

sequoia needles

Bulletin of the Sequoia Audubon Society
San Mateo County Volume 48, No. 6
March, 1998

This Month's Program

Pelagic Birds of N. California

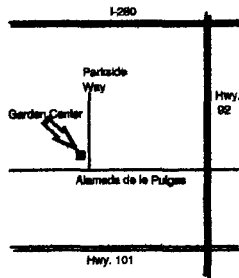


Ted Chandik, retired chief naturalist at Palo Alto Baylands, will present a slide program on the identification of offshore birds of Northern California.

Ted, who has too long been absent as a presenter, is a skilled birder, photographer and tour guide (on both land and sea). He continues to be active as a bidding instructor and he has agreed to once again co-lead our Yuba Pass field trip this year.

Ted's talks are always noted for both entertainment and information value.

Meetings are 7:30 PM, the second Thursday of every month at the San Mateo Garden Center on the Alameda at Parkside.



Next Month's Program

Al Jamarillo's talk on blackbirds and orioles, originally scheduled for this month was given last month because of a change in his personal schedule. **Paul Noble**, originally tabbed for February, will be our April presenter. If this *doesn't* confuse you, you are a perfect candidate to be our next Program Chair.

Christmas Count Results

You'll find this year's Christmas Count results on Page Four. Statistically, both counts could be considered "high-average" in results. Compilers **Robin Smith** and **Al DeMartini** deserve our thanks and wish to express their thanks to all of the participants. A special thanks is due to **Josie McKee**, who was instrumental in putting together the last minute Año Nuevo Count dinner.



From The President

Francis Toldi

Late last year you all received a request for a special year-end donation to Sequoia Audubon. The response has been overwhelming. I have always believed that Sequoia Audubon has an active, motivated and generous membership; now I know it as a fact! Your contributions will allow us to proceed on an exciting educational project—long delayed for lack of funds—involving direct instruction on birds and habitats. Robin Smith will provide more detail in another issue of *Needles*. We are also finally able to purchase a fax/copier for the office. Thanks again for your warm and helpful response.

In the near future the **Nominating Committee** will begin its deliberations over next year's recommended slate of officers and directors of Sequoia Audubon. Please give me a call or drop me a note if you are interested in serving on the Committee or Board, or if you want to recommend any individual for an office or directorship.

Francis Toldi

Apology and Correction

Cliff Richer

I have received an appropriately indignant letter from Sabrena Rodriguez of the ECO-O.K. Program of the Rainforest Alliance. In my short article, "The Shade Grown Coffee Panic", in December's issue, I erroneously identified the Rainforest Alliance with the mis-directed and ill-informed MacDonald's boycott of a few years ago. To quote from her letter, "**The Rainforest Alliance has never proposed or endorsed boycotts...**" Mr. Richer has confused our organization with the Rainforest Action Network..."



Ms. Rodriguez is correct. *I was wrong and I apologize.*

She also included a considerable amount of background information with her letter. There was no opportunity to review this material prior to our deadline, but it deserves attention and further comment.

Cliff Richer

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

March

THURSDAY, MARCH 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.

SATURDAY, MARCH 7 — THE FILOLI ESTATE — Donna Petersen will lead us on a birding tour of this estate and its magnificent gardens. To get there take I-280 to the Edgewood Road exit. Go west on Edgewood and turn north on Canada to the estate. Identify yourself to the gatekeeper as a Sequoia field trip participant. He or she will direct you to the proper parking lot where Donna will meet you at 8:30 AM and collect the \$5.00 fee. **This trip is limited to ten participants.** Reservations are required. Call Merry Haveman to register. Heavy rain cancels the trip.

LEADER DONNA PETERSEN
COORDINATOR MERRY HAVEMAN 344-2146

THURSDAY, MARCH 12 — GENERAL MEETING — Featuring **The Identification Of Pelagic Birds** by Ted Chandik — 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, MARCH 28 - THE BEGINNERS' TRIP TO THE STANFORD CAMPUS HAS BEEN CANCELED.

