



sequoia needles

Bulletin of the Sequoia Audubon Society ♦ San Mateo County ♦ Volume 44, Number 7 ♦ April 1995

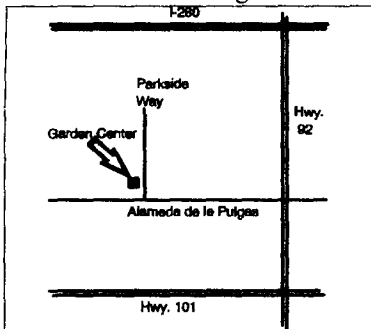
This Month's Program



April is Audubon month. Yet many of us don't understand or appreciate the work of our National Audubon workers in Sacramento. **Jill Shirley**, one of our National Audubon Western Region

Representatives, will present the main program on "Highlights of the Western Region."

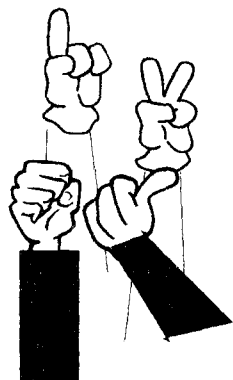
We will also be treated to one of **Audubon Canyon Ranch's** always exciting short presentations. (Audubon Canyon Ranch is an independent organization supported and endorsed by Sequoia Audubon but not associated with the National Audubon Society.)



New Slate Of Officers

The following slate of officers will be presented for election at the June General Meeting.

President	Julia Mandeville
Vice-president	Rich Kuehn
Treasurer	Debbi Frantz
Secretary	Francis Toldi
Directors	Robin Smith
	Cliff Richer



This is a unique year in that all of the present office-holders have agreed to stand for re-election. However, the proposal of these candidates by the Nominating Committee does not close the process. Any member may be nominated from the floor (with the permission of the nominee) by any other member in good standing.

**WATCH NEXT MONTH'S NEEDLES FOR
DETAILS ON THE MAY MEETING**

From The Editor



This is my third month as your temporary editor while the "Great Editorial Search" continues. President Julia Mandeville tells me that we have a new editorial staff in place and we just need to hold a meeting to turn over the reins, so you should be getting a new look to the **NEEDLES** in April.

I have enjoyed my three month stint, just as I enjoyed a previous 11 years as editor. And I have made a standing offer to the Board of Directors to step in as temporary editor in the future, should it be necessary.

Some of you may have noticed that the **NEEDLES** had a somewhat different look and feel to it under the stewardship of Harriette Judge and Michael Lee Huygen. You also probably noticed that I reversed some of their changes when I resumed editing the **NEEDLES**. I want you all to know that the reversion to an older format was not a real or implied criticism of Harriette or Michael Lee. I think they did an excellent job. It was just easier for me to do the newsletter in an old and familiar format.

I expect the new editors to find their own format and their own way of putting the newsletter together. At a recent Bay Area Audubon Chapters meeting, we discovered that each of the nine chapters had its own methodology. The only thing we had in common was that we were all computerized.

Nevertheless, among my scattered and confused notes some common threads emerged:

1. Always have your regular features in the same place in each newsletter. Example - the calendar, meeting announcements, contributions, etc.
2. Use graphics. They tend to relieve dullness and make the text easier to read.
3. Don't sacrifice text to graphics. *Audubon* was a great magazine before it started winning awards for its graphics.
4. Personalize the newsletter. Use submissions from the members *and* if you have the proper hardware, use photographs of and by members. (I understand that the new editors have scanning hardware and can convert photos for the **NEEDLES**. I would therefore recommend that we now look for an official photographer who would be responsible for at least one photo per newsletter.)

And finally....to my successors. Good luck!



"In a democracy, individual understanding of problems and an aroused public opinion are essential to constructive action. It is my considered judgment that in the Northwest true understanding of the forest problems has been delayed by the hired men of the forest industries, who have been adroit in issuing misleading propaganda."

--- Henry Wallace, Secretary of Agriculture, 1942

The NEEDLES is printed by O.I.C.W.



Calendar

April

THURSDAY, APRIL 6 - BOARD MEETING at the Sequoia Audubon Office at 7:30 PM. All members welcome.

