

This Month's Program

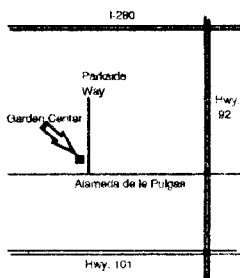
Paul Nobel of Santa Clara Valley Audubon and the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory will present a program on the identification of owls.

Paul is an industrial strength birder, an experienced tour leader and an enthusiastic speaker

and this should be a great opportunity to watch, listen and learn.

Next Month

In March, our own **Al Jamarrillo**, a professional birding tour leader and an SAS Director, will present a program on Blackbirds and Orioles.



Aud.-Ca Staff Changes

Mini Nagendran, the personable crane expert, has left Audubon California and entered the academic world.

She had replaced Bob Barnes and is being replaced by Bob Barnes, who is returning to Audubon. Bob, who has had a long-time interest in the Kern River Preserve, will be headquartered there.

Both Bob and Mini have made presentations to Sequoia Audubon in the past. Both have been assets to the Audubon cause. We regret losing Mini but are glad to see Bob back.

New Birds at CPM

Coyote Point Museum for Environmental Education has added a Peregrine Falcon to their educational staff. The 6 year-old male Peregrine Falcon was bred and raised in captivity as an educational bird and has traveled extensively to provide school programs for children. This bird will participate in the Museum's Hawk Talks Demonstration. In addition, two more Chukars have been joined the once-lonely resident. We would suggest that they not introduce the Peregrine to the Chukars.

A Tale of Three Vireos

Cliff Richer

Seventeen years ago, Steve Laymon, now director of the Kern River Research Center in Weldon, told me to carefully note any observations of any Solitary Vireos I might see east of the White Mountains, where we were at the time.

Well, it took a little more time than Steve predicted, but sure enough, I've been able to add not one, but two, new birds to my life list without ever leaving my living room.

Our Solitary Vireo is now the Cassin's Vireo. The Plumbeous Vireo is found in the mountains of the Sonoran and Chihuahuan Deserts and in the southern Great Basin. The Blue-headed Vireo (whose head looks gray to me) is found in the northeast US and eastern Canada. (This bird keeps the Latin name *solitarius*.) Their song is essentially the same — usually an important point in separating species — but their DNA has diverged enough so that they are now considered distinct. There is some overlap of Cassin's and Plumbeous and theoretically they can hybridize. Furthermore, a Cassin's with worn or dull plumage may look much like the dull Plumbeous. If you have a lot of imagination, a Cassin's in bright new plumage may even resemble a Blue-headed. In short, if you're in Cassin's territory, be careful about calling Plumbeous or Blue-headed.

Here are some other changes in the AOU's checklist of North American Bird species.

The western races of the Marbled Murrelet have been split off and are now the **Long-billed Murrelet** (*Brachyramphus pedrix*). While it is conceivable that this bird could show up in California don't count on it. Travelers to the Aleutians should be looking for it however.

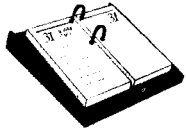
The Plain Titmouse is gone. Its now called **Oak Titmouse** (*Baeolophus inornatus*). East of the Sierras it is now considered a separate species, the **Juniper Titmouse** (*B. tidgwai*).

Proposed reclassifications arising out of DNA technology are slowly being absorbed into the AOU classification system. **New World Vultures** have been shifted from diurnal raptors to the order *Ciconiformes* and are now listed after storks, to which they are more closely related and there are shifts in the order of classification of whistling ducks and songbirds.

(Thanks to Rich Stallcup and his article in the Fall issue of the PRBO Observer for the vireo identification tips.)



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

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5— 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, FEBRUARY 12 — GENERAL MEETING — Featuring **Owl Identification** by Paul Nobel at the San Mateo Garden Center on the Alameda at Parkside. An informal get-together begins at 7:30 with the General Meeting at 8 PM. See page one for details.

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21 AND FEBRUARY 22 -- THE LOS BANOS REFUGES AND PANOCHE VALLEY FIELD TRIP. A highlight field trip covering two

diverse areas and exposing us to a variety of rare and unusual birds.

