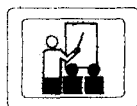




Bulletin of the Sequoia Audubon Society
San Mateo County Volume 41, No. 3
November, 1992



This Month's Program

El Nino: The Phenomenon And Its Result

Dr. James C. Kelley, Dean of the School of Science of San Francisco State University, will bring us the latest data on this natural phenomenon that has been blamed for everything from the California drought to the Somalian famines. Recurring periodically and beginning near Ecuador's uninhabited equatorial islands *El Nino* has global effect on our environment, our climate and our economy.

Dr. Kelley is an oceanographer interested in coastal ocean processes, particularly coastal upwelling. He is President of the California Academy of Sciences and Chairman of the Board of the Moss Landing Marine Laboratories. An authority on off-shore oil and gas development and their environmental impact, he is a member of the Outer Continental Shelf Advisory Board to the Secretary of the Interior. With 25 years of sea-going experience behind him, he has been chief scientist on a number of major oceanographic cruises.

Next Month's Program

Rescue, Rehabilitation And Release

Peninsula Humane Society.

Details in next month's *NEEDLES*



San Francisco Bay Wildlife Society Presents

AVOCET FESTIVAL '92

featuring
12th Annual Wildlife and Nature
Arts and Crafts Sale

Saturday and Sunday, November 7 & 8
9:00am to 5:00pm

San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge
One Menloville Road, Fremont
(Exit Thornton Ave., off Highway 84, east end of Dumbarton
Bridges. Follow Thornton south one mile to Refuge entrance.)

Pottery + Paintings + Photography + T-Shirts
Wood Sculpture + Jewelry + Raffle + Food
Environmental Fair + Wildlife Programs
and More!

*Early Browsers 1992's winners programmed at the Refuge by doing your
Christmas shopping early! At the same time, enjoy some of the
free educational activities that are part of Avocet Festival '92!*

Co-sponsored by:
Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society
Oakland Audubon Society
Tid-City Recycling Center
Citizens Committee to Clean up the Refuge

Phone (510) 790-4775 for information.



From The President

Anne Moser

BOARD MEETINGS: Our board meets monthly, at 7:30 the first Thursday of each month at our office at 30 West 39th Avenue in San Mateo. You are always welcome.

It's amazing how many items are on our agenda. Last month we had thirteen items under new business- ranging from a letter advising us that the September 1993 National Audubon Board Meeting would be in San Francisco and asking us to invite the National officers to visit a chapter meeting; to a fund-raising offer from *Birdwatchers Digest*. In addition to this we have the treasurer's report and the reports from our standing committees. And there are always old business items to be finalized or advanced.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY: The chapter still needs Committee Chairpersons for Publicity, Programs and Fundraising. Please volunteer. We need you!

THE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE has developed a letter to be sent to each new member. Another letter is ready to be sent to transfers from other chapters. we want to make people welcome and to be a "member-friendly" organization. You can help by bringing a friend to the meetings and encouraging them to join us.

BIRDATHON: We raised a total of \$2965.89 through the Birdathon last spring. Thank you to all of the sponsors, who will be listed in next month's *NEEDLES*.

BINOCULARS FOR CONSERVATION: Do you have an old, but usable, set of binoculars at home? The Manomet Bird Observatory in Plymouth, Massachusetts is collecting them for donation to South American conservation and research groups. For more information call our office (345-3724).

PARTING THOUGHTS: "Without birds where would we have learned that there can be song in the heart?" ---Hal Borland

Good birding to you.

ADDRESSOGRAPH MACHINE FOR SALE

In case you haven't noticed we have switched over to the use of computer-generated mailing labels for the *NEEDLES*. This leaves us with a perfectly serviceable Scriptomatic machine for which we no longer have a use. Make us an offer we can't refuse.



