



sequoia needles

Bulletin of the
October, 1991

Sequoia Audubon Society

San Mateo County
Vol.40,#2

This Month's Program

Pelagic Birds and Pelagic Birding are the subject of this month's program presented by Paul Jones. Paul is a long-time member of SAS, a marine biologist with a Master's degree in Ornithology, a life scientist with the Environmental Protection Agency, and a bay and ocean naturalist for ten years. He has sailed and traveled extensively, led ocean tours from Half Moon Bay to Alaska, taught land birding classes and participated in our annual Christmas Counts. His specialties are seabirds, water birds and pelagic mammals. His last program in March 1989 was acclaimed as one of that season's highlights. *This program is entirely different but promises to be equally enthralling.*

Next Month's Program

The changeover in Program Chairs has caused a delay in firming up arrangements for future programs. Watch next month's **NEEDLES** for details.

Editorial Apology

We have received a number of first and second-hand comments on last month's article, "Where Are They Going?", by Francis Toldi. Although the article was identified as being solely Mr. Toldi's personal comments and opinions, some readers missed the disclaimer and took his personal conclusions to be the official stand of the Sequoia Audubon Society. To those readers we apologize.

Although many of us have doubts about some recent actions taken by National Audubon's executives, we remain firmly committed to the Audubon Cause.

The Board's official position - as affirmed in its September 8 meeting - is contained in the article on Page Seven, "Synergy with Audubon" by Vice-president Rick Johnson.

A Costa Rican Odyssey

—John Silliman and Sara Goodale

While climbing out of our shuttle bus at San Francisco International Airport early on the morning of March 15, we realized that the magic day had arrived. We were soon boarded on a Continental 727 heading for our intermediate stop in Houston. Our connecting flight to San Jose, Costa Rica was delayed a few minutes while a decision was made to skip our scheduled stop in Managua, Nicaragua because of "labor unrest".

Shortly after dark we saw the sparkling lights of San Jose, the capital of this West Virginia-sized Central American country. The warm air that greeted us as we stepped out of the plane convinced us that eight months of planning had not been in vain.

Eschewing a cab in favor of a local bus was a disappointment to the horde of taxi drivers who waited like the black vultures we would see later. At the hotel we joined some of the East Coast participants in the Cheeseman Ecology Safari for a refreshing pineapple drink.

The next morning our group opted for a short stroll in a local park. We were in the dry cycle of the climate and birds were scarce in the city but all were anxious to start our adventure. Upon returning to the hotel we were met by our local liaison who drove us to the Lankester Orchid Gardens. Here again the dry conditions were evident - many of the plants were shriveled, dusty and dormant. More of our group met us at the gardens where we met Lisa, owner of Rancho Naturalisa, and our hostess for the next three days.

From San Jose we headed eastward, downslope through Cartago, the historic capital; Siguerres, where we stopped for eggs and fresh groceries; and Tuis for a beer before heading up to our Shangri La.

After depositing our luggage in our spacious upper floor bedrooms, we were dazzled by the beautiful tropical birds just outside our balcony. Warblers and tanagers - including the magnificent crimson-rumped - put on a show in the poro trees and bushes. Clay-colored robins and groove-billed anis cavorted in a hibiscus shrub. Crow-sized oropendulas flew across the yard to land in a nearby flowering tree. A tame Amazon parrot squawked for attention outside the kitchen window and Sasha, the female pit bull, rolled in the grass exposing her tummy to the warm sun.

A variety of activities were available to us. Several trails allowed exploration of this section-sized reserve. Half of our group opted for a horseback ride to a water-driven sugar cane pressing mill. The other half hiked upstream along the Tuis River to a visit with a local wagon-wright who still made ox-carts in the traditional way. Another day several of us chose a white-water rafting trip on the Reventazon River. The low water levels in this dry season allowed some of us to float alongside the rafts. Two species of kingfishers perched above the river bank and many Swainson's hawks were seen heading north. The most impressive sight of all was a kettle of more than 400 broad winged hawks.

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The SAS Calendar

OCTOBER

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3.

SAS BOARD MEETING, 7:30 PM at the SAS office. ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME - Please contact the Sequoia Office (345-3724) for details.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5

COASTAL VAGRANT CRAWL. The second in a series of special "high-intensity" field trips searching for vagrants along the San Mateo Coast. Limited to 5 participants. See the article on page 3 for more details.

