



sequoia needles

Bulletin of the Sequoia Audubon Society • San Mateo County • Volume 42, No. 9 • June 1994

JUNE NEEDLES

Backyard Birder.....	2
Election Day	2
Calendar of Events	3
Donation Allows Special Sale	3
Audubon Canyon Ranch Needs Volunteers	4
Nominating Committee	4
Field Trip Reports	4
Who's Who	4
Board Of Directors Meeting Highlights	4
The Bookworm	4
Spring 1994 Birdathon	5
Oakland Museum Co-sponsors Workshop	5
Earth Island Journal Report	5
NAS Western Regional Conference	6
News From Our Ranch	6
Special Sale	7
Stunked?	7
On The Shelf	7

POTLUCK TIME 6:30 pm at the San Mateo Garden Center on the Alameda at Parkside. Election of officers and program immediately following potluck.

Please remember to bring your own utensils and plates and a paper bag in which to take them home. Those people whose **LAST NAME** begins with **A-F** should bring a **dessert**; **G-L** a **casserole** or other hot dish; **M-Z** should provide the **salads**. Please bring enough to serve five times the number in your party.

Letter From The President

By Anne Maser

This is my last letter to you as your president. The past two years have gone by so fast and have been most rewarding. Coming as I did with a minimal knowledge of National Audubon and the Sequoia Chapter, I've had a lot to learn.

* To members of the Board who helped educate me I owe thanks, in particular to Rick B, Mary & Cliff.

* To the committee chairpersons, I admire the work you do; Robin, Education and Bob, Conservation, need special mention.

* To those members who said "Yes" when I asked them to take on responsibilities - Rich, Dean, Julia, and our co-editors Harriette and Michael Lee - you're great.

*Some people called to volunteer their time for SAS's benefit, Sue C. NEEDLES mailing, Debbie Treasurer, Ann publicity, Grace S and Lee Hostess, Iona birdseed sales: Thank you all.

*These are behind the scene wonders: Rick J. breeding bird atlas; Dan K. Christmas Count; Judy Spitler field trips; Nick audit, Janet and Eileen, Board members. You are so necessary to SAS.

*Every board needs a secretary, and Francis' competent minute-taking and sense of humor have been a real plus for me. He's also coordinated the Birdathon as well as been the second editor of S.F. Peninsula Birdwatching. Thanks, Francis.

Sequoia Audubon can't exist in a vacuum; membership participation is essential. To all of you who helped these past two years, I can only say a big THANK YOU. I leave the Presidency with many happy memories and a group of new friends.

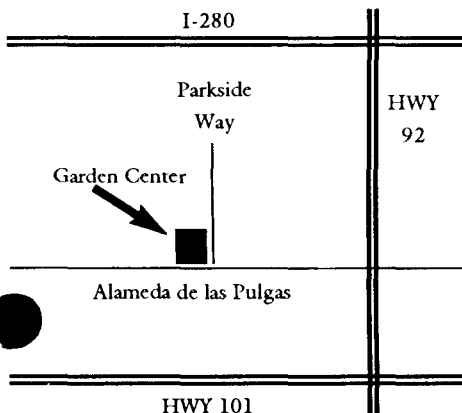
Our appeal for funds in the February NEEDLES raised \$390. Thank you, to each of you who cared enough to make a donation. Your money will be carefully spent on SAS activities.

If you are going to be out of town on Election Day, June 7th, consider getting an absentee ballot and voting for CAL-PAW (more elsewhere).

Good birding to you all..

June 9 Special Meeting starts at 6:30 pm. Annual Election & Pot Luck Program: 1992 National Audubon Society International Ecology Workshop in Kenya.

After our semiannual potluck dinner and annual election, take a casual safari through the East African landscape as seen by Program Co-chairs Rich Kuehn and Dean Schuler during their 18-day 1992 NAS trip to Kenya. An edited video of some of the 420 avian and 36 mammalian species observed, as well as footage of native tribesmen living in the Samburu/Bufalo Springs and Masai Mara will be featured.



