

This Month's Program

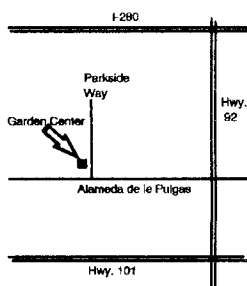
The Creeks Of The Peninsula

Karen Cotter, Streamkeeper

Program Director for Coyote Creek Riparian Station, will present a talk and a slide show on creeks in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties. The slide show, "Creeks: Life Lines to

Wildlife," features some of the unique wildlife and plant life found in and near our local creeks, potential threats to these unique habitats, and shows simple things that every resident can do to maintain and preserve these diverse ecosystems.

Coyote Creek Riparian Station is located in Alviso. The Station has been studying bird utilization of riparian corridors and performing biological surveys of creeks in Santa Clara County,



The meeting is

Thursday, November 14 at 7:30 PM at the San Mateo Garden Center at Parkside on Alameda.

The Christmas Counts Are Coming!

Because of Dan Keller's increasing involvement as a tour leader conjunction with Costa Rica's *Rancho Naturalista* (see this month's leading article), this year's Christmas Count Compilers will be Al DeMartini and Robin Smith.

It's not too early to sign up for either or both counts. Just fill in the application on Page Six and send it on to the office so that our new compilers can get their paperwork started.

Every year Sequoia's two counts rank among the top ten in the nation in number of species identified. Yet, among the top counts we traditionally have the lowest number of participants! WE NEED YOU!

Memories Of Costa Rica

Birding With Dan Keller

(First of Two Parts)

Rich Kuehn



In August I traveled to Costa Rica with nine other members of the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory for 16 days of fantastic birding under the tutelage of Dan Keller. Inasmuch as Dan plans to lead another trip from January 5-18, 1997, from which Sequoia Audubon will

benefit, I want to share some of my memories in hopes it will encourage others to visit this wonderful birding destination.

Often called the Switzerland of Central America, Costa Rica boasts more than 830 avian species in an area smaller than West Virginia. This richness of species is due to its divergent habitat and to its geographic location in the "bottleneck" between the two large land masses of North and South America. Our trip ventured into all the major habitats as we traveled from Caribbean foothill forests to the middle elevations and into the Talamanca highlands before dropping back into the Caribbean lowlands. Later we went to the semi-arid ranch lands of Guanacasta in the Northwest and on to the transition (humid/dry) lowland forest on the Pacific slope.

We departed SFO at 8:30 PM and after a brief stop at Los Angeles, we left on our overnight flight to San Jose. Upon clearing immigration, we were joined by Jay Vandergaast, a Canadian biologist employed as a birding guide by Rancho Naturalista, the first of the five lodges we would visit on our private bus.

The city soon gave way to hills, which had been cleared for coffee, sugarcane, and other crops. The towns became smaller as we climbed out of the Central Valley into the Tuis-Turrialba region of the Talamanca Mountains and we arrived at our comfortable resort.

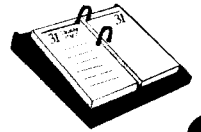
Even before we had eaten lunch, members began adding to their life lists with sightings of White-necked Jacobins, Rufous-tailed and Violet-headed Hummingbirds; Blue-gray, White-lined, Scarlet-rumped, and Palm Tanagers; Great Kiskadee, Tropical Kingbird, Social Flycatcher, Gray-headed Chachalaca, Hoffman's Woodpecker and the Clay-colored Robin, Costa Rica's national bird. It was all we could do to finish our meal before heading out on some of the almost seven miles of trails. A trip to the nearby "Berry Patch" hummingbird feeders added Green Hermit, Little Hermit, Green-crowned Brilliant and the more rare Snowcap (*Rancho Naturalista is one of the few places in the world where this little hummingbird can be called common, --Ed.*), Red-footed Plumeleteer, and Purple-crowned Fairy.