SUNDAY, MARCH 29 — CHABOT REGIONAL PARK — Kenneth Burton, a Marin County birder with twenty years experience, has volunteered to lead our field trip to Chabot Regional Park. Expect a four mile walk in mixed habitats of upland woods, grassland and riparian growth near Lake Chabot. We will meet at 8:30 AM at the Proctor Staging Area. To get there take I-580 east to Castro Valley and exit north on Redwood Road. Follow Redwood Road approximately one and a half miles to the staging area.

LEADER KENNETH BURTON (415) 669-1847
E-MAIL: birdbanding@compuserve.com

April

THURSDAY, APRIL 2 — BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

SATURDAY, APRIL 4 — ED LEVIN COUNTY PARK —
Led by Bob Reiling

THURSDAY, APRIL 9 — GENERAL MEETING

SUNDAY, APRIL 19 — MINES ROAD — Led by Cliff Richer

SUNDAY, APRIL 26 — WILLIAMS SISTERS' RANCH —
Led by Francis Toldi (Reservations Required)



News From Audubon Canyon Ranch

Betsy Stafford

Tired of words like "erosion," "ground saturation," "record precipitation," "El Nino?" It's time to try out some new 1998 vocabulary, like "spring migration," "wildflower explosion," and "heron/egret nesting colonies."

Bolinas Lagoon Preserve — The Public Season Opens **March 14** and Ends July 12. All kinds of critters are now stirring at our Bolinas Lagoon Preserve. Our superb training program will graduate 20 new Ranch Guides on the opening day of our public season, Saturday, March 14. A handful of Great Blue Herons should be nesting in the redwoods by then. And no doubt there'll be some Great Egrets flying over, on the lookout for mates and nesting sites.

Please don't forget we need and heartily welcome any of you to serve as Chapter Hosts on any Saturday or Sunday during our public season. **SAS has been assigned March 28 & 29, April 25 & 26, May 16, 17 & 30, June 13 & 14 and July 12.** To volunteer for a day at the Ranch, please call Debbi Frantz at 571-6759 or to volunteer on another date, call the ACR office at 415-969-9244. We promise you a big thank you and an insider's peek at a very special place.

Spring Work Day, March 8. We invite you for a free lunch — and a few hours of helping us spruce up Picher Canyon before the public season starts. Please call 415-868-9244 before March 8, so that we can reserve a lunch for you.

A Book-Signing Celebration with Dr. Marty Griffin. Join us in celebrating the tough, tenacious, and inspiring author of an entertaining new book, *Saving the Marin-Sonoma Coast: The Battles for Audubon Canyon Ranch, Point Reyes, and the Russian River*. On Sunday, March 15, at noon, Dr. Griffin will be at the Preserve to give an exclusive reading from his chronicles of the dramatic coastal battles he has been involved in since 1957 — battles for Richardson Bay, Bolinas Lagoon, Tomales Bay, Audubon Canyon Ranch, Point Reyes National Seashore, the Russian and Eel Rivers, and the "Wild and Scenic" Rivers. We hope you'll join us in honoring Dr. Griffin's lifetime of wildlife protection; his books will be available for purchase in ACR's Bookstore. Please call to say you'll come.

A Special Day at Bouverie Preserve — Spring's wildflowers are always spectacular at our Bouverie Preserve in Sonoma's Valley of the Moon, and we have reserved Saturday, May 16, for guided nature walks for our Audubon friends. Reservations are required and this day usually fills up quickly so call ahead to reserve, at 707-938-4554.

Other Public Guided Nature Walks. A lottery system is used for reservations on our public Saturdays — April 11, April 18, and May 30. These guided nature walks are held from 9:30-1:30. Please call Nancy at 707-938-4554, at least one month in advance, to reserve space on one of these hikes.

At the Cypress Grove Preserve, John Kelly is continuing our study of Bay Area heronries. If you are interested in joining this monitoring program of the heron and egret nesting colonies throughout the North San Francisco Bay Area, please call our Cypress Grove office at 415-663-8203.

