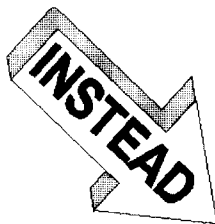


From the President

A Northern Goshawk screaming and circling overhead, wings fully extended. A male Blue Grouse booming and later sitting in a pine tree feasting on pine needles. Footprints of a bear and cub padding down to the river to drink. Early morning sun shining through the rabbit's ears, rendering them translucent. Where were we???

In late July, a group of early-rising stalwarts from Sequoia traveled to the Kern Valley to bird with Bob Barnes, Director of Bird Conservation for CA-Audubon. If you have never had the pleasure of birding in this area, I highly recommend it. There are five bio-regions in greater Kern Valley and they host exceptionally high mammal, plant and bird diversity, including two hundred breeding bird species. A great birding spot!

**No Meeting or
Program This
Month**



I am continually amazed at the amount of land that has been protected in Kern Valley and by the pace of restoration within the Kern River Preserve. When I first discovered the preserve, the re-vegetation efforts were just beginning. Many, many volunteer hours later the results can be seen in the riparian area trees that tower overhead. This is Bob Barnes' special place. Without his vision and continuing efforts for The Nature Conservancy, for Audubon and for all of us, preservation and restoration of the Kern Valley would not have advanced nearly this far and surely not this fast. It is a contribution of untold value to all of the American people.

Sequoia Audubon has the opportunity to accomplish something similar at **Bair Island**. We have volunteers working in pairs there, completing a public use survey, handing out brochures and talking to people who are using the levee for recreation. A scope is set up to entice visitors to take a look at the birds that inhabit Inner Bair Island. These first phase activities will go on for twelve months. These activities must be staffed. **Bair Island needs you!!!!** Volunteers are the key to success at Bair. You will be asked to complete a three hour training put on by the National Wildlife Refuge staff and to work a three hour shift once a month. The information gathered and the comments solicited from visitors will aid the refuge staff in planning for the restoration of the Island. This is **our** special place. Come and be part of the restoration effort!

To sign up as a volunteer or for more information call Robin Smith at 325-3306.

Please attend Sequoia's 50th Birthday Bash. It would be my pleasure to meet and greet all of you there.

— Robin Smith

(For more on the birding trip to the Kern River Preserve, see the related article on Page Seven)

Sequoia's 50th Birthday Bash

The Sequoia Chapter will be celebrating its 50th birthday on Saturday, September 18 at the Redwood Shelter in Huddart Park from 10 AM to 4 PM.

Bring your own picnic lunch. Coffee, Tea and Birthday Cake will be provided by the chapter, as will the charcoal for the barbecues.

Bird walks will be held at 9 & 10 AM and at 2 PM.

A parking fee of \$4 per car will be charged by County Parks.

The mission of Sequoia Audubon Society is to participate 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

SEPTEMBER

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 2 —
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
— 7:30 PM — At the Sequoia Audubon
office. All members are welcome. Call

ahead to make sure that there will be enough room.

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 9 — THERE IS NO GENERAL
MEETING THIS MONTH. IT'S PLACE HAS BEEN
TAKEN BY THE 50TH BIRTHDAY BASH BARBECUE
AND PICNIC AT HUDDART PARK ON SEPTEMBER 18.**

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 12 — PHIPP'S COUNTRY FIELD
TRIP** — A combination produce stand, pick your own berries
and backyard menagerie, Phipp's Country (Formerly Phipp's
Ranch) has become a favorite birding spot with rare and unusual
birds turning up annually. We will meet in front of Phipp's at 9
AM. To get there take Hwy.1 to Pescadero Road. Follow
Pescadero Road through town until you come to the farm stand.
Park away from the farm stand so as to leave the nearest spaces
for customers.

