

SEQUOIA NEEDLES

*Bulletin of the Sequoia Audubon Society, San Mateo County
Founded 1949*

*Volume 56, No. 1
September-October 2005*

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

DEAR FELLOW MEMBERS

BY CAROL MASTERSON

Sequoia Audubon is committed to birds and the natural environment of San Mateo County. We have many exciting plans and programs for this year and next and we want you to be a part of them. Whether you simply enjoy watching birds or want to get more involved, SAS has something for you. How would you like to get involved? Perhaps you would be interested in writing our lawmakers to help make changes to environmental law. How about educating the next generation about the future of our Bay Area natural environment? Would you like to get involved in conservation work? You could help with bird census counts in San Mateo County, or if you are more energetic, you could help clear trails at Pescadero Marsh. Whatever your interests or skills, SAS can use your talents.

Are you a member of Sequoia Audubon? The dues are \$15 a year and you will receive our newsletter *The Needles*. As a member you will also be eligible for special members-only field trips.

Did you know that Sequoia Audubon is a separate organization from National Audubon? We are affiliated through a mutual agreement, but we are an independent group. When you join National Audubon you automatically become a member of your local county chapter, which is Sequoia Audubon. At one time National Audubon shared the dues you paid with the local chapters. Now, however, we receive less and less of your annual member dues. Your membership dues, contributions, and donations are the primary source of funds for our organization. That is why we rely on local Sequoia Audubon

membership to support our conservation and educational programs.

Help make a difference for Bay Area birds and wildlife. Get involved with Sequoia Audubon today. What can you do to help? Ask not what the birds can do for you....

Thanks for your continued support of Sequoia Audubon Society.

Whom do I contact to get involved?

Write your lawmakers:

Cynthia McLaughlin texcat@earthlink.net

Education:

Sue Cossins cuz02@earthlink.net

Bird census:

Robin Smith rwinslows@sbcglobal.net

Clearing Pescadero Marsh:

Norma Vite nolema@coastside.net

Membership:

Bill Critzer wcritzer@earthlink.net

A BIG YEAR FOR SAS – A BIGGER YEAR TO COME?

BY NORMA VITE

2004-2005 fiscal year has come to an end. On July 30th our membership held a planning meeting for the upcoming year. But first we wanted to review our goals from last year and see how much we had accomplished. It is with great pride we are able to list the following:

- The Pescadero Marsh project has begun. Step one is clearing the Sequoia Trail. Look in future *Needles* for dates when we will continue clearing and replanting. Contact Norma Vite at (650) 560-9740.
- We purchased a tripod for the Half Moon Bay State Beach education program. When we get involved in classroom programs, we need your help.
- We purchased a scope for San Pedro Park volunteers in memory of Cliff Richer.
- Many wonderful field trips were held and lots of great birding was appreciated by all. Check the website at www.sequoia-audubon.org

(Continued on page 2)

Monthly Meetings

San Mateo Garden Center

September

Thursday, 8th, 7:30 PM

Program: The People and Temples of Cambodia and Burma (Myanmar)

October

Thursday, 13th, 7:30 PM

Program: The March of the Other Penguins

(See program details on page 2)

Upcoming Field Trips

(See trip details beginning on page 3)

September

Sunday, 4th Coyote Point

Saturday, 10th San Pedro County Park*

Saturday, 17th Mt. View Forbay/Charleston Slough*

Sunday, 25th San Francisco Aquatic Park*

October

Saturday, 8th Coastal Birding Day*

Saturday, 22nd Filoli Estate

Sunday, 23rd Edgewood Park

November

Saturday 5th Delta Meadows

Saturday 12th Pescadero Marsh

Sunday, 20th Edgewood Park

Saturday 26th Basic Birding*

*Beginner/Family Trip

Check the field trip descriptions for any special information or requirements. Late comers may be disappointed. For all field trips bring

(Continued on page 3)

Sequoia Audubon Society

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Carol Masterson	650-347-1769
Past President	
Open	
Vice-President	
Open	
Second Vice-President	
Howard Rathlesberger	650-561-9532
Secretary	
Norma Vite	650-560-9740
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Peter Grace	415-467-0343