SPRING 1998 BIRDSEED SALE ORDER FORM

ALL ORDERS WITH PAYMENT MUST BE RECEIVED BY WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15

Proceeds support local Audubon conservation and education programs

Please check preferred pickup location. Pickup dates will be April 23-26, 1998 with details to be advised later.

☐ San Bruno

☐ Burlingame

☐ Belmont

☐ Half Moon Bay

☐ Pacifica

☐ San Mateo

☐ Atherton

☐ San Carlos

			# BAGS	\$-COST-\$
AUDUBON WILD BIRD MIX.....	20 lb @ \$10.00 /bag		_____	= _____
red & white millet plus black oil sunflower				
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BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER.....	25 lb @ \$14.00 /bag		_____	= _____
WHITE PROSO MILLET	25 lb @ \$ 9.50 /bag		_____	= _____
THISTLE	5 lb @ \$ 8.50 /bag		_____	= _____
SUNFLOWER CHIPS.....	25 lb @ \$27.50 /bag		_____	= _____

SALES TAX IS INCLUDED IN ALL PRICES ABOVE

Contribution to Sequoia Audubon Society (tax deductible) _____

CHECK # _____

TOTAL _____

THE NEXT SEED SALE WILL BE HELD IN OCTOBER

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

345-3724

Another Reason to Hate Eucalyptus

Cliff Richer

When I first came to California I found those funny trees with the peeling bark interesting. I even found the strong aroma quite appealing. My first Long-eared Owl had its day-time roost in a red eucalyptus tree and my first Rufous Hummingbird was in a flowering blue gum. However, I soon learned from experienced California birders to avoid wasting time birding non-flowering eucalypti. Eucalyptus groves were barren of anything except eucalyptus. Birds — indeed all wildlife — avoided eucalyptus. It had no food value to wildlife and supported no local insects. Its fallen leaves and shed bark continued to emit those oils that give the tree its characteristic odor and poisoned the soil under them. Insects and native plants found no home in the toxic soil. During the drought years, I also learned that eucalypti were highly efficient water hogs, stealing it away from local plant life.

Even so, I rationalized that bad as they were, eucalypti provided occasional nest sites for herons, hawks and owls, and a rare eucalyptus in flower attracted hummingbirds, orioles, warblers and other nectar-loving birds. It also seemed to me that flowering eucalypti attracted more than their share of vagrants — particularly eastern warblers.

It now seems that these flowering eucalypti are, in fact, death traps for our native North American species. In October 1996, Rich Stallcup reported finding a dead Ruby-crowned Kinglet with its facial feathers matted flat from black, tar-like pitch, its nostrils sealed shut. The tar was solidified eucalyptus oil. The bird had suffocated as a result of attraction to the eucalyptus flowers. Since then, other observers have found similarly affected Yellow-rumped Warblers.

It may also be that we are seeing evolution in progress. My unscientific observation that a flowering eucalyptus attracted a high proportion of non-native eastern warblers could be true. It might be that our local birds — after nearly 150 years of exposure to the eucalyptus — are learning, in Nature's harsh school of evolution, to avoid the deadly flowers.

March, 1998

Bluebird Programs Underway at County Parks

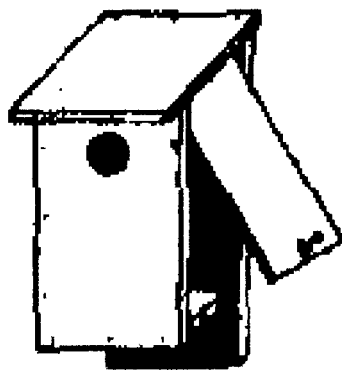


Bluebird trails are now in the planning stages at three of San Mateo County's parks.

One individual is setting up a trail at Edgewood Park. Edgewood, with its extensive open spaces and grasslands is ideal for such a project, and the progress of this trail will be followed closely.

At two other parks, the trails have been initiated by the parks' volunteer organizations. At San Pedro Valley Park, eight of the volunteers, under the leadership of Jim Pommier, will be monitoring 8-10 boxes during the first year.