The S A S Calendar

November

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 4

SAS BOARD MEETING

7:30 PM at the SAS office. **ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME.** Please call ahead to be sure there will be enough room.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7

BEGINNER'S FIELD TRIP - FOSTER CITY SHORELINE

We'll review some of the shorebirds and waterfowl from our Mountainview trip and take a look at some of the open water birds on the bay as well as the shorebirds of the rocky shores and mudflats. The two hour field trip will be followed by an open-ended discussion period. 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 FRANCIS TOLDI 433-0660

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 7 & 8

AVOCET FESTIVAL '92

SAS will be participating in this two day wildlife and nature, arts and crafts, show at the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Visitors Center in Fremont. 9 AM to 5 PM daily.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 11

SAS GENERAL MEETING

EL NINO: THE PHENOMENON AND ITS RESULTS presented by Dr. James C. Kelley, Dean of the School of Science of San Francisco State University. At the San Mateo Garden Center on the Alameda at Parkside. Socialization and refreshments at 7:30 PM. Meeting begins at 8:00.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17

MID-WEEK FIELD TRIP TO REDWOOD SHORES

Despite intensive development, this area still affords some marvelous birding opportunities. To get there take Hwy. 101 to the Redwood Shores Parkway exits. Follow Redwood Shores Parkway to the Radio Broadcasting Station at its end. We will meet by the side of the road in front of the radio station at 9:00 A.M. **(Note that these directions are different from those given last month. These are correct. Sorry.)**

LEADER NICK COIRO 349-1834

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6

FIELD TRIPS TO PRINCETON HARBOR

The only sheltered harbor between Santa Cruz and San Francisco, Princeton Harbor is winter home to a good variety of bay ducks, loons, cormorants and other divers as well as gulls and shorebirds. Oldsquaws, glaucous gulls and the rock sandpiper are regular winter visitors and the area almost always has one or two surprises. We'll also investigate some of the local areas that have produced some winter surprises in recent years. Because of the richness of the area we'll do this in two field trips, following this one with another on December 6. To get

(Continued on Page Three)



News From Your Ranch

Dan Murphy

Annual Appeal: This is the month we at Audubon Canyon Ranch make our annual appeal for your financial support. As you are no doubt well aware, the economy is a mess. The uncertainty of employment seems to cast a spell. Low interest rates and the stagnant economy have the potential for devastating non-profit corporations like ACR. However, let me assure you that ACR remains on a very solid financial footing even though our revenues are down and our expenses continue to increase.

Like your Audubon chapter, ACR depends on your financial support. ACR was created by dedicated Audubon members from around the Bay Area. Although it was established as an independent non-profit corporation it retains very close links with its sponsoring chapters. Many of us continue to view the Ranch as our chapter's sanctuary.

ACR gets no government support. **Neither does it receive funding from the National Audubon Society.** Our funding comes from you, from investments we have made and from grants we receive from foundations. But the bottom line is *you*. Your donations to ACR make our sanctuary one of the most successful non-profit corporations of its kind. Think what ACR accomplishes through the generosity of our friends. It protects about 2000 acres of critical plant and wildlife habitat in Marin and Sonoma counties. It employs three professional biologists dedicated to research and training volunteers. As a result of their efforts we host fall and spring education programs which have reached thousands of Bay Area school children. Our volunteers are not only docents or weekend guides, but include hundreds of others who count birds, plant grasses, fix fences, file books and work very hard as board members or advisors. Can you imagine a board with 40 members and 30 additional advisors which actually functions? Read any book about group dynamics: it just shouldn't work. But it does function effectively and efficiently at ACR. Our staff, our many volunteers and our board are dedicated to the goal of making ACR the finest organization of its kind. I think we have succeeded. If you know Audubon Canyon Ranch you most probably agree that it is an organization worthy of your support.

With so many non-profit and charity organizations facing this economy, I know you are faced with a difficult decision about where your donations will be directed. If you wish to direct your donation to an organization which effectively preserves the environment, educates and motivates children to achieve an environmental awareness, involves the public in the quest for a deeper understanding of the world around us, do send your tax-deductible to Audubon Canyon Ranch. Make your check payable to Audubon Canyon Ranch and mail it to us at 4900 Highway One, Stinson Beach, CA 94970.

