

This Month's Program

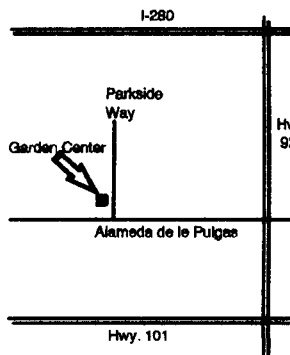


A Win-Win Approach With Endangered Species Dr. Tom English

Doctor English, the Senior Environmental Manager for GE Nuclear Energy and a Vice President of the Peninsula Conservation Center Foundation, takes a look at historical extinction rates and compares them with today's extinction rates.

However dismal the picture may be, Dr. English believes there is room for optimism and will show us how we can protect both endangered species and the human race from extinction.

Meetings are held the second Thursday of the month at the San Mateo Garden Center, on the Alameda at Parkside. An Informal get-together begins at 7:30 PM with the General Meeting and program at 8 PM.



Next Month's Program

Can Ecology Be a Basis for Ethics?

David Schrom examines land use and transportation issues.

Año Nuevo Christmas Count Does It Again!

Only during the drought years did we have sunny Año Nuevo Counts and even then they were the exception, not the rule.

The Año Nuevo Count proved once again its affinity for rotten weather. Last month's count was held in rainy weather - a phenomenon that has plagued this count as long as your Editor can remember.



From The Editor

Just In Case We're Late

There are some months when you just can't avoid foreign objects hitting the fan. This is one of those.

Just as we were about to start on the Needles, our computer started making strange noises and weird colored objects flitted across the screen.

Your Editor, displaying his full computer expertise, decided that his hard disk had crashed, destroying all material entered since the last backup (November 1995) and immediately whisked his machine off to a place where boy-faced young wizards made mysterious passes over the electronic corpse.

The wizards discovered that the mother board had burned out. Since there was no father board, our computer had become a cyber-orphan. This saddened us but we were happy to learn that the replacement would upgrade the computer to a degree we had hoped for but had not expected would be possible. Then they discovered my memory chips were obsolete and wouldn't work with the new board. That hurt since it nearly doubled the original estimate.

The replacements were made and the computer plugged in. Oops, now there wasn't enough power for the new mother board. A new power supply was added. The computer chattered away happily, but the monitor remained blank. Since I thought it would be nice to see what I was doing, I authorized a new video card. In it went. Now the computer chattered away, the screen lit up and all seemed well. Suddenly screams of agony began coming from the back of the machine. The modem was dying! I selected a new modem and the wizards made more motions over the reviving corpse. Lo and behold, it now worked. Everything had been replaced *except* the disk drives, reestablishing my reputation as one of the world's foremost computer non-experts.

The bad news was that the repair had cost me three times what I had expected. The good news was that I hadn't lost any data and that I now had a brand new almost state-of-the-art machine at a relatively bargain price.

At the same time that my computer was undergoing its forced rehabilitation, Anne Moser informed me that our printer had lost its training supervisor and they needed more time in order to meet our deadline!

So, if you got your Needles late, don't blame us. Blame PG&E (the principal wizard attributed my computer burnout to the blackout), or blame our printing supervisor's new employers.

On the other hand, if you did get it on time, credit Anne Moser and her distribution crew who did yeomen work to get this edition to you.

The mission of Sequoia Audubon Society is to participate actively in environmental education, and conservation and in the restoration, preservation, protection and enjoyment of our native natural resources with emphasis on birds and their habitats.



The S A S Calendar

ATTENTION!

Some of the directions & meeting places of field trips have changed since the December *Needles*. The directions in this issue are the ones to use.