LEADER GARTH HARWOOD 879-0724

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 18 — SEQUOIA AUDUBON'S
50TH BIRTHDAY BASH** — Beginning at 10 AM at the Red-
wood Shelter in Huddart Park. Bring your own picnic lunch. Se-
quoia will provide the charcoal for the barbecues as well as
coffee, tea and birthday cake. Bird walks will be held at 9 & 10
AM and at 2 PM. **REPLACES THE REGULAR MONTHLY
GENERAL MEETING.** A parking fee of \$4.00 per vehicle is
required by County Parks.

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25 — BURLEIGH-MURRAY
STATE PARK FIELD TRIP** — Riparian and grassland areas
about the chaparral-covered hillsides yielding an excellent variety
of local resident species. Migrants should also be good at this
time. We meet in the gravel parking area just inside the gate off
Higgins-Purisma Road. To get there go south 1 1/2 miles from
the Hwy.1 - Hwy.92 intersection in Half Moon Bay. Turn inland
on Higgins-Purisma Road and proceed 1.7 miles to the park en-
trance on the left.

LEADER AL JARAMILLO

OCTOBER

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 3 — HAWK HILL FIELD TRIP —
Golden Gate Raptor Observatory volunteers count 20,000 Rap-
tors annually during fall migration. Nineteen species of birds of
prey have been recorded. Get tips on how to distinguish between
Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks. Our leader is a 10-year vet-
eran hawk watcher with Golden Gate Raptor observatory. Bring
lunch, liquids and layers of clothing. We meet on top of Hawk
Hill at 9 AM. To get there, take 101 across the Golden Gate
Bridge and exit almost immediately on Alexander Street. Swing
back under the freeway and follow the road up the hill.

LEADER LESLIE FLINT

AUDUBON-CALIFORNIA

to host

National Audubon Society's Convention

April 14-18, 2000

Asilomar Conference Center

Pacific Grove, CA

Registration materials available Nov. '99



California Fall Challenge

Francis Toldi

This year the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory is again
holding it's "Fall Challenge." This is a birding contest that runs in
late September through early October. Various teams compete to
identify the most species in a particular county, raising money to
support SFBBO and other organizations in the process.

Each of the last two years your own Sequoia Audubon team,
the "Rowdy Stone-turners" has won top awards in many of the
available categories, including "most birds seen," "highest
percentage of county list" and "rarest bird."

Help us uphold our winning tradition by agreeing to pledge
to our team. You may pledge a per species amount or a flat fee.
The money we raise is split evenly between SAS and SFBBO. All
contributions are tax-deductible. I promise a full personal report
to each person who pledges. Thanks in advance!

☐ Yes, I will pledge _____ cents per
species identified by the Rowdy
Stone-turners (up to a maximum of

\$_____) in their effort to keep the championship
for Sequoia Audubon Society.

☐ I prefer to contribute a flat amount of

\$_____ to help promote the efforts of
SAS and SFBBO.

Name.....

Address.....

City.....State.....Zip.....

Telephone.....

Private Refuges in Los Banos Area Trying for "Important Bird Area" Designation

A coalition of state, federal, and local agencies has nominated the Grasslands of Merced County as a "California Important Bird Area"

The Grasslands, a series of privately owned wetlands, is constituted as a water district and managed as a private refuge for waterfowl. It has been recognized as an "Internationally Significant Shorebird Site" by the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network and is about to be included on the RAMSAR list of Wetlands of International Importance.



The IBA designation is made by the National Audubon Society to increase public awareness of vital avian habitats and does not carry any additional regulatory or management restrictions.

The Grassland Water District, in conjunction with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, state Department of Fish and Game, and the National Audubon Society-California, is seeking the nomination.

The National Audubon Society awards the IBA designation in recognition of good land stewardship and positive management practices.

Although the Grasslands has its own management and scientific staff, the refuge is managed in close cooperation with the authorities at the nearby Los Banos State Wildlife Area and at the four National Wildlife Refuges in the area.

In a related development the state Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) will pay an estimated \$1.29 million for 724 acres of land linking the North and South Grasslands.

