

sequoia needles

Bulletin of the Sequoia Audubon Society
San Mateo County Volume 48, No. 8
May, 1998

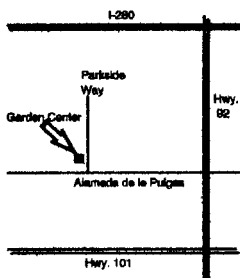
This Month's Program



The Kern River Preserve

Bob Barnes, long-time Audubon activist and birder, is on the staff at Audubon's Kern River Preserve. The Preserve — a stunning riparian area in Kern County — was recently acquired from the

Nature Conservancy by the National Audubon Society. Audubon has acquired one of the last remaining California nest sites of the Yellow-billed Cuckoo and inherits a major riparian restoration project. Bob will also be leading a Sequoia field trip to the Kern River Preserve and adjacent desert and mountain areas on June 6, 1998.



Next Month's Program

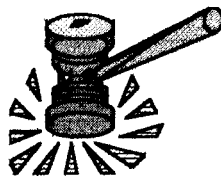
President Francis Toldi will be our speaker at the annual General Meeting and Potluck Dinner. The program will be a slide presentation showing the mammals, habitats, people, and birds encountered on an overland trek through Central Africa from Johannesburg to Nairobi.

Nominating Committee

This year's Nominating Committee, consisting of Francis Toldi, Marilyn Noah and Merry Haveman has come up with the following slate of nominees for the June General Meeting:

President	Francis Toldi
Vice-president	Marilyn Noah
Treasurer:	Tom Vanden Bosch
Secretary:	Open
Directors:	Merry Haveman Cliff Richer

Nominations from the floor are acceptable if agreed to by the nominee.



From The President

Francis Toldi

We have a problem in Sequoia Audubon. Like all small, non-profit organizations, the day-to-day business of the organization is run by a small group of people, supported by a larger group of sympathetic members. I have written before about how appreciative we are of our very supportive general membership.

The problem is that the small group of more active members is shrinking. Several very active members have left the area, or have work schedules that don't allow time for Sequoia Audubon. We are only able to fill the Board of Directors nominations slate for our upcoming fiscal year by convincing several people that were ready to retire, to continue.

If you have ever considered becoming more active in Sequoia, now is the time to step forward. There are many different ways to be active: you need not feel obligated to work in an area that is not of interest to you. Sequoia is a very multi-faceted organization. We need your good energy on all levels. Please call me, or mail in the tear-out form reprinted below to express your interest. You can be sure that we will explain to you up front the nature of any Sequoia activity you undertake and what kind of time commitment is involved.

Thanks in advance for expressing your interest in our organization.

YES, I am willing to be more involved in Sequoia Audubon.

I am primarily interested in helping with:

- ☐ Board of Directors
- ☐ Committees (Conservation, Education, Development, etc.)
- ☐ Monthly General Membership Meetings
- ☐ Sequoia *Needles* preparation and distribution
- ☐ Birdathon
- ☐ Field trips
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____
- ☐ Anywhere Sequoia needs assistance

NAME _____

TELEPHONE _____

Cut out or copy this form and mail it to:

Sequoia Audubon Society
30 West 39th Avenue
San Mateo, CA 94403-4561

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, MAY 2 — INNER BAIR ISLAND ANNUAL SPRING CLEAN-UP of its inner sloughs and the Marina. Call **MIKE SPENCE** at Local Birds, Inc. (367-1986) for details.

THURSDAY, MAY 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.

SATURDAY, MAY 16 — SAN PEDRO VALLEY COUNTY PARK — *(Note the change from a weekday to a weekend field trip).* This park provides a variety of wooded, riparian and grasslands habitat for many species of birds. The trip will entail some walking along easy trails. It begins at 9:00 AM in the parking lot of the park. To get there take Highway 1 to Pacifica and, turn inland at Linda Mar Boulevard. Follow Linda Mar to its end, look to the right and then follow the signs to the park.
LEADER JUDI SPITLER 355-9362

THURSDAY, MAY 14 — GENERAL MEETING — Bob Barnes, of Audubon California and Audubon's Kern River Preserve will present a program on the Preserve, a stunning riparian area in Kern County, recently acquired from the Nature Conservancy. Bob will also be leading a Sequoia field trip to the Kern River Preserve and adjacent desert and mountain areas on June 5, 1998. — 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.