The four refuges north of Los Banos are noted for White-Faced Ibis, Sandhill Cranes, a large variety of waterfowl and shore birds, raptors and owls. Twenty miles south of Los Banos, Little Panoche Road winds its way through the Diablo Range into Panoche Valley where wintering flocks of Mountain Plovers, Vesper Sparrows, Mountain Blue-

birds, Long Billed Curlews, and perched raptors vie with the resident Roadrunners, Phainopeplas and Chukars for the birders' attention. On Saturday we plan on meeting in the parking lot of the Los Banos Wildlife Area on Henry Miller Road north of the town of Los Banos at 9:00 A.M. On Sunday we will meet at the parking lot above Little Panoche Detention Reservoir at 8:30 AM. Bring lunch for each day as facilities are limited. The trips will go on rain or shine. Motel reservations are recommended at this time of year.

LEADER CLIFF RICHER 873-1754

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28, PRINCETON HARBOR -- A return to this remarkable area and the diversity of its waterbirds, shorebirds and wintering passerines should produce a few surprises and a very satisfactory "day

list". To get there take Hwy. 92 to Hwy. 1 and follow Hwy. 1 north to Capistrano Rd. and turn left at the lights. Take your first left and proceed straight ahead into the upper parking lot where we will meet at 9:00 A.M.

Boots or sturdy shoes are recommended. The trip should break up at noon.

LEADER TO BE ANNOUNCED



News From Audubon Canyon Ranch

Betsy Stafford

Migration, hibernation, estivation - while all these adaptations are fine for some critters at ACR, there's plenty of action for others this winter.

Docents at both of ACR's teaching preserves are busy wintering over with both advanced and new docent training programs. Ranch Guides at Bolinas Lagoon Preserve will start their training for weekend guiding on February 7. This fascinating program runs for six Saturdays and is taught by ACR's four outstanding biologists. Topics include inside info on nesting herons and egrets, pond life, plant communities, and teaching techniques. There's still time to sign up for this very popular program that trains you to share your knowledge and love of the natural world with the public on weekends during the spring and summer nesting season. Call 415-868-9244 for details.

John Kelly, our Resident Biologist at Cypress Grove Preserve, reports on some fascinating research in progress. Paul Spitzer, from the Oxford Lab on Maryland's Chesapeake Bay, is studying migration timing, Pacific Coast distributions, and molt in Common, Red-Throated, and Pacific Loons. Philippa Shepherd, from Simon Fraser University in British Columbia, is working with John on the ecology of wintering shorebirds and plans to follow the local movements of radio-tagged Dunlins. Other ACR research continues on wintering waterbirds on Tomales Bay and regional heron and egret populations.

From Bolinas Lagoon Preserve Ray Peterson, our Resident Biologist, gives the unofficial report on the spring '97 heronry nesting season. For Great Blue Herons: 7 pairs raised about a dozen chicks (which is close to the 30-year average of a little under 2 fledglings per nest). For Great Egrets: 70 pairs, about 140 chicks that fledged. For Snowy Egrets: 10 pairs, probably 15 fledglings.

Some Snowy Egret chicks, Ray reports, were eaten by ravens, which appear to be at an all-time high population in the Bay Area. (*In San Mateo County, raven numbers appear to be down as they are being displaced by unprecedented numbers of American Crows. Has Marin inherited our ravens? --Ed.*) Some of the facts on the predation are unknown. Did it occur after the chicks were four weeks old, when both parents had to leave the nest to forage? Or were the nests flat-out abandoned by the adults? Ravens seem to pick on Snowys, but what about the Great Egret chicks?

If you and yours would like to learn more about the natural world of our beautiful Bolinas Lagoon Preserve, please consider joining us as hosts for a weekend day during the heronry's nesting season, mid-May to mid-June. We have been most grateful to the many of you who have hosted in the past, and we urge all of you to volunteer a day to help welcome the public to the sights and sounds of our preserve in full breeding plumage. Please call the SAS office or our office at 415-868-9244. We need and appreciate your volunteer help.