February

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1- 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, FEBRUARY 3, THE RAPTORS OF ALTAMONT PASS - This area east of Livermore is best known for its windmill farms - except to birders. For birders, Altamont Pass is noted as the winter home of a great number and variety of hawks and eagles. Every winter the resident red-tails, prairie falcons and golden eagles are joined by their cousins fleeing the snows and cold of the north. Peregrines, bald eagles, rough-legged and ferruginous hawks are only some of the visitors to these rolling grasslands and rocky outcrops. This trip normally extends into the afternoon so bring lunch and liquids. We'll begin our caravan of the area at 9:00 AM. To get there take I-580 past Livermore to Vasco Road. Take the Vasco Road exit north. We'll meet in the small shopping complex on the left about a block north of I-580. **Note that these directions are different from those given in December.**

LEADER NICK COIRO 349-1834

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6 - CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING at the Sequoia Audubon Office at 7:30 PM. All members welcome. Please call ahead to confirm time and place.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, COYOTE POINT FIELD TRIP. A special week-day field trip to explore the birds and environmental assets of this very special area. We'll meet at the lower end of the Museum parking lot near the picnic benches. **Note that these directions are different from those given in December.**

LEADER NICK COIRO 349-1834

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8 - GENERAL MEETING - De. Tom English examines the phenomena of extinction in his "Win-Win Approach with Endangered Species". The meeting will be at the San Mateo Garden Center on the Alameda at Parkside. Informal get-together begins at 7:30 PM with the General Meeting and program at 8 PM.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17 - REDWOOD SHORES - BICYCLE FIELD TRIP - Biking the trails along the sloughs makes it possible for us to get to areas not accessible by car. The area is quite productive in birdlife, particularly shorebirds, raptors and waterfowl. The nine mile trail may be muddy and rut

(Continued on Page Three)

ACR



News From Your Ranch

Mary Engebretsen

The ACR public season begins on Saturday, March 16 and continues through Sunday, July 14. As in previous years we will be open Weekends and holidays from 10 AM to 4 PM.

Have you signed up for your opportunity to act as Host for a day? Although each chapter has been assigned specific dates during the season, a volunteer may sign up to host for any day. You may not be available to host during your chapter's assigned month or you may decide to host several times during the season in order to see all stages of the nesting. If you want to host at any time, for any reason, you can do so by calling the Bolinas Preserve at 868-9244.

Are you new to hosting? What is the procedure? What can you expect from your day? To help you, Ray Peterson will take the new hosts for a morning walk at 9:00 AM and conduct a Pre-Amble Orientation at 9:30 of each hosting day. Bring a friend or family member along so you can hike the trails during the breaks. At the end of the season, ACR will honor the hosts at a barbecue.

Thirty-three trainees will join the ranks of docents at Bouverie Preserve in February. They have completed their 22 week training course and are eager to guide the school children on hikes or to visit them in their classrooms. Anyone wishing to become a docent at Bouverie should call Cia Donahue at 488-0337.

Join us on Bouverie's Guided Nature Walks on February 17, March 2, 16, April 6 and 20, or May 4 and 25. It is necessary to make a reservation as the number of people on each hike is limited. To make a reservation call 1-707-938-4554. Saturday, May 18 has been set aside for the Audubon chapters to make group reservations.

Do you want to work with wildlife in the field? Are you interested in marine mammals? Do you enjoy collecting data or acting as a docent? Each spring (March-June) the ACR Harbor Seal Study has collected data in Tomales Bay on the seals' reproductive success and on disturbances by humans. This year we will also work with the public on an educational program about harbor seals on the mudflats at the north end of Tomales Bay. For more information on either program, call Mary Ellen King at 1-707-537-1546.

SFBBO's '96 Classes

The San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory will conduct the following classes in 1996:

Gull Identification
Shorebirds
Owls
Pelagic Birds
Raptors
Wildlife Pencil Art

Don Starks
Howard Cogswell
Paul Noble
Debbie Shearwater
Allen Fish
Chuck Stasek

For more information, call SFBBO at 1-408-946-6548.



The S A S Calendar

(Continued from Page Two)

ted with potholes and rocky areas. The leader has traveled it often on a street bike with no problems but a mountain bike is best. We will meet at 8:30 AM at the western end of Bridge Parkway. Take the Marine Parkway exit from Route 101 at the Ralston Avenue Exit to Redwood Shores. At Bridge Parkway turn left and park at the end of the street. The trip should end about noon. **RAIN CANCELS THE TRIP.** The trip will be restricted to 8 participants, and you will have to call the office (345-3724) for reservations. If the trails are too muddy, the trip will be diverted to Foster City. Participants will have to call the leader the night before the trip to find out if such a diversion is necessary and to get directions to the new location. Call before 10 PM..