LEADER: DAN KELLER (365-2032)

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10

SAS GENERAL MEETING. OCEAN BIRDS

AND PELAGIC BIRDING with Paul Jones, biologist, ornithologist, naturalist, teacher, lecturer and member of SAS. Paul's first love has always been the birds and mammals of our oceans. Come and let him share his experiences with you. At the San Mateo Garden Center, Parkside at the Alameda. Socializing at 7:30 PM. Meeting and program begins at 8:00.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12

BEGINNER'S SPECIAL. THE PALO ALTO BAYLAND

DUCK PONDS. The first in a series of special trips designed with the beginning birder in mind. There will be a one to two hour trip looking at the birds on the duck pond and the nearby lagoons, followed by a short sit-down session to discuss what we saw and what we should be looking for. Discussion topics are up to the participants and can range from fine points of identification (Is it a lesser or greater scaup?) to the environment (Why are there fewer ducks this year?). Meet at 9:00 AM at the Palo Alto Bayland Duck Pond.

LEADER: FRANCIS TOLDI

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 15

HAYWARD REGIONAL SHORELINE. The shorebirds and waterfowl will be back, there are reports of a resident peregrine falcon and the marshes should be teeming with wildlife at this time of year. Meet at the Hayward Regional Shoreline Interpretive Center at 9:00 AM for a morning of easy walking and birding.

LEADER: NICK COIRO (349-1834)

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 20

BEGINNER'S SPECIAL. MOUNTAINVIEW FOREBAY.

The second in our series of special trips for the beginning birder. Once again a one or two hour trip will be followed by a short sit-down discussion on what we saw. We should see most of the birds we saw in the first beginner's trip plus a good selection of those confusing LBBs (Little Brown Birds) otherwise known as shorebirds. Once again, the discussion topics are up to the participants. Meet at 9:00 AM at the Shoreline Park entrance at the end of San Antonio Road. Take the San Antonio Rd. exit North off of Highway 101 and follow it a short way to its end.

LEADER: DAN KELLER (365-2032)

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27

SCOPE AND BINOCULAR SHOW

The third annual show sponsored by the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory (SFBBO) and Golden Gate Raptor Observatory (GGRO). At Fort Mason in San Francisco from 10 AM

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SAS Forms Action Network

You can make a difference! Assemblyman Ted Lempert said, "Letters are worth more than dollars." Your representatives **do** read letters from their constituents and are influenced by public opinion and involvement on environmental issues. Your voice counts in our struggle to protect birds, other wildlife and their natural habitats.

But how do you write a letter expressing your views and concerns to our elected officials? And how can you keep track of the many important bills as they make their way through the legislative process? Here is where SAS can help. Join our Action Network and we will send you Action Alerts on key items coming up through the national, state and local governments, as well as timely updates on environmental issues. If you don't know how to write a letter to your elected representatives, or don't know how to reach them, just let us know and we'll send you a kit that includes guidelines for letter writing; the names and addresses of your legislators and elected officials; background information on conservation issues; and tips on how to use your letters as an effective information tool.

Our SAS Action Network can be a positive step towards your involvement in protecting the natural world for all species to enjoy. Make your voice heard! Fill out the form below, send a card or letter to Action Network, Sequoia Audubon Society, 30 West 39th Ave., San Mateo, CA 94403 or call the SAS office at 345-3724.

YES, I WANT TO JOIN THE SAS
ACTION NETWORK!

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

CITY..... ZIP PHONE

I have ☐ have not ☐ written to my legislators in the past.

I would like to receive the SAS letter-writing kit. ☐

I am a member of the National Audubon Activist
Network ☐

Wetlands and Bay Information

The San Francisco Estuary Project has produced a number of information sheets on the Bay Area's water resources.

"Monitoring and Research" describes the need for a regional monitoring strategy and includes a summary of existing monitoring and research programs.

"Wetlands" explains wetlands types, describes the importance of wetlands and the pressures on them.

"Who Manages the Bay and Delta?" lists the various governmental agencies that are responsible for regulating and managing the Estuary. Addresses, phone numbers and contact persons are included.

"Agricultural Drainage" and "How We Use the Estuary's Water" are also available.

Copies of any of these may be obtained by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to the San Francisco Estuary Project, PO Box 2050, Oakland, CA 94604-2050.

("News From the Ranch", which normally appears in this space was not received this month, but will return in November.)