Please call ahead to be sure there will be room.

SATURDAY, APRIL 8 - SAN BRUNO MOUNTAIN FIELD TRIP -

POSTPONED TO SATURDAY, MAY 20 - Mac MacCormick, an accomplished birder with the Golden Gate Audubon Society, the author of the San Bruno Mountain Checklist and of the chapter on San Bruno Mountain in our soon-to-be-published update of *San Francisco Peninsula Birding*, is our leader on this trip. **POSTPONED TO SATURDAY, MAY 20. More details in next month's NEEDLES.**

THURSDAY, APRIL 13 - GENERAL MEETING - IT'S AUDUBON

MONTH! Jill Shirley of National Audubon's Sacramento Office tells us about the responsibilities of the Western Region. Audubon Canyon Ranch also is featured in a short program on this remarkable enviro-education organization. Meeting begins at 7:30 PM with the program at 8:00. At the San Mateo Garden Center on the Alameda at Parkside.

SUNDAY, APRIL 16 - MINES ROAD FIELD TRIP - This is an auto caravan through an isolated valley where we usually find phainopepla, Lewis' woodpecker, Lawrence's goldfinch, golden eagle and prairie falcon while road-runner, wood duck, wild turkey, Costa's hummingbirds and rufous-crowned sparrows are likely. Yet, despite its seeming isolation, you are more than an hour 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 over the years varying between 40 and 90 degrees at this time of year. There are only two reliable restroom facilities, at lunchtime and at mid-afternoon, and no gasoline stations until I-5, so be prepared. To get there, take I-580 past Livermore to the Vasco Road exit. Take a right at the exit and follow Vasco to its end. Take a right. In about 1/2 mile you'll come to Mines Road on the left. We will meet at this intersection at 8:30 A.M. Late arrivals will have no problem in catching up with the group by simply following Mines Road.

LEADER CLIFF RICHER 355-4058

SUNDAY, APRIL 23 - YERBA BUENA NURSERY FIELD TRIP - The variety of habitat and plantings at this popular nursery provides a home for an amazing variety and number of birds. The nursery welcomes birders to its public areas during normal business hours. Meet at 9:00 AM in the nursery parking lot.

LEADER DAN KELLER 726-3306

SATURDAY, APRIL 29 - 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 and wood ducks. 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 \$5 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.

COORDINATOR LOUISE FLETCHER 591-6804.

(Continued on Page Three)

News from Our Ranch

ACR



Dan Murphy

The Marin hills are green with fresh grasses and leaves, the product of our wet winter. Wildflowers

bloom in open fields and beneath oaks and redwoods. Birds sing from deep riparian cover and from tree top snags. Egrets guard eggs which will soon hatch young to join their great blue cousins.

Our trails are open and inviting. Consider a three mile hike which teases you to discover as many as half a dozen habitats and perhaps as many micro-climates. Listen to the flow of water over rocks and deadfalls; a winter wren's prolonged melody; the breeze-tousled leaves; the gentle tapping of a foraging nuthatch or the shattering drumming of a territorial pileated woodpecker. Look down at a columbine or touch a mimulus to see it close before your eyes.

This and so much more is the Ranch. Enjoy these wonders with us. By May the moment will have passed and new wonders will take their place.

HOSTING AT THE BOLINAS LAGOON

PRESERVE is easy, enjoyable and interesting. Each public season we ask your help in performing this very important function. From now until July 16 you can volunteer to greet visitors at the Ranch, have them register and give them enough information to start them on the trails or get them to the picnic area. You will also have enough time to visit the heronry and the bird hide yourself. With luck you might even have time to hike one of the longer trails.

Sequoia Audubon is committed to provide hosts for all weekends in May and for May 29. Call the office (345-3724) to volunteer for May. Call the Ranch (868-9422) for other days.

FORTY-SEVEN NEW DOCENTS completed the 23 week training program and have graduated as the class of '95. By now they have guided their first groups of school children and they are full-fledged members of that incredible group of volunteers who make ACR's education program a national model of excellence.