SATURDAY, MAY 23 — PIPER SLOUGH — This trip is a walk along the levees. Specialties of the area include Black-chinned Hummingbirds, Yellow-breasted Chats and Blue Grosbeaks. Piper Slough is at the north end of Bethel Island off Highway 4 in east Contra Costa County. Because of limited parking, we will car pool from the Bay Area, beginning at 8 AM. Call the trip leader to make arrangements.

LEADER MERRY HAVEMAN 344-2146

SUNDAY, MAY 24 — EAST BAY SHORELINE — Join Ken Burton on a late spring visit to various spots from Richmond to Oakland. We'll be looking for out-of-season shorebirds and waterfowl as well as the usual wummer species. There will be very little walking on this trip. Meet at 7:30 AM at Pt. Molate Beach Park on Western Drive in Richmond. Take the Pt. Molate exit off I-580 and go north on Western Drive about ¾ mile to the park on your left.

LEADER KEN BURTON

SUNDAY, MAY 31 — BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE SAN FRANCISCO ZOO — Reservations are required for this behind the scenes tour. We will visit areas of the zoo not generally seen by the public, including the avian conservation center. Admission is \$8. We will meet at the Primate Discovery Center at 1 PM. Call the Trip Coordinator for your reservation.

COORDINATOR BARBARA STEWART 359-3899

May, 1998



News From Audubon Canyon Ranch

Jeanne Price

MAY IS THE BEST MONTH TO VISIT THE HERONRY! Eggs are hatching and chicks are being fed while nesting rituals continue. There is a little bit of everything going on in the heronry in May at Bolinas Lagoon. So be sure to come any weekend from now to mid-July to catch all the action. By the end of March, eight pairs of Great Blue Heron were nesting and the Great Egrets were courting. The Great Blues have selected the trees over the parking lot, now the preferred spot by the early birds.

Bolinas Lagoon Preserve biologist Ray Peterson reports bays and oaks fallen during the winter have opened up new views of the heronry from the Clem Miller Outlook. So viewing is even easier than before. "We have displaying Great Egrets all over the place," reports Peterson and "a very lush look" to the Preserve.

HOSTING IS THE MOST FUN. If you haven't yet signed up to host on a Saturday, Sunday or holiday this spring you are missing a lot of fun. Just call Debbi Frantz at 571-6759. You get to welcome people from all over the world to our special corner of it. *(See related article on opposite page.)*

ACR SPINS AN ELECTRONIC WEB. Have you checked out ACR's web page at <http://www.egret.org>? Give it a try. If you like to use e-mail the address is acr@egret.org. E-mail is checked daily.

NEW FACES AT THE RANCH Ray Paula has stepped into Helen Pratt's shoes to record the activities of the heronry at the Bolinas Lagoon Preserve. Helen has retired from this commitment after 30 years of dedicated service. We have a new full time Research Co-ordinator in Katie Etienne. She headquarters at Cypress Grove and began working February 1 of this year. She is a biologist who is finishing her Masters in Aquatic Ecology and has a strong interest in research — a perfect fit for ACR's research preserve.

WANT TO BE A BOLINAS PRESERVE DOCENT? If you would like to know more about the wonderful docent training that begins in September, then come to an Orientation Meeting at the Bolinas Preserve on Highway 1 at Stinson Beach on May 27. If you miss that meeting it will be repeated on August 26. Get acquainted with some great people and a great place where you might want to spend more time. For further information call 415/868-9244.



Following the Exxon Valdez spill in 1989, 375 sea otters were rescued. 197 were returned to the wild. Returns from tagged releases indicated a survival rate under 50%. Cost - \$18.3 million - about \$200,000 per otter.

Sequoia Audubon Society



The S A S Calendar

June

THURSDAY, JUNE 4 — BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING at the Audubon Office at 7:30 PM.

SATURDAY, JUNE 6 — KERN RIVER PRESERVE — See next month's *Needles* for details.

LEADERS BOB BARNES & FRANCIS TOLDI 344-1919

THURSDAY, JUNE 11 — ANNUAL ELECTION OF OFFICERS, GENERAL MEETING AND POTLUCK DINNER — at the San Mateo Garden Center on the Alameda at Parkside at 6:30 PM.