(Continued on Page Three)



News From Your Ranch

(Continued From Page Two)

DUNN PROPERTY FUNDS APPROVED. It was a close one, but funding for acquisition of the Dunn property was finally approved by both the Senate and the House. This is the property between the town of Marshall and the Cypress Grove Preserve. Its pending sale threatened our vision of preserving the east shore of Tomales Bay. Though \$2.1 million had been appropriated for a portion of the property last year, the remaining two million was not included in this year's budget. However thanks to the last minute efforts of many letter writers, of ACR Executive Director Skip Schwartz and to all of our local congressional delegation the necessary money was appropriated. If you are so inclined, do drop a thank-you note to each of our Senators and local Congressional Representatives.

FALL SEMINARS: (Please register in advance for all seminars and workdays by calling 868-9244.)

Saturday, November 7 - FALL WORK DAY at Bolinas Lagoon Preserve with the ACR family. Not only is this one FREE, but we'll provide a FREE LUNCH if you'll help us get ready for winter.

Saturday, November 14 - MONARCHS at Bolinas Lagoon with Ray Peterson (\$25). Monarchs are the royal family of butterflies and they are holding court at Bolinas. This is your invitation to an audience with these majestic insects.

RANCH GUIDE TRAINING. Plan your spring calendar to include a new commitment to the Ranch - become a ranch guide. Learn to help us interpret the heronry, the ponds and the lagoon for weekend visitors. Our training sessions will begin on February 6 and continue through March 13. The first session will be an orientation session followed by interviews. Call 868-9244 for further details.

Dan Murphy Teaching Bird Class

Dan Murphy, our regular ACR columnist, founder of the San Francisco Bird Blitz, SF Christmas Count Coordinator and all-around good guy, will teach three class sessions and lead two field trips on the **Winter Birds of San Francisco**.

The course is designed to help you identify the birds and discover their habitats. Lectures will be held at the California Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park on Tuesdays from 7:00 to 9:00 PM on November 10, 17, and 24. Field trips will be on Saturday mornings, November 14 and 21. Registration is \$65 for Academy and Audubon members. To register, send a note indicating "City Birds", your name, address and phone number along with your check and a self-addressed stamped envelope to Adult Education, California Academy of Sciences, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, CA 94118.

Sequoia Audubon Society



The S A S Calendar

(Continued From Page Two)

there take Hwy. 92 to Hwy. 1 and follow Hwy. 1 north to Capistrano Road. Take Capistrano Road to the Princeton Inn and turn right, continuing until you come to Vassar Street. We'll assemble at 9:00 AM at the end of Vassar Street where it meets the beach.

LEADER

DAN KELLER

365-2032

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2

GOLDEN GATE PARK - CHAIN OF LAKES Join us for this mid-week field trip. Enjoy an easy morning's walk with good birding. Blue-winged teal, wood ducks, Eurasian wigeons, red crossbills and a number of rare warblers have been seen near these lakes in recent years and almost anything might be found in the area. To get there take Sunset Blvd. north from Lake Marced (or any other convenient juncture) and follow it right into the park. Once in the park, take a left on South Drive and your second right on East Drive. We will meet in the parking lot on the right just before Middle Lake and across from the Equestrian Center at 9:00 AM. The trip should break up at noon.

LEADERS

NICK COIRO

(349-1834)

LINDA KYPTA

(591-9053)

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3

SAS BOARD MEETING

7:30 PM at the SAS office. **ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME.** Please call ahead to be sure there will be enough room.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10

SAS GENERAL MEETING

RESCUE REHABILITATION AND RELEASE by the Peninsula Humane Society

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12

FOSTER CITY FIELD TRIP

Wintering ducks and shorebirds will be our main interests along the bays and lagoons of Foster City as we look for the fieldmarks that separate Barrow's from Common Goldeneye and greater from lesser scaup. Learn how to identify the red knot (who is really gray) and pick the knot out of the flocks of dowitchers, plovers, willets and dunlins. Meet in the parking lot at the Recreation Center on Shell Blvd. at 9:00 A.M. rain or shine. The trip should end at noon.