Major New Problem for Environmentalists

---Rick Baird

It used to be we only had to fight in the legislatures to get adequate environmental laws passed and implemented, NOW WE'RE GOING TO HAVE A MUCH TOUGHER JOB IN SEEING THAT EXISTING AND FUTURE ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS ARE IMPLEMENTED AS INTENDED. "Why is this?", you ask.

The Bush Administration has developed an insidious means of thwarting the implementation of environmental and other laws outside the judicial or legislative arenas.

It is being accomplished through a White House administrative review of the routine regulations issued by the EPA and other agencies. These are the regulations necessary to implement laws as passed by Congress.

This review process is conducted by the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) with major input from the very powerful White House Council on Competitiveness.

To quote a recent by-lined column from the *Wall Street Journal*:

"California Representative Henry Waxman calls this process 'sinister'. Massachusetts' Rep. Gerry Studds says its 'Orwellian', and Minnesota's Rep. Gerry Sikorski thinks it nothing short of 'treason'.

The column goes on to say, "Democrats charge that, through its (the administration's) process of reviewing the routine-but-important regulations that enforce new laws, the Council is secretly and probably illegally seeking to thwart the intention of those laws - especially the Clean Air Act - to benefit business interests."

The charge of illegality is because it's all being done behind closed doors, with no public input and with no public record of the proceedings.

The *Wall Street Journal* column went on to say:

"As a legal matter, decisions about regulations still rest with the agency or jurisdiction...but **practically speaking, the Council (COC) exerts considerable clout.**" (Emphasis added)

President Bush established the Council of Competitiveness in 1989 shortly after taking office. Vice-president Quayle is its chairman. Others on the Council include White House Chief of Staff John Sununu, Budget Director Richard Darman, Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady, Commerce Secretary Robert Mosbacher and Attorney General Dick Thornburg.

This Council on Competitiveness makes "recommendations or suggestions" to the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) as to how various agencies proposed regulations should be changed to improve competitiveness. The OMB was given this authority, not through any legislative process, but by a Reagan presidential order.

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The SAS Calendar

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to 4 PM, the show features all the major manufacturers, as well as ongoing lectures on gull, shorebird and hawk identification. Special session on the care and selection of birding optics. Door prizes. Entry fee of \$3.00. For more information call SFBBO (408-946-6548) or GGRO (415-331-0730).

NOVEMBER

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 3

BEGINNER'S SPECIAL. FOSTER CITY'S SHELL BAR.

The third in our series of special trips for the beginning birder. The Shell Bar is neither a place for swinging singles or 49er fanatics, but a prime resting place for shorebirds. This trip is timed for high tide when the bar will be crowded. Once again a one or two hour trip will be followed by a short sit-down discussion on what we saw. We should see many of the birds we saw in the first two beginner's trip with an emphasis on some of the larger shorebirds. Once again, the discussion topics are up to the participants. Meet at 9:00 AM in the parking lot of the Beach Park Shopping Center at the intersection of Beach Park and Marlin in Foster City. LEADER: CLIFF RICHER (355-4058)

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7

SAS BOARD MEETING, 7:30 PM at the SAS office. ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME - Please contact the Sequoia Office (345-3724) for details.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13

COYOTE POINT FIELD TRIP A morning walk through the varied habitats in this small jewel of an area can yield many surprises. We'll meet at 9:00 AM in the lower end of the Museum parking lot, near the picnic tables. LEADER: NICK COIRO (349-1834)

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14

SAS GENERAL MEETING. PROGRAM TO BE ANNOUNCED. At the San Mateo Garden Center, Parkside at the Alameda. Socializing at 7:30 PM. Meeting and program begins at 8:00.

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 16 & 17

THE SACRAMENTO VALLEY WILDLIFE REFUGES AND GRAY LODGE The refuges are suffering badly under the drought. The Bureau of Reclamation has given them a less-than-adequate emergency water allotment. Unless we get some good drenching rains in October this trip will be called off. Watch next month's *NEEDLES* or call the office (354-3724) or the leader for latest details. LEADER: CLIFF RICHER (355-4058)

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 24

THE SUNNYVALE SEWAGE PONDS. Over the last two years this has developed into one of the Peninsula's "hot spots" with wintering glaucous gulls, lost Sabine's gulls, and rare shorebirds. Let Dan and Francis introduce you to this "new" discovery. We'll meet at 9:00 AM. Meeting place to be named next month. Trip should last until noon. LEADERS: DAN KELLER (365-2032) & FRANCIS TOLDI

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"It is better to be numbered among fools than to be isolated among the wise and to see oneself alone against everyone."  
---Moliere (*Which only goes to show he practiced what he preached.* ---Editor.)

