



sequoia needles

Bulletin of the
March, 1991

Sequoia Audubon Society

San Mateo County
Vol.39, #6

THIS MONTH'S PROGRAM

Steve Schmidt will present March's program on one of California's natural treasures, Mono Lake. Steve is a local architect and environmentalist who is involved with the Mono Lake Committee. He hopes to share some of the changing faces of the lake with us during his slide presentation.

This slide program was developed as an introduction to Mono Lake to use at the visitor's center at Mono Lake. Many of the slides are by David or Sally Gaines, and reflect their personal and emotional affinity with the lake. Besides highlighting the beauty of the lake, Steve's program will discuss the impact of human activities on the lake. He will discuss current information on the biology and politics of the lake and the maintenance of water levels. Come and share images of this natural wonder that so many people have fought so hard to save.

Meetings are held at the San Mateo Garden Center on the second Thursday of each month. The Garden Center is just off the Alameda de las Pulgas on Parkside Way. The meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. with a social mixer; the general meeting and program begin at 8:00. The public is invited.

NEXT MONTH'S PROGRAM

April's program will be presented by Joe Galkowski, a local amateur naturalist and professionally published wildlife photographer. The program will explore California wildlife, with an emphasis on birds that live in or pass through the San Francisco Bay Area.

Sequoia Audubon Society

FROM THE PRESIDENT

While the New Year found our country committed to the war in the Persian Gulf, touching all our lives, we face sober times ahead with the deliberate oil spill in the Gulf and the tragedy it has created to bird, marine and human life, we all need to raise our conscious efforts here at home to support the National Audubon Society which is currently assisting in the clean-up and continuing as a powerful force for the conservation of wildlife and natural resources.

The most recent issue of the *Audubon Leader* reports the purchase of a 116 acre parcel of mixed coniferous forest north of Florence, Oregon along Tenmile Creek and within a national forest! This will be the first forest sanctuary in the Pacific Northwest and completes the largest extant tract of unlogged coastal temperate rain forest in the contiguous United States.

The National Audubon Society has a new logo on its publications and stationery - a blue banner! The intent, as explained in a letter from President Peter A.A. Berle, is to act as "a rallying symbol for all of the environmental work we do. It will unite every branch and service of Audubon so that our public will acknowledge each and every one of our programs and publications as a part of a greater whole -- part of a powerful, grassroots environmental organization that is making a difference." However, we will all miss the egret!

It is a pleasure to report on a new SAS project introduced to the Board of Directors at our December meeting by our enthusiastic and dedicated Vice-president, Rick Johnson - the compilation of a Breeding Bird Atlas for San Mateo County. The primary goal is to confirm the number of species breeding in each block (5 km. x 5 km.) within the County. The data would be indicated on a series of maps showing the distribution of breeding bird species. This is a five year project similar to others already in progress in several Bay Area counties. These projects will provide several benefits:

- Pinpoint important habitat areas
- Provide an atlas to be used in educational programs
- Provide new breeding records and information on the biology of birds breeding in San Mateo County

A number of Christmas Counters declared interest in working on the Breeding Bird Atlas this spring. But we will need a lot more help to complete this project. If you are at all interested or just want more information phone Rick Johnson (571-8533) or the Audubon office (593-7368) today!

A note on the SAS Spring Bird Seed Sale. I know you will all want to feed our beautiful feathered friends because of the extreme cold weather and the drought. For the convenience of our coastside members and friends we will have a coastside pickup location for the Spring Bird Seed Sale.

With the coming of spring it will soon be time for the 1991 BIRDATHON. This event is an annual nationwide effort on behalf of all of Audubon - the only organization-wide fund-raising programs we have with far-reaching effects. Last year all of the National Audubon funds raised in the Western Region were dedicated to the preservation of Mono Lake through the MONO LAKE LEGAL FUND. We'll have more news on this important event next month.

...Mary Bresler

THE SAS CALENDAR

SATURDAY, MARCH 2 PRINCETON HARBOR

Our leader birds and scouts this area frequently so the exact itinerary will depend on "what's hot". We may be birding the harbor, the marsh, the nearby groves, fields or hedgerows - or maybe a little of each - according to what Dan or his birding informants have discovered recently. To get there take Hwy 92 to Hwy 1 and follow Hwy north to Capistrano Rd. and turn left at the lights. Take your first left and proceed straight ahead until you can take another left into the upper parking lot where we will meet at 9:00 AM.