LEADER

NICK COIRO

349-1834

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15

HAYWARD SHORELINE FIELD TRIP

A midweek field trip to an area that has been relatively unexplored by SAS birders will begin at 9:00 AM in the parking lot of the interpretive center just across the San Mateo Bridge. To get there take Hwy. 92 across the bridge to the first exit. After exiting, take a left and look for the signs to the interpretive center.

LEADER :

AL DE MARTINI

SATURDAYS, DECEMBER 19 & 26

THE CHRISTMAS COUNTS

Page Three

Is It Really Jobs Versus The Environment?

From The Conservation Committee

"The annual economic toll of air pollution in Southern California alone is estimated to be \$12 billion. In addition, toxic chemicals cost the state \$4 billion annually. The other side of the coin reveals that pollution control industries boost the economy, directly and indirectly generating three million jobs nationwide as well as \$100 billion in expenditures to the economy. A large share of that industry is based in this state."

--- Tracy Gibbs reporting in the *Conservation Voter*

"If economic conversion in this country were to include investment in alternative energy and conservation five billion federal dollars could generate 350,000 jobs through such labor-intensive conservation measures as residential weatherization. This compares to only 50,000 to 100,000 jobs from military spending, and far fewer through capital investment in gas or oil.

--- *Energy for Employment*, Greenpeace, 1992

Firing Back

Letter Writing - The Next Step

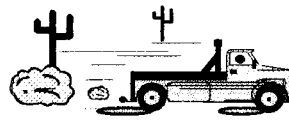
Often when you write to a corporation protesting its environmental policies or to a politician urging a specific course of action, you will receive an obfuscatory or non-committal reply.

Don't just fume and throw their letters away. Fire back! Even when you receive a highly technical and well-reasoned letter (from their point of view) you don't have to respond in kind. Our technical arguments won't influence a corporate or political decision. The volume and persistence of our responses will. Politicians count votes. Corporations want business. It may be gratifying or fulfilling to respond in a highly technical or emotional manner, but don't lose sight of the objective. Be sure to state your position clearly and succinctly right at the beginning. After that you can be as scientific or righteous as you desire.

Politicians are especially good about acknowledging your letter without committing themselves to anything. When you receive the standard response, "Thanks for your interest on this issue which is also of importance to us.", don't accept it. Be blunt! Tell them, "Your first letter told me nothing about your position on XX. Will you support (or sponsor) XX? If not, why not?"

When you get a letter that agrees with your viewpoint, be sure to respond and show your thanks. And if you should get that rarest of political responses - one that says they disagree with you - thank them for their honesty, but reiterate your position.

By the way, the same rules apply when you write to National Audubon or any other group. They're all bureaucracies and, in many cases, their leaders are ex-politicians like Peter Berle or George Ellman. Persistence pays. For example, the blue banner is dead and the egret flies again.



Revised Statute 2437

"The right of way for the construction of highways over public land, not reserved for public uses, is hereby granted."

This innocuous seeming law, passed in 1866, and repealed in 1976, is now being used by "wise use" advocates and local governments to oppose wilderness designation in many areas - most notably in Alaska and Utah.

Although it was repealed, rights established prior to 1976 were left intact. That means that if a county or state can show that some form of construction had taken place on the road, then that area can be disqualified from wilderness designation.

County officials in Utah and state officials in Alaska are preparing hundreds, perhaps thousands, of right-of-way assertions. The stated motives are laudable. "We're opening the beauty of Alaska to the common people," says Lieutenant Governor Jack Coghill.

Many conservationists are reading "common people" to mean logging, mining and off-road vehicles.

T N C & Irvine Co. Agree To Preserve Gnatcatcher Habitat

In August The Nature Conservancy entered into an agreement with one of Southern California's largest developers to manage 17,000 acres of coastal sage scrub habitat - home of the endangered California gnatcatcher. This is the largest privately owned patch remaining of this once common habitat.