LEADER NICK COIRO 349-1834

March

SATURDAY, MARCH 2, PESCADERO MARSH - John and Nina Padley truly 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, Pescadero Marsh is one of the premier birding spots in the county so birders need not worry that their hobby 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. at the parking lot opposite Pescadero Road on Hwy. 1.

LEADERS JOHN AND NINA
PADLEY

TUESDAY, MARCH 5 - CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING at the Sequoia Audubon Office at 7:30 PM. All members welcome. Please call ahead to confirm time and place.

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

THURSDAY, MARCH 14 - GENERAL MEETING - David Schrom will give a presentation titled "Can Ecology Be a Basis for Ethics", covering land use and transportation issues. The meeting will be at the San Mateo Garden Center on the Alameda at Parkside. Informal get-together begins at 7:30 PM with the General Meeting and program at 8 PM.

SATURDAY, MARCH 16 - SAWYER CAMP TRAIL - This is a new field trip by a leader who so ably filled in on the Klamath Field Trip last year. See next month's *NEEDLES* for details.

LEADER WERNER SCHUMANN

Eubanks E-Mails on the National Audubon Society

Ted Eubanks, a member of the National Audubon Society Board of Directors and a long-time bird conservationist wrote a long Internet E-mail letter to those who had been critical of the National's position. The following are excerpts taken from this letter.

"As many of you are aware, beginning in November, 1994 we embarked upon a strategic planning process to evaluate and re-direct our Society. We crafted a plan that commits the organization to simple, clearly prescribed mission: 'to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, **focusing on birds**, wildlife and habitat for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity'."

"Our commitment to bird conservation is categorical, unequivocal and unambiguous."

"Audubon envisions a world where humankind accepts the obligations of being a part of nature... We seek to shape a culture in which the violation of nature is socially, politically and morally reprehensible."

"Audubon works toward a future in which public policy and individual choice are framed by environmental consciousness and sensitivity. We work toward a future where environmental conflict and divisiveness are supplanted by cooperation and respect. We work toward a future where debate and dialogue are shaped by environmental literacy, not by political rhetoric and dogma."

"Should Audubon improve? Without a doubt. *Audubon Fieldnotes* is a disappointment and I am firmly dedicated to see it restored to its previous level of quality. However, remember that at its peak *American Birds* did not exceed 20,000 subscribers. „we must break into a larger market. I welcome any suggestions..."

"Finally, what about Audubon Magazine? You will see a gradual transformation... but I ask your patience as we test each modification in a limited market."

"**Audubon has suffered, at least at a certain level, for the last decade from mission drift.** Yet the vast majority of our staff and members continued along our century-long path for bird conservation. **Audubon is as committed to and invested in bird conservation** as at any previous time in its history... I cannot conceive of a more dynamic, energetic and focused organization than the Audubon we presently have in the making."

Italics and bold-face lettering in the article were provided by your Editor, who welcomes and applauds Ted's comments. They denote a marked change from the course of personal ambition charted out by the previous President. If you want to receive a copy of the entire letter - and you should - send your request and a self-addressed stamped envelope to the office.

❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖

It would indeed be a tragedy if the history of the human race proved to be nothing more than the story of an ape playing with a box of matches on a petrol dump. David Ormsby Gore

Environmental Ed. Award Nominations Due

Nominations for Sequoia Audubon's 1996 Environmental Education Award are due on March 4. This award is presented to individuals who have contributed to increased environmental awareness in our community. Individuals do not have to be professional educators or members of Audubon in order to be nominated.

If you have a worthy candidate and do not have nomination forms or feel that you may not make the deadline, contact Robin Smith (325-3306) immediately. Depending on the number of nominations already received and the Education Committee's ability to review them, you may get permission to present a late nominee.

The award will be presented at the General Meeting on May 9.

Forest Speculations

Cliff Richer

Ancient forests, also known as old-growth forests, are revered as sacrosanct by today's conservationists.

Just the mention of clear-cutting provokes a knee-jerk revulsion among environmentalists.

The removal of dead, diseased and damaged trees is called "salvage logging" and is usually regarded as acceptable by forest lovers.

Are these valid beliefs? Once forest fires were anathema to everyone - loggers, environmentalists, forest managers and the general public. Today fire is recognized as a renewing and revitalizing force and selective burning is considered a legitimate means of preserving our forests. Are our current beliefs any more valid than our previous belief that all woodland fires should be suppressed?