(Continued on Page Four)

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



SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 2 - STUDENT FIELD TRIP TO THE PALO ALTO BAYLANDS - Bring binoculars, an adult, and a spotting scope if you have one available. Directions: Take 101 to Palo Alto and exit on Embarcadero East. Go past the airport to the end of the road and turn left to the Baylands. Meet at the Duck Pond at 9:30 AM. You can park at the Duck Ponds or across the road from it. Anyone (including adults) is welcome to attend, but please notify the leaders. The trip will break up at 11:30 AM. For further information contact the leaders.

LEADERS: **ROBIN SMITH** **325 - 3306**
 MARY BRESSLER **994 - 3687**
 MAY BLOSSOM-WILKERSON

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 2 - BOOK-SIGNING PARTY - SAN PEDRO VALLEY COUNTY PARK - SAS will take over the Visitors' Center for a celebration and book-signing party for the new and revised San Francisco Peninsula Bird-watching. 1-5 PM. Authors, illustrators and committee members will be present to celebrate the completion of and sign copies of the book.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 6 - COYOTE POINT - A special week-day field trip to explore the birds and environmental assets of this very special area. The trip will begin at 9:00 AM. We will meet at the lower end of the museum parking lot near the picnic benches. **RAIN CANCELS THE TRIP.**

LEADER **NICK COIRO** **349-1834**

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7 - BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING at the Sequoia Audubon Office at 7:30 PM. All members are welcome. Please call ahead to be sure to confirm time and space.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14 - GENERAL MEETING at the San Mateo Garden Center on the Alameda at Parkside. An informal get-together begins at 7:30 with the General Meeting and Program at 8 PM.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 17 - SHARP PARK SHORELINE AND GOLF COURSE. This area can be extremely productive as it encompasses a harbor with scoters, loons and mergansers, a beach, a fresh-water marsh and isolated groves of trees, all of which have been known to yield surprises. We will meet at 9 AM at the Anchor Monument just south of the fishing pier on Sharp Park Beach. The trip should break up at noon. Heavy rain cancels the trip.

LEADER **JUDI SPITLER** **355-9362**

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4 - REDWOOD SHORES FIELD TRIP — These points of land between Foster City and Bair Island appear desolate and dusty in the summer, but can be teeming with birdlife in the winter when the rains turn the former salt and oxidation ponds into shallow pools ideal for many shorebirds and dabbling ducks. The area also has grassy areas (unfortunately slated for future development), sloughs and oxidation ponds where horned larks, tri-colored blackbirds, diving ducks and larger shorebirds can also be found. To get there take Hwy. 101 to the Holly Street/Redwood Shores Parkway exit. Follow Redwood Shores Parkway to the overseas radio broadcasting station, where the road takes a sharp right turn. We will meet there at 9:00 A.M. Although there will be very little walking, some of the areas may be muddy so boots are recommended. Trip should break up at noon. **RAIN CANCELS THE TRIP.**

LEADER **NICK COIRO** **349-1834**

PRINCETON HARBOR FIELD TRIP - THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12 — The only sheltered harbor between Santa Cruz and San Francisco, Princeton Harbor is winter home to a good

variety of bay ducks, loons, cormorants and other divers as well as gulls and shorebirds. Not only does the harbor usually have one or two surprises, but the nearby willows, cypresses and grasslands have proven to be first-rate warbler traps. Clay-colored sparrows, palm and prairie warblers are only a few of the species that have wintered here the last few years. To get there take Hwy. 92 to Hwy. 1 and follow Hwy. 1 north to Capistrano Rd. and turn left at the lights. Go past the marina and take the next left at Prospect Way/Harvard Avenue. Follow Harvard west a couple of blocks until it ends where we will meet at 9:00 A.M. This will be a walking trip along the beach and rocks with some areas of broken footing, so boots or sturdy shoes are recommended.

The trip should break up at noon.

LEADER **CAROL MILLER**

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21 — THE CRYSTAL SPRINGS CHRISTMAS COUNT — SEE PAGE SIX FOR THE SIGN-UP SHEET. SIGN UP NOW! WE NEED YOUR HELP!

SATURDAY, JANUARY 4 — THE AÑO NUEVO CHRISTMAS COUNT — SEE PAGE SIX FOR THE SIGN-UP SHEET. SIGN UP NOW! WE NEED YOUR HELP!