News From Audubon Canyon Ranch

(Continued from Page Two)

By early February some Great Blue Herons will be cruising around the canyon at Bolinas Lagoon, checking out last year's nests. Late winter's a busy time for these handsome creatures, who are now sporting nuptial plumes on their heads, necks and backs in their annual spring search for mates and good fishing.

Late winter's also a busy time for other two-legged species at ACR. Ranch Guide training begins Saturday, February 7, and continues for the next five Saturdays. It's an outstanding program that trains volunteers on the natural history of the heronry, pondlife and botany at ACR, as well as techniques for trail teaching, and much, much more. In exchange for several week-end days of assisting the public during the open season (March 15 to July 19), Ranch Guides become members of the ACR family, able to have access to a rich continuing education program, many fun activities and trips, a discount at the ACR bookstore, and opportunities to visit the Ranch during certain closed times. It's probably not too late to call now and inquire about this unique program - the office phone is 415/868-9244, 9 am to 5 pm M-F.

Congratulations to the newly elected Chapter Representatives to the ACR Board: From Golden Gate - Dan Murphy; from Madrone - Jack Harper and Jeff Holtzman; from Marin - Jim Cooke, Barbara Salzman, and Lowell Sykes; from Sequoia - Leslie Flint.

A BUSY WINTER AT BOUVERIE PRESERVE — 30 new docents will graduate on February 19th. They've had 21 days of learning natural history and teaching techniques from the experts and are ready and anxious to join about 70 other active Bouverie docents in teaching and sharing a love of nature with Sonoma schoolchildren.

Bouverie Preserve is host to thousands of Rough-skinned, Red-bellied, and California Newts. The 11th Annual Newt Count starts this month. Stay tuned.

If you'd like to get an insider's view of this beautiful preserve in Sonoma's Valley of the Moon, join us for a Workday, Sunday, March 1. In exchange for some help on the trails or in Gilman Hall, we provide camaraderie, a beautiful place to work during wildflower season, and a free lunch. Call Nancy at Bouverie Preserve, 707/938-4554.

Our Cypress Grove Preserve just completed, in conjunction with the Point Reyes Christmas count, a waterbird survey on Tomales Bay. John Kelly, biologist for the preserve, reports that they found unusually low numbers of some species of waterbirds, in particular, Common Goldeneyes, Buffleheads, Red-Throated Loons, and Surf Scoters (the lowest number of these scoters in nine years). Is this because of late arrival? a real population crash? temporary changes due to El Nino? ACR participates in four annual waterbird counts and we'll keep you posted as to the results of the others.

Join us for the
National Audubon Society's
1998 Western Regional Conference
Asilomar, California



April 4-7



Adventures in Bird Conservation: A Century of Audubon Accomplishments

Make plans to join hundreds of other bird lovers, nature enthusiasts and environmental activists at the National Audubon Society's 1998 Western Regional Conference.

April 4-7 at the Asilomar Conference Grounds on the beautiful Monterey Peninsula in Pacific Grove, California. Interactive workshops, inspiring speakers, exciting field trips and stimulating discussions will focus on this year's theme, "Adventures in Bird Conservation: A Century of Audubon Accomplishments."

Confirmed speakers include celebrated wildlife artist and conservationist **Robert Bateman**, renowned birder, and author of *The Peterson Guide to Advanced Birding*, **Kenn Kaufman**, and distinguished photographer and naturalist, **Arnold Small**, and biologist and researcher **Dee Boersma**.

Other scheduled highlights include a special retrospective of Audubon's accomplishments during this century, and a 100th birthday party celebrating a century of the life and work of Hazel Wolf.

The conference also offers field trips to some of the most beautiful

landscapes and bird-rich habitats in North America. Highlights this year include a pontoon boat ride through Elkhorn Slough, the ever-popular pelagic trip, and a special field trip featuring **Kenn Kaufman**.