GENERAL MEETING

Second Thursday of the Month, 7:30 pm
At the San Mateo Garden Center
on Parkside at the Alameda

BOARD MEETING

First Thursday of the Month, 7:30 pm
At the Sequoia Audubon Office
All members welcome

**VOTE
YES ON PROP 180
(CAL-PAW)
SEE PAGE 2**

Any information for the Needles should be sent to the Sequoia Audubon Society office. The deadline is the last day of the month 2 months prior to the month of publication, except for the September issue, deadline before August 1. Our next issue will be for September.

Have a great summer!

Backyard Birder

By Rick Held

Selecting Water Features For Your Yard

If you have a bird feeder and some attractive native plants for neighborhood birds, what can you do to increase the variety of birds in your yard? Well, the perfect complement to a feeder is water. A source of fresh water will cause the seed eating birds to stay longer and other birds, normally foraging for insects nearby, will stop by also.

The first water feature that usually comes to mind is a bird bath. The most common material is concrete, sturdy and relatively inexpensive. Concrete baths can be purchased in all sizes and shapes, from short pedestals about 14 inches high, to larger models as tall as 30 inches. They are available in many colors and styles. Concrete baths are probably the longest lasting type, especially in our area where freezing temperatures are almost unheard of.

Urban wildlife is something we have to adjust to on the Peninsula. Raccoon, deer, opossum, skunks, as well as our preferred songbirds, need water as much as we. Planning in anticipation of this fact will prevent conflict later on. For example, placement of goldfish or koi in an outdoor pool is usually a mistake, unless special precautions such as extra depth or some kind of barrier is provided. Expensive fish that avoid the raccoons often fall victim to a Great Blue Heron or egret. Spectacular backyard birding, but expensive.

A particular problem we hear about often is occasional use of the bath itself by a wild animal friend. Raccoons are especially notorious for tilting the bowl off of the pedestal, sometimes causing the bowl to crack or break. The best solution we've heard is to use a construction grade caulk/adhesive such as silicone to "glue" the bowl to the base. The bath will be harder to turn over, reducing the likelihood of breakage.

Baths are also available in other materials including metal rim, ceramic with a metal stand, composite materials such as epoxy/stone and even wood frame. These types often have a plastic bowl, easily removed for cleaning and rarely broken by animals. These types of baths are usually considerably lighter and therefore more mobile than the concrete styles. They can be moved about the yard to suit the season or suit your viewing preference.

Robins and jays prefer baths in open spaces, while smaller birds like warblers and finches prefer water sources nearer shelter such as a tree or shrub. The major difference between the two locations is that a bath under a tree will have to be cleaned much more often than one in the sun. The one in the sun, however will evaporate faster and require replenishment more

often. On balance I'd suggest locating precisely where you will see it best and enjoy it most. If it is near, not under a tree, and in partial sun at that location, you have the best of both worlds.

Water depth is always a question. Very deep pools (3 inches is pretty deep to a goldfinch!) will be used for cautious drinking, but you'll rarely see a real "bath" being taken. Shallow water, even as little as 1/2 inch, is most attractive for bathing and drinking. Baths and pools with gradually sloping sides, and not especially smooth surfaces, are most often used.

Bath designs other than concrete, just as attractive to the birds, may be a better complement to your landscape design and space limitations. Hanging and post or tree-mount baths are available in various materials. These types provide an alternative when a patio or deck is the preferred location, and can be especially effective in keeping the bathing birds out of the reach of ground predators such as cats.

Any bath should be located so that a predator has little or no cover to hide while in wait for a bird. This usually means about 10 to 15 feet of clear area around a pedestal type and placement of a hanging or attached bath at least 30 inches from the ground, if not higher.

Birds will be attracted to a low bath, on or near the ground, most easily. But this is usually the worst location for their safety. Making the bath more attractive, but farther from the ground is better. Moving water, a dripper or a mister will make noise, creating interest and accelerating the adoption process, even for a bath on a second story deck. A plastic milk jug, filled with water and punctured by a pin, can be hung temporarily above the bath. The constant drip, drip is very effective in attracting curious birds.

The most complicated, most expensive, and usually the most bird-attractive water feature is a pool or fountain. Both can recirculate the water, creating sound and motion that guarantees bird adoption, but also requiring replenishment every few days.

It is very difficult to modify a bath designed to provide still water, to create a recirculating spray or fountain. The plumbing challenge is substantial, and the problem of maintaining water levels and filtering is almost insurmountable. If you want to consider a recirculating fountain, investigate before you purchase. A retrofit is a real problem that will certainly interfere with your enjoyment of backyard visitors.