The new preserve adjoins other public open space. The Irvine Company is funding the entire project as a trade-off for residential and commercial development on nearby, less environmentally sensitive property. Eventually the new preserve will pass into public hands in accordance with various development agreements.

The TNC's management plan is the work product of ecological experts from a number of disciplines. In all cases habitat preservation has been given first priority while satisfying community desires for continued access.

"It's unusual for the Nature Conservancy to manage private property," commented Steve McCormick, the Conservancy's Executive Director, "but...this alliance of two relatively uncommon partners to preserve a significant part of California's landscape will, we hope, serve as a model for other landowners and developers."

Counted Any Good Birds Lately?

Freeport, Texas is perennially number one or number two in the nation in terms of numbers of species counted in the annual Christmas Bird Count. This has become almost a self-fulfilling event. The Freeport count attracts birders because it is number one and it continues to be number one because it attracts so many birders. For example, on the 1989 count there were 159 observers, not only from Texas but from distant points such as Arizona and Washington, DC. That year they tallied 170.524 birds of 226 species - the most species ever turned up on a North American Christmas Count.

Normally one or both of Sequoia's Christmas Counts makes it to the top ten in the nation - but we have the dubious distinction of traditionally having the fewest or nearly the fewest observers of

any of the top ten. For example, in 1989 - not a good year for us - our counts were twelfth and fifteenth in the nation. Of the top fifteen counts, six had more than 100 observers and the average number of observers was 80. We had 34 on each count.

While you may not be a demon observer who turns up six or seven rarities, you might be the one who spots "that funny looking blackbird" or marks down the common bird that - as often happens - mysteriously disappears from the circle on count day. And even if you don't turn up the bird of the day, your participation will certainly increase the statistical validity of the count and make the database that much more meaningful to scientific analysts, now and in the future.

So, sign up now for one or both of our Christmas Counts. We need you - regardless of skill levels or previous experience. You can contribute to both a friendly competition and the world's oldest ongoing environmental database.

ITEMS FOR SALE OR RENT

- BIRDER'S HANDBOOK** - Ehrlich, Dobkin and Wheye
- BIRDING AT THE BOTTOM OF THE BAY** - SCVAS
- BIRDING NORTHERN CALIFORNIA** - Jean Richmond
- ENJOYING HUMMINGBIRDS MORE** - Various
- MONO LAKE GUIDEBOOK** - David Gaines
- NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC FIELD GUIDE**
- SPECIES IN DANGER IN OUR BACKYARD** - Jamison
- PACIFIC COAST CHECKLISTS** - Pads of 25
- SAN MATEO COUNTY CHECKLISTS**
- ECO-SAFE STRING BAGS**
- "I'd Rather Be Birding" BUMPER STICKER**
- SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY PATCH**
- VIDEOS FOR RENT:**
 - **TECHNIQUES OF BIRDING** - Arnold Small
 - **VIDEO GUIDE TO BIRDS OF N.A.** - 5 Tapes

Items Sold at SAS Office or at Meetings

17.50
10.75
10.50
3.50
6.00
20.00
5.00
3.00
.50
4.00
1.50
2.50

\$2.00 per week
\$5 per tape/per wk.

Items Mailed to Customers

20.00
13.00
13.00
4.50
8.50
22.50
6.00
3.50
.75
5.00
2.00
2.75

Please call to make
arrangements for rental of
video tapes by mail.

ALL PRICES INCLUDE SALES TAX

Please make all checks payable to:
Sequoia Audubon Society
30 West 39th Avenue, Suite 202
San Mateo, CA 94403-5671

The Chase Is On!

The Eighth Annual San Mateo County Wild Goose Chase!

The Annual Wild Goose Chase is on again!