You will enjoy a wide variety of workshops on topics including Backyard Habitat Enhancement, Birding Trails, Important Bird Areas, Growth Management, Habitat Restoration, and Sparrow Identification. We will also feature workshops which highlight Audubon's conservation efforts on behalf of forests, wetlands, national wildlife refuges, the Endangered Species Act and the Salton Sea.

It is important that you register early to reserve a spot on the more popular field trips. Also, you can save money by registering before January 19, 1998.

If you have not yet received your registration form in the mail or from your chapter, or need more information, please contact the Audubon-California office at: (916) 481-5332 or by email jjacobs@audubon.org.

Audubon-California
555 Audubon Place
Sacramento, CA 95825

AUDUBON ECOLOGY CAMPS AND WORKSHOPS

The Audubon Ecology Workshop series is offered weekly throughout the summer. We offer something for everyone: for adults 19 years of age and older, for families, and for youth ages 10-18. Field studies range from geology and marine life, to birds, mammals, plants, insects, weather, astronomy and citizen science research skills.

Camps and Workshops are offered in breathtaking settings: on a wild island in Maine, in Minnesota's northwoods, in the shadow of Wyoming's Wind River Mountains, among scenic pastures and woodlands in Vermont, and in the lush, deciduous woodlands of Connecticut.

Faculty are nationally renowned educators and specialists in field sciences, education, environmental public policy, ecology, science education and the cultural arts. College credit is available.

ENRICH THE REST OF YOUR LIFE!

FOR A FREE 1998 CATALOG CONTACT:

Audubon Ecology Camps & Workshops,
Phone: 203-869-2017 • Fax: 203-869-4437
E-mail: aew@audubon.org



No-Win at Davis Lake

...and other problems with non-native species

Cliff Richer

In October, after long and fruitless attempts to work out a satisfactory solution with local citizens, the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) mustered 150 of its employees -- including armed rangers -- to clear Lake Davis of Northern Pike.

The pike, a prized game fish through much of its natural range, had been introduced by well-meaning, but misguided, individuals, and was prospering in its new home. The DFG feared it would escape into the Feather River system and pose a threat to the already endangered native salmon through all of Northern California. They decided that the only practical answer to the problem would be to poison the lake and remove the pike -- an alternative that had proven effective in many other cases.

One huge problem posed itself. Lake Davis is a water supply for the town of Portola and a major feed for the marshes and aquifer of Sierra Valley.

While I agree that the Northern Pike posed a danger to our fisheries and I have confidence that the DFG biologists have done their work thoroughly, I find myself shuddering over the deliberate poisoning of a drinking water supply and I wonder how I would feel if I lived in Portola. It is hard to imagine that there was no other alternative, but it is equally hard to imagine that the DFG did not consider every other possibility. I find myself in sympathy with everyone (except the idiots who originally planted the Northern Pike and the militia wannabes who made death threats against the DFG) and in agreement with no one.

The Lake Davis controversy is so far the most extreme example of the conflicts involved in the removal of alien species from our environment.

The feral cat problem is another. Although I am currently catless, I have shared my household with one or more felines for most of my life. I have admired and observed cats and their behavior. I find the current statistics on

wildlife kills by cats to be so exaggerated as to be ludicrous. (An Australian study came up with far more believable statistics than the Wisconsin study so beloved by the anti-cat people.) Yet, there is no question that they are highly efficient predators and can have an adverse effect on the environment. I am also opposed to the mutilation of animals (neutering) and their enforced confinement (house-only cats) for the purpose of turning them into personal toys. In other words, everybody's crazy but me on this issue. Its also why I no longer have a cat.

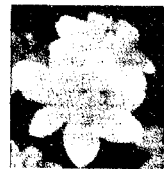
Other non-native animals have their own constituencies. Indeed, a federal law protects wild horses and feral burros; there have been organized protests to the elimination of wild goats and sheep; well meaning citizens release Belgian hares and lab animals into the wild; and humane societies treat and release red foxes and starlings.