Kathy Manus of the Friends of San Bruno Mountain has contacted Howard Rathlesberger — county coordinator of the Bluebird Recovery Program — and arranged for the delivery of a number of bluebird boxes.



A factor in insuring the cooperation of County Parks was the decision by the SAS Board to "guarantee" the bluebird trails by agreeing to take them over or dismantle them if local volunteers lost interest.

Outside of County Parks, a 31-box trail has been established for a year at Filoli and additional trails are also under consideration for the San Francisco Watershed and for the Williams Sisters' Ranch.

Expectations for the various trails are mixed. First year bluebirders have all

been warned to expect minimal results. A well-known, but entirely mysterious, phenomenon is that bird houses and boxes are rarely used in the first year. At San Bruno Mountain and San Pedro Valley, the hope is to attract any cavity-nesting species that may have been displaced by the encroachment of blue gum eucalyptus over the years. If their boxes are successful in attracting bluebirds, these two volunteer groups will consider that an enormous bonus.

SAS wishes them all great success, whatever their objectives!

Long-Term Christmas Count Results

The results of all Christmas Counts since 1971, including a statistical analysis of the data is available.

If you want a copy of these analyses, send a self-addressed, stamped, business size envelope with 78¢ postage to Cliff Richer, 330 Baden Avenue, S. San Francisco, CA. 94080.

If you have a computer with a spreadsheet program capable of handling an Excel 5.0 file you can include a diskette. Be sure to have enough postage on your envelopes if you're sending a diskette. The 78¢ will cover the return envelope.

A \$5 check made out to SAS is requested but not required.

Tough Talk

We tend to think of botanists as intense, bookish and inherently gentle types. This stereotype, if it ever was true, certainly did not apply to those nineteenth century researchers who took on the job of cataloging California's flora.

Asa Gray once characterized Albert Kellogg — considered the top botanist of his time — as a "nuisance to the science." Hans Hermann Behr immortalized one of his enemies by naming a louse after him. The demure Victorian lady scholars of the day were equally outspoken. Kate Brandegee referred to fellow UC faculty member Edward Lee Greene's work as "a disgrace to botany."

It's a wonder any of them survived long enough to get the job done.

B of A Awards Education Grant to SAS

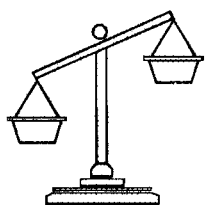


Bank of America has awarded us a grant for the purchase of binoculars and field education materials for juniors' and beginners' field trips and for class-

room outings. Thirty pairs of compact binoculars with cases have been purchased and thirty sets of the multi-fold "Local Birds" ID cards will be obtained under the grant. Education Chair Robin Smith was quick to point out that Vice-president Marilyn Noah was especially effective in preparing and submitting the grant. Robin now has the job of devising how to mark and monitor the glasses for use and recovery.

Robin and President Francis Toldi noted that the fifty Audubon Adventures classrooms have been funded for this year and funds will be available for next year's efforts. Audubon Adventures remains one of the most effective and exciting examples of National and local Audubon cooperation and we are committed to its continuing expansion.

Re-balancing the Scales



Last year, there was a brief flurry of environmental idiocy in the public media when some media pundits pronounced that scientists had "discovered" there was no such thing as a "balance of nature". The only thing that this revealed was the stupidity of the "scientists" that made this discovery.

Mother Nature is a very complex lady. With the right hand, she is juggling all the organisms that constitute an ecosystem, trying to balance them against each other. Meantime, with the left hand she is introducing all sorts of random forces. The true balance of nature is the effort to seek equilibrium, not equilibrium itself. If a true balance of nature were ever achieved it would be a completely static state — a situation Mother Nature abhors even more than imbalance. The

ultimate random factors in Mother Nature's left hand are the great catastrophes — earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, wildfires, etc.