LEADER: Dan Keller (365-2032)

SUNDAY, MARCH 3 PINE LAKE PARK AND STERN GROVE

This little park in San Francisco was "discovered" by local birders seeking last year's rare brown-crested flycatcher. Besides this rare bird it produced a heavy concentration of birds in a small area. To get there take 19th Avenue (Hwy. 1) north through San Francisco. From 19th Ave. you have to take a left turn onto Sloat. Unfortunately you can't take a left turn there so you have to go past it, find the first place you can take a U-turn and come back to Sloat. From Sloat take a right on Vale and go downhill into Pine Lake Park to the parking lot. We'll meet there at 9:00 AM.

LEADERS: Nick Coiro and Linda Kypita

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6 MOUNTAIN VIEW FOREBAY AND SHORELINE PARK. **Please note this is a change of date.**

This area affords some of the most varied shorebird and waterfowl wintering habitat in a small area. In recent years it has always produced a surprise bird or two. Parasitic jaegers, red-necked grebes, little blue herons, Ross' geese and tufted ducks are only some of the past visitors. The trip will involve walking on level well-defined paths. We will meet at 9:00 AM at the foot of San Antonio Rd. near the entrance to Mountain View Shoreline Park. To get there, take Hwy. 101 to San Antonio Rd. and take the San Antonio Rd. (North) exit. Follow San Antonio Road for a short distance until it makes a right angle turn and becomes Terminal Road. Stop and park as close to the intersection as feasible. Trip breaks up at noon.

LEADER: Nick Coiro (349-1834)

THURSDAY, MARCH 7 SAS BOARD MEETING, 7:30 PM. Place to be announced. ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME - Please contact the Sequoia Office (593-7368) for details.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13 - The Mountain View Forebay and Shoreline Park Field Trip has been changed to March 6.

THURSDAY, MARCH 14 SAS GENERAL MEETING MONO LAKE - IT'S BEAUTY AND IT'S PROBLEMS presented by Steve Schmidt. At the San Mateo Garden Center on the Alameda at Parkside. Social Mixer at 7:30 PM, General Meeting begins at 8:00.

SATURDAY, MARCH 23 MENDOTA WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA Mendota Wildlife Management Area is located in the central San Joaquin Valley, just south of the town of Mendota and about twenty-five miles west of Fresno. We can expect to see good numbers of migratory and resident waterfowl and shorebirds. There is an active White-faced Ibis rookery on the (Continued on Page Three)

NEWS FROM THE RANCH

HAPPY BIRTHDAY ZUMIE! Clerin Zumwalt, our first Audubon Canyon Ranch naturalist, celebrated his 80th birthday in February. Zumie is an inspiration to everyone involved in ACR. He's a gentleman we are grateful for and he's someone each of us calls a friend. Happy 80th, Zumie!

BOLINAS LAGOON PRESERVE OPENS MARCH 16. It's that time again. The Ranch opens on Saturday, March 16. The herons should be nesting and the egrets should still be forming pair bonds and establishing nests. Considering we have had our fifth consecutive winter without much rain, it's probable we will have an early wildflower season. When you walk the trails at the Ranch watch for wintering birds which haven't migrated yet. By your next visit in April or May the woods will be alive with the songs of vireos, warblers and other territorial birds, many of which will have migrated from the tropics.

When you visit the Ranch remember the Panoramic Highway over Mt. Tam is open. The coastal route remains closed. If you are coming from the south and you don't like the winding road over the mountain, try taking Sir Francis Drake Boulevard to Highway One at Olema, then drive south about 12 miles to the Ranch. This route adds about 20 minutes to the trip, but it allows you to stop off at Five Brooks Pond and the Point Reyes National Seashore headquarters area, both great spots for birding on your way to or from the Ranch.

We're looking forward to seeing you at the Ranch.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES TO HOST AT THE RANCH: Each year our sponsoring Audubon Chapters provide hosts at ACR. Perhaps this is the year you would like to volunteer a Saturday, Sunday or holiday to greet visitors, answer a few questions and share the joy of Audubon Canyon Ranch. You're sure to have enough time to visit the overlook, walk a few trails and have a picnic. If you can't volunteer when members of your Audubon chapter are hosting, just call the Ranch and let Edris arrange an opportunity for you to join our Ranch hosts.

SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY will host all weekends in March beginning on Saturday, March 16 and will host on July 4, 6 and 7. Rick Baird is coordinating Sequoia's efforts. To volunteer call for any particular weekend or weekends, call Rick at 574-1067.

Madrone Audubon will host all weekends in April and on July 13 and 14; Golden Gate will host all weekends in May and Marin will have the responsibility for the month of June.

SPRING SEMINARS:

SPRING WILDFLOWERS - Saturday & Sunday, April 6 & 7. Be among the lucky few who will delight in the wildflowers of ACR's beautiful Bolinas Lagoon and Bouverie Preserves. On Saturday, Ray Peterson will guide you to the discovery of some of California's coastal wildflowers. Then, after spending the night at Volunteer Canyon, you will drive to the Bouverie Preserve near Glen Ellen, where John Petersen will show you the wealth of wildflowers found in our interior foothills. (\$45).

LOVE SONGS OF THE MYACAMAS - Saturday, May, 4 - Here's an introduction to bird song and ecology of the interior.

(Continued on Page Three)

NEWS FROM THE RANCH

(Continued from Page Two)

foothills. You'll have a great time with John Kelly and John Petersen as they guide you through the many habitats of the Bouverie Audubon Preserve. The incredible richness of the Preserve should be just what you need to learn many of the bird sons familiar to all parts of the Bay Area. (\$20).

NATURAL HISTORY OF TOMALES BAY - Saturday, May 18 - You won't have a dull moment with John Kelly when you join him to explore Cypress Grove and ACR's other properties along Tomales Bay. John will not only show you the birds and wildflowers, marshes and grasslands; he'll help you develop an awareness of the ecological variety of one of central California's richest and most fragile estuaries. (\$20).

To register for these seminars or inquire about others, call the Ranch at 868-9244.

SPRING GUIDED NATURE WALKS AT BOUVERIE are conducted Saturdays, 9:30 to 1:30, March 9 & 23, April 13 & 27, and May 11 & 25. Join a docent for a walk through the delightful grasslands, woods and forests of the Bouverie Audubon Preserve. Enjoy the wonderful variety of wildflowers and birds at our very special place in the Sonoma foothills. Registration is required for these free trips and may be as late as the Wednesday preceding the trip. However if you wait for the last moment you could be disappointed. Call (707) 938-4554 to reserve your space.

SPRING SCHOOL PROGRAMS begin in March. This is the highly acclaimed program which introduces elementary school children to the amazing natural world at the Bouverie and Bolinas Lagoon Preserves. Led by volunteer docents, these programs are designed to instruct, motivate and involve children both in and out of the classroom. Docents visit classes to help prepare students and teachers for their visit. Then they lead groups of 6-8 students to discover the wonders of spiders and newts, oaks and redwoods at Bolinas Lagoon or at Bouverie. All these classes are free and transportation funding is available for all classes which would otherwise be unable to reach the Ranch. Of course this is only one of many programs funded through the generosity of ACR's friends.

MINING COMPROMISE MADE

In San Bernadino County Viceroy Mining Company has signed an agreement with representatives of the Sierra Club, the Wilderness Society, the California Wilderness Coalition, the Desert Protective Council, Desert Survivors and Citizens for a Mojave National Park. Under the agreement the mining corporation will use closed tanks instead of open ponds, will establish a \$2 million restoration fund and carry out a number of other environmental enhancements to their operations.

The Wilderness Society emphasized that they did not want the mine at all, but seeing that it was inevitable under existing law, "we wanted it to be a shining example of what a mine could be...What we came up with is going to set new standards."

One party not satisfied with the agreement was BLM State Director Ed Hastey. The BLM had originally approved the mine in 1987. Hastey complained that Viceroy had "paid off" the environmentalists and stated that "we had no part of it."

Don't you think you should have, Ed?

---The Editor

THE SAS CALENDAR

(Continued from Page Two)

refuge, and Clark's and Western Grebes will be engaged in their courtship rituals. Eighty to one hundred species of birds can be expected. We plan to meet at parking area 4 at 8:00 am. Because of the early start and the long distance to the refuge from the Bay Area, most participants will want to travel Friday evening and either camp at the refuge or stay in a nearby motel. If you are interested in attending, please call the Sequoia office (593-7368) at least a week before the trip so that we can arrange car pools, and accommodations for those who want them.