I have enjoyed the magnificent displays of French broom and yellow star thistle in bloom. I initially admired the towering and fragrant eucalyptus trees. Unfortunately, these are not native to this environment. Non-native plants pose problems for refuges, parks, and preserves. They move into new environments quickly, spreading rapidly and aggressively, displacing native plants. Their hardiness and toughness makes them inhospitable to native wildlife and sometimes you have to combat it by introducing more aliens -- a process that is often fraught with danger. This spring, the Mid-Peninsula Open Space District grazed 420 goats on the Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve. The goats did eat the thistle but their effect on native plants was severe enough that this method will be reserved only for areas of severe infestation. Back east, European beetles and weevils have been introduced to control the highly invasive purple loosestrife. Thanks to thorough and painstaking research this introduction has been highly successful and another species of weevil was introduced this year to control star thistle on the Carrizo Plains.

I hope they're right, but the history of deliberate introduction of nonnative species is filled with many disasters and a very few successes.

Endangered Plant Found on SFB NWR

One of the latest listed endangered species is the Contra Costa goldfields, a member of the aster family growing in the "bathtub ring" surrounding vernal



pools. This bright yellow wildflower grows 4-12" high and was once common in the Bay area. It has been extirpated in Santa Clara and Mendocino counties but can still be found in Alameda, Contra Costa, Napa and Solano counties.

One of the areas where it is still common and under strict protection is the Warm Springs Seasonal Wetlands on the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge. Unfortunately for wildflower fans, this particular vernal pool habitat (also home to the endangered tadpole shrimp and tiger salamander) is so sensitive that it has been closed to the public.

National Audubon Convention

Estes Park Center
(YMCA of the Rockies)
Estes, Colorado
July 6-12

For more information

Write to: Audubon Convention
4150 Darley Ave.
Boulder, CO 80303
Phone: 303-499-3622 Fax: 303-499-0286
e-mail: convention@audubon.org

Solar Power Breakthrough?

Our compliments to Sacramento's Municipal Utility District which is putting its money where its environment is. Not only did they close down an obsolete and potentially dangerous reactor, but they are, to date, the heaviest municipal investor in solar power.

They have invested \$22 million under the premise that two solar energy companies will manufacture and install photovoltaic devices in Sacramento. These solar arrays are expected to be competitive with other power sources.

WINTER 1998 SAS BIRDSEED SALE ORDER FORM

ALL ORDERS WITH PAYMENT MUST BE RECEIVED BY WEDNESDAY, FEB. 11TH

Proceeds support local Audubon conservation and education programs

Please check preferred pickup location. Pickup dates will be February 19-22, 1998 with details to be advised later.

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 ☐ Burlingame
 ☐ Belmont
 ☐ Half Moon Bay
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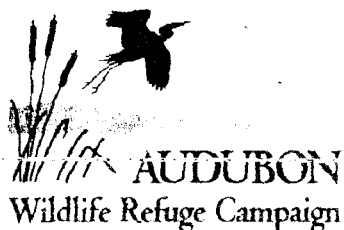
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Address _____

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Mail your check and order to
SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY
 30 West 39th Avenue, Suite 202
 San Mateo, CA 94403



After years of pressure brought by Audubon members around the country, the National Wildlife Refuge Improvement Act of 1997 was enacted on October 9, 1997. National Audubon Society President John Flicker was present when the new law was signed. For the first time conservation was established as the central mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Although the first refuges were established by President Theodore Roosevelt shortly after the turn of the century, the vast network of lands never had a guiding purpose. The Refuge Improvement Act addresses this need while providing a number of benefits that will assist refuge professionals in their duties.

Of special interest to Auduboners is recognition in the law that "compatible wildlife dependent recreation," including wildlife observation, ought to receive priority consideration over other uses such as grazing, jet skiing and oil drilling.

The new law requires the Secretary of the Interior to: manage refuges for biodiversity; monitor trends in fish, wildlife and plant populations; ensure water quality and quantity on refuges; and requires that comprehensive conservation plans be crafted and implemented within fifteen years. These plans will provide for extensive public involvement and offer refuge professionals an opportunity to educate their local communities about the important role these unique places play in protecting America's natural heritage.