For example, Hurricane Fran's brief visit to North Carolina last year changed the face of half the state. More than 8 million acres of trees were damaged. Pine plantations suffered because timber growers had replaced deep-rooted longleaf pines with shallow-rooted, faster-growing tobilloes. (Tree farms are essentially a human-created and human-maintained static eco-system). The endangered red-cockaded woodpecker was hit hard. Their cavity nests created weak spots in pines that were no match for the hurricane's 115 mile-per-hour winds. About 90% of sea turtle nests along the heaviest-hit stretch of coast were wiped out according to *Wildlife in North Carolina*. Freshwater fish were killed when organic material flushed into waterways and consumed the available oxygen.

Having wreaked havoc with the left hand, Mother Nature is now trying to restore balance with the right.

Mother Nature is not always nice, or convenient, but she is always interesting.



Chinook Salmon: Struggling to Survive

The Chinook, or king salmon, have four spawning runs each year in the Sacramento River basin. They include a winter run, spring run, fall run and late fall run, based on when the fish enter the river to spawn.

Although the winter-run salmon is the only species currently listed as endangered, all four runs have declined. Actions to list the spring-run Chinook salmon as endangered are currently under review at both federal and state levels.

The four populations used to number in the hundreds of thousands but have fallen off drastically.

From 1967 through 1969, the average winter-run was 84,000 fish; by 1983, only 341 winter-run salmon (a 99.6 percent decline) returned to spawn. The fall run, which accounts for 90 percent of the total salmon caught at sea, has had a 50 percent decline, as have late fall-run

salmon. The spring run salmon are down to only a few thousand.

The Chinook is the largest salmon, averaging 18 to 24 pounds, and have small black spots on the back, dorsal fin and tail fin. The fall run fish are robust and deep bodied, while the spring and winter run kings are smaller, slimmer and net as brightly colored. They are anadromous fish, born in fresh water, migrating to the ocean, and returning to their river of origin three to five years later. Once they reach their home river, salmon stop eating and die soon after spawning.

Salmon face many obstacles during this migration. Dams block their migratory paths. Rip-rap eliminates shade and underwater shelter. Water releases from the dams raise the temperature of the river. The infamous Delta pumps suck salmon in, killing them. Intake screens alleviate this problem for the spawning adults, but unknown thousands of fingerlings slip through the screens. Hundreds of smaller unscreened agricultural pumps placed along both sides of the river and in the Delta continue to kill adult fish.

Salmon are more sensitive to pollution than most fish. Agricultural pesticides and fertilizers, oil and gas leaking from motorized watercraft, and municipal and industrial discharges have short and long-term affects on the salmon.

Salmon are important to California's economy. More than 70 percent of salmon caught off the California coast come from the Sacramento River system. The state's fishing industry has been severely damaged both commercially and recreationally.

There is hope. Increased preservation activities the last three years have been encouraging.

Winter run salmon numbers and fall run salmon numbers have increased over the last two years. Even though this increase may be coming from fish hatcheries the higher survival rate of hatchery salmon is significant and should be reflected in the wild populations once the effects of our long drought are have been absorbed.

Condensed and adapted from an article by Lynette Reichenberg in the Summer '97 issue of River Run newsletter of the Sacramento River Preservation Trust.