UPCOMING SEMINARS:

Spring Wildflowers: A Personal Introduction with John Petersen at the Bouverie Audubon Preserve. Sunday, April 2 (\$10 or \$20 per family)

Spring Workday at Cypress Grove with John Kelly and the ACR Staff. Saturday, April 29. No charge but bring your own lunch.

Register for these seminars by calling 868-9422.



Earth Day Notes

ENDANGERED SPECIES

FORUM April 19 - Preliminary event to Earth Day. 7 PM at the City of the City Council - Chamber. Anna Esboo will preside.

HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECTS

- 1 **Edgewood Park.** 10 AM to 3 PM on both April 22 and 23. Meet at the parking lot on Edgewood Road.
- 2 **Pescadero Marsh.** Beginning at 10 AM on both the 22d and 23d. Meet at State Park Headquarters at the end of Water Lane in Pescadero.
- 3 **Pacifica State (Linda Mar) Beach.** April 23 from 10 AM to 1 PM. We'll meet in the parking lot at Crespi and Highway One.
- 4 **Montara Mountain.** 10 AM to 5 PM on both the 22d and 23d. Meet at the entrance to McNee State Park north of Montara State Beach.
- 5 **San Bruno Mountain.** 10 AM to 3:30 PM on April 23. Meet at the Bank of America building on Old County Road in Brisbane.

(These projects involve the removal of invasive non-native species of plants.)

- 6 **Ravenswood Preserve.** 10 AM on April 22 only. Meet in the parking lot at the end of Bay Road before Cooley Landing. (This is a clean-up project.)

Bring water, lunch, gloves and appropriate tools such as shovels and picks. Enjoy the out-of-doors in company with other "shrub-roots" environmentalists. Be satisfied that you are doing something to help our precious ecological heritage.

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Northeast Pennsylvania Audubon Society is asking everyone celebrate Earth Day, April 22, by wearing Blue and Green.

.....

A native plant sale is being held at the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center from 10 AM to 4 PM in connection with their Environmental Information Fair. In addition there will be nature activities for kids and interpretive programs. Volunteers wishing to help in a morning refuge clean-up should show up at 9 AM.



Calendar May

THURSDAY, MAY 4 - BOARD MEETING at the Sequoia Audubon Office at 7:30 PM. All members welcome. Please call ahead to be sure there will be room.

SATURDAY, MAY 6 - SAN PEDRO VALLEY COUNTY PARK. This little jewel of a park nestled under Montara Mountain in Pacifica is a favorite with local hikers but its riparian habitat is often overlooked by birders. We will be joined on this spring visit by members of the San Pedro Valley Park Volunteers. The trip will be led by Judi Spitler.

THURSDAY, MAY 11 - GENERAL MEETING. Meeting begins at 7:30 PM with the program at 8:00. At the San Mateo Garden Center on the Alameda at Parkside. See next month's *NEEDLES* for details.

SUNDAY, MAY 14 - THE WILLIAMS' SISTERS RANCH. This marvelously tended ranch has been bequeathed to National Audubon and will eventually become one of Audubon's sanctuaries. Just off of Skyline Drive west of San Mateo it has an amazing diversity of habitat. Jesse Grantham of the Western Regional Office of National Audubon and an excellent birder will lead the trip.

SATURDAY, MAY 20 - SAN BRUNO MOUNTAIN FIELD TRIP - Mac McCormick, an accomplished birder with the Golden Gate Audubon Society, the author of the San Bruno Mountain Checklist and of the chapter on San Bruno Mountain in our soon-to-be-published update of *San Francisco Peninsula Birding*, is our leader on this trip.

FRIDAY, MAY 26 through MONDAY, MAY 29 - TIOGA PASS AND THE MONO BASIN. We'll meet at noon on Friday of this Memorial Day weekend at the beginning of Tioga Pass in Yosemite and proceed across the pass to Lee Vining on Mono Lake. If Tioga Pass is snowed in we'll meet in Lee Vining on Saturday morning. This is a reservations only trip. Contact the leader to reserve your place. The itinerary of the trip will remain flexible until the last minute due to snow conditions in the Sierras and the leader must have your name and phone number in order to advise you of any last minute changes. Contact Cliff Richer (355-4058) for details or to make reservations.