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, JUNE 13 & 14 — YUBA PASS AND SIERRA VALLEY — We still have not been able to finalize the dates for this trip — Watch the *Needles* for details.

LEADERS TED CHANDIK & CLIFF RICHER 873-1754

Hosting at ACR

Cliff Richer

One of the better benefits you're entitled to as a member of Sequoia Audubon is the honor and fun of hosting at Audubon Canyon Ranch's Bolinas Preserve.

Only the members of ACR's founding chapters — Marin, Golden Gate and Sequoia — have this privilege. And it is a privilege. There's nothing very complicated about it and it can be done by anyone — except that its reserved for us!

There are plenty of ACR members who would willingly act as Ranch Hosts, but this is one of ACR's ways of recognizing its ties back to the organizations that first realized the necessity of saving this unique piece of nature for future generations.

For me, it is one of the highlights of my spring. Every year I look forward to two events — birding Mines Road and hosting at ACR.

For me, the thrill of watching the egrets and herons soaring overhead and cavorting in the treetops is matched by watching the cliff swallow nests from three feet away and — sometimes — by watching the hummers, jays and juncos up close from the bird blind. There's also the fun of meeting a lot of nice people — those who work at the Ranch and those who visit it.

In return all I have to do is say "Hi, welcome to Audubon Canyon Ranch" to the driver of each incoming car and direct them to the parking area, OR man the reception desk where you answer some simple questions about the Ranch. (There's always someone around to which you can refer the complicated questions.) OR patrol the parking lot to be sure that you're squeezing in the maximum number of vehicles.

Why not call Debbi at 571-6759 right now to get in on the fun? There are still a few dates open — just waiting for you.



Shade-Grown vs. Sun-Grown

The Continuing Tempest In A Coffee-Pot

Cliff Richer



My cynicism on this issue continues to decline. My initial source of skepticism, a German doctoral candidate, whose thesis is "Avian Re-population of Second Growth Rain Forest in Honduras" (loosely translated from the German) has stated that his experience is with Honduran cooperatives, which are examples of "slash-and-burn" agriculture. They typically have scattered clusters of coffee bushes and their shading trees, both planted after the original rain forest has been cleared. In his experience these are worthless as bird habitat.

I also received a message on my answering machine — the name unfortunately was not clear and he left no return phone number — from a birder who said he had recently been on a tour in Panama where they had birded on or near several coffee plantations. He stated that on plantations where the rain forest had been cleared and replanted, there was little or no bird life, but on the plantations where only the understory had been cleared, that the birding was excellent.

And finally, just before we went to press, Bill Bousman, who does the excellent "Bird Sightings" column for Santa Clara Valley Audubon's newsletter, the *Avocet*, called me to tell about the marvelous birding he had enjoyed on Mexican coffee plantations some 15 years ago. From his description, these would have been in areas where coffee had been planted under the original rain-forest canopy.

So, it appears that there are a lot of ways to grow coffee and most of them are bad for birds. Unfortunately, the only one being threatened by the conversion to sun-grown coffee is the one that is "bird-friendly". So far, this conversion seems to be confined to Mexico and Guatemala, but it is spreading. To do your part in curbing this trend toward the continued destruction of our rain-forests, you can either confine your caffeine consumption to those ecologically correct "shade-grown" coffee brands now being marketed through the Wild Bird stores or Audubon or you can write to the corporate offices of your favorite brand names to find the sources of their brew.

Didja Know?

All birds can change the shape of their wings to some extent. This is what enables them to soar, to glide, power-dive or just plain fly. However, the hummingbirds are the only ones who can change that shape so radically that they can get lift on both the up and down strokes. This ability explains their maneuverability, speed and endurance. It took man a million years to discover this fact, but the hummingbird knows it the first time it flies.

If men's tongues were comparatively as long as the chameleon's, they would be eight feet long...which would qualify them for a Budweiser commercial.

If these two examples don't convince you of the stupidity of such comparisons, nothing will.

Winter Birding in Michigan

Tom Vanden-Bosch

At the end of January, Maryann Danielson, Jean-Marie Spoelman and I spent a week in Michigan looking for winter birds. The focus of our trip was two days around Sault Ste. Marie led by Whitefish Point Bird Observatory. We started at Grand Rapids and drove north the day before the guided tour stopping at Hartwick Pines State Park and at a local birders home near Gaylord. Our first day list included Wild

Turkey, Mute Swan, Mallard, Common Goldeneye, Black Duck, Red and White breasted Nuthatch, Black-capped Chickadee, Downy and Hairy Woodpecker, and Common and Hoary Redpoll.