## The Bookworm

---Anne Moser

On a recent trip to Texas I used the Lane Guides, but also *Birder's Guide to Texas*, by Edward A. Kutac (1989, Lone Star Books).

The book covers the entire state by dividing it into eight regions. I used two of these sections - the Gulf Coast and South Texas. The driving directions were clear although I did supplement the maps with larger scale local maps. Kutac's personal experience added to the more factual bird-finding information. The addresses were accurate; I used them to write ahead for information. The book also includes a checklist of Texas birds, a list of birding organizations and other informational appendices. A complete index of both birds and places made it easy to use.

I'll certainly use this guide again on my next Texas trip.

Wessex Books on Santa Cruz Avenue in Menlo Park is a great second-hand bookstore. They even have a special section marked "Birds". I wander by at irregular intervals and often find an "oldie".

Recently Handbook #22, British Columbia Provincial Museum, *The Birds of British Columbia, #8, Chickadees, Thrushes, Kinglets, Pipits, Waxwings and Shrikes*, by C. J. Guignet, caught my eye. It has nice black and white illustrations and information about each family as well as a wealth of detail; description, range, nesting, voice and nesting about each species. It's a nice little reference book, not just for British Columbia, but for anywhere.

## Ocean Birds of the Nearshore Pacific

---A Book Review by Phil Sayre

Rich Stallcup's 214 page paperback is an absolute necessity for those interested in pelagic birding. In this book there is a wealth of information on identification, behavior and occurrence of birds, mammals and sea turtles which are encountered from the California coast to the edge of the continental shelf.

Species accounts comprise the bulk of the book. Each species is discussed with regard to its behavior, description of plumage, distribution and occurrence. Rich shares with us his tips on identification, giving us the general shape and overall impression of the bird.

The ink drawings and the photographs of the marine mammals are in their natural habitats and show only the way you see them from boats, and are more instructive than drawings of the whole animal.

In addition to the field guide aspects of this book, Rich discusses the ocean currents and topography of the Northeast Pacific. There is advice on locating a boat, the best spots on the boat and how and when to find sea birds from the mainland.

I highly recommend this book to both the novice and the experienced pelagic birder. If you can't stand next to Rich Stallcup on your next trip, then take along his book. (Reprinted from the July-August 1991 Western Tanager, the newsletter of the Los Angeles Audubon Society.)

## More on the Birdseed Sale

Additional pickup locations are also available for birdseed customers. In addition to the locations given on the order form, you can pick up the bird seed in **Burlingame, Half Moon Bay and Menlo Park**. Call the office (345-3724) between 9 AM and 12 noon for exact times and locations.

For those of you who may have noticed, we have reduced the number of "seed mixes" we are offering this year. This was done partly based on last year's purchases and partly based on reports of results with different seed mixes.

## An Open Letter to President George Bush

---John Frank Bryant

(This letter represents the opinions of Mr. Bryant and do not necessarily represent the views of the Editor or the Sequoia Audubon Society.)

Mr. President:

Your abandonment of your "no net loss of wetlands" is simple dishonesty. Your method of accomplishing it, by turning the Vice-president loose to "redefine" wetlands is destructive cynicism, as well as simple dishonesty. You deserve no more respect than the other devious, pavement-oriented politicians who are allowing the fouling of the nest.

On the other hand, if redefining problems will really solve them, then you have hit on a great tool. Since I am not one to stand in the way of real progress, here are some suggestions for the broader use of this ingenious political mechanism.

1. You, the Education President, can solve our educational problems by re-defining literacy. I suggest that the new definition classify as literate anyone who can participate in their state's lottery without assistance.
2. Global warming can be handled by redefining our body temperature from the inadequate 98.6 to a more convenient 103.6
3. The Administration can solve the housing problem in half an hour by redefining a home as a shopping cart and a cardboard box.
4. We can protect our children from maltreatment simply by redefining abuse as involving the loss of more than one pint of blood.
5. We can solve the problem of courage in government by redefining it as the guts to run for reelection after so massively insulting the intelligence of the citizenry.

Most importantly your Administration's respectability problem can be solved by redefining "lie" as "joke." That way, we will be able to laugh our way through all this terrible government we are getting.

