

SEQUOIA NEEDLES

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

*Volume 56, No. 2
November-January 2005-2006*

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

NEWS ABOUT YOUR CHAPTER

BY CAROL MASTERSON

The Board of Directors and interested SAS members met on July 30, 2005 for our summer planning meeting.

We agreed to continue our regular programs including field trips, member evening programs, fundraising, the newsletter, and conservation collaborations. It was also decided that we need to focus our limited resources on fewer projects. We identified the following programs as the ones to continue.

Pescadero Marsh Continue to assist with trail clearing and start replanting natives at this California State Preserve. Continue work on an updated bird checklist, plan birding surveys, plan field trips, and help with the creation of a docent program.

Half Moon Bay State Beach – Continue supporting the Snowy Plover Watch program and support an education program for schools on the coast by providing teaching materials. Plan field trips and Coastal Birding Day at Half Moon Bay State Beach.

Edgewood County Park Continue to support the Bird Conservation Program with a bird census three times per month. Help to recruit more bird monitors and continue monthly field trip walk.

Bluebird Program – Continue to support the Bluebird Program for San Mateo County. Add pages to the SAS website devoted to the Bluebird Program with information for the Bluebird Monitors. Include plans for building a Bluebird box. Recruit more

volunteers to input data for the Bluebird Program.

Membership Communication – We will improve communication with our membership by adding more information to the SAS website in a more timely manner. Enhance the website with more pictures and text about birds, birding, and what SAS is involved in. We will also develop better member communication by email.

Community Presence – We need to make the Sequoia Audubon name more visible to the public. Join and support more local environmental groups that act to promote, protect, and preserve natural environments.

CROW OR RAVEN?

BY THERESA O'BRIEN

One of the most challenging aspects of birding, and mind boggling for beginners, is the task of learning how to identify two or more species of birds that basically look the same. Empids are perhaps the most challenging; however, close behind that challenge is the Raven vs. Crow.

The most common ways to distinguish between the two are size and appearance. This talent comes with time and field experience. Ravens look larger overall than crows. Furthermore, they often look more disheveled than crows, which most often have a smoother appearance. The next physical feature to observe is the bill. A raven's bill will look longer, heavier, and thicker than a crow's. Additionally, their bills often have bristles protruding from the base of the beak. While standing, a raven's throat has a shaggy, unkempt appearance while the crow's throat presents a sleek, clean-shaven image in contrast.

Another common diagnostic tool can be a bird's tail shape. While standing, a raven's

(Continued on page 2)

Monthly Meetings

San Mateo Garden Center
(See program details on page 2)

November

Thursday, 10th, 7:30PM

Program: Birding in Costa Rica

December

Thursday, 8th, 6:30PM

Program: Potluck and Birds and Wildlife of Fiji

January

Thursday, 12th, 7:30PM

Program: Nature Tour of Alaska

Upcoming Field Trips

(See trip details beginning on page 3)

October

Saturday 22nd Filoli Estate

Sunday 23rd Edgewood Park

Sunday 23rd San Francisco
Aquatic Park*

November

Saturday 5th Delta Meadows and
Cosumnes River Winter Birding

Saturday 12th Pescadero Marsh

Sunday 13th San Francisco
Aquatic Park*

Sunday 20th Edgewood Park

Saturday, 26th Basic Birding*

December

Saturday & Sunday, 3rd & 4th

Sacramento Wildlife Refuges

Sunday 10th Pre-Christmas Count
at Washington Park

Sunday, 11th San Francisco
Aquatic Park*

Saturday, 17th Crystal Springs

(Continued on page 3)

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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

Birding in Costa Rica: Fun Birding, Easy Traveling

By Les Chibana

Thursday, November 10, 2005, 7:30 PM

Costa Rica is uniquely located to host wildlife from the North American and South American continents. Its location and size also make it easy to travel from the Caribbean coast and slope to the

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.

Pacific side and to see the diversity enhanced by these different bodies of water. The element of elevation adds further habitat diversity to this tropical wonderland. The birds are dazzling and plentiful. The people and culture make this a great country to visit.