Saturday, the Whitefish Point-led tour focused on the area within about 10 miles of the Soo in Michigan. There were two guides and six of us in a van. This had been a warm winter, hovering about freezing, so the winter birds were harder to find. We found flocks of Snow Buntings, Common and Hoary Redpolls, two Snowy Owls, Gyrfalcon, Northern Shrike, Pine Grosbeak and Black-Capped Chickadee. One of the Snowy Owls left its perch and flew right over us as we stood by the road watching it. The Gyrfalcon, gray morph, gave us quite a show as it perched above us on a bridge and flew past us twice trying to catch a duck for lunch. Most of the day was spent driving country roads looking for Sharp-tailed Grouse and Bohemian Waxwings. No luck. At the end of the day we ventured into Canada to see Harlequin Ducks frolicking in a power plant canal.

On Sunday we caravanned in individual cars continuing our search for birds missed on Saturday. We found Sharp-Tailed Grouse (one a long way off), Bohemian Waxwings in a crabapple tree by the road, and Boreal Chickadee. No Great Gray Owls. About mid-day we headed south to the Lower Peninsula in search of

the elusive Great Gray Owl. The owl was reported at a clearing between Harbor Springs and Charlevoix. For two and one-half hours we searched in the fog and confusing directions. After some back and forth and stopping for directions we finally found the location. The owl was there and we got great views. The bird was hunting snow covered fields for mice or voles and would almost disappear into the snow when it dove on its prey. At least once we thought we were going to have to rescue it from its hole in the snow, but it knew what it was doing and flew out. The bird and its hunting show were the highlight of the trip.

Tom, a first-time contributor to the Needles, makes his debut with articles about three great birding trips he undertook recently.

Despite a mild fear of "over-kill" we felt these articles were interesting enough to include them all in this issue.

GREAT WORK, TOM.

The next day we worked our way south along Lake Michigan finding Oldsquaw (an estimated 2000+ in a

flock off of Manistee), Trumpeter Swan, Common Mergansers, Bufflehead, Mallard, Ring-billed and Herring Gulls. We ended a long day of driving in Ann Arbor.

The next day our guide from the Soo trip took us south of Detroit to Belle Isle for White-Winged Crossbills. At the expected spot we had to bird for almost two hours before they arrived in full view low in conifers for great views. On that high note we headed back to Grand Rapids, stopping at the Kellogg Wildlife Sanctuary near Battle Creek to see Tundra, Trumpeter, Bewick's and Whooping Swans as well as Black Ducks, Scaup, Ring-billed Duck, Redhead, Mallard, Snow (Blue) Goose and Canada Goose

Our last morning we spent along Lake Michigan looking for a Purple Sandpiper (not found) and finally Blanford Nature Center in Grand Rapids where we added Brown Creeper and Pine Siskin. Our trip list of 65 species also included Blue Jay, Northern Cardinal, Mourning Dove, American Robin, Turkey Vulture, Red-tailed Hawk, Coopers Hawk, Tufted Titmouse, House Finch and Red-winged Blackbird.

I'm going back to get that Great Gray Owl and maybe a Boreal Owl.

TNC at Fort Hood An Old Threat Lessened... A New Threat Discovered...

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) has been hired by the US Army to serve as environmental manager of the Fort Hood Military Reservation in Texas. Fort Hood is important to birders because it is a prime nesting ground for Black-capped Vireos and Golden-cheeked Warblers, two birds with limited ranges in the US.

TNC has enlisted the help of the latest technology to preserve and study these two species. By using hand-held detectors and Global Positioning Satellites (GPS), the researchers can pinpoint nest locations within a few feet and map them on computer-generated mapping systems.

Nest predation by Brown-headed Cowbirds was found to be a major problem. Using the computer maps TNC found out that there was a direct relationship between cowbird predation and the distance from grazing herds of cattle. Simply by re-locating the grazing areas during the critical months when the vireos and warblers were laying their eggs, they almost eliminated the problem.