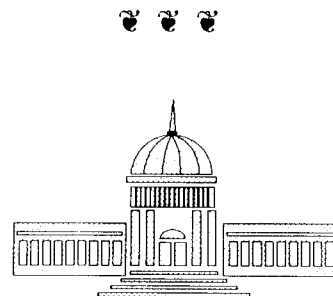
Fountains are usually purchased complete, including pump and plumbing. Pools can be purchased as individual components or as a complete kit including the plastic liner, pump, tubing, spray nozzle, valves, etc. At least one manufacturer even provides different kits for pools, channels and cascades, with the plastic sheet and other components tailored to the design. Although appearing difficult to install,

most pools kits can be built in an afternoon, including a bit of landscaping and rock sculpture to complete the design.

Fountains and pools with more subtle water movement, such as a cascade or even a miniature "rapids", seem to be more effective in providing bathing and drinking than the more dramatic spraying type.

No matter which bath, fountain or pool you select, periodic maintenance will be required. Algae will grow, debris will collect and bath usage will decline. Plan to spend a few minutes every few days with a long bristle brush and some fresh water. Usually a few minutes scrubbing the basin with the brush and rinsing with water will clean it adequately. Sometimes a stronger combination of a small amount of laundry bleach and mild dishwashing soap is needed, but don't overdo it.

These comments presume the space, the time and the money to invest in creating a permanent water source for your bird friends. Often just as effective, and certainly less expensive, is to set up the lawn sprinkler to create a cascade on the leaves of a tree as the lawn is watered. You can then watch the hummingbirds enjoy their casual shower. And Mourning Doves make especially effective use of a trickle of runoff or a small terra-cotta saucer with just a half-inch of clean, fresh water.



**SEQUOIA
AUDUBON SOCIETY
URGES YOU TO VOTE !
ELECTION DAY, JUNE 7
VOTE YES ON PROP. 180
(CAL-PAW)**

We Californians have a critical need for parks for recreation and for the protection of wildlife, native plants and their habitats. This measure will be fiscally responsible, affordable, and a lasting investment in your future through the acquisition of wetlands, old growth forests, riparian areas and other habitats. It is a citizen's initiative and is endorsed by dozens of environmental organizations.

Calendar of Events



Saturday, June 4 - **THE BREEDING BIRD BLITZ**

Slow down and actually look at what your feathered friends are doing - what they have in their beaks, where they are going, and who they're going with. We will be looking for breeding confirmations in one (or more) of the Breeding Bird Atlas Squares that has had minimal coverage thus far. We will meet at 6 am at the Hwy 1 and Tunitas Creek junction (about 7 1/2 to 8 miles south of Half Moon Bay). If you are late, we will be continuing east on Tunitas Creek Road. If you know you are coming please notify Judy Spitler at 355-9362.

LEADER: RICK JOHNSON,



Saturday, June 11 - **BOBELAINE AUDUBON SANCTUARY WORKDAY** SPONSORED BY SACRAMENTO AUDUBON SOCIETY

Bobelaine Sanctuary (400 acres on the Feather River, 35 miles north of Sacramento)

Restoration workday - help is needed to work on preparing areas for planting of native trees, clearing a firebreak along the levee, finishing the north firebreak, and several other restoration activities at this National Audubon Sanctuary managed by Sacramento Audubon Society. Bring weedeaters, rakes, chainsaws, and long-handled trimmers. Potluck lunch at noon. For more information call Jan or Bill Clark at (916) 783-8305.

Saturday & Sunday, June 11 & 12 **YUBA PASS & SIERRA VALLEY**

"The Call of the High Sierra" affords a chance to see birds rarely seen on any of our other field trips via easy walking trails through lovely mountain and Sierra valley habitats. Saturday's birding in the mountain areas will be for Dipper, Black-backed Woodpecker, Evening Grosbeak,

summer warblers, flycatchers, etc.

Sunday we'll caravan to see the birds of the Eastern Slope and the Modoc Plateau. Arrangements have been made for us to use the facilities of San Francisco State University's Sierra Nevada Field Campus, where camping in platform tents with mattresses and cots, hot showers & three meals a day are available for \$23.75 per day. Just bring your own bedding and towels. Motels are also available in Sierra City, with meals at the field campus.