## ACTION ALERT

### BUSH LAUNCHES ATTACK ON WETLANDS

The Bush Administration recently proposed to "redefine" what a wetland is -- part of Bush's hypocritical program titled "Protecting America's Wetlands". Present estimates indicate that if this program is enacted, the Bay area could lose 50% or more of its wetlands. 10-30% of our nation's 100 million acres of wetlands would face destruction.

**The public has until October 15 to comment on the new definition.** Please write a brief one page letter to the EPA to urge the agency to maintain scientific criteria when determining what is a wetland. Express your outrage that millions of acres of wetlands will be lost because of political considerations. Send a copy to President Bush, and urge him to uphold his pledge of "No Net loss of Wetlands". It is critical that we get as many letters into the public record as possible between now and October 15.

#### **A Little Background**

The Environmental Protection Agency, the Army Corps of Engineers, and other agencies use a guide, called the 1989 Wetlands Delineation Manual, to identify and determine the boundaries of wetlands. The current manual requires three criteria must be met for an area to be designated as a wetland: it must have water-loving (hydrophytic) plants, hydric soil, and it must be wet at or below the surface for some period of time. The proposed revisions redefine some wetlands plants as upland, increase the time soil must be wet, change from a biological to an agricultural definition of growing season, and change requirements for surface water. The intent of the Administration is to exclude large areas from protection under the Clean Water Act, the only Federal law which regulates wetlands destruction.

In the past revisions to this guide have been suggested by a committee of technical experts. During this round of revisions, however, decisions about the Delineation Manual were made by the upper echelons of the Bush administration. **As a result, most of the changes proposed by the White House were motivated not by sound wetlands science, but by political pressure from business interests within the Administration, acting in collusion with oil, gas, homebuilding, and farm lobbyists who wish to deregulate millions of acres of wetlands.**

The President's program includes more than the changes to the wetlands manual. The Administration is attempting to gut wetlands protection by crippling the regulatory system, by eliminating on-site mitigation and by ranking wetlands. The highest rank will still have a chance to be preserved, although they may be filled. Any wetland less than the highest rank can be developed without challenge. In addition there are two "wetlands destruction" bills pending in Congress (H.R. 1330 and S. 1463). The Administration is gearing up an effort to eliminate or weaken Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

## **Wildlife impact**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has determined that our nation has already lost 50% of its historic wetlands, and California has lost more than 90%. The Bay Area has lost 95% of its tidal wetlands. Wetland dependent species such as ducks and shorebirds have followed a similar decline. If President Bush's program is enacted, these losses will continue dramatically. Our Bay's seasonal wetlands will no longer be considered wetlands because they may not be covered with water for 21 consecutive days, especially during a drought.

## **WHAT YOU CAN DO**

1) Write to the EPA explaining your concern that the new manual defines wetlands politically, not scientifically. Here are some points to make:

- \* The new definition of wetlands makes a mockery of the President's "No Net Loss of Wetlands" pledge.

- \* Do not adopt the new, proposed Wetlands Delineation Manual.

- \* Any changes to the wetlands manual must be based on sound science and the recommendations of wetlands experts from the scientific community, not developers, the oil industry and other special interests.

To: Mr. Gregory Peck  
Chief, Wetlands and aquatic Resources Regulatory Branch, Mail Code A-104F  
Environmental protection Agency  
401 M Street, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20460

2) Send a copy of your letter to Senator Seymour. This will underscore your concern over the wetlands issue. It may dissuade him from sponsoring one of the wetlands destruction bills, S. 1463 that is pending in the Senate.

3) Please write to President Bush and tell him to withdraw his wetland program because it will mean tragic losses to this critical habitat. Also, send him a copy of your EPA letter. To: President George Bush, The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W. Washington, D.C. or call 1-202-456-1111 and leave a message.

# SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY (SAS) MEMBERSHIP POLL

BACK A WINNER! SAS, helped stop the destruction of EDGEWOOD PARK. We recently joined in a lawsuit against US EPA on SF BAY DELTA water quality that has gotten them doing their job; and an additional suit is pending against the Water Quality Board on the Delta issue. Our work on MONO LAKE seems about to be really successful. We have long protected PESCADERO MARSH, and are now one of the Plaintiff's in a suit to protect it from logging generated sedimentation.

The local challenge is just beginning. 50% of San Francisco Bay wetlands may be lost. The President who promised no net loss of wetlands has accepted developers' recommendation to "redefine" them; a kind of stealth weapon against waterfowl. The Board has decided that effective action must be taken. *The work will be nearly as ugly as fund raising* - trials, hearings, massive paper work and other misery. It is hard; it is expensive, and it must be done, now. We need a lot more active people, and a lot more active money.