Field Trip Report

The Northern Refuges

President's Weekend - February 18, 19 & 20

When Cliff Richer had to withdraw at the last minute Werner Schumann stepped up to lead this trip to the Klamath Basin, Surprise Valley and the Northern Sierra. Cliff Richer and the trip's participants thank Werner for having done an outstanding job under trying circumstances.

The trip was blessed with unseasonably warm weather and although all of the expected species - bald and golden eagles, tundra swans, many species of geese and ducks, - were seen, the special birds - northern shrikes, tree sparrows and Bohemian waxwings - had apparently headed north already. Especially outstanding was a full daylight view of a short-eared owl. A total of 67 species were recorded by the group. One desirable side-effect of the trip is that Werner has agreed to lead at least one trip (Sawyer Camp Trail) for us next year.

---Cliff Richer



SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY INC.

30 W. 39th Avenue #202, San Mateo, CA 94403
(415) 345-3724

WINTER 1995 SAS BIRDSEED SALE - - - ORDER FORM

ALL ORDERS WITH PAYMENT MUST BE RECEIVED BY WEDNESDAY FEB. 15TH!!

Proceeds support local Audubon conservation and education programs

Please check preferred pickup location. Pickup dates will be Feb. 23-26, 1995 with details to be advised later.

☐ San Bruno ☐ Burlingame ☐ Belmont ☐ Half Moon Bay
☐ Pacifica ☐ San Mateo ☐ Atherton

			# BAGS	S-COST--S
AUDUBON WILD BIRD MIX.....	20 lb @ \$ 8.00 /bag		_____	= _____
red & white millet plus black oil sunflower				
RED/WHITE MILLET MIX	20 lb @ \$ 8.00 /bag		_____	= _____
BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER.....	25 lb @ \$15.00 /bag		_____	= _____
WHITE PROSO MILLET	25 lb @ \$10.00 /bag		_____	= _____
THISTLE	25 lb @ \$38.00 /bag		_____	= _____
	5 lb @ \$ 9.00 /bag		_____	= _____
SUNFLOWER CHIPS.....	25 lb @ \$31.00 /bag		_____	= _____

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

NAS Acquires New Sanctuary

On December 30, 1994, The National Audubon Society acquired 1400 acres of the historic McCord Ranch in Sonoma County. This fine example of oak-savannah woodland was turned over to Audubon as an open-space exchange for development rights on the other 1600 acres of the farm. It adjoins 1700 acres already slated to become Audubon property in the future. Both properties are joined by BLM property to the east.

NAS is further seeking conservation easements with Sonoma County on other adjacent properties. Audubon is proposing a cooperative land management agreement with both BLM and Sonoma County to manage the entire area as a single preserve.

Stone Lake NWR Gets Official Status

Stone Lake National Wildlife Refuge is now the newest unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System. The acquisition of 707 acres at two locations 10 miles south of Sacramento is a modest beginning to what is hoped will be a 9000+ acre refuge with an additional 5000 acres of adjacent state and locally controlled lands.

This northeastern Delta location is a key element in efforts to compensate for and restore lost wetlands in the Central Valley.

Public access to the refuge is now limited to pre-arranged excursions. For information on these excursions call the Stone Lakes NWR office at 916-979-2085

GGAS Settles Suit Against Oakland Airport

Golden Gate Audubon Society has achieved a favorable settlement in its 1986 suit against the Oakland Airport.

Under the settlement 70 acres of wetlands will be restored. Once restored by the airport these lands will be turned over to the East Bay Regional Park District for future management.

Sequoia Audubon Society

Drennan Named NAS VP For Ornithology

In a continuing reversal of the disastrous National Audubon policy of "de-emphasizing" its emphasis on birds, Dr. Susan Drennan has been promoted to Vice-president for Ornithology by the National Audubon Society.

Dr. Drennan is the former editor of the now defunct and sorely missed *American Birds* and down-sized *Field Notes*. As Vice-president she will continue to have responsibility for the magazine and the Christmas Count and will have Birds in the Balance Director Stan Senner report to her.