LEADERS: Dave Shuford & Tim Poole

SATURDAY, MARCH 30 WUNDERLICH PARK

In recent years we have overlooked this park in our field trip schedule since none of our usual field trip leaders felt truly familiar with its details. Its location with a variety of habitats and woodland edges produces a good variety of birds and pleasant walking along well-maintained trails (which you may have to share with an occasional horse and rider). Dan does know the park well and has brought this park back into our field trip roster. Take I-280 to the Woodside Road (Hwy. 84) exit. Take the exit and turn west through the town of Woodside. You will find the park entrance on the right about two miles past the center of town. Neither the sign or the entrance road are terribly obvious, so watch carefully and be prepared to back-track if you miss it the first time. The entrance road leads directly into parking lot where we will meet at 9:00 AM.

LEADER: Dan Keller (365-2032)

SATURDAY, APRIL OCEAN ALLIANCE BIRDING SAIL

Details were unavailable as of press time. Call the Audubon Office (593-7368) or watch the next **NEEDLES** for details.

SUNDAY, APRIL 14 MINES ROAD - DEL PUERTO VALLEY

An auto caravan through isolated valleys where some birds linger on despite the destruction of their habitats in the Central and Livermore Valleys. Phainopepla, Lewis' woodpecker, Lawrence's goldfinch, golden eagle and prairie falcon are near certainty while roadrunner, wood duck, wild turkey, Costa's hummingbirds, rufous-crowned, sage and grasshopper sparrows are likely. Yet, despite its seeming isolation, you will never be more than 45 minutes away from either Livermore or Interstate 5 so that you can break away and return to civilization at any time. This is an all-day trip, ending at dusk, so bring lunch and liquids. Weather is unpredictable, with temperatures in the last 10 years varying between 40 and 90 degrees on this trip. There are only two reliable restroom facilities, at lunchtime and at mid-afternoon; and the only service station at the half-way point is not always operable, so be prepared. To get there, take I-580 to the North Livermore Ave. exit. Take a right at the exit and follow Livermore Avenue through the center of town where it becomes South Livermore Ave. Approximately a half mile beyond the center of town you will see the Nob Hill Shopping Center on the left. We will meet in the parking lot and leave there promptly at 8:30 A.M. Late arrivals will have no problem in catching up with the group if they continue on S. Livermore Ave. until it becomes Tesla Rd. and then take a right on Mines Road less than a mile from the meeting place.

LEADER: Cliff Richer (355-4058)

EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

This year, the Education Committee of Sequoia Audubon Society will offer up to three scholarships to teachers in San Mateo public schools. These scholarships will generally cover tuition costs and, where applicable, room and board costs as well. The scholarships will be available for attendance at five different programs.

This spring, we will be offering a scholarship for tuition costs for "Environmental Education in the Curriculum," an evening course at Hayward State University (starting March 28). We will also be offering a scholarship to a new program by the National Audubon Society on "California Wetlands" (April 21-28). (This scholarship would cover \$500 of the tuition, room, and board costs of \$975.)

In the summer, we will be offering scholarships for the National Audubon Society's Field Ecology workshops in Wyoming and for the course "Nature Study" at the Sierra Nevada Field Campus of San Francisco State University.

Next fall, we will offer scholarships for a weekend course, "Environmental Education--Methods and Materials," at San Jose State University.

If you or any teachers or student teachers you know are interested in any of these programs, please contact the Sequoia Audubon office for more information and an application. The deadline for applications is March 20 for the spring programs and March 31 for the summer and fall programs.

AUDUBON ADVENTURES

Thanks to help from previous year's Audubon Adventure teachers and assistance from the County Office of Education, we have had outstanding success in enlisting new teachers in the Audubon Adventure program this year. Last year Sequoia Audubon, with the help of donations from some of our members, had twelve classes enrolled in this worthwhile environmental education program. This year, we had 46 classes from 20 different schools enrolled in Audubon Adventures, and we had more than 10 Sequoia Audubon Society members sponsor classes. We on the education committee are extremely gratified by the support of the membership and the involvement of our teachers. With this program, everyone wins; the kids receive fun and informative newsletters about natural topics, the teachers receive assistance in teaching their students about environmental topics, and the members of Sequoia Audubon Society know that our local kids are becoming more interested in our natural environment and will be more concerned about saving it. Thank you to everyone who has helped make this program a success, and may we reach even more children next year.