The Education Committee in Action

The Education Committee is sponsoring three classroom programs for the current school year.

Audubon Adventures is National



Audubon's program aimed at elementary school children in grades four to six. The program includes six issues of the *Audubon Adventures* newspaper, with an

individual copy for each student, and an accompanying teacher's resource manual integrating math, science, social studies, language and creative arts. In order to give the teachers greater flexibility and more time to plan, all 6 issues will be delivered early in the school year rather than spaced out as they were in the past. The topics for the 1996-97 school year are: Animal Communications; Marine Mammals; Pondering Pond Life; Snakes, Life Styles of the Thin and Squamous; Songbirds and Wildflowers.

Last year students in over 15,000 classrooms were enrolled nationwide. Sequoia is accepting applications from the county public schools but the program is also available to private schools.

Sequoia Audubon Society has budgeted funds to sponsor 25 teachers in San Mateo County classrooms. The enrollment fee is \$35 per classroom. In the past, we were able to sponsor more than 60 classrooms with the help of private donations. If you want to sponsor a classroom — public or private, specific or general, this county or anywhere else — your donation will be appreciated.

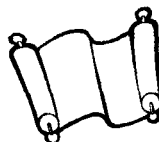
In a new multi-media interactive venture Sequoia is hoping to sponsor two classrooms in National Audubon's WILD WINGS program. This program is being offered to classrooms that can access the Internet and a local PBS channel. (Our current problem is finding a channel carrying the program). It consists of three electronic field trips to the Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge where guides will answer some student questions on the air.



We are also accepting donations to further this program as well.

Any checks should be made out to the Sequoia Audubon Society and mailed to the Education Committee, Sequoia Audubon, 30 W. 39th Ave., #202, San Mateo, CA 94403. If you are making donations to a specific program of a specific class, be sure to include a note outlining your wishes.

And finally the Education Committee will once again make its Environmental Education Award to any educator or private citizen who makes outstanding contributions through public education to increase understanding of the interdependence within the natural world and the awareness of the need for protecting native ecosystems.



This Is Hunting?

A few years back you may recall that a Washington, D.C. lobbyist, paid a \$4,000 fine for illegally shooting over a baited field. It now appears that Thomas H. Boggs, who is with the Washington law firm of Ponon, Boggs, and Blow, paid the fine to protect Rep. William Ford of Michigan and 20 other guests from the embarrassment of being charged with a federal hunting violation.

The citation was issued after wildlife officials watched the group fire more than 700 shotgun blasts in less than 45 minutes, killing at least 182 ducks and wounding an undetermined number. (That kind of firepower was probably greater than was expended in the Spanish-American War.) A federal agent who saw the shooting, was quoted as saying, "Ducks were failing out of the air all over the place. There were crippled ducks swimming everywhere." He described the shoot as one of the most lethal he had ever seen, and said that one of the reasons officials stopped the shoot was because none of the hunters stopped to collect the birds they had killed. (So much for the hunting ethics of this group.)

The citation was issued over only one of the ducks. That bird bore a Fish and Wildlife band and could be positively identified as being a migrant. Shooting hand-raised ducks over a baited pond is

not against the law, but the banded bird was obviously not bred locally, and so was a violation of the law.

This type of "hunting" (?) takes place all over the US and there is little regulation of managed shooting preserves. Not surprisingly, Rep. Ford has fought legislation to regulate or curb shooting on private preserves.

To their credit most duck hunters deplore this kind of senseless slaughter even while resisting legislation that would regulate private hunting clubs or "preserves".

Birding Name Quiz

Bill Principe

The following are REAL NAMES used in the past. They are taken from Grinnell and Miller (1944, *The Distribution of the Birds of California*, Pacific Coast Avifauna 27.), which is the standard reference for California birds. They are alternate, local or obsolete names for regularly occurring California birds.

Identify the birds by their current names. (Hint: A knowledge of scientific names will help with some of these.)

NO FAIR CHEATING (That means leave your copy of Grinnell and Miller on the shelf.)