The Wild Goose Chase is Sequoia's number one fundraiser for the year. Barry Sauppe will lead a team of crack (?) Sequoia Audubon Society Birders, Dan Keller, Linda Kypka, Cliff Richer, through all the county's prime birding spots trying to identify as many species as possible. The county is "hot" this year and weather permitting we have an excellent chance of breaking last year's record of 169 species.

We are asking you to support the effort with a pledge of just a few pennies for each species they identify.

You can show your commitment to SAS and your confidence in the team's goal of 169+ species by "pre-paying" your pledge for 170 (or 100) species. Make all checks payable to Sequoia Audubon Society and mail them to: 30 West 39th Avenue, Suite 202 San Mateo, CA 94403

ALL HONORED PLEDGES ARE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE.

My Wild Goose Pledge

YES, I will support Sequoia Audubon Society and its conservation efforts with a pledge of _____ cents per species.

YES, I will pre-pay my pledge based on an estimate of at least 100 or 170 species being identified.

My check for \$_____ is enclosed.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE _____

JOIN THE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

CRYSTAL SPRINGS BIRD COUNT
12/19/92

Once again, Dan Keller will compile both counts and with two years' experience behind him will be shooting for new records, so we need even more help than usual. In order to do our best we need a lot of people. We need all the eyes and ears we can get to find birds, keep records in the field, and count birds. Christmas Counts mean dawn-to-dusk birding, and maybe even some owling. But even if you can only devote a few hours at a feeder or in a local park, we need your help. We need people who will walk city residential areas, school grounds, golf courses, parks and cemeteries within both count circles and report the population of each species they find. We need to perform good counts to evaluate the birds in our 15-mile diameter circles and compare results with other years.

PLEASE TEAR OUT OR COPY THIS FORM AND SEND IT IN TO THE AUDUBON OFFICE SO THAT WE CAN ASSIGN THE AREAS.

PLEASE ENCLOSE A CHECK FOR \$10.00 PER PERSON WHICH WILL BE USED BY AMERICAN BIRDS TO REPORT OUR COUNT AND TO HELP COVER CHAPTER COSTS.

Sequoia Audubon Christmas Counts,
30 West 39th Avenue, Suite 202
San Mateo, CA 94403

AÑO NUEVO BIRD COUNT
12/26/92

I will participate in the...

☐ CRYSTAL SPRINGS CBC on 12/19/92

☐ AÑO NUEVO CBC on 12/26/92.

☐ I am an experienced birder and am willing to serve as an area leader.

For Crystal Springs, I would like counting this area:

First Choice: _____

Second Choice: _____

Third Choice: _____

For Año Nuevo, I would like counting this area:

First Choice: _____

Second Choice: _____

Third Choice: _____

I will count any area assigned. Yes _____ No _____

I will monitor and report my feeder on 12/19 _____ 12/26 _____

I will be at the compilation on 12/19 _____ 12/26 _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip Code _____ Telephone Number _____

PLEASE, WE NEED YOUR REPLY BY DEC. 5

Sequoia Audubon Society

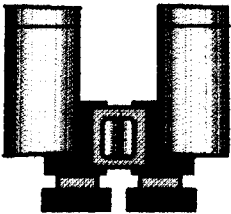
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Thinking Binoculars

New Technology Makes High Powers Usable

Carl Zeiss Optics has recently introduced a 20x60 hand-held binocular to the US market. The glasses have been available in Europe since early 1991 and the early reports are highly favorable.

Prior to the introduction of this high-tech instrument, few birders had been able to manage anything larger than 10 power optics without a tripod or other external bracing. Zeiss now claims that a touch on their stabilizing button will eliminate normal human-generated movement and make it possible to focus and get good detail at 20 power magnification. Test subjects reported that with the stabilizing button depressed, the movement in the



20x binoculars was equivalent to that normally experienced in 8 power instruments.

Field of view (50 yards at 1000 yards) and close focus (15.4 feet) are considered remarkable in a binocular of this power. The size (11" long and 6.3" wide) and the weight of 3.5 pounds are somewhat off-putting, but reports are that the balance and "feel" of the instrument are excellent.

