

Sequoia needles

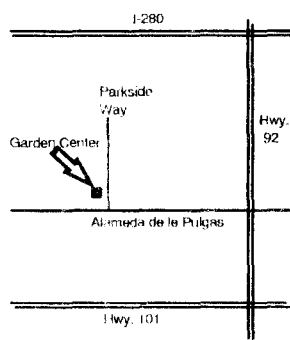
Bulletin of the Sequoia Audubon Society
San Mateo County Volume 41, No. 7
April, 1993



This Month's Program

The Endangered Clapper Rail - An Update

Elaine Harding Smith, a biologist with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, will bring us up to date on the status of, and the continuing dangers to, the endangered California clapper rail. Elaine has a Master of Arts degree in biology from San Jose State and has worked for California State Parks and as an environmental consultant. Expect to hear about such vital issues as habitat preservation, predator control and monitoring techniques used to guarantee preservation of this unique



San Francisco Bay species. The program follows the General Meeting. Meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month at the San Mateo Garden Center on the Alameda at Parkside. Refreshments are served at 7:30 PM with the meeting following at 8:00.

May's Program

Next month's program - designed for younger, aspiring birders will start promptly at 7:30 and will feature a short slide presentation on our local (and commonly seen) birds of our backyards and Bay.



Refreshments will be ready at 7:00 and a short general meeting will follow the program. The presentation of our Environmental Award and the Nominating Committee's slate of officers will

wind up the meeting at about 8:30.

The Nominating Committee

The Board has approved the formation of the 1993 Nominating Committee. Anne Moser is chairwoman and will be assisted by Louise Fletcher and Nancy Richer. Anyone who wishes to suggest a candidate for any office or for the Board of Directors should contact Anne (324-1718), Louise or Nancy. Nominations may also be made from the floor at the Annual General Meeting in June provided that the nominee has given his or her permission.



From Your President

Anne Moser

A new project deserving of our consideration came to our attention recently. The **Papageno Project** offers bird feeders and bird seed to people confined to their homes. **Ms. Muriel Leff** (221-9988) is the organizer and Golden Gate Audubon is the sponsor. Ms. Leff is looking for volunteers to set up the feeders and keep in contact with the home-bound feeder watcher, resupplying the feeder if necessary. Write Ms. Leff, Apt. #925, 240 Lombard Street, San Francisco, CA 94111-1113. Opera lovers will recognize that the project is named after the character who loved birds in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*.

Last month's meeting featuring **Jim Lomax's** extensive series of slides on the birds of Arizona and Texas - all in the currently recognized taxonomic order - was our best turnout of the year. Unfortunately that says more about our usual attendance than it does for March's. Out of a **NEEDLES** mailing of nearly 2500 we have been averaging about 25 at our monthly meetings. Obviously we need to expand our *active* membership. This month's meeting is one that should be of interest to every bird-lover and environmentalist in the county. Make a note now to come to the meeting and bring a friend. You'll find it both entertaining and educational.

A special thanks goes out from me and from the Board to **Harriet Judge** for agreeing to serve as our Publicity Chair for the remainder of this year and to **Louise Fletcher** and **Nancy Richer** for agreeing to serve on this year's Nominating Committee.

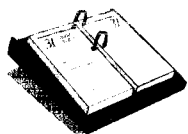
All birding and environmental organizations are aware of the need to encourage participation by younger people. By and large we are a graying group. Towards this end our chapter is having an early meeting on May 13 featuring slides of local and common birds. We'll follow this up with an individualized field trip on Sunday, May 23. Think ahead and invite a grandchild, your child, a neighbor's child or even a whole scout troop to come with you. (*The first conservationist and birder I ever met was my own scoutmaster nearly 50 years ago. ---The Editor*)

Isn't this warm weather glorious? Good birding to you as the migrants start coming through.

"The bluebird carries the sky on his back." ---Thoreau

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See Page Five for full details on our  
**Spring Birdseed Sale**  
featuring "hulless" sunflower seeds!  
(They don't leave a mess for you to sweep up.)