Les Chibana has been a birding instructor in Palo Alto for over 10 years. He is not currently teaching, because of a projected move out of state. His 25+ years of birding avocation have been enhanced by 9 years of migrant bird banding in Alviso. His birding business has provided Bay Area and visiting birders with the opportunities to discover the joys of our exceptional birding areas. Visit his BirdNutz website, www.birdnutz.com, to see what's hatching.

Birds and Wildlife of Fiji

By Bill Beckon, Ph.D.

Thursday December 8, 2005, 7:30 PM

Discover the fascinating birds and wildlife of this magical Pacific island. Bill Beckon studied the birds and wildlife on the 220 islands of the Fiji archipelago in the South Pacific. He is an author of many scientific articles about Fiji birds and wildlife and helped write a resource book for use in Fiji schools. During his research he discovered a new species of fruit bat.

The program will be preceded by a potluck beginning at 6:30 PM.

Nature Tour of Alaska

Thursday, January 12, 2006, 7:30 PM

By Bob and Sue Cossins

Join SAS members, Bob and Sue Cossins, in reliving their 2005 Sierra Club nature tour of Alaska. The tour, which focused on birds, wildflowers, and wildlife, included stays in Anchorage, Nome, Valdez, Denali, and Seward.



(Crow or Raven - continued from page 1)
tail feathers form a slight wedge. A crow's tail has a slight v-shaped indentation and appears square or slightly rounded. In flight, a raven's tail appears as a stocky, wide wedge, while a crow's looks longer, forming a smooth semi-circle with squared edges.

Social habits can be another method used to distinguish one bird from the next. In this case, ravens often appear solitary or paired, unless an abundant food source allows for larger groups. Crows, by contrast, are gregarious groupers.

Flight patterns also differ between the two species. Ravens often soar and glide with wings positioned flat or horizontally. Crows rarely soar, but have smooth wing beats that resemble a rowing motion. Furthermore, they glide with their wings slightly raised.

With a little effort in the field, these two can be removed from the "birds that look alike" list. In time, a raven will cease to look like a crow and a crow will not look like a raven.

Sources:

The Sibley Guide to Birds

North American Wildlife

Peterson Field Guides: Western Birds



FIELD TRIPS

BY CAROL MASTERSON

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 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 required** because this trip is limited to 20 people maximum. (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 to visit the gift shop.

Directions: Take Hwy 280 to the Edgewood Road exit; go west. Turn right/north on Cañada Road and drive approx. 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 will be a \$12.00 entrance fee. Heavy rain cancels. Call Carol Masterson at 650-347-1769 to reserve your spot.

Leaders: 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 8 AM increases the chance of seeing all the interesting fall birds at Edgewood.

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

Leader: Lee Franks (650) 592-7733

San Francisco Aquatic Park

Sunday, October 23, 9:30 AM

Join National Park Service Ranger Carol Kiser on this beginners' bird walk to see shore, migratory, cityfied, and resident birds as we walk along Hyde Street Pier and Aquatic Park. Bring binoculars, 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 the 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

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 in 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, lots of ducks, White-fronted and Ross's geese, sparrows, Turkey vultures, White-tailed Kites, Red-shouldered and Red-tailed hawks, American Kestrels, Sandhill cranes, Killdeer, Black-necked Stilts, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Long-billed Curlews, Western and Least sandpipers, Long-billed Dowitchers, Common Snipe, California endemic Yellow-billed Magpies, White-breasted Nuthatches, Bewick's and Marsh wrens, Golden- and Ruby-crowned Kinglets, woodpeckers, and more. We will start at Delta Meadows, then move onto the Cosumnes River Preserve. We can meet at 7:00 AM and carpool (figure it will take about two hours to get from San Francisco to Delta Meadows). After birding 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 remote, but real, possibility in November. Bring a hat, fluids, lunch, and snacks. Bring a scope

(Continued on page 4)

Upcoming Field Trips

Christmas Bird Count

Wednesday, 21st Berkeley East Shore State Park

Saturday, Dec 31st Año Nuevo Christmas Bird Count

January

Saturday, 7th Basic Birding*

Sunday, 8th Arrowhead Marsh

**Beginner/Family Trip*

Check the field trip descriptions for any special information or requirements. Late comers may be disappointed. For all field trips bring 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 attempt to stay on schedule, circumstances may dictate changes to field trip leaders, dates, or times.