TNC scientists also discovered that a mysterious night-time predator was attacking the nests and killing the young birds. The researchers staked out a number of nests, equipping them with infrared lights and tiny video cameras. The first pictures showed the adults becoming agitated and then flying away, leaving the fledglings behind to be consumed by an invisible predator. Finally, an image with good enough resolution was obtained to show the predators — fire ants. This introduced insect pest has been the scourge of the Southeastern US since it was first detected during the 40's and it has been spreading inexorably north and west ever since. Its fearsome bite isn't fatal to humans or domestic and farm animals but is so painful that it can drive even large mammals to manic reactions resulting in death or permanent injury. On the nestlings, the first few bites were sufficient to cause death, whereupon the ants could consume the bodies, leaving only bones and a few feathers in the nest by dawn.

TNC has yet to develop a solution, but now, at least, they know the problem.

No Tunnel Funding Bill
 The current mood in the Senate seems to be to cut down the size of the bill -- also characterized as a "budget buster" -- rather than add to it, so the likelihood of getting the tunnel funds included seems remote.

Although it has been criticized as a "pork barrel" bill with funds allocated for a number of special projects such as a bike path along the Delaware and rest stops in the Great Smokies, there are no funds for the Devil's Slide Bypass Tunnel.

Nevertheless, if, by the time you read this, this bill has not gone to President Clinton for his signature, write to Senators Feinstein and Boxer. Otherwise, we'll be stuck with the slide delays for another generation.

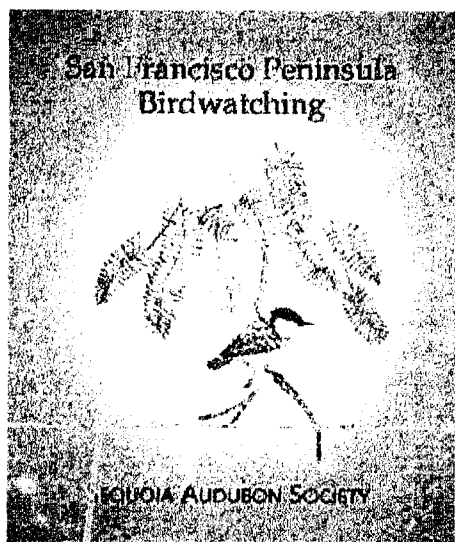
The Devil's Slide Bypass Tunnel
 The lack of any organized political pressure being brought to bear on our elected representatives to restore the bypass funding and apply it to the tunnel has led some to feel that those organizers' real agenda was to retain the status quo.

After reassuring us repeatedly during the Tunnel campaign that these funds would be available, they have done nothing to bring this to fruition.

Where are the letter-writing campaigns, the public meetings, the seeking of endorsements from notables, the full-page ads?

In other words, where are you now that we need you?

SPRING MIGRATION SALE!



FOR BIRDERS IN YOUR FAMILY OR AMONG YOUR FRIENDS

A SPECIAL LIMITED TIME, MEMBERS ONLY PRICE

\$12.50

+ Sales Tax

Available at Meetings

To order by mail send a check for \$15.00 (includes sales tax, postage and handling) for the first book and \$14.00 or each additional book to:
 Sequoia Audubon Book Sale

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: acw@audubon.org



☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

A Vancouver, B.C. birder, excited about spotting a hawk outside his window, went rushing out with his binoculars — but little else. He was arrested and convicted of appearing nude in public.

(But it was a lifer, your Honor.)

(A huns rap?)

(As the Brits say, "A killer look".)

(Create your own comment.)

Point Pelee and Kirtland's Warbler

Tom Vanden-Bosch

Spring brings birds migrating northward and the hunt for fall-outs of migrants, especially warblers.

One place noted for spring warbler migration and potential for fall-outs is Point Pelee Provincial Park in Ontario on the north shore of Lake Erie, about 30 miles east of Detroit. The other attraction in the area is the Kirtland's Warbler found only in the upper part of Michigan's lower peninsula. If you are thinking about a spring birding trip for eastern birds, you might want to consider Michigan and Point Pelee. Marion and I took our second trip to the area in May 1997. It turned out we picked the coldest spring in recent memory, but we still recorded 164 species, including 20-some warblers.