# The S A S Calendar

April

**THURSDAY, APRIL 1 - 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.

**SUNDAY, APRIL 4 - THE ECOLOGY OF PESCADERO MARSH.** Pescadero Marsh docents John and Nina Padley love "their" marsh and will share its complexities and secrets with us. This is a multi-faceted field trip which will deal with all aspects of the marsh's ecosystem. But of course, since Pescadero Marsh is one of the premier birding spots in the county birders need not worry that their interests will be overlooked. The weather may be cool or warm, depending upon fog and wind conditions, so be prepared accordingly. Boots are recommended but any walking will be relatively easy and on level grades. We will meet at 9:00 A.M. in the **first** parking lot south of the bridge over Pescadero Creek on Hwy. 1.

LEADERS JOHN AND NINA PADLEY 345-2984

**THURSDAY, APRIL 8 - SAS GENERAL MEETING -** Elaine K. Harding-Smith, a wildlife biologist with the US Fish and Wildlife Service at the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge, will update on the status of and continuing dangers to the endangered California clapper rail. At the San Mateo Garden Center on the Alameda at Parkside. Socialization and refreshments at 7:30 PM. Meeting begins at 8:00.

**SUNDAY, APRIL 11 - EDGEWOOD COUNTY PARK.** This winter's return to a more normal rainfall pattern should trigger an explosion of wildflowers in this park, that is once again being threatened by the possible development of a golf course. Our leader is not only a superb birder, but a professional landscaper who can assist us in identifying many of these plants. **Call the office (345-3724) or Anne Moser (324-1718) for details.**

LEADER: DAN KELLER

**SUNDAY, APRIL 18 - MINES ROAD FIELD TRIP.** This is our annual auto caravan through an isolated valley where relict populations of 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, purple martin, wild turkey, Costa's and calliope 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 varying between 40 and 90 degrees on this trip at this time of year; there are only two reli

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# News From Your Ranch

Dan Murphy

## THE PUBLIC SEASON -- WE'RE OPEN!

What more can be said until July 19, when we close to the public? April is your chance to see the Ranch at its peak season. Who knows what will happen to the birds? Eggs will be in the nests and the first young will be hatching. Songbirds will be on territory, shorebird and duck migration will be underway and wildflowers can be expected to be fabulous after our drought-busting year. Visit the Ranch now and again later in the season as spring fades to summer and the herons and egrets begin to fledge.

**THE CLERIN ZUMWALT CIRCLE.** The Board of Directors has announced the creation of the Clerin Zumwalt Circle in our Grove of Honor. It furthers our recognition of those donors who have included ACR in their wills and charitable trusts.

**NEW RANCH GUIDES AND DOCENTS AT BOLINAS.** It was a year ago when we first announced our plans for a new docent training class at Bolinas Lagoon Preserve and now 31 new docents have graduated. They and many others are volunteering thirtime, expertise and love to work with our 4th and 5th grade visitors from around the Bay Area. Twenty-four new Ranch Guides have completed training and have joined the ranks of those docents who help with our interpretive programs each weekend.

**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES.** Once again we can use your help with our ongoing harbor seal project at Tomales Bay. The seals will be pupping soon and people will be disturbing them. We need volunteers to document seal reproductive success and to assess the impacts of human disturbance on these sea mammals and others to participate in our public outreach program. If you can help with either please contact Mary Ellen King at 707-537-1546.

We continue to need hosts each weekend and holiday during our public season from now until July 18. If you want to spend a day at the Ranch and join our family of volunteers here is your chance. All you have to do is greet visitors, direct them to the overlook and answer a few questions. You usually get enough time off to hike a trail and enjoy a bit of the Ranch yourself. Volunteers are expected to arrive at the Ranch at around 9:45 and stay until 4:30. You can sign up through Sequoia Audubon (345-3724) for our four July dates or call ACR (868-9244) for other dates.

**SPRING CALENDAR:** Pre-registration is required for all ACR activities. for events at Cypress Grove and Bolinas Lagoon Preserves, call 868-9244. Call 707-938-4554 for Bouverie Audubon Preserve events.

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## News From Your Ranch

(Continued from Page Two)

**April 2: Nature at Night with Cathleen Canyon (\$10):** Let our crickets, frogs and owls brighten your night as you explore the world of shadow and sound in our lovely Bouverie Preserve.