For the latest schedule and updates, go to the Sequoia Audubon web site, contact the trip leader, or call **Carol at 650-347-1769**.



Nesting Crows

(Field Trips, continued from page 3)

if you have it. 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 Area: 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. (It's 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. Go left at the stop sign. You'll go across 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.

Leader: Jean Ouellette and Carol Masterson; for information call (650) 347-1769.

Pescadero Marsh with Gary Deghi

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

San Francisco Aquatic Park

Sunday, November 13, 9:30 AM

For details, see trip description under October 23.

Edgewood Park Walk

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

Birding should be great at Edgewood Park. Fall birding should be in full swing. We will look for resident and migratory species. Starting early increases the chance of seeing all the interesting fall birds at Edgewood. Warblers, sparrows, hawks, and thrushes are all possible. The walk is over moderately strenuous terrain.

Directions: Meet the leader in the paved parking lot at the main gate 8:00 AM sharp. The Edgewood Park entrance is east of Hwy 280 on Edgewood Road in Redwood City.

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

Sacramento Wildlife Refuges Weekend Trip Saturday & Sunday, December 3 & 4

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 Refuge Complex. This area has freshwater marshes, riparian woodlands, and valley grasslands. Some species we may see include White-faced Ibis, lots of ducks, White-fronted and Ross's geese, hawks, sparrows, woodpeckers, and more. We will travel in a car-caravan since walkers tend to disturb the wildlife in some areas. Motel reservations are advised. Willows and Williams have a good selection of motels in all price ranges. Camping is available at the Colusa-Sacramento River State Recreation Area in Colusa. Our precise itinerary will depend on where the birds are. **Trip reservations are required** so we will know how many to expect.

Directions: Take Hwy 80 northeast toward Sacramento; go north on Hwy 505 to meet Hwy 5 north toward Williams and Colusa. We will meet at the parking lot inside the entrance to the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge at 9:00 AM sharp.

Leaders: Joe Macho & Martha O'Neal (650) 692-8138

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 the Broadway-Burlingame exit; go west, pass Rollins Road, and take a left on Carolan Ave. (Do not cross the railroad tracks.) Go south on Carolan past Oak 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

San Francisco Aquatic Park

Sunday, December 11, 9:30 AM

For details, see trip description under October 23.

Berkeley's East Shore State Park – Mid-week Walk

Wednesday, December 21, 9:00 AM

Meet at 9:30 AM at the Sea Breeze Market at the intersection of Frontage Road and University Ave. in Berkeley. This will be an easy 2-hour stroll with a chance for some exciting and varied birds. We will look for shorebirds, waders, ducks, gulls, raptors, and songbirds. Bring scopes. Trip ends at 11:30 AM. Heavy rain cancels.

Directions: Take I-880 to Berkeley. Take University Ave.

(Continued on page 5)

(Field Trips, continued from page 4)

exit. If you came by I-880 north, after exiting eastbound onto University Ave., you'll have to turn around where possible and then go west over the freeway towards the Marina. The Sea Breeze is on the southwest corner of the University Ave./I-880 Frontage Road intersection.

Leaders: Marilyn Nasatir, 510-845-1029, mnasatir@berkeley.edu and Inge Svoboda, 510-548-4308, i_svoboda@yahoo.com

SEQUOIA AUDUBON CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

Crystal Springs Christmas Bird Count

Saturday, December 17

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 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

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

Call Robin Smith at (650) 325-3306 or Gary Deghi at (650) 726-1340.

Send email to office@sequoia-audubon.org

Introduction to Basic Birding

Saturday, January 7, 9:00 AM

For details, see trip description under November 26.

Arrowhead Marsh – Alameda County

Sunday, January 8, 9:00 AM

You would never suspect that between the Oakland Airport and the Coliseum would be a hidden jewel – Arrowhead Marsh. This 50-acre wetland was saved from the developers and restored. It has become an important stopover on the Pacific Flyway for hundreds of shorebirds, waterbirds, raptors, possible Clapper Rails, and is even an oasis for Bay Trail walkers. Join East Bay birders Marilyn Nasatir and Inge Svoboda for a morning of great birding.