Our Problems: We don't like to raise money or ask people to work for free, and don't really know how. We have to ask, but do not want to offend. SPEAK YOUR PIECE; SPEAK IT NOW! THEN WE GO TO WORK.

(You may want to tell us much more than there is room for. Put your ideas on a sheet of paper and fold it inside this one.)

1. Do you believe SAS should be active in local environmental issues? How active?
2. Do you object to SAS asking you for (a) money <yes/no> or (b) your time <yes/no>? (Circle answer.)
3. What three things do you most *dislike* about the mass of fund requests you have been getting?
4. What type of fund requests did you approve? Got a sample?
5. What type of fund requests did you actually respond to? Got a sample?
6. Do you have experience in management/administration <yes/no>, fund raising <yes/no>, personnel management <yes/no>, or environmental litigation <yes/no>; or know of someone who does?
7. Do you have three friends you would ask to join SAS <yes/no>? Three friends you would physically bring to a meeting or bird walk <yes/no>?

PLEASE FOLD, STAPLE, STAMP AND MAIL BACK TO US. YOUR INPUT  
WILL GO TO ALL BOARD MEMBERS. THANKS, THE BOARD.

Additional comments?

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<fold here first>

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<fold here second>

**RETURN ADDRESS**

stamp

**MARY BRESLER, PRESIDENT  
SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY  
30 W 39th AVE  
SAN MATEO CA 94403**

## BIRDSEED SALE ORDER FORM

|                                                                         |            |   |         |   |           |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|---|---------|---|-----------|
| AUDUBON PREMIUM MIX<br>White Proso Millet, Red Millet & Sunflower Seeds | 20 lb. bag | @ | \$9.50  | x | bags = \$ |
|                                                                         | 50 lb. bag | @ | \$18.00 | x | bags = \$ |
| BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER SEED                                                | 25 lb. bag | @ | \$16.00 | x | bags = \$ |
|                                                                         | 50 lb. bag | @ | \$27.00 | x | bags = \$ |
| NIGER THISTLE SEED                                                      | 5 lb. bag  | @ | \$11.00 | x | bags = \$ |
|                                                                         | 25 lb. bag | @ | \$48.00 | x | bags = \$ |
| WHITE PROSO MILLET                                                      | 25 lb. bag | @ | \$9.00  | x | bags = \$ |
|                                                                         | 50 lb. bag | @ | \$13.50 | x | bags = \$ |

*Sales tax is already included in these prices*

TOTAL PRICE      \$

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ St \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail your order and check to:

**SEQUOIA AUDUBON SEED SALE**  
30 West 39th Ave., #202  
San Mateo, CA 94403

Your order will be confirmed by mail.

Pickup times and locations (incl. maps and directions) will be provided.

Pickup dates are 10/17 through 10/20:

### PICKUP LOCATIONS

San Bruno – Jennis Residence – 3781 Pacific Hgts. Blvd.

San Carlos – Wild Bird Center, 926 El Camino Real

[The Wild Bird Center is offering a 10% discount (except on optics) on all purchases made at the time of your seed pick-up]

San Mateo – SAS Office – Call 593-7368 for times

The dates and times of pickups will be on the SAS answering machine tape and in next month's newsletter.

### 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, 30 W. 39th Ave., #202  
San Mateo, CA 94403. 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/wk.            |
| Video Guide to Birds of North America (Set of 5) | \$5.00/ea tape/ea wk. |



**San Francisco  
Peninsula  
Birdwatching**

## A Costa Rican Odyssey

(Continued from Page One)

On the third day we continued our journey, proceeding east to the Caribbean port of Moin where we boarded a boat for the 84 kilometer ride to Tortoguero. Enroute we saw numerous great egrets, great blue herons, kiskadees and juvenile little blue herons, but missed the hoped-for marine turtles coming ashore to lay their eggs. The captain made the trip exciting when he threaded the shallows of the man-made inland canal system.

After a few hours the captain eased us up to the dock of the Mawamba Lodge, just south of the Nicaraguan border. This would be our home for the next two nights. The first night we went on a boat trip with a powerful spotting light. Our first denizen of the shallows was a huge frog. Later we spotted a few caymans and our best find of the night - a roosting chestnut-bellied heron with its extraordinarily long bill. Daylight cruises through these same channels revealed anhingas, bare-throated tiger-herons, grey-necked wood-rails, kingfishers, a variety of hawks and many fresh water turtles.