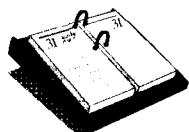
**April 3 & 4: Spring Wildflowers with Ray Peterson and John Petersen (\$40):** At both the Bolinas Lagoon and Bouverie Preserves. Overnight lodging is available at Bolinas Lagoon for an additional \$5. This is sure to be a fantastic wildflower year so take advantage of this information-packed field class to increase your wildflower identification skills.

**May 15: Introduction to the Taxonomy and Ecology of Coastal Prairie Grasses with John Kelly (\$20):** Here's your chance to learn to identify some of the plants we see most and no doubt ignore the most. We'll look at the flowering native grasses of Cypress Grove, learn about their role in the coastal ecosystem and use taxonomic keys and microscopes to identify them.

**May 15: Heron and Egret Photography with Philip Loring Green (\$35):** Here's a one-day program with one of America's leading wildlife photographers. You'll learn to photograph those gorgeous herons and egrets which bring us back to the Ranch year after year. Bolinas Lagoon Preserve.

**May 22: The Ninth Annual Downhill Hike with Ray Peterson (\$10):** Ray's been going downhill for nine years now. You just have to be there to understand how he does it. Bolinas Lagoon Preserve.

**BOUVERIE GUIDED NATURE WALKS:** Join a docent-led walk through the Bouverie Audubon Preserve in Sonoma. Spectacular wildflowers and birds will enhance the beauty of the preserve. Dates are Saturdays April 3 & 17 and May 1 & 15. All walks begin at 9:30 AM and end around 1:30 PM. Reservations for these **free** walks are required so call 707-938-4554 early



## The S. A. S. Calendar

(Continued from Page Two)

able restroom facilities, at lunchtime and at mid-afternoon; and a full tank of gas is recommended, so be prepared. To get there take I-580 to Livermore. Stay on 580 past Livermore to the Vasco Road exit. Take a right at the exit and follow Vasco Road to its end at Tesla Road. Take a right and follow Tesla for a little more than 1/2 mile until you come to Mines Road on the left. We will meet at that intersection at 9 AM. Late arrivals will have no problem in catching up with the group if they continue on Mines Road.

LEADER CLIFF RICHER 738-9176

**SATURDAY, APRIL 24 - JASPER RIDGE BIOLOGICAL PRESERVE.** Join us for a half day of birding in Stanford University's unique biological preserve. Birds seen on previous Sequoia Audubon field trips include western tanagers, blue-gray gnatcatchers, five species of flycatchers, wood ducks and even an osprey. We will meet at the Jasper Ridge Main Gate (not the Whiskey Hill Gate) at 8:30 AM. **Be prompt as the gate will be open only from 8:15 to 8:30 AM.** From I-280 take the Sandhill Rd. exit west about 2 miles to a gate on the left. We will go rain or shine. A gate fee of \$4 per person is required. The size of the group is limited, so please call the office (345-3724) to reserve your space on this reservations-only field trip. If you need additional information, call Louise at 591-6804. **Sorry, no children under the age of 14.**

LEADERS: PETER METROPULOS & LOUISE FLETCHER

### May

**SUNDAY, MAY 2 - BEGINNER'S FIELD TRIP -LAND BIRDS - JUNIPERO SERRA COUNTY PARK.** Because of their proximity to a large apartment complex and to I-280, the birds of this urban park have a reputation for being relatively tame and easy to see. This trip will follow the format of our other beginner trips in which a relatively short birding trip will be followed by a discussion section over coffee (or whatever). The discussion session will be held at the Park's picnic tables so bring your own "whatever". Meet at the first parking lot inside the park entrance at 9:00 AM. To get there take El Camino to San Bruno and turn west on Crystal Springs Avenue. Follow Crystal Springs Ave. to the park entrance on the left.

LEADER FRANCIS TOLDI 433-0660

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 5 - HAYWARD REGIONAL SHORELINE.** Many of the shorebirds (some in breeding plumage) and waterfowl will still be here, the winter resident peregrine falcon should still be around 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. To get there take Hwy. 92 across the San Mateo Bridge to the first exit. After exiting, take a left and look for the signs to the interpretive center.