Directions: Take Hwy 880 to the Hegenberger Exit and go west on Hegenberger Road. Go about 0.9 mile and turn right at Pardee; turn left on Swan Way; go 0.3 mile to the entrance of Martian Luther King Jr. Shoreline-Arrowhead Marsh entrance. Turn right onto paved road and go 0.8 mile to the parking area at the end of the road. Meet at the fishing pier at the end of the parking lot. Bring a scope if you have one. Dress in layers for variable weather. Heavy rain cancels.

Call Carol Masterson for information (650) 347-1769.

Leaders: Marilyn Nasatir (510) 845-1029 and Inge Svoboda (510) 548-4308

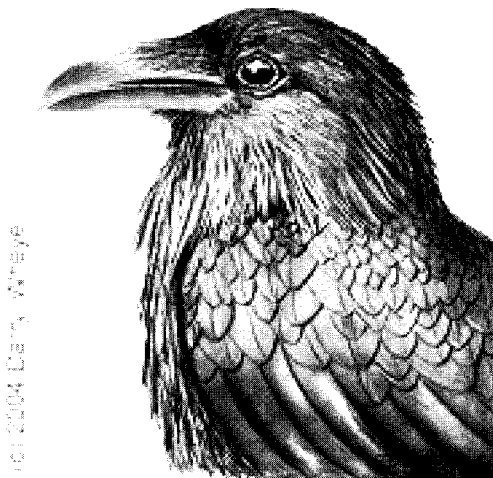
Wheelchair Accessible

Some weekend trips in 2006 will be to Panoche Valley and Los Banos, January 14-15, Consumnes River, January 28, and Klamath Falls, February 18-19-20, with Joe Macho and Martha O'Neal. If you are interested in these trips, please call Joe at (650) 692-8138 for more information and to

AUDUBON CANYON RANCH RAVEN PREDATION STUDY PUBLISHED

STUDY SUPPORTED BY SAS

BY DARRYL WHEYE



Can ravens, which are known to prey on nestlings, *ever* benefit a heronry? In a surprising turn of events, this is just what John Kelly, Katherine Etienne, and Jennifer Roth report in their paper, "Factors influencing the nest predatory behaviors of Common Ravens in heronries," published in the May issue of *The Condor* (vol.107, pages 402-15). The authors analyzed raven behavior at five heronries in the Marin County area – including the Audubon Canyon Ranch heronry at Picher Canyon on the Bolinas Lagoon Preserve. The analyzed behaviors included aerial patrols, landings in the heronries, interactions with herons and egrets, and predation on Great Egret nests. In three of the study sites this activity did not result in a rise in overall heronry losses! How did these sites differ from the others? Apparently, the differences trace back to predator density and learning. When a few ravens exclude other nest predators -- or at least dampen their effect -- while keeping their own impact to a low level, their presence can indirectly help defend the heronry. On the other hand in the following circumstances: when raven numbers and their brood sizes increase, when they've taken up residency at a heronry long enough to become efficient nest predators, and when alternative foraging options are limited; their impact on the nesting success

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OTHER BIRDING ACTIVITIES

(Sequoia Audubon does not sponsor the following activities)

Sandhill Crane Festival, Lodi, CA

Saturday & Sunday, November 5 & 6, 2005

This beautiful bird is celebrated with a yearly festival. There will be nature tours, wildlife demos, workshops, family activities, art show, and more. For online registration and info call (209) 367-7840 or online at www.lodichamber.com/cranefestival.html

Beginner/Family Trip

Central Valley Birding Symposium, Stockton, CA.

November 17 – 20, 2005

See article on pg. 5.

Yolo Wildlife Area

Second Saturday of each Month, September through June, 9:00 AM to 12 Noon

Tour the 16,000 acre Yolo Wildlife Area with an experienced field trip leader. View flooded seasonal and permanent wetlands, native grasslands, and young riparian forests. Depending on the season, look for migrating and resident waterfowl, shorebirds, songbirds, raptors, and wading birds.