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'06*	Gary Deghi, Bill Critzer
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Members are encouraged to submit original or uncopyrighted material – articles, artwork, cartoons, photos – for Needles. The deadline for submission is the first day of the month preceding publication. Send comments and contributions to:

sas_editor@yahoo.com



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MEETING PROGRAMS

BY BARBARA WILSON

The People and Temples of Cambodia and Burma (Myanmar)

By David Cardinal

Thursday, September 8, 2005, 7:30PM

Veteran nature photographer David Cardinal will share some of his images and insights from his recent trips to Burma and Cambodia and its Angkor temple complex. Burma in particular is a land that time seems to have forgotten. A combination of a severely repressive government and a US embargo has kept

Monthly Meetings
San Mateo Garden Center
605 Parkside Way, San Mateo
Parkside Way is west of Alameda de las Pulgas, between 26th and 28th Avenues.

large portions of the country the same as they were nearly 1000 years ago. David will share not only his experiences but also his thoughts on how best to see these still exotic countries.

The March of the Other Penguins

By Robin Smith

Thursday, October 13, 2005, 7:30PM

Robin Smith will take you along on her voyage to Antarctica to visit penguin colonies on the Falklands, South Georgia, the Antarctic Peninsula, and Tierra del Fuego. Enjoy seeing many varieties of penguins as well as other Antarctic denizens. See glaciers hanging on for dear life. Come and enjoy another view of Antarctica.

Check the website for changes and additions.

Volunteers Needed for Pescadero Marsh

Do you like to get out and work? Help clear trails at Pescadero Marsh. It will help you lose those unwanted pounds and help the Pescadero Marsh trail restoration project. For information call Norma Vite (650) 560-9740.

(SAS Big Year, continued from page 1)

audubon.org for the latest field trip listings.

- Over 100 people participated in our two Christmas bird counts, even though one was on a rainy day. Hope to see you there this Christmas. Contact Robin Smith for info (650) 325-3306.
 - We continued to serve as host and hostesses at the Audubon Canyon Ranch. We agreed to this obligation years ago when the property was first purchased. This is one full day but lots of fun. To help next spring, contact Sue Cossins at (650) 347-9358.
 - Howard's bluebird recovery program is extremely successful and will continue. Howard is always looking for new volunteers to monitor boxes. Contact Howard at (650) 561-9532.
 - Lee Franks is in his fifth year of bird monitoring at Edgewood Park. He is very pleased with the success and would like more volunteers to commit three to six hours a month. It is a great way to become an expert birder. Contact Lee at (650) 592-7733.
 - We have had excellent programs at our monthly meetings; we need your suggestions for speakers this coming year. Put your thinking caps on and let us know what is on your list.
 - Elementary schools in San Mateo County were visited and birding skills demonstrated. Would you be willing to help continue this project? Contact Carol Masterson (650) 347-1769.
 - Two successful birdseed sales were held. With your help we raised money for our conservation and education projects. See the order form in this month's *Needles* to order seed.
 - Bill Critzer, Membership Chairman, lets us all know when our memberships will run out; watch your *Needles* address label for your renewal date.
 - Two successful raffles and sales were held at our potluck dinners. Thank you for being so generous with your donations and purchases.
- Our goal for next year is to see more of you involved and this list be longer. A big thanks to all of you who continue to support Sequoia Audubon in any way that you are able or desire. Happy Birding!



FIELD TRIPS

BY CAROL MASTERSON

Coyote Point

Sunday, September 4, 8:00 AM

Fall and winter are great times to view birds at Coyote Point. The wetland fronting San Francisco Bay attracts numerous shore birds. The trees and grassy areas also provide good birding.

Directions: Take 101 to the Peninsula Ave. exit in Burlingame. Go east following the signs to Coyote Point. Meet in the parking lot behind the Yacht Club at 8:00 AM. Tell the Gatekeeper that you are with Sequoia Audubon Society to get in free.

Leader: Sue Cossins (650) 347-9358

San Pedro County Park

Saturday, September 10, 9:00 AM

This coastal wooded park provides a variety of habitats for migrating and resident birds. The trip will entail some walking along easy trails.

DIRECTIONS: Hwy 1 to Pacifica and turn inland at Linda Mar Boulevard. Follow Linda Mar to the end and follow the signs to the park. Meet in the parking lot just to the right (south) of the Visitor's Center. Heavy rain cancels.