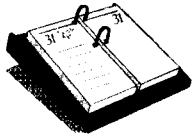
LEADERS JOHN AND NINA PADLEY 345-2984

**THURSDAY, MAY 6 - 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, MAY 13 - SAS GENERAL MEETING A SPECIAL MEETING FOR SPECIAL PEOPLE

The general meeting will be preceded by a special program and slide show for children in Grades 4-8. This will feature the common birds of the garden and the most visible birds of the Bayshore. This will be followed up by a field trip on Sunday, May 23. Refreshments at 7:00 PM with the program at 7:30. At the San Mateo Garden Center on the Alameda at Parkside.

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## The S.A.S. Calendar

(Continued from Page Three)

### SUNDAY, MAY 15 - SAN PEDRO

#### VALLEY PARK.

This wooded park provides a variety of habitat for migrating and nesting species of forest and grassland birds. Our leader knows the park well as she has reported on it for the last several years - both for the Christmas Count and for the Breeding Bird Atlas. The trip will entail some walking along easy trails.

The park has been consistent in producing one or two surprises every spring and we may be lucky enough to find one of these eastern warblers or vireos this year. The trip will begin at 9:00 AM in the parking lot to the right of the visitor center. To get there take Highway 1 to Pacifica and turn inland at Linda Mar Boulevard. Follow Linda Mar to its end and "jog right" into the Park.

LEADER

JUDY SPITLER

355-9362

### SUNDAY, MAY 23 - SPECIAL FIELD TRIP FOR GRADES

4-8. See next month's **NEEDLES** for details. All children at this grade level and accompanied by an adult are eligible even if they can't attend the May 11 meeting. Several leaders will be available.

**THE MEMORIAL DAY FIELD TRIP TO TIOGA PASS AND MONO LAKE HAS BEEN CANCELLED** as we do not expect Tioga Pass to be open in time this year. A substitute field trip will be announced in next month's **NEEDLES**. Possible substitutes include a Thrasher Tramp to SW Kern County or to Nevada's Lahontan Valley and Stillwater Refuge (about 70 miles east of Reno.). Both areas are noted for desert and mountain specialties. If you would be interested in either trip, call Cliff Richer (738-9176).

## George Ellman to Continue as Regional Member Of NAS Board

Although the actual elections to the National Audubon Board of Directors will not begin until mid-month, it appears that George Ellman is a shoo-in for re-election. George was nominated by several chapters and there are no other nominations.

George - a long-time active member of Madrone Audubon - is a resident of Glen Ellen and has been especially interested in finding a way for National Audubon to return a larger portion of the annual membership dues to the chapters. He has encouraged both local chapters and the National to increase their use of modern communications technology and is proposing a program to involve churches more actively in environmental affairs by emphasizing the biblical imperative to be stewards of the earth.

George has **not** supported efforts by some factions at National Audubon to de-emphasize the importance of birds and birding to the organization.

## We Need Your Input

From time to time Sequoia Audubon receives requests from commercial concerns to print advertisements or commercial announcements in the **NEEDLES**. Currently the SAS Board of Directors is considering what position to take and wants member input. The alternatives are:

- Refuse all such requests (our present policy).
- Allow them on an occasional case-by-case basis.
- Pursue appropriate sources of advertising as a revenue generating device.

National Audubon has no position on this matter and - obviously - accepts advertising in *Audubon* magazine. Some SAS chapters allow advertisements, a very few actually solicit them and others have a policy against them.

The principal arguments in favor are:

- Sequoia needs increased funding.
- All inquiries received in the last ten years have been from birding or environmentally-oriented enterprises which deserve our consideration.
- About half of these requests have come from SAS members with most of the remaining coming from members of other Audubon organizations.
- Members may appreciate getting information on these ventures (e.g. pelagic trips, travel or tour services, books and videos, bird feeders, etc.)

Arguments against include:

- No profit-oriented materials should appear in our newsletter.
- The advertisements would take space away from other newsletter items.
- Screening guidelines would be difficult to create and to apply
- Members are not interested in these kinds of announcements.

If you have an opinion, pro or con, please let it be known. If you wish to express your opinion, please call or write the office (345-3724) or contact any officer or director within the next two weeks.