Ancient forests are very rare in nature. Fire, disease and drought usually will "destroy" a forest long before it achieves the stable status of old-growth. Even if we have never experienced it, all of us are familiar with the "cathedral grove" concept of huge trees, little undergrowth and reverential silence that characterize ancient forests. A single species of tree dominates and it dominates be-

cause it has been successful in killing off or excluding its competition. Its high branches and foliage prevent the sun from reaching the forest floor and its leaves or needles cover the earth with a highly acidic layer that prevents seeds from germinating. The reverential silence is the result of a very limited wildlife population. Only the dominant species and its symbiotic partners survive. Certainly ancient forests deserve protection, but do they deserve it out of proportion to their normal occurrence in the natural world?

Is clear-cutting all bad? Wildlife surveys from Maine would lend considerable evidence that it is not. Five years after clear-cutting these areas in Maine were found to support a greater population and variety of birds than could be found elsewhere. Ten years after clear-cutting, wildlife of all kinds was more abundant than in the untouched forest stands. Most of the surveyed areas were less than 100 acres in size and were surrounded by forested areas. Here, in the relatively moist forests of northern Maine, selective clear-cutting seems to have replaced fire as a restorative power...at least when clear-cutting is done in relatively small patches.

The worst habitats, in terms of wildlife diversity and population, were found to be tree farms. These areas, after being clear-cut, were replanted by the logging companies and managed for a single species.

Not far behind were areas where salvage logging had been aggressively pursued. Dead or dying trees support huge numbers of insects. "Salvaging" eliminates a major food source for woodpeckers and other insectivores while cavity-nesting species depend on disease, woodpeckers and rot to create their homes. Salvaging these trees means homelessness for tree swallows, nuthatches, chickadees, woodpeckers and the small owls. The broken-off tops of lightning or wind-ravaged trees are prime nest spots for larger owls. They are also prime candidates for "salvage". In any logging operation, the ground is compacted or stripped of cover by bulldozers, trucks and logging machinery.

All of this gives considerable food for thought during a Democratic administration that sees salvage logging as a way of keeping both loggers and

environmentalists happy and a Republican Congress dominated by exploitive legislators that regard trees as merely an interim step in the process of creating lumber or paper. Right now it seems that little compromise is possible and, to me, that the compromises that are being made are all the wrong ones.

What's Wrong With Audubon Magazine?

Cliff Richer

This is a question I've asked before in these pages, without getting a satisfactory answer or without coming to any conclusion myself.

True the "prize-winning" graphics intrude on the photographs and contribute nothing. And true, the switch to soy-based printing inks "dulled" the colors. But why is it so boring?

Part of the answer came to me the other day as I was reading an article in the Fall issue of *Wilderness* on the problems with our National Wildlife Refuges. About two-thirds of the way through the article I asked myself, "Why am I reading this with such interest? There's very little here that I don't already know, I disagree with the writer on some points, he fails to develop other points that I'd really like to know more about and there's nothing really dramatic or compelling about his style. Yet, I'm reading this article and enjoying it."

In an effort to determine what secret this author had and that Audubon Magazine lacked, I went back to the beginning of the article to note his name. The writer's name didn't help me in determining the details of why Audubon Magazine is so dull but did fill in the "big picture".

The author of "A System Under Siege" was Les Line, the editor of Audubon fired by former National Audubon President Berle.

The National Audubon Board of Directors has pledged to re-vitalize the magazine. What better way could they choose than to hire back former editor Les Line?

n n n n n n n n n n n n n n n n
"The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science."

---Albert Einstein

February, 1996



SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY INC.

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

WINTER 1996 SAS BIRDSEED SALE - ORDER FORM

ALL ORDERS WITH PAYMENT MUST BE RECEIVED BY WEDNESDAY FEB. 14TH!!

Proceeds support local Audubon conservation and education programs

Please check preferred pickup location. Pickup dates will be February 22-25, 1996 with details to be advised later.