LEADER: Judy Spitler (650) 355-9362

Beginner/Family Trip

Mt. View Forbay/Charleston Slough

Saturday, September 17, 9:00 AM

This area has some of the most varied shorebirds and waterfowl in a small wintering habitat. We will be looking for returning waterfowl, shorebirds, terns, and skimmers. If we are really lucky we may see a Burrowing Owl, a Little Blue Heron, or the elusive rail. Walking is easy along the top of flat levees. Dress in layers for warm to cool weather. Bring fluids and scopes if you have them.

Directions: South on Hwy 101 to San Antonio Road. Take San Antonio Road (North) exit. Follow San Antonio Road until it makes a right angle turn and becomes Terminal Road. Stop and park as close to the intersection as possible. We will meet at 9:00 AM sharp.

Leader: Francis Toldi (650) 344-1919

Beginner/Family Trip

San Francisco Aquatic Park

Sunday, September 25, 9:30 AM

Join National Park Service Ranger Carol Kiser on this beginners' bird walk to see shore, migratory, citified, and resident birds as we walk along Hyde Street Pier and Aquatic Park. Bring binoculars and bird books and dress in layers. We will meet at the Hyde Street Pier entrance at Hyde and Jefferson Streets and will go for about 1½-2 hours. There is no charge and walk is wheelchair accessible.

Directions: Bus numbers 10, F, 30, 47, 49, and the cable car stop nearby. Call (415) 673-MUNI for details. As meter parking lasts only for one hour, parking is best at garages nearby for about \$2.50 per ½ hour at the Anchorage Shopping Center or at Ghirardelli Square.

Leader: Ranger Carol Kiser (415) 561-7100

Beginner/Family Trip – Wheelchair Accessible

Coastal Birding Day at Half Moon Bay State Beach

Saturday, October 8, 9:00 AM

Put this date on your calendar to celebrate the birds of coastal California. We will meet at the Half Moon Bay State Beach for a day of coastside birding. We will have live captive birds of prey, lectures, and field trips to learn about the birds of San Mateo County. This is a great way for kids and beginning birders to get started birdwatching. We have binoculars to share. We will also have tips for advanced birders. Bring a picnic lunch, fluids, and lots of birding enthusiasm.

Directions: Take Hwy 92 west to Hwy 1 at Half Moon Bay. Go south on Hwy 1 to Kelly Ave. Take a right hand turn on to Kelly and drive to the end of Kelly Ave. to the entrance to Half Moon Bay State Beach. Entrance to the State Beach is \$6.00 per vehicle.

For information call: Carol Masterson (650) 347-1769

Beginner/Family Trip

Part of program is Wheelchair Accessible

Filoli Estate

Saturday, October 22, 8:30 AM

The Filoli Estate is the property of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. We have been invited for a morning of

(Continued on page 4)

Upcoming Field Trips

(Continued from page 1)

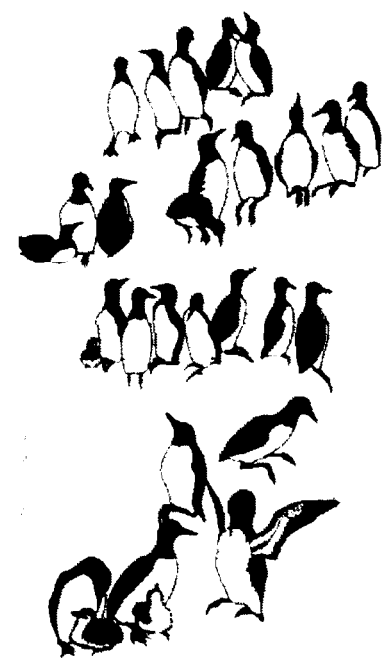
your binoculars, water, wear sturdy walking shoes or boots, sun block, hat, and always dress in layers for hot sunny weather to cool windy conditions. While we will attempt to stay on schedule, circumstances may dictate changes to field trip leaders, dates or times.

For the latest schedule and updates always go to the Sequoia Audubon web site, contact the trip leader, or call

Carol at 650-347-1769.

Sequoia Audubon on the Web

Remember to check out our web site for updates on field trips, conservation news, and links to great birding sites. www.sequoia-audubon.org



(Field Trips, continued from page 3)

birding at this beautiful site on the edge of the San Francisco watershed land. The grounds of Filoli have a fine planted garden surrounded by large oaks and trails leading to riparian, redwood, and farm habitats. Over 96 species of birds have been found here.