Directions: Meet in the parking lot at the Yolo Wildlife Area. From Davis take I-80 East and exit Mace Blvd. Turn left at the end of the off ramp (Chiles Road). Go straight through the next light and travel approx. 4 miles to the end of the road. Drive up onto the levee and enter the Wildlife area on the left.

Dress in layers (hat and sunscreen), wear shoes that can get muddy and bring water and snacks.

A \$5.00 donation is suggested. Call (530) 758-1018 for info.

Beginner/Family Trip

City of Davis Wetlands

First Saturday of each month, September through February, 3 PM to 5 PM

Visit the unique wastewater treatment facility with specially trained docents. The constructed wetlands project utilizes treated wastewater and stormwater to create a wildlife habitat. The managed native California wetlands ecosystem includes oak riparian woodlands and native grasslands. See hundreds of shorebirds in the peak of their southern migration. You may see dowitchers, yellowlegs, sandpipers, avocets, stilts, Long-billed curlew, ibis, egrets, herons, Yellow-headed blackbirds, hawks, and eagles.

Directions: City of Davis Water Pollution Control Plant, Road 28H & Road 105 (1 mile east of the Yolo County landfill). Travel north on Poleline Road (going towards Woodland); turn right on Road 28H and travel 3 miles to Road 105. If you are traveling west on I-80, take Mace Blvd exit and turn right (north). Take the first right (32A) and proceed to Road 105 and take a left. Travel to road 28H. The group will meet at the red gate 200 yards east of the intersection. Dress in layers; bring fluids and shoes that can get muddy.

10th Annual Morro Bay Winter Bird Festival

Weekend Trip, January 13-16, 2006

Come to where the birds are and join Morro Coast Audubon Society (MCAS) for their 10th Annual Morro Bay Winter Bird Festival. Located on California's scenic Central Coast, Morro Bay is an important stop on the Pacific Flyway and one of the country's pre-eminent birding spots. The area is recognized worldwide for its diversity of both resident and wintering birds and, at last year's festival, over 200 species were identified! The Morro Bay Winter Bird Festival is sponsored by MCAS and gives you the chance to join local and national birding experts on a variety of field trips and workshops. Field trip group sizes are limited to maximize spotting and identification opportunities. The Festival also offers workshops aimed at sharpening your birding skills, as well as evening programs with outstanding speakers. This year's festival will feature presentations by Kenn Kaufman and Nigel Marven.

For more information about the Festival, check the new website at www.morrobaybirdfestival.org, or call (805) 772-4677. You can request that your name be added to the mailing list for our 2006 brochure. Both the brochure and online registration will be available in October 2005. The **registration deadline is January 4, 2006** and early signups are encouraged as the most popular events fill up quickly.

7th Annual Snow Goose Festival – Butte County, California

Weekend of January 27-29, 2006

Workshops, activities, art show, field trips, and more -- all to increase public awareness, understanding, appreciation and conservation of the diverse wildlife and unique habitats of the Northern Sacramento Valley. Sign up early since the field trips and workshops sell out early. Contact Snow Goose Festival, P.O. Box 1063, Chino, CA 95927-1063 or email info@snowgoosefestival.org or go to www.snowgoosefestival.org.

California Duck Days

Friday and Saturday February 24 & 25, 2006

California Duck Days is a wetlands festival in the heart of the Pacific Flyway. There will be field trips, workshops, exhibits, art, and bird dog demonstrations. Cost is \$20; children under 16 free. **You must pre-register due to limited space** on the field trips. For information and registration, call Yolo Basin Foundation (530) 757-3780

Beginner/Family Trip

Attention Members

The SAS Website has updates and additional information on our chapter activities.

Visit us at www.sequoia-audubon.org

(Raven Predation Study, continued from page 5)
of the heronry can be anything but beneficial.