Life On The Edge

Life on the Edge is a new book which describes California's threatened and endangered species, their habitats and conservation efforts being made to save them. It is a joint undertaking of National Audubon, BioSystem Books and Southern California Edison. Information is taken first-hand from biologists, resource managers and scientists and is illustrated with historic photographs. The book will be introduced at the Endangered Species Act Symposium being held at UC Davis on April 11-12.

Kern Valley Festival

Some biologists claim that the Kern River watershed has greater diversity than any other place in the United States. This first annual festival on April 29-30 is designed to celebrate this diversity.

Events will be held in Kernville and in Weldon. There will be displays and workshops on nature photography, birding and natural landscaping. Short nature walks along the Kern River and longer field trips for wildflowers, birding and habitat restoration will be conducted.

White water rafting and book signings are also scheduled. For further information call Lynn Overtree (619-378-2531) or Judy Hyatt (619-376-1117) for further information.

Learning More About Birds

The Golden Gate Raptor Observatory is offering opportunities to anyone who wants to learn more about raptors while assisting in a long-term wildlife conservation project.

If you can commit one day every two weeks from August through December call Buzz Hall or Alan Fish at 331-0730; or you can show up at either of the Orientation Meetings on Thursday, May 11 (7-9 PM) or Saturday, May 13 (10 AM to Noon).

Dan Murphy of GGAS and ACR is offering "Introduction to Avian Field ID & Habitats of Central Coastal California" at the California Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park. The course will consist of four Thursday night (7-9 PM) lectures from April 20 to May 11 and three field trips on Saturdays, April 22 to May 6. Cost of the course is \$110. Academic credit is available at an additional cost of \$35. Call the Adult Education Dept. at the Academy (750-7100) for additional information.

Help Needed With 2 Species Counts

Bob Barnes, NAS's Birds in the Balance Program Coordinator is working with the California DFG to determine the status of **tri-colored blackbirds** in the state.

Two sets of dates have been set up for the counts. April 22 & 23 and May 20 & 21 have been designated. Two counts are necessary in order to help identify any northward movement that may occur between early and late nesting.

You can help by calling or faxing Bob Barnes at 916-481-5332 (phone) or 916-481-6228 (fax).

Brian Williams is continuing his work on **purple martins** in the state. He is requesting information on nesting locations, including the dates recorded, the location (preferably on a map) and the number of birds seen.

He has also offered to share the information he already has with regard to any location you may be interested in birding. Call him at 916-624-4862 to report or to get more details.

The Feather Duster

Cliff Richer

Identifying Empid Flycatchers (For Real This Time)

In a 1992 article in the Observer, the quarterly journal of the Point Reyes Bird Observatory, Rich Stallcup reviewed the problems in separating and identifying *empidonax* flycatchers here in the west.

Rich regularly writes identification articles for the Observer, and these alone are worth the price of PRBO membership. If you're a serious birder, you should try to find the original article - but here are a few excerpts and summations:

In order of importance, these characteristics should be noted:

1. Call Note
2. Song
3. Bill Size and Shape
4. Head-Tail Proportions
5. Eye-ring
6. Behavior
7. Winter Habitat (Central America)
8. Plumage

"Western type" flycatchers: The experts are still working on separating Cordilleran from Pacific slope flycatchers and many don't believe they ever should have been separated. On the coast, and anywhere west of the Sierras, you can be pretty sure of your ground in calling empid with a yellow throat and an almond shaped eye-ring a Pacific slope flycatcher.

Willow flycatcher: Its size, shape and lack of eye-ring make it more likely to be confused with a pewee than with other empids. The lack of a "vest", the tail-flicking and the mostly orange lower mandible identify it as a willow flycatcher.

Gray flycatcher: Palest of the empids, it is best identified by the tail. The tail is longer than in the other empids and has a narrow white outer web. Also note that it is the only empid that pumps its tail down. All others flick the tail up. **This tail movement is absolutely diagnostic.** We've also noted that the tail motion is much slower and more deliberate in this species than the others

Dusky Flycatcher: Intermediate between the gray and Hammond's flycatchers in plumage, altitudinal range and tail shape, it is separated from the gray by the tail-flick. The pale lores, giving it a spectacled look, the whitish outer webs on

the tail and its soft "whit" call separate it from Hammond's.