Reservations are required because this trip is limited to 20 people. (Sorry no children under 14.) No food or picnicking is allowed but all will be welcome after the walk to buy light food and beverages at the Café and visit the gift shop.

Directions: Take Hwy 280 to the Edgewood Road exit; go west. Turn right/north on Cañada Road and drive approximately ½ mile to the entrance of Filoli. We will meet in front of the Visitors' Center. If you want to remain after the field trip to walk through the house and/or gardens, there is a \$12.00 entrance fee. Heavy rain cancels. Call Carol Masterson at (650) 347-1769 to reserve your spot.

Leader: Sue James and Donna Petersen

Edgewood Park Walk

Sunday, October 23, 8:00-11:00 AM

Birding should be great at Edgewood Park. Look for resident and fall migratory species. Ask leader Lee Franks about the Sequoia Audubon Bird Conservation Program at Edgewood Park and how you can get involved. Starting at 8AM increases the chance of seeing all the interesting fall birds at Edgewood.

Directions: The Edgewood Park entrance is east of Hwy 280 on Edgewood Road in Redwood City. Meet the leader in the parking lot adjacent to the Day Camp area.

Leader: Lee Franks (650) 592-7733

Delta Meadows and Cosumnes River Winter Birding

Saturday, November 5, 7:00 AM-4:00 PM

The Central Valley is considered to be the single most important wintering site for waterfowl in the Pacific Flyway. Come join us for a weekend of great birding at the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. This area has open waterways, freshwater marshes, riparian woodlands, and valley grasslands. Some species we may see include White-faced Ibis, White-fronted and Ross's Geese, Turkey Vultures, White-tailed Kites, Red-shouldered and Red-tailed Hawks, American Kestrels, Sandhill Cranes, Killdeer, many shorebirds, lots of ducks, woodpeckers, and more. We will start at Delta Meadows then move on to the Cosumnes River Preserve. We can meet at 7:00AM and carpool (it will take about two hours to get from San Francisco to Delta Meadows). After birding at Delta Meadows we will drive on to Cosumnes Preserve and meet at the Visitor Center. At this point, you can select either a walking or a driving tour. Dress in layers (rain is a possibility in November); bring a hat, fluids, lunch, and snacks. Bring a scope if you have one. To carpool meet at the entrance to the Millbrae BART station just off Millbrae Ave. and Rollins Road at 7:00 AM sharp.

Directions: From the Bay Bridge, take 580 east to Highway 24 east. At Walnut Creek, take 680 north to Highway 242 north to Highway 4 eastbound. At Brentwood, do not exit with Highway 4 but stay on the freeway, which turns into Highway 160. Take 160 across the Antioch Bridge (\$3 toll), and stay on 160 (a bit tricky at Isleton: after you've passed Isleton, go left onto the bridge and then right) until you reach Walnut Grove. At Walnut Grove (after Ryde), go right onto the bridge across the Sacramento River. Turn left at the stop sign. You'll cross a small bridge over the Delta Cross Channel. Immediately after that, take a right. After a few

hundred feet, you'll see a brown sign to your left that marks the entrance to Delta Meadows River Park. Follow the dirt road and park at the side of the road before the gate (don't block the road). We will meet at the gate at 9:00 AM sharp.

Leaders: Jean Ouellette and Carol Masterson. For information call (650) 347-1769

Pescadero Marsh

Saturday, November 12, 9:00 AM

Pescadero Marsh is one of the premier birding spots in the county. It is located on the Pacific Flyway and serves as an important stopover point for migrant shorebirds, a wintering ground for waterfowl, and breeding ground for a variety of marsh birds. Walk along the newly cleared Sequoia Audubon Trail and see the work our volunteers have done on trail restoration. The weather may be cool or warm depending upon fog and wind conditions, so be prepared. Boots are recommended for wet conditions. Walking is relatively easy on level grades.

Directions: Hwy 1 South to Pescadero Marsh. Meet at 9:00 AM in the parking lot south of the bridge.