The property, once slated for development, is located about three miles east of Los Banos and south of Highway 152. The 160,000+ acre Grasslands is the larg-

est, contiguous historic marsh left in California.

The mostly degraded pasture land will be converted back to its original state of seasonal and permanent wetlands, valley sink scrub, and upland habitat, and be added to the areas managed by the California Department of Fish and Game. Some acreage will be developed to accommodate increased recreational use, including hunting and wildlife viewing.

Because of its location the property will provide excellent opportunity for high exposure and a year-around facility that emphasizes wetland and wildlife viewing. Portions of the land not part of public viewing will be added to Fish and Game's public waterfowl and pheasant hunting program.

In addition to waterfowl and shorebirds, some "species of special concern" are expected to use the area, including western pond turtle, Double-crested Cormorant, Long-billed Curlew, Tri-colored Blackbird, White Pelican, White-faced Ibis and Northern Harrier.

Government Agencies Light on Scientific Staffing

The botany staffing situation in both Federal and State agencies continues to deteriorate alarmingly. In the California Department of Fish and Game, despite voluminous new duties associated with changes to the California Endangered Species Act (CESA), no new staff has been hired, raising questions about the Agency's ability to properly implement the law. Large areas, including the Mojave Desert and Inyo and Mono Counties, have no plant specialist covering them.

In the US Forest Service, Botanists have left the Sequoia and Eldorado National Forests for new jobs. Other Forests without botanists include the Los Padres, the Cleveland, and the Angeles. The California Native Plant Society is compiling examples of the impacts of botany under-staffing so that Congress and the State Legislature will understand the problem. The CNPS is encouraging all environmental organizations to closely examine any environmental impact reports or statements to be sure they have been reviewed by qualified staff scientists.

Kesterson NWR Revisited

There's something strange happening to the rodents at the former Kesterson Reservoir, where birds were being poisoned by selenium years ago. The reservoir was filled in and capped with "impervious" clay to seal in the toxins and it now provides habitat for many rodents.

During a collection of four rodent species — house mice, harvest mice, field mice and California voles — 29 of the 87 rodents were found have both male and female organs. This condition is always present in a very small percentage of rodents, but to find it in a third of the population is astounding.

Michael Delamore of the Bureau of Reclamation (BuRec) told the *Modesto Bee*, "We're not sure what it means because it is new, and the phenomenon hasn't been widely reported."

Although scientists are not ruling



anything out, they don't believe there is an immediate human health hazard and the BuRec has concluded that something in the environment — and not genetic mutations — is causing this outbreak of hermaphroditic rodents. They are working with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the EPA and the Regional Water Resources Control Board in attempts to figure out exactly what is going on.



Heaven is under our feet, as well as over our heads.

--Henry David Thoreau

From the Conservation Committee

Leslie Flint

The Sequoia Audubon Conservation Committee reviews critical issues related to wildlife habitats and provides comments to cities, agencies and other jurisdictions. To attend our meetings, phone Leslie Flint at 573-6279.

Good News/ Bad News

THE WATERSHED — In 1993 the San Francisco Water Department started a process to develop a Management Plan to determine how their Peninsula (i.e., San Mateo County) and Alameda watersheds should be managed. This process was begun in response to public demand for more access to the watershed lands. Members of Sequoia Audubon attended the public workshops in which by 1996 a "preferred alternative" had been selected. The preferred alternative included a recommendation to continue to restrict uncontrolled public access to the watershed in order to prevent possible increased incidents of wildfire and other damage leading to erosion and negative water quality impacts.

Subsequently San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown requested a study to determine the feasibility of a golf course at the southern end of the watershed along with consideration of extending the Bay Ridge Trail through the it. SAS had taken a position against both of these proposals because of the potential impact to wildlife and to the watershed itself. In May and June 1999 the Public Utilities Commission and the city Board of Supervisors both vetoed any plan for a golf course in the Watershed. Still to be resolved is the issue of the Ridge Trail. Stay posted.