CHRISTMAS COUNT STATISTICS -1997

SPECIES	CS	AN	SPECIES	CS	AN	SPECIES	CS	AN	SPECIES	CS	AN
Red-throated Loon	59	18	Northern Harrier	22	21	Glaucous-winged Gull	1716	396	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	347	472
Pacific Loon	300	144	Sharp-shinned Hawk	14	7	Black-legged Kittiwake *	1	3	Western Bluebird	22	37
Common Loon	44	12	Cooper's Hawk	10	3	Gull species	9369	520	Hermit Thrush	82	36
Pied-billed Grebe	164	16	Red-shouldered Hawk	25	16	Forster's Tern	123		American Robin	785	522
Horned Grebe	85	11	Red-tailed Hawk	106	63	Common Murre	380	330	Varied Thrush	79	90
Red-necked Grebe *	1	1	Ferruginous Hawk*	1	1	Marbled Murrelet	2	4	Wrentit	145	166
Eared Grebe	46	5	Golden Eagle *	2		Ancient Murrelet	13	12	Northern Mockingbird	18	2
Western Grebe	304	220	American Kestrel	46	33	Cassin's Auklet	7	2	California Thrasher	15	3
Clark's Grebe	31	4	Merlin *	6	2	Rhinoceros Auklet	4	7	American Pipit	72	346
Northern Fulmar *	1	13	Peregrine Falcon *	2	6	Rock Dove	1002	98	Cedar Waxwing	202	80
Sooty Shearwater		2	California Quail	262	280	Band-tailed Pigeon	128	60	Loggerhead Shrike	12	15
Sooty/S. T. Shearwater	2	8	Clapper Rail	1		Mourning Dove	822	98	European Starling	2208	1160
Black-vented Shearwater	16	3	Virginia Rail	8	13	Barn Owl	8	5	Cassin's Vireo		1
Fork-tailed Storm-petrel		3	Sora	1	4	Western Screech-Owl	3	5	Hutton's Vireo	33	52
Brown Pelican	69	677	Common Moorhen		1	Great Horned Owl	29	24	Tennessee Warbler	1	
Double-crested Cormorant	692	52	American Coot	3655	104	Northern Pygmy-Owl	4	5	Orange-crowned Warbler	18	16
Brandt's Cormorant	187	1683	Black-bellied Plover	1047	27	Burrowing Owl	1		Nashville Warbler *	1	4
Pelagic Cormorant	73	219	Pacific Golden-Plover		2	Spotted Owl		1	Myrtle	158	116
Great Blue Heron	20	12	Snowy Plover	57	10	Long-eared Owl	1		Audubon's	518	184
Great Egret	60	6	Semipalmated Plover	177		Short-eared Owl *	4		Yellow-rumped Warbler	578	456
Snowy Egret	168	14	Killdeer	97	301	Northern Saw-whet Owl	13	2	Townsend's Warbler	125	368
Cattle Egret *		1	Black Oystercatcher	4	35	White-throated Swift	2		Hermit Warbler *	2	5
Green Heron		1	Black-necked Stilt	108		Anna's Hummingbird	502	114	Palm Warbler	1	1
Black-crowned Night Heron	10	3	American Avocet	723		Belted Kingfisher	15	10	Black and White Warbler*		1
Greater W.F. Goose		1	Greater Yellowlegs	23	18	Acorn Woodpecker	38	50	Common Yellowthroat	32	37
Brant	27	518	Lesser Yellowlegs		1	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker		1	Hooded Warbler	1	
Canada Goose	277		Willet	2193	161	Red-breasted Sapsucker	8	5	Wilson's Warbler		1
Wood Duck *	13	16	Wandering Tattler	1	2	Nuttall's Woodpecker	16	1	Black-headed Grosbeak	1	
Green-winged Teal	359	38	Spotted Sandpiper	3		Downy Woodpecker	18	14	Spotted Towhee	71	46
Mallard	506	75	Whimbrel	48	62	Hairy Woodpecker	24	28	California Towhee	215	119
Northern Pintail	188	58	Long-billed Curlew	76	6	Northern Flicker	120	73	Savannah Sparrow	102	58
Cinnamon Teal	1	14	Marbled Godwit	813	54	Pileated Woodpecker *		8	Fox Sparrow	85	149
Northern Shoveler	377	117	Ruddy Turnstone	8		Black Phoebe	141	99	Song Sparrow	237	439
Gadwall	187	2	Black Turnstone	26	162	Say's Phoebe	28	22	Lincoln's Sparrow	86	62
Eurasian Wigeon *	2		Surf-bird	48	24	Tropical Kingbird	1		Swamp Sparrow*	1	1
American Wigeon	576	3	Red Knot	271		Horned Lark	8		White-throated Sparrow *	2	3
Canvasback	716		Sanderling	346	185	Barn Swallow		1	Golden-crowned Sparrow	1035	667
Redhead	38		Western Sandpiper	2350		Tree Swallow *		20	White-crowned Sparrow	1192	938
Ring-necked Duck	47	11	Least Sandpiper	148	1	Violet-green Swallow *		192	Harris' Sparrow		1
Greater Scaup	1785	1	Dunlin	690		Steller's Jay	135	212	Dark-eyed Junco	562	482
Lesser Scaup	486		Peep, species:	3050		Scrub Jay	339	122	Red-winged Blackbird	261	1259
Scaup, species:	2106		Short-billed Dowitcher	566		American Crow	82	3	Tricolored Blackbird	25	411
Black Scoter *	4	23	Long-billed Dowitcher	423		Common Raven	237	114	Western Meadowlark	305	309
Surf Scoter	1262	232	Dowitcher, species:	562	12	Chestnut-backed Chickadee	558	663	Brewer's Blackbird	1191	836
White-winged Scoter	16	20	Common Snipe	14	11	Oak Titmouse	20	6	Brown-headed Cowbird	48	21
Common Goldeneye	908	21	Red Phalarope*	1	6	Bush-tit	790	342	Blackbird, species	100	
Barrow's Goldeneye	19		Pomarine Jaeger *	2	2	Red-breasted Nuthatch	3		Purple Finch	35	79
Bufflehead	862	43	Bonaparte's Gull	3	1	White-breasted Nuthatch	7	1	House Finch	664	213
Hooded Merganser	55	5	Heermann's Gull	13	48	Pygmy Nuthatch	164	116	Red Crossbill	12	8
Common Merganser	1		Mew Gull	372	67	Brown Creeper	13	34	Pine Siskin	31	305
Red-breasted Merganser	23	27	Ring-billed Gull	515	3	Bewick's Wren	86	76	Lesser Goldfinch	24	98
Ruddy Duck	1465	102	California Gull	11243	39	House Wren *	2		Lawrence's Goldfinch		1
Turkey Vulture	55	58	Herring Gull	690	19	Winter Wren	16	55	American Goldfinch	7	40
Osprey		1	Thayer's Gull	35	3	Marsh Wren	24	25	House Sparrow	174	30
White-tailed Kite	35	42	Western Gull	6061	1322	American Dipper		4			
Bald Eagle	1		WxGW Gull hybrid	100		Golden-crowned Kinglet	58	54			