Leader: Gary Deghi (650) 726-1340

Edgewood Park Walk

Sunday, November 20, 8:00-11:00 AM

Birding should be great at Edgewood Park. Look for resident and fall migratory species. Ask leader Lee Franks about the Sequoia Audubon Bird Conservation Program at Edgewood Park and how you can get involved. Starting at 8AM increases the chance of seeing all the interesting fall birds at Edgewood.

Directions: The Edgewood Park entrance is east of Hwy 280 on Edgewood Road in Redwood City. Meet the leader in the parking lot adjacent to the Day Camp area.

Leader: Lee Franks (650) 592-7733

Introduction to Basic Birding

Saturday, November 26, 9:00 AM

This is Birding 101 for all new birders. Ever had basic birding questions and were afraid to ask? How do I use a field guide? Which field guide is the best? I can't find the bird everyone else is seeing! How do I use binoculars? What is good birding etiquette? We will have binoculars to share. Dress in layers and bring water. Call Carol for directions. Rain cancels.

Leader: Carol Masterson (650) 347-1769

Beginner Skills Trip - Beginner/Family - Wheelchair Accessible

Pre-Christmas Count Walk at Washington Park, Burlingame

Sunday, December 10, 8:30 AM

Get prepared for the Christmas Count. Never been on a Christmas count? Come and learn "how to" from some experienced birders. Come and practice your skills.

Directions: Washington Park is near the railway station in Burlingame. Take Hwy 101 to Broadway-Burlingame, go west, pass Rollins Road, and take a left on Carolan Ave. (Do not cross the railroad tracks.) Go south on Carolan past Oak

(Continued on page 5)

(Field Trips, continued from page 4)

Grove. You will see the Burlingame High School on your left. Meet at the corner of Carolan and Burlingame Ave. behind the train station at 8:30 AM sharp. Bring your bird book and binoculars

Leader: Sue Cossins (650) 347-9358

Beginner Skills Walk

BOY SCOUT BIRDERS AT COYOTE POINT

BY LINDA A. VOTTERI

Forty-two enthusiastic Webelos assembled at Coyote Point for a week of day camp starting July 18, 2005. Under the watchful eyes of Sue Cossins, Carol Masterson, Frank Vitale, and Linda Votteri, the boys, aged nine and ten, were introduced to the wonderful world of birding. The group was divided into four dens. Each den had a one-hour session that included a brief talk and a walk to spot and identify the birds of the area.

Coyote Point is a regional recreation area that provides a wide variety of birding opportunities -- an ideal area for the beginner birder. Shorebirds were spotted with ease and included the following: Great Blue Heron, Snowy and Great Egrets, Forster's Terns, and Pied-billed Grebe.

The boys enjoyed trying to identify the birds using

binoculars and bird guides loaned by SAS. As each bird was identified, they wrote down its name. The funniest comment I heard from one of the Webelos when asked if he had a favorite bird was: "I'm not much of a bird watcher, but," with a twinkle in his eye, "I love baseball and my favorite teams are the Blue Jays and the Orioles."

Many of the Webelos shared their love of birding with the leaders and are already making out their holiday lists for binoculars and bird books and are making plans for future bird walks.



Photograph by Sue Cossins

SAVE THE DATES: SEQUOIA AUDUBON CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

Crystal Springs Christmas Bird Count

Saturday, December 17, 2005

The Crystal Springs count is regularly one of the top ten for numbers of species identified. We need your help to exceed our count from last year. Some of the best birding you will do this year will be at the Christmas counts. Better yet, sign up for both the Crystal Springs and the Año Nuevo counts.

Año Nuevo Christmas Bird Count

Saturday, December 31, 2005

Come and help us make this the biggest bird count ever. This count has the potential to match or exceed the Crystal Springs Count in species diversity and numbers of birds, but is traditionally under-reported due to the small number of participants. Sign up now!

Christmas Count Compiler: Al DeMartini.

For more information, send email to office@sequoia-audubon.org or call Robin Smith at (650) 325-3306 or Gary Deghi (650) 726-1340.

Thank You To our Field Trip Leaders

You are the heart and soul of Sequoia Audubon. Thanks for your time and energy to help us see and know birds. Thanks for your patience when we can't find the bird in the tree. Thanks and keep up the good work.