ABALONE PERMITS OK'D — A disappointing loss was the approval by the Coastal Commission at their July meeting of four permits for abalone aquaculture in Pillar Point Harbor (allowing the production of up to 2,250,000 abalone within a 1.46-acre area). Your Conservation Committee had sent letters to the San Mateo County Harbor District in 1995, 1997, and again in June 1999



stating our opposition to the proposed abalone aquaculture. At issue were potential negative impacts to waterfowl, the marine benthic environment, kelp beds (food source for abalone), loss of mooring space for fishing boats, possible infestation by the sabellid worm which would endanger native abalone populations, and the tons of fecal matter generated by abalone in a single day, which would affect water quality. Nonetheless, the Commission allowed the permits with extensive conditions. The conditions include purchasing seed stock from sabellid-free facilities, dissolved oxygen and benthic monitoring, restrictions on kelp harvesting locations and the prohibition of any activities which might impede access to the public boat launch. However, no conditions were imposed to protect water birds.

AIRPORT RUNWAY EXPANSION — Following on the article in the August *Needles*, and to keep you up to date, the San Francisco Planning Dept. and



the FAA held public scoping meetings for the EIR and EIS Report process in August. This

process gave the public and other interested parties an opportunity to state their opinion about what issues should be addressed in these studies. SAS members attended these meetings to express their concerns for the impact this project will have on birds, wildlife and habitat in the central and south Bay

COORDINATORS NEEDED — The Conservation Committee needs your help. We would like to stay abreast of other environmental organizations' positions on the runway expansion issue. We do network with many organizations, but of course not all, given our limited resources. We need volunteers who are willing to be put on the mailing list, collect the newsletter, position papers, press releases, etc. from just one organization and share that information with us. If this is a way you might like to get involved, please call and leave a message on the office answering machine (345-3724). We look forward to hearing from you.

Northern Pike Return to Lake Davis

More than two dozen northern pike have been found in remote Lake Davis, the same mountain lake that Fish and Game officials poisoned two years ago in a controversial attempt to destroy the ferocious non-native predator. In October 1997, Fish and Game agents poured liquid and powdered poison into the lake to kill every fish in it to keep the pike out of California's river system.

State and local officials said they believe the pike had established themselves again at Lake Davis. The question was how did they get there? The immediate suspicion was that some misguided individual may be releasing the non-native predator into the lake in hopes of establishing a new sport fishing population.

Twenty-eight pike were caught by state Fish and Game agents monitoring the lake using electro-shock fishing.

Local residents asked the governor to pledge that the lake wouldn't be poisoned again. The state once again finds itself firmly impaled on the horns of a dilemma, between protecting native species or safeguarding a community water supply.

Davis Sides with Farmers Over Water

Not on side of angels in this issue

The governor has intervened in a fight over the use of water in the Central Valley Project for fish and wildlife protection, taking the side of the state and its farmers against the US Interior Department and most conservation and wildlife organizations.

In his brief filed in U.S. District Court in Fresno, Davis said he wants to make sure the State Water Project "is not harmed" by the federal water dispute.

Dozens of districts and growers are contesting the Interior Department's interpretation of how much water is actually needed. They favor the intervention by Davis, who said California was forced to intervene because the Interior Department failed to accurately describe the issues to the court and had made claims "that go well beyond the accounting issue and threaten the rights of the state of California."



FALL 1999 BIRDSEED SALE ORDER FORM

ALL ORDERS WITH PAYMENT MUST BE RECEIVED BY WEDNESDAY, OCT. 6

Proceeds support local Audubon conservation and education programs

Please check preferred pickup location. Pickup dates will be Oct. 14-17, 1999 with details to be advised later.