On Saturday meet at 9:00 am in the parking lot of the Sierra Nevada Field Campus 8 miles north of Sierra City. On Sunday meet at 8:00 am at the Summit Campground. Reservations are required for this trip and for the accommodations at the Field Campus. Call the leader for details and reservations.

LEADER: CLIFF RICHER 738-9176

Motels: Harrington's Sierra Pines (916) 862-1131, Sierra Chalet (916) 862-1110, Buttes Motel (916) 862-1170, Sierra Buttes Inn (916) 862-1122



Monday, July 11 - **FIELD TRIP COMMITTEE MEETING**

7:30 pm at the Sequoia Audubon Society office. Field trip leaders are requested to either attend or advise Judy of their desires for the new year. **ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME.** Please call Judy Spitler at 355-9362 with any field trip suggestions or to lead a field trip to your favorite birding spot.

Thursday July 28 - Sunday July 31 - **INDIAN VALLEY FIELD WEEKEND** CO-SPONSORED BY EL DORADO NATIONAL FOREST AND THE NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

Indian Valley (a 300 acre valley adjacent to the Mokelumne Wilderness near the crest of the Sierra Nevada at the headwaters of the North Fork Mokelumne River about 10 miles southeast of Carson Pass and Hwy 88)

Come anytime from Thursday dinner through Sunday lunch to learn and participate in field trips, monitoring

techniques, bird surveys, vegetation surveys, stream channel surveys, small erosion control projects, Great Gray Owl surveys, amphibian surveys, and campfire talks emphasizing both human and natural history.

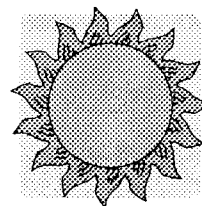
For more information or to register, call Bob Barnes (Audubon) at 916-481-5332 or write to: Helen Bombay/Mike Foster, Indian Valley Field Weekend, El Dorado National Forest, 100 Forni Road, Placerville, CA 95667.



Sunday, September 11 **POINT REYES FIELD TRIP**

A search through the "warbler traps" of Point Reyes can yield almost anything at this time of year. We'll be looking for inland and eastern vagrants but can expect migrants and some early arriving winter residents as well. Walking will be minimal but sturdy shoes are recommended. Clothing should be layered since the weather on Point Reyes is extremely changeable. Fall is normally the pleasant time of year on the Point, but it has the coolest average summer temperature in the continental US. We will meet at the new Point Reyes National Seashore Headquarters building at 9 am. The trip will take place rain or shine. Bring lunch. The trip normally ends at 2pm.

LEADER: CLIFF RICHER 738-9176



Generous Donation Allows Special Sale

The following books have been donated to SAS and we are selling them. Please call the SAS office for information and price.

- **THE GREAT BIRD ILLUSTRATORS AND THEIR ART 1730-1930**, Peyton Skipworth, 1979
- **102 FAVORITE AUDUBON BIRDS OF AMERICA, WITH COMMENTARIES BY ROGER TORY PETERSON** (no date)

Audubon Canyon Ranch Volunteers Needed

Every year Sequoia Audubon provides volunteer weekend hosts for Audubon Canyon Ranch in Bolinas. It's a very pleasant activity for you to meet and greet people visiting the Ranch. You are given instructions when you arrive in the morning so you'll know what to do. There's also an opportunity for you to walk the trails yourself and visit the excellent bookstore. When you sign up, you'll receive driving directions and information. Our dates this year are June 4 & 5, 11 & 12, 18 & 19, 25 & 26 and July 10 & 17. To sign up, call the SAS office: 345-3724.



Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee is very pleased to present this slate for 1994-95. The election takes place at the General Meeting June 9. (see page 1) Nominations can also be made from the floor.