CHRISTMAS COUNT RESULTS

	Crystal Springs	Ano Nuevo
Total birds identified	88800	24295
Total Species identified	194	182
Number of participants	53	48
Compilers	Al DeMartini and Robin Smith	

PARTICIPANTS

Both Counts: Rick Baird, J.R. Blair, Nat Bowditch, Susan Bowie, Jo Chamberlain, Barbara Costa, Merry Haveman, Sharon Hom, Grant and Karen Hoyt, Rick Johnson, Dan & Don Keller, Bert & Josie McKee, Peter Metropulos, Pat Pauch, Dave Powell, Barry Sauppe, Robin Smith, Judy Spittler, Maria Straatmann, Ron Thorn, Francis Toldi, Scott Young

Crystal Springs Count: Charles Benedict, Lee Blackburn, Ruth Casto, Virginia Clifford, Luke Cole, Gary Deghi, Al DeMartini, Al Eisner, Gene Ersfeldt, Debbie Franz, Tad Gibson, Dave Hershey, Howard Higley, Chuck Hignite, Shirley Higuera, Copileen Ibarra, Sue James, Al Jamarillo, Andy Kratter, Nancy Lechich, Rosalie Lefkowitz, Ann Loper, Iona Luke, Steve Miller, Anne Moser, Diana Quan, Grace Sain, Eileen Sauppe, Debbi Shearwater, Betty Toft,

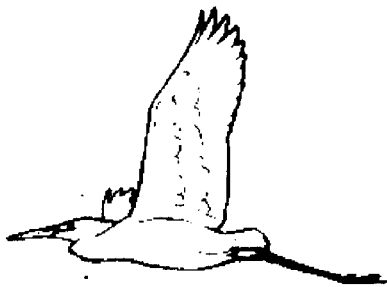
Ano Nuevo Count: Laurie Bechtler, Dick Carlson, Rita & Rob Colwell, Sue Cossins, Allan Duvall, Garth Harwood, Gloria Heller, Karen Kluge, Carol Miller, David & Rebecca Nation, Karen & Kristie Nelson, George & Martha Oetzel, Pete Popin, Cliff Richer, Terry Rosenmeier, Gary Strachan, Sonia Stromeyer, Eric & John Toldi,