We started and ended our trip in Grand Rapids. We birded to Pelee and spent four days there, including a side trip to Rondeau Provincial Park and to Comber Woods. Pelee and Rondeau are points that project into Lake Erie and so are targets for northward migrating birds after crossing Lake Erie. Pelee is more famous than Rondeau because its shape tends to concentrate the birds on the southern end when they arrive. This plus the low trees makes for spectacular in-your-face birding at times. Pelee has lots of trails and finding birds is usually just a matter of walking and looking. Rondeau is similar. Comber Woods is a wet wooded area best known for Cerulean Warblers. During our visit we saw Prothonotary, Black and White, Nashville, Yellow, Blue-winged, Golden-winged, Cape May, Chestnut-sided, Bay-breasted, Black-throated Green, Black-throated Blue, Magnolia, Common Yellowthroat, American Redstart, Ovenbird and Northern Waterthrush for warblers. Also Veery, Wood Thrush, Swainson's Thrush, Scarlet Tanager, Indigo Bunting, Swamp Sparrow, Field Sparrow and Sedge Wren to name a few.

From Pelee we went north to the Grayling/Mio, Michigan area. This is where Kirtland's Warblers are found. On our way north we birded Tobiaco Marsh and Nayanquing National Wildlife

Refuge in the Bay City area on Saginaw Bay. It was raining at both so our birding was limited. We added Marsh Wren, Tundra Swan and Bobolink to our list. The Grayling area has trails through pine and hardwood groves, and ponds and lakes. The best way to find Kirtland's Warbler is by taking a trip led by either the Michigan Department of Natural Resources out of Grayling or the US Forest Service out of Mio. We've done both. This year the Mio trip was the best. Because of the cold spring, the warblers were late and we did not find them during our four days here. We did find Common Loon, Bald Eagle, Osprey, Wood Duck, Black Tern, Red-breasted Nuthatch and Brown Creeper among others.

Leaving Grayling, we continued north into the Upper Peninsula. Driving along the north shore of Lake Michigan we had an Osprey fly in front of us carrying a fish. Our next stop was Newberry for visits to Seney National Wildlife Refuge, Whitefish Point Bird Observatory, and the Taquamenon River State Park. The weather continued windy, cold and sometimes rainy. Whitefish Point was bird quiet with sparrows and chickadees at the feeders and migrating Common Loons and Red-breasted Mergansers over Whitefish Bay. Near the mouth of the Taquamenon River we hiked a trail and found Boreal Chickadee and Ruffed Grouse. More Nashville, Black-throated Green and Yellow-rumped Warblers as well. At Seney we hiked a 1-mile nature trail to find Sora as well as Black and White, Nashville, Yellow-rumped and Chestnut-Sided Warblers. Yellow Rail had been seen but we did not find it. The auto route produced Common Merganser, Trumpeter Swan, Ring-necked Duck and Sandhill Crane.

Before leaving the Upper Peninsula, a visit to Hulbert Bog and a Forest Service road yielded Gray Jay and Evening Grosbeak. On our way south we stopped again in Mio for another try for Kirtland's Warbler. This time we were rewarded with four singing males as well as C' colored Sparrow and Upland Sandpiper.

The last part of our trip was to southwestern Michigan, visiting Warren Woods State Park and Sarret Nature Center near Benton Harbor. It was warmer now, finally! Warren Woods was

particularly interesting; it is a mature sycamore forest with very large trees. We found Pileated Woodpecker, Barred Owl, Scarlet Tanager, Canada Warbler, and Northern Rough-winged Swallows among others. Sarret produced one of the highlights of our trip when a ground feeding Tufted Titmouse mistook a White-throated Sparrow for leaves and revealed the bird to us. Once the titmouse had found it for us we watched in for a while — a lifer for both of us.

Two weeks of birding went way too fast. We saw lots of birds in spite of the weather and a number of new ones for one or both of us. This is one of my favorite birding trips and I look forward to the next time.

The following books were helpful in planning and making this trip; *Enjoying Birds in Michigan* by Michigan Audubon Society; *Favorite Birding Areas* by Grand Rapids Audubon Club; *Michigan Wildlife Viewing Guide* by Michigan Department of Natural Resources; *Natural Michigan* by Tom Powers, and *Bird Finding Guide to Michigan* by Michigan Audubon Society.