☐ San Bruno

☐ Burlingame

☐ 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					
RED/WHITE MILLET MIX.....	20 lb@	\$ 9.00	/bag	_____	= _____
BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER.....	25 lb@	\$12.00	/bag	_____	= _____
WHITE PROSO MILLET.....	25 lb@	\$ 8.00	/bag	_____	= _____
THISTLE.....	5 lb@	\$ 8.00	/bag	_____	= _____
SUNFLOWER CHIPS.....	25 lb@	\$22.00	/bag	_____	= _____

SALES TAX IS INCLUDED IN ALL PRICES ABOVE

Contribution to Sequoia Audubon Society (tax deductible) _____

CHECK # _____

TOTAL _____

THE NEXT SEED SALE WILL NOT BE UNTIL FEBRUARY 2000

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

Profits from the Sale of Birdseed Go to Advance the Missions of Sequoia Audubon Society

Resident Canada Geese — Pets or Pests

The US Fish and Wildlife Service announced new rules to cope with expanding resident populations of Canada geese in urban and suburban communities.

These rules give state wildlife agencies the ability to design their own management programs and to take actions to control goose populations without having to seek separate permits from the Service for each action, thus enabling these agencies to respond more quickly.

The new permits will allow states to act as soon as it becomes apparent that resident Canada geese are a problem. USF&W will issue permits that identify the terms and conditions of management actions. As long as states satisfy those conditions, they can proceed without seeking separate permits from the Service every time a problem arises.

Migratory Canada Geese are not a problem but complaints about resident geese are on the increase. Urban and suburban development has resulted in the creation of ideal goose habitat conditions — park-like open areas with short grass adjacent to small bodies of water — resulting in growing numbers of resident geese on golf courses, parks, airports and other public and private property. Removed from most predators and free of the perils of migration these populations enjoy consistently high reproduction and survival rates. Because of their size, even small numbers of geese can pose a health or safety crisis in some areas. Goose droppings in heavy concentrations can contribute to excessive algae growth in lakes resulting in fish kills and contaminate municipal water supplies. Overall there are more than a million non-migratory and often highly territorial Canada Geese.

Now, states may contract with private companies and individuals to manage resident populations of Canada geese. They are prohibited from selling the birds or otherwise profiting from the take, but may donate them to food banks.

In order to protect migratory goose populations, permits are only valid when all migratory bird sport hunting is prohibited.

Aleutian Geese May No Longer Be Endangered

The USF&WS has proposed removing the Aleutian sub-species of the Canada Goose from the threatened species list, citing a remarkable recovery after non-native foxes were removed from their nest islands.

These duck-sized geese were among the first animals to be listed under the Endangered Species Act when their numbers fell below 800 in 1975.

But removing foxes from the birds' nesting islands and relocating some geese to more islands brought their numbers to about 32,000, the Fish and Wildlife Service said.

At one time this sub-species was thought to be extirpated but ornithologists found a small population on the rugged, remote Buldir Island in the western Aleutians in 1962.

We Ain't Dead Yet! Yellow-eared Parrot Flocks Found

In 1998, the last known flock of Yellow-eared Parrots disappeared from Ecuador. Conservationists mounted an immediate and fruitless search for other flocks in Ecuador and Colombia, and the bird was generally assumed to be extinct.

Then, early this year one of the last remaining project field men found two flocks totaling 61 birds — including a nest with young — in a remote Colombian valley.

This particular parrot, unlike most of its cousins, does not tolerate human activity well and cannot survive in captivity. These traits do not bode well for its future but conservationists are guardedly optimistic that preservation efforts in Colombia will be more successful than they were in Ecuador.

George Wilhelm Steller

The familiar Steller's Jay, as well as the Steller's Eider and Steller's Sea Eagle of the arctic are named for an 18th century German naturalist, who, like many scientists of his day, worked for the Czar.