## Japan Bans Use Of Mist Nets

The Japanese have banned the possession, sale or use of mist nets. In most countries these nets are used for capturing birds for the purpose of banding, but in Japan and in the Mediterranean these nests are used to trap birds for human consumption. It is estimated that the ban will save the lives of 3,000,000 birds each year.

Since most bander's nets are made in Japan, various ornithological groups are working with the Japanese to be sure that the mist nets will still be available for scientific studies.

# SPRING 1993 SAS BIRDSEED SALE - - - ORDER FORM

ALL ORDERS WITH PAYMENT MUST BE RECEIVED BY TUESDAY, APRIL 27TH!!!

Proceeds support local Audubon conservation and education programs

Please check preferred pickup location:

☐ San Bruno ..... By arrangement

☐ Burlingame ..... By arrangement

☐ Pacifica ..... By arrangement

☐ San Mateo ..... 5/6, 5/7, 9 am - noon, By arrangement

☐ Belmont ..... 5/6, 5/7, 6 - 8 pm

☐ Half Moon Bay ..... 5/6, 5/7, 6 - 8 pm.

☐ ..... By arrangement

☐ Atherton ..... 5/6, 5/7, 6 - 8 pm

|                                             |         |         |      | # BAGS | \$--COST--\$ |
|---------------------------------------------|---------|---------|------|--------|--------------|
| AUDUBON WILD BIRD MIX .....                 | 50 lb @ | \$19.00 | /bag |        | =            |
| red & white millet plus black oil sunflower | 20 lb @ | \$10.00 | /bag |        | =            |
| RED/WHITE MILLET MIX .....                  | 50 lb @ | \$18.00 | /bag |        | =            |
|                                             | 20 lb @ | \$ 9.00 | /bag |        | =            |
| BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER.....                    | 50 lb @ | \$25.00 | /bag |        | =            |
|                                             | 25 lb @ | \$14.00 | /bag |        | =            |
| WHITE PROSO MILLET .....                    | 50 lb @ | \$17.50 | /bag |        | =            |
|                                             | 25 lb @ | \$10.00 | /bag |        | =            |
| THISTLE .....                               | 25 lb @ | \$48.00 | /bag |        | =            |
|                                             | 5 lb @  | \$12.00 | /bag |        | =            |
| SUNFLOWER CHIPS**.....                      | 25 lb @ | \$24.50 | /bag |        | =            |

\*\*A new item!! Try hulled sunflower seeds and avoid the cleanup under your feeder. Attractive to smaller seedeaters; be sure to use a feeder that discourages large birds.

SALES TAX IS INCLUDED IN ALL PRICES ABOVE

Contribution to Sequoia Audubon Society (tax deductible) \_\_\_\_\_

CHECK # \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_

Please enclose a **stamped self-addressed envelope** to receive your order confirmation and directions to your pickup location.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Work) \_\_\_\_\_

Mail your check and order to

**SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY**

30 West 39th Avenue, Suite 202

San Mateo, CA 94403

☐ I am interested in other types of seed/supplies

☐ Might be willing to help in future seed sales

We are interested in knowing what birds you are seeing most frequently at your feeders as well as the most unusual. We would like to share this information with our members, so please take a moment to list them at the bottom. Thanks!

Most Frequent: \_\_\_\_\_

Most Unusual: \_\_\_\_\_

# 1993 Birdathon! 1993 Birdathon!

## Frances Toldi

April is the traditional time for the Birdathon. As many of you know, the Birdathon is one of our most important fundraisers of the year, as well as a lot of fun!

New members may not be familiar with what happens during the Birdathon. Every April birdwatchers from all over the county go out and count as many species of birds as possible in one 24 hour period to raise money for Audubon causes. Sponsors pledge a stated amount per species, which they pay to Sequoia Audubon after the count is completed. For example, if 100 people pledge 10 cents per species, and 150 birds are counted, that would raise \$1500. One half of the money raised goes directly to Sequoia and the other half goes to two National Audubon Programs (The Mono Lake Defense Fund and the Richardson Bay Education Center.)

In the past we had a single official team, representing the entire Sequoia Audubon organization. While we still have the official team, lately we have been encouraging people to form their own teams and join in the fun. Last year we had a total of four teams: The Megaticks (the official team), the Ultimate Coot, the Huffin' Puffins and the Garbled Modwits.