Hammond's Flycatcher: A "chunkier" (big head, short tail) bird than the dusky it is best distinguished by its sharp "pic" call note. Its outer tail feathers are tannish, rather than white. It is generally found at lower altitudes than the dusky but there is considerable overlap

In summary, Rich quotes the advice given by Roger Tory Peterson in his first *Field Guide to Western Birds* (1969). If the birds still perplex you, "...let most of them go just as *Empidonax*es."

The Backyard Birder

Rick Held

Pine Siskins

Pine Siskin (*Carduelis pinus*) are regular winter residents over much of the Peninsula. Recently, however, large numbers of the birds have invaded backyards and covered local feeders. These movements may or may not be classified as "irruptions," the siskin winter range is described as "erratic" in some publications. Whatever the official classification, large numbers of these birds have invaded the areas along the coast from Eugene, Oregon to the Monterey Bay during the Winter of 1992-93 and again this winter.

Some authorities suggest that these migrations are caused by food scarcities in the birds' normal ranges. In the case of the siskin, who are conifer seed specialists, the normal winter habitat of the largest portion of the population is in the lower elevations of the Sierra and coastal ranges. Several years of drought, good crops of pine cones and mild winters probably caused the siskin population to increase significantly. In 1992 and again in 1994, winter came early to the mountains, with snow and cold temperatures affecting access to food sources. The combination of large population and low food supplies likely drove the siskin down to the lower elevations, and our backyards.

One result of this phenomenon, other than a significant increase in the consumption of Niger seed, was an alarming increase in mortality of siskins at backyard feeders. These little guys would just puff up their feathers, sit still for a few hours and keel over, sometimes at the rate of one or two per day.

In 1993 we collected several sample birds and sent them to the state wildlife lab in Sacramento. The lab reported that the siskin had apparently expired of salmonella poisoning. This is a similar bacteria to the one that causes food poisoning in humans. It occurs naturally in the native bird population, but becomes more virulent when the birds are under extreme stress.

So, what is happening? I propose that these birds are stressed due to lack of food. They congregate at Niger and black oil sunflower feeders in order to survive, since the food available in their rather narrow specialty, pine seeds, is not abundant here. Food scarcity and resulting high congregations of birds at feeders facilitates transmission of the salmonella between birds, sickening the weaker ones.

What can be done? One solution might be to stop feeding, although you have to ask yourself if this is a solution or just removing the problem from your own yard. A better approach, assuming that you enjoy feeding and appreciate the opportunity to observe nature close-hand, is to provide Niger or sunflower, but frequently clean the exposed surfaces of the feeder with a weak solution of bleach and water (3% or less). Keeping the area under the feeder relatively clean of seed debris and droppings is also a good practice.

[This will be the last of my articles for "The Needles" for a while. Time demands of the business have made it increasingly difficult to devote the time required for the column. I would like to thank the Sequoia Chapter for allowing me to contribute these thoughts over the past year or so. I have enjoyed the writing, and the discussions that followed. I wish you all Happy Backyard Birding!]

Rick and Marsha Held own the Wild Bird Center on El Camino Real in San Carlos. (The Editor apologizes for not having had this column in the NEEDLES for the last two months. An error in the address followed by a dilatory reaction from the US Postal Service made it impossible to run Rick's two articles as scheduled. As a result we have an article we are holding in reserve for next February. We regret but understand Rick's decision to put a hold on his writings for a while, but we hope we will see him again in the pages of the NEEDLES before too long.)



Meet The Challenge

Julia Mandeville

- Our concern with pending legislation in the United States Congress continues this month. The earnest debate over the **Endangered Species Act** has begun. Commentators expect the process of examining, attacking and defending the Act to last a good six months. We urge our members to **immediately** write to our elected officials to urge the fullest protection for the act and to discourage compromises aimed at weakening its scope and enforcement. Here are the names and addresses of those officials. Please keep this list as we will be asking you to petition your representatives several times in the next few months.