The Wildlife Refuge Improvement Act of 1997 was crafted after Audubon and other conservation organizations stopped bills in the last two Congresses that would have designated harmful uses, including grazing, aerial bombing, logging, oil and gas exploration, as priority purposes of the Refuge System, coequal in importance to wildlife conservation.

The new law was a bi-partisan effort crafted by Interior Secretary Bruce

Babbitt, Congressmen George Miller (D-CA), John Dingell (D-MI) and Don Young (R-AK), and representatives from the conservation and sportsman's communities. Its ultimate passage depended on support from Senators John Chafee (R-RI), Bob Graham (D-FL) and Dirk Kempthorne (R-ID).

While the National Wildlife Refuge Improvement Act of 1997 is a compromise, the birds and other wildlife are better off on wildlife refuges is a result of this legislation. Auduboners across the country should be proud of their efforts that led to the enactment of HR 1420.

Ibis Make Big Comeback

In 1983, the California Department of Fish and Game classified the White-faced Ibis as a "Species of Special Concern", noting that it no longer bred anywhere in California. Some experts however believed that there was a small breeding population in the Los Banos Area. This latter belief was confirmed ten years later and the population was estimated at about 2000 birds.

From that point the population has increased dramatically each year. In 1996, the population was counted at 4095 and in the spring of 1997, scientific estimates placed the number at more than 5000.

Once a rare and valued sighting, the White-faced Ibis is now commonly seen on both the public and private wetlands of the Los Banos Area - most notably, the Los Banos Wildlife Area and Santa Fe Grade Road.

This recovery is due largely to a side effect of the private duck clubs in the area. Some years ago, these duck clubs and

some local farmers constituted themselves as a separate water district. During the drought, while the public refuges pumped groundwater and begged for water allocations from the federal Bureau of Reclamation, the Grasslands Water District continued to receive its allocations. With an adequate, guaranteed water supply, this district became the principal



breeding ground for most of the Central Valley's species.

No longer "just" a loose confederation of duck clubs or an agricultural water district the Grasslands have become a complete conservation unit with biologists, an education center and a full-time management staff to oversee its operation as a healthy partner in the preservation of the environment.

(We will be visiting the Los Banos refuges on a February 21 field trip.)

Half Moon Bay Pelagic Trips

For the first time, Debbie Shearwater has scheduled a series of pelagic trips from Half Moon Bay. The trips are long-distance cruises aboard the 60 foot Wild Wave, skippered by Tom Zizzo. The 10 to 12 hour trips will journey out to the edge of the continental shelf, to the Pioneer underwater canyon and possibly to Pioneer Seamount. The trips, departing September 19, October 17 and November 8 will be limited to 25 passengers and leaders. Cost will be \$95 for each trip.

To secure a reservation, please send a check to Debbie Shearwater, PO Box 190, Hollister, CA 95024; telephone: 408/637-8527. Include the full name, address, and telephone number for each person registering for the trip. This trip cannot accommodate anyone under 18 years of age, or pregnant women.

The Pioneer Canyon and Pioneer Seamount are potentially excellent destinations for the seabirder and the targeted species are the rarest seabirds along the Northern California's offshore waters. These include the possibility of a Laysan Albatross, a Red-billed or Red-tailed Tropicbird, Craveri's and Xantu's Murrelets as well as the usual assortment of pelagic birds and mammals.

Congratulations are also due to Debbie and to SAS's own Al DeMartini who exchanged vows in a civil ceremony in Hollister this past fall. Good luck to two great birders and two of the world's better people!



Society is always taken by surprise at any new example of common sense.

—R.W. Emerson

Spring Birding Classes — San Francisco

Evening bird classes taught by Joe Morlan will be starting February 17, 18, and 19, 1998. All classes meet 7-9:15 PM, in room 222, Marina Middle School, 3500 Fillmore at Bay St. Free parking is in the school lot off Bay St. on the east side of the building. The instructor is co-author of *Birds of San Francisco and the Bay Area and Birds of Northern California*. He is also coordinator of the recorded Northern California Birdbox sponsored by Golden Gate Audubon Society. Slides illustrate all lectures, and the text for all classes is *A Field Guide to the Birds of North America*, second edition, by the National Geographic Society.