Whoever you are **we need your help**. A very modest pledge to the official team would be easy to do and deeply appreciated. A generous contribution would be even better. If money is a problem we always welcome volunteers to help in the administrative effort of running the Birdathon. If you are feeling a bit more ambitious, you might want to start up a new team.

Your team can be active at whatever level you want. It can consist of just you - and spend two hours counting species in your neighborhood. You could join up with a family member or friend and spend a full day birding in your favorite area or areas. You could bird only in the city limits, or the county -- or you could do what the official team does and go all-out from 4 AM to midnight all over the Bay Area.

Please help us with this year's Birdathon! Fill out the form below and send it in to Sequoia's office or call 345-3724 for more information.

-----  
**YES**, I wish to join in. I will sign  
up pledges and conduct my Birdathon on \_\_\_\_\_

**YES**, I will support Sequoia  
Audubon Society with a pledge of \_\_\_\_\_ per species.

**YES**, I will pre-pay my pledge based on an estimate of at least  
100 or 150 different birds being identified.

My check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ Send this form to:

**Sequoia Audubon Society**  
**30 West 39th Street, Suite 202**  
**San Mateo, CA 94403**

*Sequoia Audubon Society*

# Wild Goose Chase Results

With 97% of pledges realized, last fall's Wild Goose Chase grossed \$1595. for Sequoia's battered budget.

Although it is not our policy to identify our donors by amount, we feel special thanks are in order for members **Dr. Howard Gurevitz, Tom and Marion Vanden Bosch, Dr. Bill Lofthouse** and non-member **Linda Richer**. We also want to acknowledge the continued long-distance support of **Jean Durick**, who has consistently responded to all of our fund-raising efforts without any additional solicitation. (Jean is a former director and officer who moved to Iowa more than a decade ago.)

That does not diminish the heartfelt thanks that we extend to all of you who supported our efforts.

**Rick Baird Susan Bernhard Susan Bianucci**  
**Josephine Blue Mary Bresler Lee Brown**  
**Jennielee Centie Virginia Clifford**  
**Leah Cohen Mike & Lynn Cropper**  
**Peter Cross Lisa Currier**  
**Maryann Danielson Mrs. Jean Durick**  
**Helen Evans Louise Fletcher Leslie Flint**  
**Debbie Frantz George & Ruth Frecker**  
**William K. Groll Dr. Howard Gurevitz**  
**Dr Dale Hands Shirley Higuera**  
**Clarie Hollenbeck Jim Ingwerson**  
**Ann B. Jeffries Paul Jones**  
**Robert & Eileen Kratter**  
**Stan & Carrol Larsen Wendy Lee**  
**Dr. Bill Lofthouse Gwen Lorraine**  
**Hal & Barbara Lucas Jo Macartney**  
**Michael Macchiaverna Fred Mc Elhany**  
**Peter J. Metropulos Genevieve Miller**  
**Anne Moser Janet Murphy Frances Nelson**  
**John & Nena Padley Pete & Donna Petersen**  
**Larry & Fran Prager Linda Richer**  
**Mrs Paul A. Schultz Werner Schumann**  
**Al Seubert Carl Smith Robin W. Smith**  
**Judy Spitler Jean-Marie Spoelman Jim Steele**  
**Ruth Stonehouse Maria Straatmann**  
**Francis Toldi Peggy Utterback**  
**Marian & Tom Vanden Bosch**  
**Dr. Paul Wachter Linda Wagner**  
**Wild Goose Travel**  
**Bob & May Blossom Wilkinson**

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"...today the problem is not so much the DPW's past, as the fact that it too often seems to be living in it. We have in mind the agency's endless, wrong-headed litigation over Mono Lake and its refusal to accept responsibility for the pollution created by its coal-fired Arizona power-generating facilities."

---Los Angeles Times editorial.

# Field Trip Reports

## February 20 -- Palo Alto Baylands

Eight intrepid birders ignored the weather forecast and showed up for a beginners' trip to the Palo Alto Baylands. They were treated to a lovely day, no rain, few people and good birding.