1. Cow Troopial
2. Tell-tale Tattler
3. Long-clawed Towhee Bunting
4. Brown Gooney
5. Purple Coat-tail Grackle
6. Rusty Maggot-eater
7. Black-tailed Flycatcher
8. Ground Wren
9. Bowbill Thrush
10. Oregon Robin
11. Titlark
12. Crested Shining-black White-winged Flysnapper
13. Blue-headed Greenlet
14. Colorado Turkey
15. Henry Mock-thrush
16. Red-billed Mud-hen
17. Western Sea Dove
18. Bell Bunting
19. Foolish Guillemot
20. Chaparral Cock
21. Flame Bearer
22. Red-moustached Woodpecker
23. Ant-eating Woodpecker
24. Black Woodcock

You'll find the answers on Page 7.

Costa Rica

(Continued from Page One)

A short walk further and we saw nesting Golden-hooded Tanagers, Col-lared Trogons, Whitefronted Nunbirds, Dusky Antbird, Spotted Antbird, Squirrel Cuckoo and Groove-billed Ani. Before dark, we also added Common Tody-flycatcher, Mistletoe Tyrannulet, Gray-breasted Martin, Southern Rough-winged and Blue-and-white Swallows, Brown lays, Bananaquits, Rufous-capped Warbler, Montezuma's Oropendola, Bronzed Cowbird, Black-cowled Oriole, Black-headed and Buff-throated Saltators, Yellow-faced and Blue-black Grassquits, and Variable Seedeater. Following a scrump-tious evening meal we went to sleep wondering how the next day could possibly top the first!

The dawn chorus began just before sunrise. Most of us devel-oped a routine — grabbing mugs of freshly-brewed coffee in the dining room and climbing the stairs to the large, second-floor balcony. The panoramic view, with the Rio Tuis Valley stretching out nearby and two active volcanoes in the distance, was spectacular. In the im-mEDIATE foreground, Jay had placed cooked rice on the feeders and attached partially peeled bananas and ripe squash to dead branches stuck into the ground at the edge of the yard. He, Dan and Lisa Erb — the lodge manager and a fine birder — would spend the next hour help-ing us locate and identify the many new or forgotten species which came to feed or moved about in the trees. Over 120 species have been seen from this porch! During the three mornings we also saw Ruddy Ground-Doves, White-tipped Doves, a Gray-chested Dove, a Red-billed Pigeon; Brown-hooded Parrots, Crimson-fronted Parakeets; Black-cheeked and Golden-olive Woodpeckers; Keel-billed Toucans; Masked and Black-crowned Tityras; Southern House Wren; Tropical Parula; Chestnut-headed Oro-pendola; Giant Cowbird; and Green Hon-eycreeper, plus the other birds seen the first afternoon. I was especially amazed to find that here the Little Tinamou was a "feeder bird". (*The Rancho Naturalista verandah has to be one of the world's greatest sedentary birding spots. I was*

there in Spring and it also produced the most spectacular thunderstorm watching I've ever experienced. —Ed.)

After breakfast, we would split into two groups and walk the trails. These led into recovering second-growth forests or through pasture land studded with bushes and trees. An ant swarm was everyone's sought-after prize, as antbirds and other species follow and feast on the ants and the other insects escaping the oncoming swarm. Fruit trees also yielded mixed species flocks. One morning we rose



early and rode to the lush Carib-bean forests of the Tapanti Re-serve. Tapanti is home to several middle-elevation forest special-ties. We saw Tiny Hawk, Double-toothed Kite, Black Hawk-eagle, Barred Forest-falcon, American Swallow-tailed Kite, Barred Parakeet, Prong-billed Barbets, Golden-bellied Flycatcher, Tufted Flycatcher, Scale-crested Pygmy-tyrant, Olive-striped Flycatcher, Ochraceous Wren, Gray-breasted Wood-wren, Brown-capped Vireo, Olive-crowned Yellowthroat, Red-faced Spinetail, Spotted Barbtail, Barred Becard, Slate-throated Redstart, Common Bush-tanager, Chestnut-capped Brush-finch, Sooty-faced Finch, and a host of colorful tanagers, including Silver-throated, Bay-headed, Spangled-cheeked, and Crimson-collared.