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Southern California Edison and the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power are financing the development of the LA301, a four passenger electric automobile and minivan. The specifications for the vehicles call for a range of 150 miles, a 70 mph top speed and an acceleration from 0 to 30 mph in 9 seconds. The prototype has a plastic body and a galvanized steel frame. Production models are expected to be ready by 1993 and will be available to the general public for about \$25,000.

SAUPPE TO CONDUCT CLASSES

Barry Sauppe, our local - but internationally acclaimed - bird expert is conducting a series of special birding classes in the field.

Classes will be held every Saturday and Sunday morning. The emphasis will be on learning field marks of the birds and on using them to identify birds anywhere in the world. The "Sauppe System", when properly used will enable you to identify birds you have never seen before.

The all-morning field trips will concentrate on learning the local birds but will show you how to transfer this knowledge to other areas. Trips along the coast may emphasize how to identify those hard-to-see and harder-to-identify off-shore species; a talent for which Barry is locally famous.

For serious birders at any stage of development - beginners, novices, intermediate or advanced. Fee is \$15 per class. Call Barry (726-1081) to make reservations or for more information.

PELICAN ISLAND AUDUBON SOCIETY HONORED

The Pelican Island Audubon Society in Florida was honored by the U.S. Department of Interior when it received the Take Pride in America award. The award recognizes private participation in the protection and stewardship of public lands. It was recognized for implementing county-wide citizen litter patrols, recycling and education programs and an Adopt-a-Beach program. The chapter is also active in other coastal and estuary programs and works with and through other civic, business and government groups.

BIRDS UNDER STRESS

Songbirds and hummingbirds came under extreme stress this winter. All species were already under stress from the drought and had little in the way of body-fat reserves. When the Christmas weekend freeze came along many of the smaller species succumbed - not from freezing, but starvation.

Insectivores - warblers, bushtits, wrentits, kinglets, etc. - and hummingbirds were particularly affected. Barry Sauppe commented on the many bodies of yellow-rumped warblers he found in Golden Gate Park. Rich Stallcup estimated that as many as 90% of the ruby-crowned kinglets and Townsend's warblers in West Marin may have been killed.

Hummingbirds are still in need of help. Many ornamental plants are so damaged by cold and drought that they have not flowered and will not recover this year. The Anna's hummingbird is normally through its first nesting cycle by this time. This year, mating activity appears to be at an all time low. The first Allen's and rufous hummingbirds are now passing through in migration. Competition for the few existing food sources is high. Even the seed-eaters are having trouble accumulating enough body-fat to sustain them in migration.

It's important for all of us who have feeders to maintain them during this time and to keep them up even if it seems that fewer birds are visiting them. Suet and peanut butter feeders benefit the insect-eaters; nectar feeders can be used by hummingbirds and by yellow-rumped warblers as well; and seed feeders will help augment the drought and cold-reduced natural supplies.

BIRDSEED ORDER FORM

	# Bags	Cost
PREMIUM MIX		
20 Lbs. at \$10.00 per bag		\$
50 Lbs. at \$20.50 per bag		\$
WESTERN WILD BIRD MIX		
20lbs @ 20 Lbs. at \$ 9.50 per bag		\$
50lbs @ 50 Lbs. at \$20.50 per bag		\$
BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER SEED		
20lbs @ 25 Lbs. at \$16.50 per bag		\$
50lbs @ 50 Lbs. at \$29.50 per bag		\$
NIGER THISTLE SEED		
20lbs @ 5 Lbs. at \$12.00 per bag		\$
50lbs @ 25 Lbs. at \$55.50 per bag		\$
ALL PRICES INCLUDE SALES TAX		
Total		\$

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY ZIP ST

PHONE

Please send the order form and your check to Sequoia Audubon Society, 720 El Camino Real, Belmont, CA 94002
 Plan to store your seed OUTSIDE in a tight (but not completely sealed) container, such as a garbage can with a snug lid.
 Seed will be available for pickup on SATURDAY, MARCH 1 and in the evenings on the week of APRIL 1.
 COASTSIDE PICKUP will be available for those who desire or need it.

Your order and pickup options will be confirmed by mail.