Lee Franks	Ranger Carol Kiser
Sue Cossins	Ranger Dave Augustine
Robin Smith	Ranger Nelle Lyons
Gary Deghi	Inga Svoboda
Francis Toldi	Marilyn Nasatir
Judy Spitler	Helen McKenna
Paula Miller	Alan Hopkins
Leslie Flint	Garth Harwood
Eileen Kay	Debi Shearwater
Teri Tith	Alvaro Jaramillo



RED-TAILED HAWK AND HAWK HILL

BY CAROL MASTERSON

The Red-tailed Hawk ranges throughout North America to central Alaska and northern Canada and south as far as the mountains of Panama. Although not truly migratory, they do adjust seasonally to areas of the most abundant prey. In winter many of the northern birds move south.

Hawks are carnivores (meat eaters) that belong to the category of birds known as raptors – birds of prey. They have strong, hooked beaks; their feet have three toes pointed forward and one turned back; and their claws, or talons, are long, curved, and very sharp.

Prey is killed with the long talons and, if it is too large to swallow whole, it is torn to bite-sized pieces with the hawk's beak.

Since the beginning of recorded history, birds of prey have been both despised and revered. The sport of falconry – using raptors as hunting aids – has been practiced in Asia and Egypt since 3000 BC. Yet, until recent years, birds of prey have also been ruthlessly destroyed because of real or imagined competition with humans for game and domesticated animals.

The Red-tailed Hawk is a grouping of 14 sub-species, each of which is more or less specific to a geographical area and differs from the others in size, markings etc.

(Continued on page 7)



Fall 2005 BIRDSEED SALE ORDER FORM

All Orders With Payment Must Be Received By Friday, September 23, 2005

Proceeds support local Audubon conservation programs

Pickup dates will be Oct. 13-16

Check Preferred pickup location below:

Half Moon Bay ☐ Burlingame ☐ San Carlos ☐ Pacifica ☐ San Mateo ☐ Atherton ☐



		Number of Bags	Cost in \$
Audubon Wild Bird Mix	20 lb @ \$14.00/bag		
Black Oil Sunflower	25 lb @ \$12.50/bag		
White Proso Millet	25 lb @ \$12.00/bag		
Thistle— 5 lb.	5 lb @ \$10.00/bag		
Thistle— 20 lb.	20 lb @ \$32.00/bag		
Sunflower Chips	25 lb @ \$28.00/bag		
Total birdseed purchases (sales tax is included in all prices above)			
Tax-deductible contribution to Sequoia Audubon Society (Thank You!)			
Grand total (check payable to Sequoia Audubon Society)			

Please enclose an e-mail address or a stamped self-addressed envelope to receive your order confirmation and directions to pick-up location. Mail check and order to:

Sequoia Audubon Society

Birdseed Sale, 315 Shad Court, Foster City, CA 94404

E-mail: office@sequoia-audubon.org Information: (650) 349-1555 (Iona Luke)

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Birdseed supplied by the Wild Bird Center of San Carlos.

The next seed sale will be January, 2006. Thanks for supporting Sequoia Audubon.

Comparisons

Based on general body shape and flight habits, hawks are classified into three different groups (genera): the Accipiters, the Falcons and the Buteos.

The Sharp-shinned Hawk, the Cooper's Hawk, and the Goshawk are Accipiters. They have long tails and short, rounded wings that enable them to dart through and around trees in pursuit of other birds, their principal prey. Typically they fly low with a series of rapid wing beats followed by a brief period of sailing and then another series of wing beats. Accipiters are associated with brush and timbered areas.

Falcons prefer open country. They include the Prairie Falcon, the Peregrine Falcon, the Merlin, and the dainty little American Kestrel, also called the Sparrow Hawk. Falcons have a streamlined body, long, pointed wings, and long tails. A series of strong, rapid wing beats gives them extremely fast flight in open country and their swiftness allows them to overtake and capture other birds on the wing.

The American Kestrel is the smallest of our hawks and feeds mainly on mice and insects. It is the only one of the falcons that hovers over its intended prey. Because of its habitat and range, it is also the only Falcon or Accipiter that most people are likely to see.

The Buteos are the largest of the hawks. They are the broad-winged, broad-tailed soaring hawks that are more readily seen because of their habit of circling high in the air or perching in dead trees or on telephone poles along the road. They include the Red-tailed, the Red-shouldered, the Swainson's, the Rough-legged and the Ferruginous hawks.