Following four days at Rancho, we went on to Chacon's Lodge. At 7200' everyone was on the lookout for the col-orous Resplendent Quetzal, the signature bird of Central America. The next morn-ing we were not disappointed. We had glorious half-hour long views from 30 feet without leaving the grounds. (*Chacon's is well-known as a fishing lodge but is one of the great unknown birding spots in Central America. The Resplen-dent Quetzal is much more common here than at the famous Monteverde Reserve.*

Ed.) Here we also saw Rufous-collared Sparrows, Dark Peewee, Yellowish Fly-catcher, and Mountain Robin. The sugar-water feeders yielded close looks at Vol-cano, Scintillant, and Magnificent Hum-mingbirds; Gray-tailed Mountain-gem, Green Violet-ear, and Slaty Flowerpiercer — what a bill on this fellow! A morning walk up into the montane oak forest

produced Emerald Toucanet, Flame Tanager, Yellow-bellied Siskin, Ruddy-capped Nightingale-thrush, Spotted-crowned Woodcreeper, Yellow-thighed Finch, Large-footed Finch, Black-capped Flycatcher, Collared Redstart, Flame-throated and Black-cheeked Warblers amongst the birds I remember. The cli-mate here is even cooler at night than in the Bay Area, but the days warm up rapidly

(To be continued next month.)

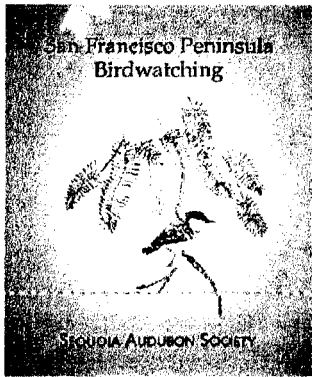
Dan's January 5-18, 1997 trip cost will be \$1850 per person. This price in-cludes lodging and meals at four loca-tions, all ground transportation, park fees, some laundry, guiding by Dan Keller and local guides, class time locally for trip preparation, complete bird check lists and a custom Costa Rica T-shirt. It does not include airfare (estimated to be \$750 with United Airlines), bottled drinks and alco-holic beverages, or tips to local providers. As Dan's initial experience with *Rancho Naturalista* came about through his SAS contacts, he will personally donate \$150.00 to SAS for each participant on this particular tour. The group size is lim-ited to 12 people plus guides. For further information contact the SAS office (345-3724).

State of the Sacra-mento River Conference

The Sacramento River Preservation Trust will present a conference on the State of the Sacramento River on Saturday, November 9, 1996 at Red Bluff.

The conference will update you on the current state of the Sacramento, specifi-cally the upper river fisheries and riparian habitat management plan, the evolving CALFED process and the ongoing imple-mentation of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA). In addition to the conference, there will be informa-tional and educational ground tours on Friday, November 8 and recreational ac-tivities on the river on Sunday, November 10.

Details and registration information are available from the Sacramento River Preservation Trust (916) 345-1865, PO Box 5366, Chico, CA. 95927



Just In Time For Christmas!

San Francisco Peninsula Birdwatching — Sequoia's own guide to 25 of the best birding spots in San Mateo and San Francisco counties — is now available.

It can be ordered direct from the office for \$14.95 plus tax and shipping (\$18.25 total) or can be picked up at the meeting, selected field trips and fine book stores

carrying environmental works throughout the county.

Your birding friends — wherever they are located — will appreciate a copy!

Another Holiday Suggestion Clearance on Sequoia T-Shirts

In an effort to clear out our remaining inventory, we have lowered the prices on our T-shirts to just \$5. We have just a few in each size and color. These are high quality shirts and you can't go wrong at this below-cost clearance!