A Splash of Warblers

Cliff Richer

When I lived in New England, we often spoke of "waves" of warblers — mixed flocks numbering in the hundreds — that would descend on us periodically during both spring and fall migrations. I remember one morning finding nine different species of small birds in one leafless bush — all virtually immobile and exhausted from a long night's migration.

The last week of March, I encountered the closest I have come to this phenomenon locally. Our wintering Yellow-rumped warblers had left San Pedro Park some weeks before so I was surprised to find the area around the Visitors' Center surrounded by these little birds. In a few minutes I came up with two Townsend's Warblers, and a half-dozen each Orange-Crowned and Wilson's Warblers, while a Hermit Warbler sang weakly in the background.

By the next day, all were gone. Not a wave, but a ripple or at least a splash of warblers on their way north.

Hawaii Birding

Tom Vanden-Bosch

Marion and I had the fortune to spend three weeks in Hawaii in October. While the focus of our trip was not birding, we did do quite a bit of it. Overall we saw about 45 species, including some Hawaiian endemics. The fun of birding in Hawaii is that it gets you away from the crowds, you get to see places most people never see, and you see a lot of unique birds.

We started out on the island of Maui. For native birds you need to go into the native ohia and koa forest and the most accessible way to do that is by going to Hosmer Grove in Haleakala National Park. Birding is good in the grove, but the best is had by taking one of the Park Service or Nature Conservancy led hikes into the Nature Conservancy Waikamoi Preserve that adjoins Hosmer Grove. We visited there three times. The Park Service hike traverses non-native forest to reach a part of the preserve that is a relatively steep walled canyon with slopes heavily vegetated with native trees, ferns and plants. The Nature Conservancy hike starts out the same, but visits a different part of the preserve including a boardwalk into the native forest. We saw Amakihi, Apapane, and I'iwi on both hikes, Maui Creeper on the Park Service hike, and the highlight of our trip, a Crested Honeycreeper on the Nature Conservancy hike. Most of the native birds have decurved bills for nectar feeding. The Amakihi is a yellow green bird with a blackish eye line. They were quite common and in fact were a nuisance at the picnic tables in Hosmer grove. The Apapane and I'iwi are red birds with black wings and tails. The Apapane also has white undertail coverts to distinguish it and the I'iwi has salmon colored bill and legs. The Maui Creeper is a yellow fluff ball unless it is a juvenile, in which case it is gray. We saw both. We finally found the Crested Honeycreeper, very rare, on the boardwalk hike. You should know that this boardwalk is just that, a single board to walk on. The Crested Honeycreeper is black, but its feathers are tipped with red and blue-gray. It has a red-orange nape/collar and a yellowish tear drop shaped area around the eye. The crest is on the

forehead and curls forward. We were fortunate enough to get a great long look at this special bird.

Hosmer Grove, Waikamoi Preserve and Haleakala also provided Chukar, Nene (Hawaiian Goose), Ring-necked Pheasant, Eurasian Skylark, Red-billed Lothrid, House Sparrow, Pacific Golden-plover and Japanese White-eye.

Common birds in most of the Hawaiian Islands included House Finch, Common Myna, Nutmeg Mannikin, Zebra Dove, Collared Dove, Japanese White-eye, Northern Cardinal, Brazilian Cardinal, and House Sparrow. During the fall and winter months, the Pacific Golden-plover also is a common bird in the islands. We found them from sea level to 8000 feet.



Two Maui wetlands, Kanaha and Kealia Ponds, yielded Hawaiian Stilt, Hawaiian Coot, Cattle Egret, Pectoral Sandpiper, Northern Shoveler, and Black-crowned Night-heron. Among the cane fields we found Black and Gray Francolins (European partridge). For sea birds we found Great Frigatebirds and White-tailed Tropicbirds. Wandering Tattlers are common at seaside..

On the island of Kauai, the native birds are again up high, generally above 3000 feet. The best place to see them in Koke'e State Park and in the Alakai Swamp Preserve. Hiking is pretty much a must. We expected to be able to drive to the Alakai Swamp trailhead and walk a boardwalk. Not this time! The state was working on the road so we went in another way by foot. Besides seeing birds, we learned that a walking stick is a very valuable device to have when hiking here. For this hike we had a local guide, David Kuhn. He earned his guide fee with the birds, the walking sticks and a great Ahi sandwich for lunch. We saw all the birds we expected to see; Kauai Amakihi, Anianiau, Akikiki (Kauai Creeper), Akeke'e (Kauai Akepa), Elepaio (a flycatcher that looks like a chickadee or wren), Apapane and I'iwi.