Is there anything that will keep this from being under your Christmas tree this year? Well, maybe one thing. The suggested retail price is \$4725.

U S Completes 'Alala Study

The US Fish and Wildlife Service has completed a study on the near-extinct Hawaiian crow - the 'Alala. Its findings are to be announced later this year. The study is being done under an agreement between the National Audubon Society, the USFWS and management of the McCandless Ranch on the big island of Hawaii.

For years the McCandless Ranch resisted the efforts of federal, state and private scientists to study the last remaining flock of 'alala which rarely ventures beyond the ranch boundaries. The study is in settlement of a suit brought by the National and Hawaiian Audubon Societies against the ranch, the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the US Dept. of the Interior alleging that the ranch was illegally blocking access to an endangered species and that the federal government had failed to properly exercise its powers to protect the 'alala.

Ornithologists did not even know how many birds were left in the wild. There are said to be 10 or 12 of the Hawaiian crows left in the McCandless flock. Besides those in the wild, there are 11 Hawaiian crows in a captive breeding program on the island of Maui - but they have so far failed to reproduce.

Sequoia Audubon Society

A New "Life Histories"?

The Birds Of North America

In 1910, Arthur Cleveland Bent began work on his monumental *Life Histories of North American Birds*. In 1968 the twenty volume project was finally completed by Wendall Taber and Oliver L. Austin, Jr.

For many species - including some of those profiled in the earliest volumes - Bent's remains the only summary of available information.

After five years of preparation the American Ornithological Union (AOU) is launching a new series of life histories under the title *The Birds of North America*. The first few profiles have been completed and were on view at the American Birding Association Convention in May.

Frank Gill, Curator and Chairman of Ornithology at the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia is Executive Director of the project. His credentials are impressive. Twice a Vice-President of the AOU, a five-year chair of the AOU Checklist Committee, Director of the Pennsylvania Breeding Bird Atlas Program, he is the author of *Ornithology*, the most widely used college text in the field, founder of Visual Resources for Ornithology (VIREO) and an ardent birder.

The actual profiles are being written by some of today's best known avian biologists and reviewed by an advisory committee of professional ornithologists and knowledgeable birders. The entire series of 700 species profiles will take 10 years to complete and take up more than 14000 pages in 18 volumes. The project is supported by the US Fish and Wildlife Service, several foundations and private contributions, but completion can only be assured by signing up 300 charter subscribers.

You can become a charter subscriber for a one-time cost of \$1875 or three annual payments of \$700. This price includes all future price increases and the costs of shipping and handling. Regular subscribers will be billed for \$175 for each volume shipped. Shipping and handling is included, but the price can be subject to increase in subsequent years.

You can subscribe now by calling 1-800-345-8112. Visa and Mastercharge are accepted and the call is toll-free.

Species Re-Discovered

The Santo mountain starling (*Aplonis santovestris*) whose entire scientific history consisted of two sightings in 57 years was re-discovered and photographed for the first time in the summer of 1991.

Limited to altitudes of 4200 feet or higher on Espiritu Santo Island in the South Pacific nation of Vanuatu it has few competitors or predators, and may be the least numerous, non-endangered species in the world.

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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 or for the advancement of the objectives of Sequoia Audubon Society at the discretion of the Board of Directors. All gifts are tax-deductible. Please send your gift in the form of a check to the Sequoia Audubon Society, Inc. All gifts, donations and bequests will be acknowledged in Sequoia Needles and personally on behalf of Sequoia Audubon Society.

The McElhany family in memory of Dorothy Herrington
Magna P. Jensen, Kitty Mayers & Gail Johnson in memory of Lucille Colligan

Susan Bernhard

Elsie L. Hart

Ms. P. J. Magik

Syd and Ann Lambertson

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: 30 WEST 39TH AVE., SUITE 202, SAN MATEO, CALIFORNIA 94403-4561

SUBSCRIPTION TO NEEDLES SEPARATELY IS \$10.00 PER YEAR.

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