The following selections were available as of press time:

X-Large (46-48)

Large (42-44)

Medium (38-40)

Small (34-36)

Only available in White

Only available in Red

Available in Blue, Gray & White

Available in Blue, Green and Red



ITEMS FOR SALE OR RENT

BIRDER'S HANDBOOK - Ehrlich, Dobkin and Wheye
BIRDING AT THE BOTTOM OF THE BAY - SCVAS
BIRDING NORTHERN CALIFORNIA - Jean Richmond
ENJOYING HUMMINGBIRDS MORE - Various
MONO LAKE GUIDEBOOK - David Gaines
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC FIELD GUIDE
SPECIES IN DANGER IN OUR BACKYARD-Jamison
PACIFIC COAST CHECKLISTS -Pads of 25
SAN MATEO COUNTY or FOSTER CITY CHECKLISTS
"I'd Rather Be Birding" BUMPER STICKER
SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY PATCH
VIDEOS FOR RENT:

- **TECHNIQUES OF BIRDING** - Arnold Small
- **VIDEO GUIDE TO BIRDS OF N.A.** - 5 Tapes

Items Sold at SAS Office or at Meetings

17.50

10.75

10.50

3.50

6.00

22.00

5.00

3.00

.75

1.50

2.50

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

Items Mailed to Customers

20.00

13.00

13.00

4.50

8.50

24.50

6.00

3.50

1.50

2.00

2.75

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

ALL PRICES INCLUDE SALES TAX

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

COME COUNT WITH US!

Calling All Birders to the 1997 Christmas Bird Counts

December brings a chance to participate in one of our chapter's most important activities. Sequoia Audubon holds two Christmas Bird Counts each year. This year, the Crystal Springs Count will be held on Saturday, December 21 followed by the Año Nuevo Count on Saturday, January 4, 1997. All levels of birders are WELCOME and NEEDED. Join a team, enjoy the camaraderie, have fun and contribute to the effort!!!

What makes this event so successful? For most, its lots of fun. For some, its the competition. Our counts are among the top ten nearly every year in numbers of species counted. For many, its the chance to participate in a vital scientific endeavor. Each year, the data from more than 1500 counts is published in *Audubon Field Notes* and entered into a master database at Cornell University. This resource is tapped over and over again by scientists and researchers worldwide to uncover important trends. There is simply no better source for bird population information.

SO, please join us for one or both counts. Send your check and registration form to the Sequoia Audubon office along with your name, telephone number and address. For more information call the office (415-345-3724) during office hours, Tuesday through Thursday, 9AM to 12:30 PM or call Robin Smith (415-325-3306) in the evening.

It really helps the compilers to know as soon as possible who will participate. Teams need to be organized and information sent to the team leaders. Please fill out the form TODAY and send it on its way.

The 1996 Christmas Counts

SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY

REGISTRATION FORM

THE 1996 CHRISTMAS COUNTS

I would like to participate in the:

- ☐ Crystal Springs Bird Count (\$5 Fee) -- December 21, 1996
 I would prefer to count on the Coastside ☐
 I would prefer to count along the Bayside ☐
 I will attend the compilation dinner (\$5) ☐
- ☐ Año Nuevo Bird Count (\$5 Fee) -- January 4, 1997*
- ☐ I will count my feeder or backyard (NO FEE REQUIRED)
 On December 21 (Crystal Springs Count) ☐
 On January 4 (Año Nuevo Count) ☐



Please cut out or copy this form
and mail it with your check to
Christmas Counts
Sequoia Audubon Society
30 West 39th Avenue, #202
San Mateo, CA 94403

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

*No compilation dinner on 1/4/97

Answers - Birding Names Quiz

(Comments by Bill Principe are in parentheses (). Comments by the Editor are in brackets [] and *italicized*.)