If you hike the trail like we did, you need to be prepared to write off your clothes to red mud and to walk and maybe sit in the mud. Even on the boardwalks, steps were tall, about mid-calf to knee high, and on the non-boardwalk trails just as high or higher and made of sometimes slippery red soil. It was work, but definitely worth it.

The common birds are the same as on Maui, with the addition of Java Sparrow, Chestnut Mannikin, Western Meadowlark and Erckel's Francolin. We also found another Pectoral Sandpiper, more Wandering Tattlers and of course Pacific Golden-plovers. Our morning walks usually turned up Ruddy Turnstones.

On Kauai there are two National wildlife refuges; Kilauea Lighthouse and Hanalei River. At the lighthouse you can find, depending on the time of the year, Red-footed Boobys, Nene, Greater Frigatebird, White-tailed and Red-tailed Tropicbirds, Wedge-tailed Shearwaters, Newell's Shearwaters and Laysan Albatross. All except the frigatebirds breed here. Daily there is a guided walk through the Red-footed Booby rookery and Nene nesting areas. We found out that Nene are very aggressive when you get too near their nesting areas. Ever seen a grown man run from a small goose? (Not outside of high school.--Ed.)

Hanalei River has Hawaiian Duck, Hawaiian Moorhen, Hawaiian Coot and Hawaiian Stilt, Cattle Egret and Mallard.

We ended our visit with a few days in Waikiki on Oahu. Here most birding was urban in beach parks. Again we saw the common birds, but added Sanderling, Yellow-faced Canary, Red-vented Bulbul and White Tern (or Fairy Tern).

So if you go to Hawaii take the usual resort gear, but don't forget your binoculars. There are plenty of birds around and most are different from what we see here on the mainland. Birding books on Hawaii are available at most of the parks with visitor centers or can be obtained from ABA Sales before you go. References we used included *Enjoying Birds in Hawaii* by H. Douglas Pratt, *The Birds of Hawaii and the Tropical Pacific* by Pratt, Bruner and Berrett, *Hawaii's Birds* by the Hawaii Audubon society, and *A Pocket Guide to Hawaii's Birds* by H. Douglas Pratt.



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/>

OFFICERS

President	Francis Toldi	344-1919
Past President	Anne Moser	324-1718
Vice-president	Marilyn Noah	
Secretary	Debbie Frantz	571-6759
Treasurer	Tom Vanden-Bosch	369-8305

DIRECTORS

Term ending '98	Robin Smith	325-3306
	Cliff Richer	873-1754
Term ending '99	Sue Cossins	347-9358
	Al Jamarrillo	712-1272
Term ending '99	Gary Deghi	726-1340
	Eileen Jennis-Sauppe	726-1081

STAFF

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

STANDING COMMITTEES

ACR Hosting	Debbie Frantz	571-6759
Audit	Rick Baird	574-1067
Christmas Count	Robin Smith	325-3306
Conservation	Eileen Jennis-Sauppe	726-1081
Education	Robin Smith	325-3306
Field Trips-Weekday	Nick Coiro	349-1834
Weekends	Merry Haveman	344-2146
NEEDLES Editor	Cliff Richer	873-1754
Circulation Editor	Sue Cossins	347-9358
Programs	OPEN	
Publicity	OPEN	
Membership	OPEN	
Finance/Budget	Rick Baird	574-1067
Hospitality	Sue Cossins	347-9358

RARE BIRD ALERT



(415) 681-7422

We Invite your membership in the National Audubon Society & SAS. To join, please complete and mail this form with payment to SAS, 30 West 39th Ave., #202, San Mateo, CA 94403

☐ **National Audubon Society Membership**

New \$20 (1 year) Student/Seniors \$15

Members receive *Audubon Magazine* & **NEEDLES**.

Make checks payable to National Audubon Society.

☐ **Needles** subscription only. \$15 for 9 issues

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

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

SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY

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

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

HOWARD RATHLESBERGER
230 RIDGEWAY RD
WOODSIDE, CA 94062

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone Number _____

7XCH C16

Printed on Recycled Paper by O.I.C.W. 
Time Valued Material - Please Do Not Delay