☐ San Bruno

☐ Burlingame

☐ Belmont

☐ Half Moon Bay

☐ Pacifica

☐ San Mateo

☐ Atherton

			# BAGS	\$--COST--\$
AUDUBON WILD BIRD MIX.....	20 lb @ \$ 8.50 /bag		_____	= _____
red & white millet plus black oil sunflower				
RED/WHITE MILLET MIX	20 lb @ \$ 8.25 /bag		_____	= _____
BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER.....	25 lb @ \$16.00 /bag		_____	= _____
WHITE PROSO MILLET	25 lb @ \$11.00 /bag		_____	= _____
THISTLE.....	25 lb @ \$53.00 /bag		_____	= _____
	5 lb @ \$11.50 /bag		_____	= _____
SUNFLOWER CHIPS.....	25 lb @ \$35.00 /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

Bird-A-Thon's A'coming!

How would you like to spend an enjoyable time looking at birds and at the same time help Sequoia Audubon and National Audubon's RICHARDSON BAY PRESERVE education program?

It's a great idea, a fine cause, and a lot of fun. Well, how do you do this? It's simple, become a participant in our Bird-A-Thon.

The Bird-A-Thon offers you the opportunity to:

- * Meet new birding friends,
- * Go birding with a few old friends,
- * To begin or expand a list of the birds in your backyard, or
- * To take a leisurely walk around your neighborhood or a

nearby park with family or friends and keep track of the birds seen.

It does sound great, doesn't it? Well, it is, but you ask, what is the catch. Well, we are also going to ask you to see if you can get family, friends, business acquaintances, neighbors, etc. to pledge to Sequoia and National Audubon a certain number of cents per species based on the number of species you see.

The more common way of participating in a Bird-A-Thon is to form a team of 4 or 5 people. This team then picks a date between April 15th and May 15th on which they will go out over a continuous 24 hour period and see how many species of birds they can find. Each team is also responsible for obtaining pledges based on an amount per species (many times with a cap on the total amount one will pay).

Sequoia Audubon also has an **Official Team** they sponsor. This team, the Megatiks, is composed of some of the hottest birders we have in the county. The Chapter also tries real hard to obtain pledges for this team. Last year, they found 204 species in the 24 hour period. We believe this might have been the

highest total of species seen in the United States. It's important that we, as Chapter members, support this team.

This year, though, we would like to see, if by opening the Bird-A-Thon up to birders of all levels, if we can't get more people involved.

To help make this possible, we will be helping put teams together. So, if this sounds like a fun thing to do, call our office (345-3724) and leave your name and dates you might be available. We will help get you together with others who will be participating. This is what we meant when we said, "make new birding friends".

Hey, we also know there are a lot of people who don't have the time to go several hours or all day. Therefore, this year, we want to have teams (can be just one or two people) who will watch the birds in their back yards. Even if we only come up with 8 - 10 species, it's educational, fun, and can still help raise money for SAS

and NAS if people pledge 50 cents or \$1 per species instead of the more normal \$.10 - \$.25 being pledged to some of the teams who will have more time to spend.

Again, this might be the beginning of a yard list for some, for others, it may be an opportunity to expand their yard lists. For many, yard lists aren't important, but the activity will simply give enjoyment in seeing birds and helping our cause.

If any of this sounds interesting, please let us know through the office. Leave your name, address and phone number, and we will get back to you to answer any questions you may have.

If we can help out in any way to answer questions, please call us at the office and one of us will call you back with details.



The Grasslands Water District

Little known outside of the Los Banos area, the Grasslands Water District is fast becoming a major conservation force in the Central Valley.

Originally created as a coalition of farmers and duck hunting clubs for the purpose of securing winter water rights for wetlands, the District has since evolved into a private wildlife management organization with significant educational and conservation programs.

While duck hunting is the primary interest of most of its members, the District, in its incarnation as the Grasslands Resource Conservation District, has sponsored efforts to assure that the area remains and expands its status as a major stopping place for migrating and winter shorebirds, as a nest site for raptors, owls and passerine species as well as waterfowl and as home to several endangered or threatened plant and animal species. White-faced ibis, once found almost exclusively on the Los Banos Wildlife Area are now more often found on the Grasslands - notably along Santa Fe Grade northwest of the wildlife area.