1. Brown-headed Cowbird
[Blackbirds are members of the troupial family.]
2. Greater Yellowlegs
3. Spotted Towhee
4. Black-footed Albatross (Some people guessed Brown Booby, but albatrosses are the ones known as "goony birds".)
5. Brewer's Blackbird (Most people guess Great-tailed Grackle.)
6. Brewer's Blackbird (Sorry, a trick repeat.)
7. Say's Phoebe
8. Wrentit *[Neither old or current name makes sense to me.]*
9. California Thrasher (The generic name is *Toxostoma*, which translates as "bow mouth")
10. Varied Thrush (Shame on you if you missed this one.)
11. American Pipit
12. Phainopepla (Do you know of any other crested, shiny, black flycatcher? Rumor has it that after coming up with Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow and Pacific Slope Flycatcher, the AOU is going to officially adopt this name.)
13. Solitary Vireo (Greenlets are small, tropical vireos.)
14. Wood Stork *[Makes sense. They aren't found in Colorado and don't look like turkeys. The logic is obvious.]*
15. Crissal Thrasher (The first description was published by an ornithologist named Henry.) *[At one time, thrashers, mimic thrushes and shrikes were all lumped together as mock-thrushes.]*
16. Common Moorhen (No one has missed this one yet.) *[I'll give extra points for any one who said Common Gallinule.]*
17. Pigeon Guillemot *[I'm still holding out for Black Turnstone.]*

18. Sage Sparrow (The scientific name is *A. belli*.)
19. Common Murre (These birds were considered notoriously stupid by eggers who easily robbed their nests on the Farallones in the nineteenth century.)
20. Greater Roadrunner
21. Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus* means "flame-bearer".)
22. Northern Flicker
23. Acorn Woodpecker [*I thought this was another trick repeat, since flickers eat more ants than any other North American bird.*]
24. Pileated Woodpecker

Hot Eiders

In 1995, US Fish and Wildlife Service biologists Greg Balogh and Bill Larned fitted Spectacled Eiders with tiny transmitters. Weeks after most of the batteries had died, a signal was detected from a lone female far offshore in the Bering Sea pack ice. The biologists tracked the hen's signal to the eiders' winter hangout — holes in the pack ice. They found 155,000 of these eiders crammed into small holes scattered across the Bering Sea.

Only the birds' movements and body heat kept the holes open and the biologists were astounded when clouds of steam rose from the pools.

Although eiders are largely vegetarian on the breeding grounds, the speculation is that they subsist on krill — abundant in the pack ice — in winter.

Livestock & Wildlife

Don't Mix

More Evidence

The gray hawk (*Buteo nitidus*) is a small woodland raptor whose US range is confined to southeastern Arizona. It has never been very common there and in recent years there was concern that it might be on the verge of disappearing from the United States portion of its range. The principal cause was thought to be habitat destruction. The gray hawk, a riparian species, needs extensive stands of mature cottonwood trees for nesting and nearby expanses of mesquite for hunting. Arizona officials expressed concern for the

immediate future of the species in the state, but recent evidence suggests that on at least one site the hawks are not only holding on, they are beginning to increase. The U.S. Bureau of Land Management's San Pedro Riparian Conservation Area harbors about 40 percent of the gray hawks left in the United States, and since 1986 the nesting population there has increased from 11 to 18 pairs, and the total number of birds from 40 to more than 55. The increases followed removal of livestock from riparian and adjacent mesquite habitats, allowing new vegetation to become established.

Highway Kestrels

In Iowa where nest cavities are relatively scarce, researchers discovered a novel way to remedy the problem. They used the backs of highway signs along Interstate 35 as supports for kestrel nest boxes. During a five-year period from 1988 to 1992, the average yearly occupancy rate of the fifty monitored nest boxes was 45 percent, a number that compares favorably with rates in other North American locations. The number of nests producing young was also encouraging with a yearly average of 69 percent. European Starlings were quick to take up residence in boxes unused by kestrels, but there was evidence that kestrels actually evicted starlings from some boxes. The highway signs provided strong supports for the boxes, and the signs' height discouraged predators.

Laysan Fever

For the last several years, biologists and field workers in the remote Hawaiian Islands have been coming down with a mysterious illness. The symptoms are similar to those of Lyme disease and include fatigue, body aches, nausea, fever and pain in the joints. It is not fatal and the long-term effects are as yet unknown.

The victims have all been in or near seabird nest colonies and avian ticks are thought to be the carriers of the disease but final proof is still missing.

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Revolution: In politics, an abrupt
change in the form of misgovernment.

Ambrose Bierce

November, 1996

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.

Anne Moser

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