- **Field Ornithology I** meets on Tuesdays. It is an introduction to birds and birding, combining basic field skills with the study of bird ecology, biology, evolution and behavior. Part A (EA101) starts February 17 and ends March 31. Part B (EA105) starts April 14 and ends May 26.
- **Field Ornithology II** meets on Wednesdays. It is a continuing in-depth study of the identification and status of North American land birds, including sparrows, blackbirds and tanagers. Part A (EA110) starts February 18 and ends April 1; Part B (EA115) starts April 15 and ends May 27.
- **Field Ornithology III** meets on Thursdays. It is a continuing study of North American birds including hawks, falcons, grouse, and quail. Part A (EA120) starts February 19 and ends April 2; Part B (EA125) starts April 16 and ends May 28.

The instructor may arrange optional field trips on weekends. Please bring binoculars and field guides to class if you have them. Fees are \$90 for each seven-week course. Pre-registration is strongly advised. For enrollment and information call (415) 561-1860.

☞ ☞ ☞ ☞ ☞ ☞ ☞ ☞
Weed - a plant whose virtues have not yet been discovered. R.W. Emerson

Forest Appropriations Initiative

A coalition of over forty organizations headed by the Western Ancient Forests Campaign has developed a grassroots Forest Initiative to outline a series of steps that will help protect forest ecosystems and restore accountability to the US Forest Service.

"We urge Congress to take the following steps to restore the accountability of the Forest Service and protect the interests of both taxpayers and our natural environment:

1. Prohibit new roadbuilding in the National Forests by ending any appropriation for new roads and by prohibiting the use of purchaser road credits to build new roads.

2. Prohibit logging and roadbuilding on unstable and potentially unstable national forest land. Recent landslides have demonstrated the "hidden costs" to public safety and the environment of logging on steep, unstable slopes.

3. Restore accountability by reforming or abolishing off-budget funds. There is a growing consensus that the various off-budget funds -- the Knutson-Vandenberg (KV), Brush Disposal and Salvage Funds -- must be either reformed or abolished. The Administration has also proposed the creation of a new fund for ecosystem restoration called the Forest Ecosystem Restoration and Maintenance Fund (FERM). While we support the intent of the fund it would only perpetuate the incentive to log that plague the other funds. Instead we urge Congress make specific appropriations for restoration rather than creating another off-budget fund.

4. End money-losing timber sales. The annual report of the White House Council of Economic Advisors shows that the Forest Service spent \$234 million more than it collected in timber receipts in 1995. According to the Government Accounting Office (GAO) the timber sale program lost nearly \$1 billion from 1992-1994. For the sake of both the environment and the taxpayer it is time to end subsidized logging on the National Forests.

Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!

We want to thank all of you who responded so generously to our year-end solicitation letter. As of January 6, we had received \$3547, \$940 of which was dedicated to special uses (Bair Island, Audubon Adventures, office improvements and our web page).

Thus far, we have received donations from:

Robert Ahrens Ingrid Akerblom
Dr Barrett Anderson Willam Anderson
Paul And Joan Armer Leona Bartell
Julia Bott
Paul Carroll & Lisa Carnochan
Manuel Castro Virginia Clifford
Tom & Sophie Collins Willa Dallas
Helen Davis Mary Jane Dean
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Louise Bartlett Schultz Rita Thomen
John Tyler Margaret Utterback
Norma Lou Vite Diane Vornoli
Robert Wilkinson Perry Wilson
Carol Yuehn Malinda Zeilinger

We want to single out the following for a very special thanks:

Gary Deghi Jean Durick
Leslie Flint Betty Hensill
Ruth M. Johnston
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Gifts and Bequests

Lex Fletcher in memory of Louise Fletcher
Anne Moser

Francis Toldi, Jean Halford and Sue Cossins (again!) for AUDUBON ADVENTURES
See Page Seven for a complete list of those who responded generously to our December appeal.

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.

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