President Julia Mandeville
Vice President Richard Kuehn
Secretary Francis toldi
Treasurer Debbie Frantz
Directors

for term ending June 1995
Cliff Richer

for term ending June 1997
Eileen Jennis-Sauppe
Tom Vanden Bosch

Field Trip Report! Mines Road

Cliff Richer, Leader

12 birders were later joined by 4 more but unfortunately many of the Mines Road specialties failed to show. The usual **Prairie Falcon**, **Wood Duck**, **Phainopepla**, **Roadrunner** & **Costa's Hummingbird** all had appointments elsewhere, although **Lawrence's Goldfinch** (Larry to those of us who know him well) made several appearances & we did get some looks at



the elusive **Rufous-crowned Sparrow**. The trip ended at dusk in Corral Hollow Road where the 5 survivors were treated to a show by the several barn owls, including one young and very vocal downy owlet. A total of 65 species (low for Mines Road) were checked off by the leader.

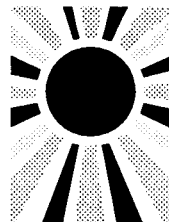


WHO'S WHO

Bob Wilkinson, Conservation Chair

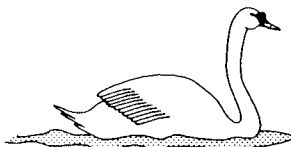
I have been inspired by people like Dave Brower and Wallace Stegner; informed by writings of such observers of our environment as Edward D. Wilson; angered by the James Watts of our society; moved to action by organizations as National Audubon. My aspiration is to involve more Sequoia Audubon members in environmental issues at this critical time when we are witnessing the greatest mass extinction in the history of Planet Earth.

Sequoia Audubon has a very capable and dedicated conservation committee; however, we would like to be able to take on more projects with the participation of more members. Please consider joining us.



Anne Moser

Born in England, I spent 6 years in Canada before migrating to Southern California in 1944. The Peninsula has been home for the past 46 years, during which time I've worked, taught, married, and raised 2 daughters. I became "hooked" on birding because there weren't wildflowers in the wintertime and the ducks at the Palo Alto Baylands were so fascinating. For the past 5 years I've combined birding with my interest in far-away places. I feel strongly that an active membership is essential for any non-profit organization to survive and hope that during the coming year SAS can involve both new and present members in its activities.



Highlights of Board of Directors Meeting April 7

The Board heard progress reports on its ongoing projects, including the 1994 Birdathon, Wild Goose Chase, and new edition of San Francisco Peninsula Birding. The Committee reports included announcement of the Environmental Educator of the Year Award to Mima Sanchez-Parsons, an innovative teacher at Hoover Elementary School in Redwood City, and the usual thorough update from Bob Wilkinson of our Conservation Committee. Other Board action included discussion about our search for a new Office Manager and the National Audubon Society.



THE BOOKWORM

By Anne Moser

Nick Lethaby, a member of Santa Clara Audubon, has written **A BIRD FINDING GUIDE TO ALASKA**. This 8-1/2 x 5-1/2, 152-page paperback is a convenient size to carry on a trip.

The guide contains general planning information and specific accounts of 200 sites both mainland and offshore. These accounts include directions to locations, species to be found there and logistics (accommodations, boat trips & car rentals). Not all sites include maps, but those that do are clear and well-labeled.

The Annotated Species List includes obvious Alaskan specialties and species that are fairly common in the state but hard to see in particular areas of the lower 48 states. Asian species, mainly migratory, are not included. The list is cross-referenced to the numbered sites. There is an index of bird names.

I wish I'd had this guide in '89 when I birded in Alaska. Checking the places I visited, the information seemed clear and complete. I'll certainly take a copy when I return.

This book can be ordered from Nick Lethaby, 79 Mirabell Court, San Jose, CA 95134. (W)408/980-1300; (H)408/435-2729. If you mention this review when placing an order within 60 days of your receipt of this issue of **THE NEEDLES**, Nick will give you a discount AND make a donation to SAS.



Spring 1994 Birdathon

By Francis Toldi, Coordinator

This year's Birdathon effort is shaping up to be one of our most successful in recent years. At this writing, several teams have yet to complete their Big Days, so I cannot give you a complete report.

I can tell you we had more teams participating than in any prior year. Each team operates in its own style, from the all-out Bird Blitz approach to a more relaxed and easy-going method of operation. What all teams share is an experience filled with comradery, fun, good birds, and important funds raised for Sequoia Audubon Society and our two designated National Audubon programs (Richardson Bay Education Center and Mono Lake).

I am able to provide more detail on the results of the Megatiks, your official SAS team. Despite occasional drenching showers we managed to find 214 species, beating last year's record by 5 species! That represents a third of all species in North America, and may well be the highest count total for any single team in North America this spring.