George Wilhelm Steller was born in Windsheim, Germany in 1709. After finishing his education, he went to Russia where he found work as a naturalist for the Academy of Sciences in Saint Petersburg. He was invited on Vitus Bering's last expedition into the Arctic Ocean. Steller is reputed to have been the first white man to have stepped on the land that became known as Alaska. Steller first saw his namesake jay on Kayak Island near present-day Valdez in 1746 and described it as either a closely related species or a sub-species of the Blue Jay.

In his three days in North America, Steller made the first descriptions of many plants and animals. In addition to the jay, he described the Steller Sea Cow. Although there are some anecdotal references to this giant relative of the manatee, no other naturalist ever saw the sea cow alive. Its existence was never in doubt as its bones continued to be found until the mid-nineteenth century. Steller also described the Spectacled Cormorant which followed the sea cow into extinction.

Returning to Kamchatka, the expedition was shipwrecked on Bering Island. Bering and most of the crew died. Steller was among the few who survived the Arctic winter. In spring they built a ship from the wreckage of their original craft. Steller was able to salvage only a few seeds from his field specimens.

After his return Steller explored Siberia, collecting plants and animals. He clashed with local authorities when he released some Siberian natives he thought had been unfairly arrested. For this he was himself arrested and imprisoned. Eventually he was tried and released. But on his return journey to St. Petersburg he was re-arrested on the same charges because local officials hadn't been told that he was no longer wanted. This incarceration broke his health and he became ill and died. He was 37 years old.

A Summertime Adventure...The Kern Preserve

Irene Contreras

Where would you be birding...if you saw birds such as Pied-billed Grebe, California and Mountain Quail, Greater Road Runner, Barn and Burrowing Owl, Vermilion Flycatcher, Mountain Blue Bird and Turkey Vulture?

...if you birded both the desert floor and altitudes of over 9000 feet?

...if you peeled off layers of clothes because the temperatures ranged from 45 to 90 degrees in a single birding day?

...if your leader was tireless, fearless, knew the local folks by name and was completely dedicated to ensuring a satisfying, quality bird-filled experience for each birder "under his wing"?

...if the assistant leader was equally qualified, with a gracious, positive, upbeat attitude despite the fact that the Yellow-billed Cuckoo was so very uncooperative.

Of course you would be lucky enough to be birding the Kern River Preserve and surrounding area with Sequoia Audubon.

Our leaders for the July 23-26 Kern River Trip were none other than Bob Barnes and Frances Toldi, and what an exciting trip this was. Six hours from the Bay area, we were transported to a varietal smorgasbord of birding habitats including: riparian forest, beautiful alpine meadows, forested areas of old and new growth trees sandwiched between meadows and open fields grazed by cattle, mountain tops with 360° views, the desert floor, river beds, towns, parks and golf courses. I, for one, find it impossible to say "my favorite spot was...", simply because it was all, in a word, wonderful!

Despite the fact that we did not see the infamous Yellow-billed Cuckoo, which seemed to take great pleasure in teasing us with tantalizing calls that had us running up and down, back and forth, the trip was an absolute success for me. Many of us saw life birds including the Blue Grouse hiding high up a tree eating the tips of pine needles, Willow Flycatcher, Clark's Nutcracker, and the magnificent Northern Goshawk, just to name a few. This trip was perfect in that it afforded many of us an opportunity to become re-acquainted with the fine details and beauty of birds we

enjoyed seeing on past trips. We had wonderful long looks at male and female Summer and Western Tanagers, Blue Grosbeaks, Horned Larks, Lark Sparrows and the ever popular and present Western Wood-Pewee!

In addition to great birding, we were fortunate in that we were able to watch a group of Field Assistants banding birds in the Kern River Preserve. We watched as a Yellow-breasted Chat, Nuttall's Woodpecker and Song Sparrow were being weighed, measured, sexed, aged and banded prior to their release.