ITEMS FOR SALE OR RENT

San Francisco Peninsula Birdwatching	\$6.00
Birder's Handbook - Ehrlich, Dobkin and Wheye	\$17.60
Birding at the Bottom of the Bay - SCVAS	\$12.50
Birding Northern California - Jean Richmond	\$12.00
Eco-Safe String Bags	\$5.00
"I'd Rather Be Birding" Bumper Sticker	\$2.00
Mono Lake Guidebook	\$7.50
National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds	\$17.25
Pacific Coast Checklists - Pads of 25	\$3.50
San Mateo County Checklists	\$0.75
Sequoia Audubon Society Patch	\$3.75

Mail order prices include sales tax, handling and shipping.
 Send checks to Sequoia Audubon Society, 720 El Camino Real, #403,
 Belmont, CA 94002. Allow 14-18 days for delivery. Most items are
 available at a reduced cost at general meetings and at the office.

VIDEOS FOR RENT

Bird identification videos can be rented from the SAS office or at the
 General Meeting. Mail rental is available. Call the office for prices.

Techniques of Birding - Arnold Small \$2.00 per week
 Video Guide to Birds of North America (Set of 5) \$5.00 ea. tape per wk.



San Francisco
 Peninsula
 Birdwatching

LYME DISEASE UPDATE

While it is still rare in California, Lyme Disease has become almost common-place among East Coast birders. The disease is spreading fast. Only Alaska, Hawaii, Arizona, New Mexico, Montana, Nebraska and Wyoming are "safe" states (so far) and the disease - or some variation of it - has been found on every continent except Antarctica.

While it was only identified in the mid-70's, scientists now believe its been around at least since the '40's. Dr. David Persing of the Mayo Clinic believes it was around on Long Island, New York where it was known as "Montauk knee" or "Montauk spider bite". Evidence of the Lyme spirochete has been found in 13 preserved ticks from that time and place. Research through old medical journals has also turned up descriptions of tick bites followed by Lyme-like symptoms as early as 1910.

While white-footed mice and deer of all species are the disease-carrying tick's preferred hosts, it is now known that almost any mammal and some species of birds can be harboring the tiny arachnids.

The deer tick (*Ixodes dammini* or *Ixodes pacificus*, on the West Coast) is one of the smaller ticks to infest mammals. The males are no larger than the letter o on this page and the females are only slightly bigger.

To defend against them most East Coast birders are wearing hats, long-sleeved shirts, long trousers tucked into socks and are making liberal use of insect repellants. They are also using permethrin a powerful tick repellant on their clothes - not their bodies. It is recommended that clothes be washed immediately after coming in and that the birder check him or herself over before taking a shower.

Field research on the deer tick is being conducted by the Universities of Massachusetts and Rhode Island and by Harvard. The U.Mass research is concentrating on natural enemies of the tick - particularly the tiny Hooker's wasp, which preys on the tick's larvae. To keep the wasp itself from becoming a pest the research is being carried out on Massachusetts's offshore islands.

Lyme Disease masks itself in many ways. In about 65% of the cases, the tick bite itself becomes itchy and is surrounded by a ring-like red rash. If caught at this stage any further progress of the disease can be arrested by the use of antibiotics. After this come flu-like symptoms, arthritic pains and blinding headaches; usually in that order.

WILD GOOSE CHASE DONORS

Dennis Beall	Barbara A. Benkman
Ray and Andrea Bottini	Lee Brown
Margaret Caulkins	Nick Coiro
Mike and Lynn Cropper	Freeman Insurance Agency
Kam Ghalamkar	Thomas Goodier
Jim P. Grant	William K. Groll
Dorothy Herrington	Colleen Horner
Rick W. Johnson	William Lofthouse
Genevieve Miller	Michael and Hulda O'Brien

Gil West

APRIL IS BIRDATHON MONTH

National Audubon traditionally holds its Birdathon in April, the month of John James Audubon's birth. In fact, individual birders and chapters hold their Birdathons anywhere from April 1 to June 1, trying to catch the height of the migratory wave.

We will be holding ours in April. Once again several different teams will be going out into the field trying to identify as many species as possible in a 24 hour period. We expect that Barry Sauppe will once again lead an official team for Sequoia. Cliff Richer's team, The Ultimate Coot, has gone into training and expects to be ready by mid-April. Other teams are forming and will be announced next month.

You too can form a team - or you can go out individually. You don't need to be either a demon birder or an outstanding fundraiser. Just ask your friends and teammates to support your efforts with a pledge of a few pennies per bird species. If you want Sequoia will even collect the pledges on your behalf. You can even do it at your feeder without leaving your living room. If you should happen to be both a super birder and fundraiser, then all the better.