There were too many great moments to squeeze into this short article. Among the highlights were a Black-footed Albatross at Pigeon Point which we saw just as a squall floated overhead. Getting more and more soaking wet we tracked the bird until sheets of rain obscured our view. There were so many other exciting moments; long lines of Ibis flying overhead in the Central Valley; a cacophony of birds breaking into song as the sun emerged after a shower on Mines Road; a very late and very comfortable looking Redhead lounging at Mountain View Forebay; three species of owl and a Poorwill calling simultaneously in Del Puerto Canyon. The list goes on and on.

I remain in awe of Barry Sauppe's identification skills. I am deeply appreciative of his and Dan Keller's energy and enthusiasm for this project, as well as that of the many other individuals who are making Birdathon possible this year. Stay tuned for more information next issue!



Oakland Museum Will Co-Sponsor Sierra Field Recording Workshop

"Nature Sounds: Collection and Use in Science and the Creative Arts," the 10th annual sound recording workshop, will take place June 17-19 at the Sierra Nevada Field Campus of San Francisco State University near Yuba Pass, under the auspices of the Nature Sounds Society and the Museum's California Library of Natural Sounds, which was established in 1969 as a permanent archive of regional nature sound recordings. Within its walls—and database—is housed the largest and most comprehensive collection of insect, amphibian, reptile, bird, mammal and environmental sounds west of the Rockies.

Expert recordists and creative artists will speak on a range of scientific, artistic and technological issues, and participants rising early to hear and record dawn choruses will have the chance to create their own cassettes to take home. No experience or special equipment is necessary to participate and families are welcome. For more information, cost and registration, call 510/238-7482.



Earth Island Journal Report

Excerpted from *Earth Island Journal* Spring 1994

Thanks to the efforts of EII's (Earth Island Institute) development consultant Katie Knight and a \$10,000 grant from the Portland-based True North Foundation, this all-kenaf issue of the *Journal* is making publishing history. This edition marks the first time that a US magazine has been published without sacrificing any trees.

The paper was made from kenaf (rhymes with giraffe), a fast-growing African plant that can reach a height of 15 feet in five months and can produce 8-10 tons of biomass per acre. The US paper industry's own studies confirm that an acre of kenaf can produce five times as much pulp in a year as an acre of trees—and at half the cost.

ELI's Kenaf Campaign Makes News

In an article about kenaf for *In Context*, Lori Weston reported that, "in 1992 45

countries produced tree-less paper, accounting for nine percent of the world's paper supply. Studies have found that these plant-fiber processes are significantly less expensive than woodpulp paper making." On the question of kenaf's ability to meet quality printing standards, *In Context* reported: "Hopeful indications include the successful printing of a section of *Earth Island Journal*'s Summer 1993 issue on kenaf paper."

Utne Reader published an article on kenaf in its tenth anniversary issue. *Audubon* ran a story in its April issue and an *E Magazine* article ("Tree Free by 2003?") cited the *Journal*'s pioneering use of kenaf paper.

The January issue of *Mother Earth News* ran a story ("Save a Tree, Grow Kenaf") that brought kenaf to the attention of hundreds of farmers across the US and produced a flurry of requests to *EIJ* for seed samples and copies of *EIJ's Kenaf Growers' Guide*. In just one week, the *Journal* received calls from farmers in California, Pennsylvania, Texas, Oregon and Virginia. The most farflung request came from two hardy farmers in North Pole, Alaska. *EIJ* has prepared a factsheet for farmers, explaining how to participate in the USDA "seed trials" for experimental kenaf growing.

The Kenaf Honor Roll

Pioneering kenaf users include Rainforest Action Network, Project Lighthawk, Ancient Forest Rescue, Hawkwatch, Sierra Club (Texas), Audubon Society, Community Recycling Center (Illinois), the Berkeley Ecology Center (California), Forest Guardians and Earth Island Institute.

The Great LA Cleanup/Earth Day Committee has chosen kenaf as the official paper for its Earth Day posters, letters and flyers.



WHO...

Do you ask for expert advice on bird feeding?