On the third day we returned to Moin. After lunch we took the bus to Selva Verde. Despite three drivers, the bus managed to take the wrong road and we ended up on a rutted gravel road that added an extra hour to the trip and dealt out lots of dusty and rough punishment to the passengers and bus.

We arrived well after dark and after dinner and a hot shower we were lulled to sleep by a myriad of cicadas and the lonesome call of a parakeet. Morning comes early in the tropics, first in the vocal cords of countless roosters, then those of barking dogs and finally, just before dawn, by the chorus of birds discussing their plans for the day. All of this was punctuated by large trucks passing by just a few feet from the lodge. Breakfast, like the other meals, was served buffet style. The manager said that the cooks smiled when folks came back for seconds. They smiled a lot. During mealtimes we chatted with our fellow guests, a group of Elderhostellers most of them from Canada.

Most of our brief time here was spent looking for interesting creatures along the trails on the lodge grounds. Beautiful flowers lined the paths and surrounded the living units. Bats, river otters, ospreys and dozens of species of smaller birds abounded throughout the area.

After departing Selva Verde we headed west to Poas Volcano and then northwest to Monteverde. This trip was the beginning of a relationship with Santiago Morales. This wonderful bus driver knew very little English, but did know the English names for the birds - which helped considerably. Some of us knew enough Spanish to communicate and to yell for him to stop so that we could look at a new species of bird. After the third or fourth stop to look at a turquoise-browed mot-mot, however, he turned and blurted out, "No more mot-mots!" He intimidated no one and amused everyone, setting the tone for a highly entertaining two hour drive to Monteverde.

At Monteverde we found it difficult to realize that our trip was already half over.

(Continued next month)

## Major New Problem for Environmentalists

(Continued from Page Three)

**With this membership and its directive, is it any surprise the "recommendations or suggestions" from the Council on Competitiveness usually adversely affect the environment and benefit business interests?**

The Council on Competitiveness' clout has been seen too often in the recent past where the COC, either working by itself or with other agencies, has been successful in:

- A. Blocking an EPA proposal to require recycling at municipal incinerators.
- B. Putting off an EPA plan that would have discouraged the incineration of lead batteries, a source of toxic pollution.
- C. Exempt old power plants from updating their equipment to the full extent required by the Clean Water Act.

This very powerful secretive Council on Competitiveness currently has on its agenda proposals that will **open wetlands for commercial development!!!** We can only guess what else they will do or try to accomplish in the name of competitiveness and at the expense of the environment in the future.

We, as environmental groups and individual activists in the environmental community, must quickly learn how to combat this major new threat to our environmental laws into which only a selected few have input.

If we aren't successful in this quest, this devastating administrative review process will severely weaken, if not totally cripple the laws we now have in place to insure our environment is preserved for generations to come.

Write to your Congressman and Senators protesting the actions of the COC or write directly to Dan Quayle, Chairman of the Council of Competitiveness, Office of the Vice-President, Washington, DC to protest their anti-environmental bias and the damaging effects of their decisions.

**The SAS Board has approved the article on Page Seven, endorses our affiliation with National, and also urges members to maintain their commitment to Audubon programs whether it be birding, research, education or conservation.**

"California has more lawyers than the United Kingdom and Germany combined." --- Associated Press (1990)

"It is a maxim among lawyers that whatever has been done before may legally be done again; and therefore they take special care to record all the decisions formerly made against common justice and the reason of mankind. These, under the name of *precedents* they produce as authorities to justify the most iniquitous opinions; and the judges never fail of directing accordingly." --- Jonathan Swift (1726)

# Synergy with National Audubon

—Rick Johnson

Last month Francis Toldi raised the question of whether Sequoia Audubon should be affiliated with National Audubon (NAS). His sense was that the strength of Audubon is in the local chapters and he was concerned that National is moving away from birds as a focus. It is worthwhile to consider why National Audubon remains important to us in San Mateo County. The strength of Audubon comes from the combination of national, regional, local and international efforts, and there are important benefits from being part of the National Audubon Society.

Through its history Audubon has had a rich diversity of programs for research, education, sanctuaries, birding, tours, and conservation. Audubon has always had a fierce commitment to protecting natural resources. A good example is Mono Lake where NAS played a critical role in protecting the lake (so far), and in establishing the principle of water rights for wildlife purposes.