If you want to form a team, or if you want to help out by manning the phones at our pledge night, or both, then call the office (593-7368) or Cliff Richer, the Birdathon Coordinator (355-4058) for more information.

STONE LAKE REFUGE PROPOSED

The US Fish and Wildlife Service is proposing a new National Wildlife Refuge just south of Sacramento. At this time it's still in the feasibility study stage and the USFWS would have to acquire substantial farm acreage. Preliminary proposals for the refuge vary from 7000 to 80,000 acres with 30,000 acres being the most commonly used figure. It would augment or include adjacent county and state refuges and the Nature Conservancy's Cosumnes River Preserve. The Fish and Wildlife Service hopes to begin acquiring land by fall of 1991. Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge, as it has been tentatively named lies in the flood plain of the Sacramento River and at maximum size would be bounded by Stone Lake North to the north, the river to the west, Locke and Walnut Grove on the south and I-5 to the east. Conversion of this land into a refuge could solve numerous problems connected with flood control and levee maintenance in the area and could actually save taxpayer dollars in the long term.

Support for the project has been lined up not only in the environmental community, but among hunters, developers, Chambers of Commerce and most Delta farmers. Possible opposition comes from large grape growers. Sutter Homes recently put 600 acres under cultivation for chardonnay and enlisted county planning commissioner Richard Samra as an ally. Samra is actively trying to bring other vintners into the Stone Lakes area and has persuaded the Building Industry Association to withdraw its support for the refuge.

Things are expected to come to a head this month when the Environmental Impact Statement is issued for public review. At that time the opposition is expected to emerge in full force. Should Sutter Homes (or any other vintner) emerge as the force behind the opposition, we may expect a call for a product boycott in response.

LOOK FOR BANDED NIGHT-HERONS

Last July biologists from Golden Gate National Recreation Association and the Point Reyes Bird Observatory placed color bands on 26 young black-crowned night-herons from the nesting colony on Alcatraz. The primary purpose was to locate the feeding and wintering grounds for this colony and to determine if the birds would return to Alcatraz to breed.

These are young birds in their first year streaked brown plumage. They have a blue and white band on the right leg and a standard aluminum band on the left leg.

If you sight such a banded heron please report the location, date and circumstances to Allen Fish (331-0730).

KIRTLAND'S WARBLER ON THE INCREASE

The endangered Kirtland's warbler which nests only in young jack pines in north-central Michigan made a dramatic increase in numbers in 1990. A total of 265 singing territorial males were counted this year, an increase of nearly 30% from 1989's 212. This is also the highest number recorded in recent years. Previous counts have fluctuated from 167 to 243.

NEW FOREST LEGISLATION

In approving the Interior Appropriation Act of 1991, Congress reduced the overall national timber cut from 11.2 billion board feet (bbf) down to 9.3 bbf. (A board foot is a rough cut board, one inch thick and one foot square.)

Congress also rejected an effort by Northwest Senators to set specific cut levels for national forests. The mandatory levels would have resulted in additional logging in ancient forests and spotted owl habitat.

WOODPECKER DETERRENT

An anonymous Fresno Auduboner is responsible for this tip published in *The Yellowbill*, Fresno Audubon's newsletter.

The tipster noticed that he could protect his expensive siding by hanging a wind chime close to the sites where woodpeckers were doing damage. When the woodpeckers moved to another spot, he made additional "wind chimes" with tin cans and string. These worked equally well and were taken down after a few weeks.

While woodpeckers may be drumming to announce their territory, they may also be looking for insects and, if you have this annoyance, you should check to make sure you don't have a more serious problem under the surface.

SHOREBIRD THREAT

The drought is shrinking wetlands along the Pacific Flyway threatening the survival of migrating and wintering shorebirds. Although 214,000 shorebirds are using the Central Valley wetlands, the inland water areas are reduced to their lowest recorded levels and the water quality in those is often suspect because of agricultural runoff and encroaching development.

Sequoia Audubon Society

SPOTTED/BARRED OWL HYBRIDS FOUND

Another peril has presented itself in the quest to save the endangered northern spotted owl.

Two hybrids between the spotted owl and the invading barred owl have been discovered in Washington and Oregon.

Barred owls adapt better to second growth woods than the spotted owl, have been rapidly expanding westward and are replacing the spotted owl in some areas of the northwest. Scientists are now concerned that they could also be altering or diluting the spotted owl gene pool if hybridization is discovered to be more than just an isolated phenomenon.