- Feeders • Seed • Houses • Books
- Tapes/CDs • Baths • Binoculars • Gifts



Wild Bird Center

926 El Camino Real
San Carlos
(415) 595-0300

NAS Western Regional Conference, Asilomar March 26-29, 1994

By Leslie Flint

The Western Regional Conference is held every two years at Asilomar. This year's theme was "Birds in the Balance," Audubon's neotropical bird conservation program, one part of a larger effort called Partners in Flight. PIF was launched in 1990 by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and serves as an umbrella organization to over 100 different participating organizations that work together to identify conservation priorities, including migrating birds.

The conference featured many excellent speakers at Plenary Sessions, notably Peter Berle, NAS President, and several invited speakers from Central America. The Concurrent Sessions included tracks emphasizing Birds in the Balance Monitoring Programs, International Partners in Flight/Birds in the Balance programs; Legislative issues both federal and local; Education and other Chapter issues and Habitat preservation and restoration.

For those of us living in the West, one of the most important issues is realization that habitat loss and overall decline of songbirds is not just an Eastern U.S. problem. Eastern migrants winter in eastern Central and South America, but most birds that breed in California, Oregon and Washington winter in an extremely small and sensitive area of Western Mexico, primarily the States of Sinaloa, Nayarit, Colima, Jalisco and Michoacan — areas that also have the largest population of Mexican endemics. When you look at a map and discover what a small area this is, you can see why we should be concerned not only about our loss of suitable breeding habitat but also about Mexico's loss of forest and wetlands due to farming, population pressures and development.

Another message stressed over and over again was the importance of communicating with your congresspersons regarding your views on the environment. There is concern that the Clinton Administration has an ambitious environmental agenda but is not currently putting effort into getting legislation passed; the Senate is conservative on the environment and we have lost some of our best pro-environment leaders; the

wise-use movement has a strong constituency and Congress is hearing more from those who would allow habitat destruction than those of us who would preserve it. We need to do what is necessary not only to preserve endangered species but also to keep common species common. Get involved! **Let your legislators hear from you!** Let the SAS office know of your interest in following legislative issues—join the Legislative Alert Network!

If you have never attended the Western Regional Conference, I suggest you put it on your calendar for 1996. I found it to be extremely informative, very exhilarating, and yes, somewhat overwhelming since there are so many important issues facing the environmental community today.



Audubon Canyon Ranch

News From Our Ranch

By Dan Murphy

Public Season Ending

Time does fly, and yet another public season is drawing to a close. As of this writing the 1994 season has been one of our most successful ever in terms of public interest in the Ranch. Between publicity in local papers and general interest in ACR our weekends have been pretty busy, but not so busy we're overrun. The Ranch will close for the season on July 17, so be sure to go out and see the heron and egret chicks.

Great Blue Herons, Great Egrets and Snowy Egrets are all on nests and birds should start fledging toward the end of June. In fact, if you put your visit off until July you're more likely to see some of the birds fledge. That first flight is quite a sight. The fledglings are adult size so they appear to be giants careening from one tree to the next, unable to grasp a branch, and always so very close to a fatal fall. They almost always make it though, so for us it is a bit of a comedy of errors. I guess for them it's like learning to skate — GET OUT OF THE WAY 'CAUSE HERE I COME AND I CAN'T STOP!!!



Tomales Bay Volunteer Opportunity

It seems early, but if you're a birder you're probably thinking about fall migration even before you're off on summer vacation. If that's the case, you may as well plan ahead now. As usual, John Kelly will be looking for a few experienced birders to help with our Tomales Bay shorebird counts in August and September. Dates aren't set yet, but if you call John at (415) 663-8203 you can get the information you need.

Welcome Pegi

We would like to welcome Pegi Knopp as the newest member of the ACR staff. She fills the new position of Development Officer. She comes to us from the Marine Mammal Center. She is a Marin Audubon Society member and has hosted at the ranch for years. Pegi will work with Skip to further our ongoing fund raising efforts.

Docent Training

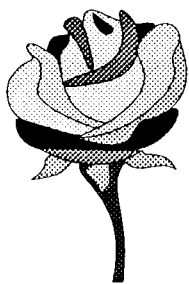
The 1994 Docent Training Class begins in September. The 22 Wednesday classes will be designed to provide you with the information and confidence to lead groups of 4th and 5th grade students on nature walks at the Ranch and to provide instruction in the classroom. An orientation session is scheduled for August 31. If you are interested in learning more about docent training, please call us at (415) 868-9244. There is a \$90 fee for this program.