Like the Los Banos Wildlife Area and the National Wildlife Refuges, the Grasslands Water District strictly enforces hunting laws and often goes beyond. For example, hunting on the public lands is allowed seven days a week during the season. Hunting on the grasslands is limited to four days. The District sponsors two annual shorebird counts, the annual Christmas Count, bird banding projects, an education center and a bi-monthly, professional newsletter. In addition to working closely with its members and with environmental professionals, the District works with the California Waterfowl Association, Ducks Unlimited, National Audubon, The Nature Conservancy, Point Reyes Bird Observatory and the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network in their mutual interests of preserving and restoring wetlands habitat.

The headquarters of the Grasslands Water District and its affiliated Resource Conservation District are south of Los Banos at 22759 Mercey Springs Road.



The Feather Duster Cliff Richer

What is a Flush Bar?

1. A drinking establishment where patrons also sample various brands of toilet facilities... or
2. The handle to a bathroom plunger... or
3. A device attached about 8 feet in front of an alfalfa swather.

And Why Should I Care?

1. I'm redoing my bathroom... or
2. It's a great singles place.. or
3. It saves bird's lives.

How Does It Work?

1. You just turn the handle.
2. You push it up and down.
3. It scares the birds into flying before they are chewed up by the alfalfa swather.

And The Answer Is:

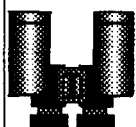
Number 3 to all of the above. The California Waterfowl Association is experimenting with this device to see if it can keep ground-nesting birds from being destroyed during alfalfa or grain harvests.

The test species, selected for their relatively large body size, were ring-necked pheasants and mallards. The test fields were 160 acres in size and adjacent to each other. A similar, but recently harvested, 160 acre field was surveyed to determine a base number of nests. The harvested field showed that 159 duck and pheasant nests had been destroyed. It was impossible to check on nests of smaller ground-nesting species such as meadowlarks because the destruction was too complete to determine the location and number of such nests.

The addition of the flush bar does nothing to prevent the destruction of the nests, but it is hoped that it will help save the nesting hens from death. First trials showed that mallards were unaffected by the presence of the flush bar. Their near-instantaneous vertical take-off (typical of all "puddle ducks") keeps most of them from being drawn into the harvester. About 8% of all mallards were killed in both test fields

Pheasants on the other hand, with their slower, more horizontal take-offs (similar to meadowlarks, sparrows and burrowing owls), are less able to get away and often fly right into the oncoming machinery. Comparison of the two fields showed that 41% of these birds were killed in a routine harvest, while only 17% died when they received the 8 foot warning offered by the flush bar.

Based on these results it is expected that the California Waterfowl Association will recommend that farmers equip their grain harvesters with flush bars. Even though the nests will be destroyed, it is expected that this warning device will save enough hens so that they may nest again - we hope in a safer place.



Field Trip Reports

**Saturday and Sunday
November 18-19
The Sacramento Wildlife
Refuges**

Six birders joined the leader at 7 AM for this trip to the Sacramento Valley Refuges only to be that the refuges were closed due to the deadlocked budget negotiations in Washington.

Nevertheless, the birders continued on after breakfast to the parking lot of the Sacramento Refuge where they birded the areas immediately surrounding the refuge headquarters while waiting for any late arrivals from the Bay area. When no more birders showed up at 9, the group decided to continue on to Gray Lodge.

En route the birders came across a harvested rice field where geese were feeding. An estimated 10,000 Snow and Ross's Geese with a scattering of Canadas and White-fronteds filled the air with their honking. The sight was awesome when they took to the air. On our way to Gray Lodge, we also stumbled upon an industrial pond where we got our fill of shorebirds. Gray Lodge, as expected, produced large numbers of ducks. The highlight of the day occurred when we scoped one of the "usual" spots for Eurasian Wigeons. Our search was more than successful. At one point we had four Eurasian Wigeons in sight at one time! The day ended on a sour note however when we were unable to find any raptors or feeding Sandhill Cranes in the usually reliable Butte Sink area.

On Sunday the four surviving birders elected to explore the western foothills of the coastal range. None of them, including the leader had ever birded this area before so it was a new experience for all of us. It proved to be a combination of oak woodlands, open fields and reservoirs. We were disappointed by the continuing absence of raptors, but were rewarded with a good variety of passerine species. Our best stop was the spillway of a reservoir providing water for the City of Santa Clara. The leader stopped there in hopes of finding a Canyon Wren or Dipper. Instead we found a flock of 12 Wild Turkeys and a young Bald Eagle.