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
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1998 NAS Regional Conference

Asilomar, CA
April 4-7
Adventures in Bird Conservation

Workshops, Field Trips and Education
To register -- or for information

Contact
Audubon Conference
555 Audubon Place
Sacramento, CA 05825
(916) 481-5332

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Zambia has set aside 40,000 acres as a chimpanzee reserve. The Wildlife Conservation Society of Zambia estimates there are only 17,000 wild chimpanzees left. It is estimated there were 2,000,000 in the wild early in this century.

1998 Golden Trout Workshop



Located at the 10,000-foot level in the Cottonwood Lakes basin of the southern Sierra Nevada near Mount Whitney, Golden Trout Natural History Workshops provide a special educational adventure to individuals and families. These six-day workshops provide professionally led tours of Sierran natural history. One of only a few such facilities remaining inside federally designated Wilderness Areas, the Camp offers daily hikes, exposure to local history and talks by special guests. All meals and shelter are provided. **Three 1998 sessions are offered beginning June 28 through July 18, including a special photography session the first week.** Enrollment is limited. To receive a brochure, write to: Cindi McKernan, Golden Trout Natural History Workshop, Inc., 1230 Friar Lane, Redlands, CA 92373 (Tel: 909-799-3060).

Migration Celebration

Brazosport, Tx
April 30 - May 3

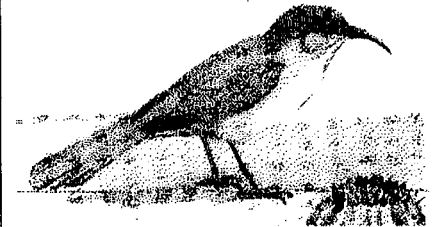
This conference is timed to catch the fabled Texas coast "fall-out" of migrating birds and includes field trips to High Island's warbler traps and shorebird flats, as well as to Brazoria County's other wildlife areas.

For more information call either the Brazosport Chamber of Commerce at 1-888-477-2505 or the South Brazoria County Visitor and Convention Bureau at 1-800-938-4853.

Le Conte's Thrasher Expanding Its Range?

The Le Conte's Thrasher, mostly restricted to the Mojave and Western Sonoran Desert areas of this country, has a small isolated population centered around Maricopa in Southwest Kern County.

In the past, there have been occasional reports of this bird being sighted just over the county line in the foothills of San Luis Obispo County's Carrizo Plain, but this bird has been thought of as struggling to maintain its population in a landscape blasted by the remnants of pre-1960 oil drilling.



Now, there are reliable reports of the Le Conte's Thrasher being seen regularly in the Kettleman Hills section of Fresno County. Sam Fitton, a BLM biologist and a birder, is leading Fresno Audubon on a field trip to show them the places he has found this bird.

DFG Director

Somewhere along the way we missed it, but has anyone else noticed that the current Director of the California Department of Fish and Game is a birder?

When Director Jacqueline Schafer made a tour of the Los Banos Wildlife Area, she broke new ground. Instead of the usual coat and tie or the "native" costume of camouflage gear and shotgun, she was dressed in comfortable walking shoes, a battered old hat and carried binoculars. She toured the refuge, talked to the professionals about habitat, not "harvest", and participated in a bird-banding project.

If her style in the office is as different as it is in the field, perhaps she can restore order and efficiency to this much-troubled department.

Gifts and Bequests

Jean Durick in memory of John Anderson

Norma M. Forcier in memory of Robert Farwell

Annette, Evilina, Kate, Kristen, Marilyn, Nancy, Richard, Rosalita and Tim of the BofA staff in San Francisco
for sponsorship of two Audubon Adventures classrooms

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.

SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY'S WEB PAGE'S URL is <http://www.belmont.gov/orgs/sas/>

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