Here are some key points:

- Overall, raven nest predation was substantial at the study sites, but it varied widely among the heronries. Variability was apparently related to differences in local diets, foraging behavior, and brood size – with predation rising when ravens had larger broods.
- After the ravens established their residency at a heronry, their predation success increased with practice over the following few years.
- Predation on egret nestlings peaked 14-29 days after first hatch as parental attendance began declining.
- The presence of ravens at a heronry might deter other nest predators.
- Manipulating raven numbers near a heronry might prove to be an effective conservation tool.

Designing a study, carrying out the fieldwork, analyzing the data, writing the report, and then marshalling it through the publication and peer review process takes years of sustained effort. Sequoia Audubon Society was among those funding this research at the Audubon Canyon Ranch heronry, and SAS – as well as SAS member, Leslie Flint — is cited in the acknowledgements section of the paper. SAS contributed \$1,250.

Darryl Wheye
Sequoia Audubon Society Board of Trustees
producer, Birds of Stanford website <birds.stanford.edu>
co-author, *The Birder's Handbook*
(with thanks to Leslie Flint, Peter Grace, Carol Masterson,
and Robin Smith for their comments)

CENTRAL VALLEY BIRDING SYMPOSIUM

NOVEMBER 17-20, 2005
RADISSON HOTEL, STOCKTON

BY CHERI PILLSBURY

The Central Valley Bird Club will host the Ninth Annual Central Valley Birding Symposium Nov. 17-20, 2005 at the Radisson Hotel in Stockton, CA. There will be field trips, workshops, and a Birding Nature Fair and Art Show with over 25 vendors selling nature-related items.

Thursday we have "The Birds of the Central Valley," presented by naturalist Jules Evens using master photographer Ian Tate's photos. Friday is "Hot on the Trail

Photo by Bob Cozzins



Rick Baird Receives Photo Tribute from SAS

Robin Smith, representing the SAS board of directors, presents Rick Baird with a photo tribute at the September 8, 2005 general meeting.

Rick has been an active member on the SAS board for many years. He will be greatly missed, but we wish him well in his retirement to Sonora, CA.



Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

THE BIRD BOX

RARE BIRD

ALERT

415-681-7422

of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker" by Bobby Harrison and our very own John Trochet. Yes, these guys searched for decades and saw the "Grail Bird" before the rest of us knew they still existed! What exciting tales they have to tell. Saturday night finds us in the company of Don Roberson. He has a Website devoted to "The History of California Birding," recounting the pre-computer days when dozens of eager (and now legendary) birders scoured the state and made history. Some of them may join Don and share in the discussion – many of them will be in attendance.

Other events include workshops such as "Parts is More than Parts: Boning up on Bird Identification" by Kimball Garrett and "Shorebird ID Workshop" by Joe Morlan. There are also regional programs on topics such as Sacramento's Purple Martins and the Sutter Buttes.

The schedule, brochure, registration form, etc. are on the website: <http://cvbs.org>. The non-computer inclined can contact Frances Oliver at (209) 369-2010. There's something for everyone interested in birds. Come and join us to bird, learn, and just have fun!

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

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2005 Annual Christmas Bird Counts



Sign up today by calling Robin Smith at (650) 325-3306 or email to office@sequoia-audubon.org

The Christmas count is done every year to record as many individuals and different species in one day as possible. The data gathered give us important information about the birds of San Mateo County. This year the counts are scheduled for:

Crystal Springs Count – Saturday, December 17, 2005

Año Nuevo Count – Saturday, December 31, 2005

We will break into teams counting birds on the coastside, hills, or bayside. After the count everyone gathers to tally the results and enjoy a compilation dinner.

Counters with all levels of experience are welcome. For beginning birders, this is a great opportunity to gain experience working with the old pros. We also need feeder watchers to count birds at their home feeders for a period of time in December.

When you sign up for the Christmas Count, please let us know your phone number, email address, experience, and whether you'd be interested in counting bayside or coastside. Be prepared to spend the day looking for birds, rain or shine.

Each count costs \$5 to cover the expense of publishing the CBC results. Be sure to sign up for the informal compilation dinner. For a mere \$5 enjoy tasty warm food and lively stories about the counts. Reservations requested so we can plan accordingly.

The Christmas Bird Counts will be some of the best birding you will do for the year!

**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.