The trip broke up when the group reached I-80. Despite the lack of cooperation by the Federal Government the trip had to be rated a success.

---Cliff Richer

Monday, December 4 Smith and Steinburger Sloughs

Despite occasional drizzle and mud, eight hardy early-rising birders enjoyed a fine morning of raptor viewing thanks to an apparent upswing in the population of small rodents. The earliest arriving birders saw two Short-eared Owls flying over the fields in their quest for breakfast. Other hunters in and over the grasslands included 21 White-tailed Kites (with 14 more over Bair Island), five Northern Harriers, six Red-tailed Hawks, r American Kestrels, 20 Great Egrets and a scattering of Great Blue Herons silently stalking their prey. Burrowing Owls eluded us and the Golden Eagle was a no-show, but the end of our short walk was rewarded with a Peregrine Falcon perched high atop a utility tower. Good views were also obtained of Clark's Grebe, Black-crowned Night-heron, Long-billed Curlew and Western Meadowlark. A total of 37 species were seen ---Al DeMartini

❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖
The Center for the Continuing Study of the California Economy predicts that the state's population will grow at twice the national rate over the next ten years. They estimate the population will grow to 35 million by the year 2000, a growth of 17%. About 80% of the growth will come from foreign immigration and is expected to be concentrated in counties like Solano and San Benito just outside the major metropolitan areas, and in the San Joaquin Valley

Gifts and Bequests

Sequoia Audubon 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 the Society. 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 the *NEEDLES* and personally on behalf of the Society. All gifts are tax-deductible.

William Groll

Richard Kuehn and Dean Schuler in memory of John Molave and John Amara

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.

Information for all officers and chairpersons should be mailed to 30 West 39th Ave., Suite 202, San Mateo, CA 94403-4561. Please send **RENEWAL MEMBERSHIPS** directly to National Audubon in the envelope accompanying your renewal notice.

Please send **LATE RENEWALS** or **NEW MEMBERSHIPS** through Sequoia Audubon Society to insure continuity of newsletter or magazine subscriptions.

OFFICERS

President	Julia Mandeville	726-5252
Past President	Anne Moser	324-1718
Vice-president	Richard Kuehn	591-4380
Secretary	Francis Toldi	344-1919
Treasurer	Debbie Frantz	571-6759

DIRECTORS

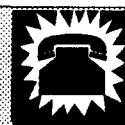
Term ending '96	Shirley Higuera	595-2187
	Iona Luke	
Term ending '97	Eileen Jennis-Sauppe	726-1081
	Tom Vanden-Bosch	369-8305
Term ending '98	Robin Smith	325-3306
	Cliff Richer	355-4058

STAFF

Terri Simpson	345-3724
---------------	----------

STANDING COMMITTEES

ACR Hosting	Julia Mandeville	726-5252
Audit		
Christmas Count	Dan Keller, Al DiMartini, R. Smith	
Conservation	Eileen Jennis-Sauppe	726-1081
Education	Robin Smith	325-3306
Field Trips-Weekday	Nick Coiro	349-1834
Weekends	Judi Spitler	355-9362
<i>NEEDLES</i> Editor	Cliff Richer	355-4058
Circulation Editor	Sue Cossins	347-9358
Programs	Dean Schuler	591-4380
Publicity	Ann Loper	343-9570
Membership		
Finance/Budget	Rick Baird	574-1067
Hospitality	Merry Haveman	344-2146



RARE BIRD ALERT

To Report
(510) 528-0288

Daily Sightings
(510) 524-5592

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 Ave., #202, San Mateo, CA 94403

☐ National Audubon Society Membership

New Members \$20 Members receive Audubon Magazine and the *NEEDLES*. Make checks payable to National Audubon Society.

☐ **Needles** subscription only. \$10 for 9 issues

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

For membership renewal information call National Audubon Society at (800) 274-4201

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone Number _____

7XCH C16

SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY

30 West 39th Avenue, #202
San Mateo, CA 94403-4561

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
SAN MATEO, CA.
PERMIT NO. 293

Printed on Recycled Paper

Time Valued Material - Please Do Not Delay