Bob Barnes repeatedly said "we are not seeing lots of birds, but we are seeing quality birds". But I think everyone on this trip would disagree. We did see "quality" birds, but we also saw "lots" of birds — approximately 109 different species! This incredible list included all of the "usual suspects" plus Green Heron, White-faced Ibis, Northern Goshawk, Mountain Quail, Blue Grouse, Burrowing Owl, Common Nighthawk, White-throated Swift, Willow Flycatcher, Vermilion Flycatcher, Clark's Nutcracker, Townsend's Solitaire, Lazuli Bunting, 6 species of warblers (including a Yellow-breasted Chat in the hand), 5 wrens, 5 swallows, 3 nut-hatches, 3 vireos, 3 blackbirds, 3 finches, 3 hummers, 3 jays, 2 bluebirds, 2 tanagers and 2 grosbeaks. There are no two ways about it, this is a mighty impressive list!

In a dry river bed, in search of the Yellow-billed Cuckoo, we found perfect tracks of a mother black bear and cub while we listened to Warbling Vireos. We did not run across the bears (thank goodness) but we saw rabbits of all sizes, deer, coyote and lizards.

Round about 5:30 a.m. in the Preserve parking lot there was an interesting lineup of wild life — a California Towhee, ground squirrel and rabbit were all having breakfast together — a Disney touch. Another unlikely guest enjoying a drink from one of the Preserve's hummingbird feeders was a Nuttall's Woodpecker. The woodpecker would perch on the side of the post holding the feeder, then turn his head to one side and drink right along with the hummingbirds.

In short, we never ran out of interesting birds, mammals or reptiles to scrutinize; nor was there a shortage of plant life. We saw breathtaking meadows carpeted with wild flowers of every color. The desert and surrounding hillsides were covered with Joshua Trees, sage and other native plants and trees.

Our search for the goshawk took us to a giant sequoia redwood stand where the trees were so tall, so wide and so old I could only look up in silence and awe in appreciation of such a beautiful wonder.

Allen and Sheila Baldrige, Debbie Brusco, Ted and Zoe Chandik, Sue Cossins, Leslie Flint, David and Merry Haveman, Susan Peterson, Chris Shoemaker, Robin Smith, Francis Toldi and I made up the SAS group. Our group was fairly large but there was no shortage of experts who were willing to share their knowledge and expertise with the rest of us. Allen and Ted added their expertise to make a interesting trip even more rewarding. Zoe's knowledge of native plants gave yet another dimension to our birding trip. The number of other seasoned birders willing to help spot and identify was gratifying — everyone helping everyone find everything was the norm each day. We all shared birding stories and adventures over dinner and just plain had a very good time. (*The ornithological & botanical expertise in this group could staff a small college. —Ed.*)

I was a little pessimistic about this year's planned trip in the middle of summer. Surely the heat would be oppressive, making birding unpleasant. However that was not the case at all. The temperature was high at times, but thanks to Bob's careful planning we managed to bird hot areas early and head for high country when the temp started to soar. Another surprise was — no mosquitos! Unlike last year's adventure in a partially flooded preserve, this year's experience was dry. I'm very glad I went. I had lots of fun, enjoyed my fellow birders and came away very pleased with all I did, saw and heard.

Sequoia's 50th Birthday Bash

The Sequoia Chapter will be celebrating its 50th birthday on Saturday, September 18 at the Redwood Shelter in Huddart Park from 10 AM to 3 PM.

Bring your own picnic lunch.

Coffee, Tea and Birthday Cake will be provided by the chapter, as will the charcoal for the barbecues.

Birding walks will be held at 9 AM, 10 AM and 2 PM.

A parking fee of \$4 per car will be charged by County Parks.

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://sequoia.ca.audubon.org/>

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Past President	Francis Toldi	344-1919
Vice-president	Marilyn Noah	
Secretary	Mary Bresler	
Treasurer	Tom Vanden-Bosch	369-8305

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	Cliff Richer	873-1754
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Hospitality	Marilyn Hemmeter
ACR Representatives:	Leslie Flint

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San Mateo, CA 94403-4561



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