A total of 45 species were logged on the two hour trip. highlights included a cooperative Clark's grebe, a pair of loudly "clapping" clapper rails in plain view less than twenty feet away, a marsh wren building a nest -- probably the first in a series of many nests, and a pair of flirting avocets. The group also had a good opportunity to study and compare wintering sparrows, shorebirds and waterfowl.

After the trip some of the participants retired to the Palo Alto Municipal golf Course Coffee Shop for a general discussion on the birds seen, and other nearby birding opportunities.

--- Francis Toldi

## February 23 -- Princeton Harbor

The leader and four other birders checked the harbor despite threatening weather and found a surprising common murre inside the harbor. Heavy rains caused the trip to be cancelled just as we reached the path to the point.

---Nick Coiro

## February 28 -- Altamont Pass

After a long wet period nine birders found themselves enjoying a nice bright sunny day with little wind. The weather was perhaps too nice as we saw fewer raptors than expected from prior years' experience. Most were redtails and kestrels although we did see one soaring ferruginous hawk and two golden eagles - one being harassed by a redtail. We did get good views of a mountain bluebird and lesser goldfinches. The leaders did spot a rough-legged hawk from the freeway on the way home.

---Nick Coiro and Linda Kypta

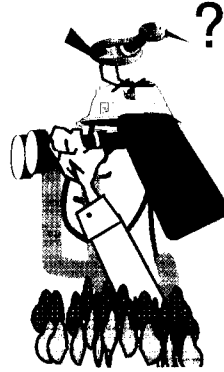
## March 10 - Stern Grove

Seven birders braved the drizzle and spent a pleasant morning birding the open field edges and the pond at Stern Grove. Birds were not numerous (28 species) but there were many Allen's hummingbirds and one migrating rufous hummingbird. Several of the birders got the rare opportunities to see the rarely-glimpsed ruby crown and orange crown of the ruby-crowned kinglet and orange-crowned warbler. A red-shouldered hawk was briefly seen and California quail were heard calling in this urban island.

---Nick Coiro and Linda Kypta

## March 6 -- Foster City by Bicycle

Eight biking birders accompanied the leaders on a 13 mile tour of Foster City's Bayshore, Marina Lagoon and Belmont Slough. Even though some of the Foster City "specialties" (Eurasian wigeon, Barrow's goldeneye and hooded mergansers) were missed, the good weather and 63 cooperative species made for an outstanding day.



An immature golden eagle (probably the same one that visited late last year as well) and a rare tufted duck, first seen on February 15, were the highlight birds while red knots, Clark's grebes and white-winged scoters were present in unusually high numbers.

---Nick Coiro and Linda Kypta

## March 10 - Stern Grove

Seven birders braved the drizzle and spent a pleasant morning birding the open field edges and the pond at Stern Grove. Birds were not numerous (28 species) but there were many Allen's hummingbirds and one migrating rufous hummingbird. Several of the birders got the rare opportunities to see the rarely-glimpsed ruby crown and orange crown of the ruby-crowned kinglet and orange-crowned warbler. A red-shouldered hawk was briefly seen and California quail were heard calling in this urban island.

---Nick Coiro and Linda Kypta

## Attu Island - Off Limits?

The US Coast Guard, which maintains the small weather station and airstrip on Attu Island, has received a number of requests from commercial fishing operations to allow aircraft to land on the island so that boat crews may be relieved and fish catches flown to Japan. In the past this airstrip was used only by the Coast Guard and by the twice-a-year birding tours. The Coast Guard fears that the increased activity at both the airfield and the docks will tax their facilities and those of the island beyond their respective capacities.



The Coast Guard feels that they cannot deny the use of Attu Island to the fishing operations without closing off all public access to the airfield and they have written to Attour, Inc. explaining the situation and ending their letter with "Despite your past use of the runway, please don't take it for granted that your request will be approved this year (1994)." It may be that the 1993 tours could be the last to this birding outpost.

# SAS Grants Science Fair Awards

Sequoia Audubon Society, through its Education Committee, granted Awards of Excellence to two students at the San Mateo County Science Fair.

Fifth grader **Scott Leddy's** Pond Water project was recognized for its excellence in the elementary school category and **Fred A. Nunes'** high school project, showing the effect of siltation on the steelhead trout population, was deemed to have special environmental significance.

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