Spring Seminars

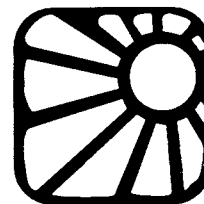
Participation in all seminars is by advanced reservation only. Please call the Ranch at (415) 868-9244 to register or for additional information. Full details for these seminars appeared in the March newsletter.

Amazing Coastal Marshes - Saturday, June 18 at Cypress Grove Preserve with John Kelly (\$30)

Butterfly Counts - Saturday, June 25 in Marin County; and Sunday, June 26 in Sonoma County; Wednesday, June 22 the Bolinas Lagoon Preserve, **Get-know-the-Critters Night** with Peterson (\$8).



Special Sale



Special prices on books and T-shirts!
Order through SAS office (415) 345-3724.

Tax included in price. Add \$1 per item if you want them mailed.

Birding at the Bottom of the Bay - Was \$10.75, now \$7.50

Birding Northern California - Was \$10.50, now \$7.50

Mono Lake Guide - Was \$6.00, now \$4.00

Birder's Handbook - Was \$17.50, now \$15.00

T-shirts - Were \$15.00, now \$9.50

Skunked? Hold the TJ

If your pet suffers a close encounter of the worst kind, you might want to try chemist Paul Krebaum's descending method. Prepare a bath using the following proportions:

- 1 quart of 3% hydrogen peroxide
- 1/4 cup baking soda
- 1 teaspoon liquid soap

Follow with a plain water rinse.

(*Chemical & Engineering News* p.90 10/18/93)



On The Shelf

By Michael Lee Huygen, MLS

Books are also an essential part of birding, but the illustrations that make them so useful also make them expensive. I have a pet stable of book sources I would like to share. I recently bought P. Harrison's SEABIRDS: AN IDENTIFICATION GUIDE and P. Hayman et al's SHOREBIRDS: AN IDENTIFICATION GUIDE for \$9.95 each (publisher's list price each, \$50)! The secret is Edward R. Hamilton, a bookseller specializing in publishers' closeouts, overstocks and remainders, including imports and university presses. The labor comes high though, for there are two 60+ page tabloid-sized catalogs to plow through each month, and an additional Supplement that accompanies orders! ERH accepts no calls, no FAXes, no credit cards; but

any book may be returned for full refund, no questions asked; and shipping/handling is a flat \$3.00 per order. Supplies are frequently limited so speed is essential.

For your own catalog, write to: Edward R. Hamilton, Bookseller, Falls Village, CT 06031-5000. I'll be glad to pass mine on if you want to see a sample.



Our next issue of the *Needles* will be in September.

Membership: We invite your membership in the **National Audubon Society/SAS**. To join, please complete and mail this form with payment to SAS, 30 West 39th Avenue, # 202, San Mateo, Ca 94403

☐ **National Audubon Society Membership:** New members \$20.

Members receive *Audubon* magazine and the *Needles* newsletter. Make check payable to National Audubon Society.

☐ **Needles only subscription:** \$10 annually (includes 9 issues per year).

Make check payable to Sequoia Audubon Society.

☐ **Donation:** SAS greatly appreciates your tax deductible donation which helps fund the Chapter's education, conservation and ongoing activities.

For membership renewal information, call National Audubon at 1-800-274-4201.

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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 last day of the month two months prior to the month of publication. 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. Please notify Sequoia Audubon Society at (415) 345-3724 of name or address changes. Please send RENEWAL MEMBERSHIPS directly to National Audubon in the envelope accompanying your renewal notice. LATE RENEWALS should be sent through Sequoia Audubon Society to avoid a lapse in magazine or newsletter issues.

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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.

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Trudy & Arnold Duncan for their donation of the following book to Sequoia Audubon

Society: *Golden Guide of Families of Birds* 1971, *102 Favorite Audubon birds of America*, *The Great Bird Illustrators and Their Art - 1730-1930*, Peyton

Skipwith -1979, *The Birds of Paradise*, Michael Everett -1978, *Birds Of The World* by Oliver L. Austin -1961, *Audubon's Birds of America. Baby Elephant Folio*

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