Meantime, the administration's spotted owl plan seems to satisfy nobody. While reducing the harvest from federal lands by 20%, the plan stops far short of the level recommended by wildlife biologists.

"The administration has been looking at this as if it's only a jobs vs. owls issue," said Fran Hunt of the National Wildlife Federation. "What they don't see is that we're dealing with an eco-system that... has been reduced by logging to something around 10% of its original size. What will happen to the loggers when the last 10% is gone?"

AN HONORABLE RETIREMENT?

You or your employer might be thinking about "retiring" your XT or low-end "286" PC computer because it's too slow or the hard disk is too small.

If so, the Sequoia Audubon office will keep it happy and hopin'!

We need to move **up** to such a machine. Our "double-floppy" Compaq is woefully outdated, is inadequate to handle the membership records from the National office, and has neither the memory or speed to handle the newest software.

Call the office (593-7368) if you have a candidate.

...Peter Cross

SAUPPE TO CONDUCT CLASSES

Barry Sauppe, our local - but internationally acclaimed - bird expert is conducting a series of special birding classes in the field.

Classes will be held every Saturday and Sunday morning. The emphasis will be on learning field marks of the birds and on using them to identify birds anywhere in the world. The "Sauppe System", when properly used will enable you to identify birds you have never seen before.

The all-morning field trips will concentrate on learning the local birds but will show you how to transfer this knowledge to other areas. Trips along the coast may emphasize how to identify those hard-to-see and harder-to-identify off-shore species; a talent for which Barry is locally famous.

For serious birders at any stage of development - beginners, novices, intermediate or advanced. Fee is \$15 per class. Call Barry (726-1081) to make reservations or for more information.

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GIFTS AND BEQUESTS

Sequoia Audubon Society welcomes gifts in general or on behalf of, or in memory of relatives or friends. Such gifts may be designated for education, for conservation or for any other specific purpose. All other gifts will be used for the advancement of the objectives of the Sequoia Audubon Society at the discretion of the Board of Directors. All gifts are tax-deductible and will be acknowledged here and personally.

In the Name of

Mrs. Maurice Luke

from

Fenwick, Davis & West

SEQUOIA *NEEDLES* IS PUBLISHED MONTHLY EXCEPT JANUARY, JULY AND AUGUST. MEMBERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO SUBMIT MATERIAL TO BE PUBLISHED IN SEQUOIA *NEEDLES*. DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF MATERIAL IS THE FIRST THURSDAY OF THE MONTH FOR INCLUSION IN THE FOLLOWING MONTH. THESE MAY BE ORIGINAL ARTICLES, ORIGINAL ARTWORK OR CARTOONS, OR UNCOPYRIGHTED MATERIAL FROM OTHER SOURCES. ITEMS DEALING WITH CURRENT CONSERVATION ISSUES MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE PRIOR TO PUBLICATION.

INFORMATION FOR ALL OFFICERS AND CHAIRPERSONS --- INCLUDING EXCHANGE BULLETINS --- SHOULD BE MAILED TO: 720 EL CAMINO REAL, SUITE 403, BELMONT, CALIFORNIA 94002.

SUBSCRIPTION TO *NEEDLES* SEPARATELY IS \$7.00 PER YEAR.

If you CHANGE YOUR NAME OR ADDRESS, send the label from a recent Audubon Magazine wrapper with your new name or address to: NATIONAL AUDUBON, MEMBERSHIP DATA CENTER, PO BOX 2066, Boulder, Co. 80322. Then, please notify the Sequoia Audubon office (593-7368) of the change. Be sure to give the name and address where Audubon Magazine is to be delivered. This avoids duplicate listings and incorrect expiration dates. Please send RENEWAL MEMBERSHIPS directly to National Audubon in the envelope accompanying your renewal notice. LATE RENEWALS should be sent through Sequoia to avoid a lapse in magazine or newsletter issues.

The following application is for NEW MEMBERSHIPS only.

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION---SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY
Chapter C16 -- 7XCH

[] YES, enroll me as a member in the NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY and of my local chapter. Please send Audubon magazine and my membership card to the address below.

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MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY PREFERRED

() Individual/\$35 () Family/\$38 () Student/\$20 () Sustaining/\$50
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() Supporting/\$100 () Life/\$1500 () Dual Life/\$2000

() MY CHECK FOR \$ _____ IS ENCLOSED.

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