- President Bill Clinton
The White House
Washington, DC 20503
Comment Line: 202-456-1111
Switchboard: 202-456-1414
E-mail: President@Whitehouse.gov

- Senator Barbara Boxer
1700 Montgomery Street, Suite 240
San Francisco, 94111
402-0100

- Senator Dianne Feinstein
1700 Montgomery Street, Suite 305
San Francisco, 94111
249-4777

- Representative Tom Lantos
400 S. El Camino Real, Suite 820
San Mateo, CA 94402
342-0300

- Representative Anna Eshoo
698 Emerson St.
Palo Alto, CA 94301
E-mail: Annagram@HRHouse.gov

BOOST YOUR SELF-ESTEEM!

Sign up to host at Audubon Canyon Ranch! You'll help the Ranch and feel good about yourself.

Birdathon'95!!!!

The BIRDATHON is - after the Christmas Count - the largest participation event sponsored by the National Audubon Society. A number of teams of Sequoia Audubon Society birders will embark on this year's BIRDATHON fundraiser. Some of the teams will start early in the morning, well before dawn and assumedly end sometime around dusk. Others will go for shorter periods. Whatever their methods, they will try to identify as many different species as possible in a 24 hour period. You can help out by pledging a nominal amount (from 5 cents on up) for each species identified by one of the teams. This year National Audubon is donating its half of the proceeds to the Richardson Bay Education Center. Your contribution will help preserve this invaluable resource.

You can show your commitment to SAS and your confidence in our birders by "pre-paying" your pledge for 150 species. Make all checks payable to **Sequoia Audubon Society** and mail to:

30 West 39th Avenue,
San Mateo, CA 94403

All honored pledges are tax-deductible.

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 _____

Field Trip Reports

Altamont Pass - February 4, 1995

A total of 16 individuals enjoyed a fine day of birding with very good weather, except for a period of fairly deep fog in the morning. Most of the anticipated raptors were found including both golden and bald (one immature) eagles, **six ferruginous hawks** and one rough-legged. The rough-legged hawk was a quick fly-by seen by only a few. The ferruginous hawks included one fairly dark immature bird and an adult dark morph bird.

Falcons were notable by their absence as neither prairie nor peregrine were found. A probable merlin (based on its characteristic straight rapid flight) buzzed a perched red-tail. Burrowing owls were also seen.

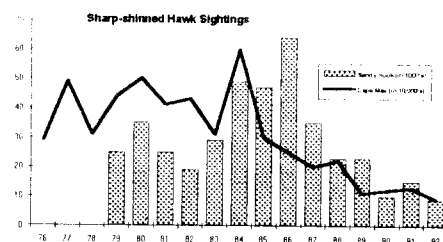
A total of 55 species were found including rock wren, California quail, lark sparrow, greater white-fronted geese, Say's phoebe, horned lark, tree swallow and tri-colored blackbird. For the first time since we have made this trip we did *not* see mountain bluebirds. However, they might have been obscured by the fog.

---Nick Corso

Eastern Sharpies in Decline

Paul Kerlinger, Director of the Cape May Bird Observatory, has reported a sharp decline in the numbers of migrating sharp-shinned hawks sighted along the East Coast. With the exception of the 1986 year, the graphs of sightings from Cape May and Sandy Hook show a remarkable correlation.

At Hawk Mountain, further inland, the decline was not noticeable until 1992. The cause is unknown but is under intensive study at this time.



Environmental Notes From History

I am the grass. Let me work. Carl Sandburg
 Our national flower is the concrete cloverleaf. Lewis Mumford
 Nothing is more beautiful than the loveliness of the woods before sunrise. George Washington Carver
 Birds are entangled by their feet, men by their tongues Chinese fortune cookie (author unknown)
 Fit thyself into the environment that thou findest on earth. Marcus Aurelius
 My riches consist not in the extent of my possessions but in the fewness of my wants. J. Brotherton
 I like trees because they seem more resigned to the way they have to live than other things do. Willa Cather

Sequoia *NEEDLES* is published monthly except in January, July and August. Members are encouraged to submit material to be published in the *NEEDLES*. The deadline for the submission of materials is the first day of the month preceding publication. These may be original articles, original artwork or cartoons, or uncopyrighted material from other sources. Items dealing with conservation issues must be submitted to the Conservation Committee prior to publication.

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