The Red-tail is the largest hawk, usually weighing between 2 and 4 pounds. As with most raptors, the female is nearly one-third larger than the male and may have a wingspan of 56 inches. This species shows a great deal of individual variation in plumage.

The adult has a rufous-colored tail that may have a black terminal bar. Adults are dark brown on the back and the top of their wings. The underside of the bird is usually light with a dark belly band and a cinnamon wash on the neck and chest. Immatures resemble the adults except that the tail is brown with dark bars. The Red-tail molts during its second year.

The adult Red-tailed Hawk is easily identified, for when it leaves its perch on slow, measured wing beats, or turns while soaring overhead, the broad, rounded tail shows a rich, russet red, hence the name. Within its range, its frequent soaring and loud voice are a good pointer.

Behavior

The Red-tailed Hawk is the most widespread and familiar member of the American Buteos. They nest in the month of March in tall trees. Like all other Buteos, it does not fly fast but soars at high altitudes using its keen eyesight to spot the

slightest movement in the grass below. It is an aggressive bird and vigorously defends its territory, especially during the winter months when hunting is difficult.

Habitat

The Red-tailed Hawk is usually found in grasslands or marsh-shrub habitats, but is a very adaptable bird, being equally at home in deserts and forests and at varying heights above sea level.

Food & Hunting

The Red-tailed Hawk is a most opportunistic hunter. Its diet is varied, but there is conclusive evidence now that 85 to 90% is composed of small rodents, with rabbits, snakes, and lizards included. Where there are large numbers of pheasant, these become the food of choice in spring and summer.

Conservation

In California, state and federal laws protect all raptors. Because of their inexperience hunting, juvenile birds may be seen eating road-killed animals. They may even kill chickens, and despite this rare occurrence, the Red-tail is known throughout the country as a "chicken hawk." As a consequence, dead hawks hanging from fences and lying under trees and power poles are mute evidence that shooters, not understanding the economic or esthetic importance of raptors, or perhaps unaware of protective laws, still kill them indiscriminately. In the rare case of an individual raptor or hawk that engages in active predation on domestic birds or animals, such a bird may be judiciously removed in accordance with current regulations.

The best place to see Red-tailed Hawks in the bay area is at the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory (GGRO) at Hawk Hill in the Marin Headlands, part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. The GGRO was formed in the early 1980s to track the Golden Gate migration, an annual flight of tens of thousands of hawks, eagles, falcons, and vultures. The best migration viewing is on fog-free days from 10 am to 2 pm, from September through November.

On Saturdays and Sundays during September and October (weather permitting) the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory sponsors a "HawkTalk" at noon and a banding demonstration at 1:00 pm. Hawk Hill is located just north of San Francisco in the Marin Headlands.

Adapted from Desert USA.com.



Photograph by Bob Cossins

SAS appreciates your tax-deductible donations which help fund the Chapter's education, conservation and ongoing activities

Name _____

Address _____

Email Address _____

Amount _____

SEND TO:

Sequoia Audubon Society

PO Box 620292

Woodside

CA 94062-0292

Thank You!

Sequoia Audubon Society

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Woodside, CA

94062-0292

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Time Valued Material—Please Do Not Delay

Photograph by Carol Masterson



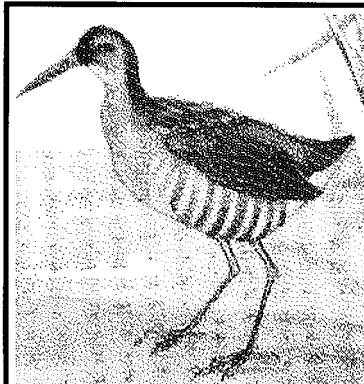
Award Ceremony at Sequoia Audubon Summer Potluck

From left, Kevin Coleman, Junior Birder Award for advanced birding skills; Howard Rathlesberger, holding a bluebird photograph gift he received from Kevin Coleman; June Flora, Ph.D., from Encinal School, Environmental Education of the Year for her Bluebird Program.

Volunteer Coordinator Wanted

Sequoia Audubon is looking for a member to tap the volunteer forces within our membership. We need someone to promote our chapter and organize volunteers for year-round birding activities.

Please contact Carol Masterson at (650) 347-1769.



Virginia Rail

THE BIRD BOX

**RARE BIRD
ALERT**

(415) 681-7422

Mission Statement

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.