What may have changed on the conservation side is a growing recognition of the importance of biodiversity. Functioning ecosystems consist of an intricate web of organisms, and the conservation goal is to protect the whole. Several of the key NAS campaigns are:

**Protection of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge from oil development. The refuge is important for birds and a complex ecosystem that is sometimes described as America's Serengeti.**

**Protection of ancient forests in the western United States. National Audubon and local chapters have mapped the remaining patches of forest which provided compelling evidence of the need for action -- quickly. Currently, there are important bills in congress to protect these forests (Rep. Jontz' bill - HR 842 - should be supported in the House, and our senators should also be encouraged to support ancient forest legislation introduced by Sen. Brock Adams of Oregon).**

**NAS has also shown leadership in identifying the economic assistance needed to accompany the conservation legislation.**

**Beginning the campaign to retain and enhance the Endangered Species Act next year. Audubon will be fighting attempts to water it down and will be seeking stronger provisions to protect habitats and biodiversity. The Endangered Species Act has been very important for birds and birding.**

By seeking to protect habitats and ecosystems, NAS is doing the right thing for birds. We at a local level gain strength from the programs and resources of National. For example, the proposed timber harvests in San Mateo County would increase sedimentation into Pescadero Marsh and threaten a potential site for Marbled Murrelets. SAS has joined in a suit with the Sierra Club to address the environmental issues in the Butano Unit. We are in a better position to fight that battle because of the work of NAS. NAS petitioned to have the Marbled Murrelet listed as a threatened species because it is dependent on old growth forest along the coast. Also, NAS has been helpful in promoting better forestry practices in California.

NAS has consistently worked to protect wetlands ecosystems. Currently, there is a campaign to pass H.R 1306, Rep. Miller's California Fish and Wildlife Protection Act, and S. 484, Sen. Bradley's Central Valley Project

Improvement Act. These bills will reallocate water from agriculture to wildlife refuges in California. The Central Valley has lost 95% of its wetlands to agriculture which receives subsidized water and in the case of rice, price supports as well. Audubon also opposes HR 1330, Rep. Hayes' bill which will gut federal wetlands protection. (Note: please send letters to Congress supporting HR 1306 and S 484, and opposing HR 1330). Wetlands protection in California is of critical importance on the Pacific flyway, and these wetlands are under attack.

Underlying the conservation crisis for birds and their habitats is the ongoing growth in world population. NAS has a strong population message. Quoting from a recent issue of Audubon Activist: "Overpopulation and its handmaiden overconsumption of the Earth's resources are causing rapid worldwide deforestation, soil erosion, groundwater depletion, loss of species, and a host of other environmental ills."

"Family planning must be made available to all developing countries to help them achieve population stability and sustainable growth."

"No biological system can support excessive growth rates indefinitely. The future for developed and developing countries alike is intertwined with population, environment, and development."

The local dimension of population control can be seen in the need for growth control, pollution reduction, and prevention of deforestation. The international programs benefit both North American migrants that winter in rain forest as well as the resident species in the tropics that Audubon members enjoy observing on trips.

NAS contributes in many other ways in education, research, and sanctuaries. Just to cite one example close to home, the Department of Fish and Game selected Audubon to develop a school program to assist schools in "adopting" an endangered species in their area, and to create study and conservation programs. Audubon was selected because of the excellent work of the NAS staff at the Richardson Bay Center.

The strength of the national organization is in the quality of the people. Audubon positions on issues are researched and thoughtful, and consequently get a good hearing. If possible SAS members should make an effort to attend an Audubon conference to meet NAS staff and Audubon members from other chapters. Next spring there will be a Western regional meeting at Asilomar; this is a great event and opportunity to discuss Audubon programs and priorities.

To conclude, we will reprint some comments from Grant Hoyt, President of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society. Grant is an active birder, and he recently attended the National Audubon conference in Colorado. Grant went to the conference concerned that NAS may have shifted away from birding. Grant reports the "ongoing fascination with birds is what bonds Audubon members together as we enter the modern era of environmental awareness, and it becomes nearly impossible to separate birding as a recreational pastime from the stark realities of habitat destruction and species endangerment. I was so impressed with the competence, commitment and positive energy of the Audubon people I spoke with and listened to that I realized it would be a mistake to sever my affiliation with National Audubon, and I would urge SCVAS members to likewise maintain their support for NAS."

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