

SEQUOIA NEEDLES

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WAVECREST: THE LONG BATTLE ENDS

BY GARY DEGHI

On the morning of August 16, 2007, I received an email informing me that the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) had reached agreement on the terms for purchase of the area in Half Moon Bay known as Wavecrest. I must admit that I was somewhat overcome with emotion. This undeveloped area between the Ocean Colony and Arleta Park neighborhoods has been the focus of development wars for years, and I have helped Sequoia Audubon Society (SAS) publicize the valuable natural resources of this area since I moved to Half Moon Bay in the summer of 1988. So what is so special about Wavecrest?

I first set foot on the Wavecrest property while participating in my first Christmas Bird Count (CBC) in December of 1987. I was overwhelmed by the number of hawks, kites and harriers observed in a short period of time. Short-eared Owls were even flying over the ocean bluffs at dawn! Little did I know that within months I would move to within a mile of this place, and that it would be a focus of my attention for years to come.

To a raptor flying along the coast, Wavecrest looks like a veritable smorgasbord. This area has everything a hawk could want: mature trees that provide perching and roosting sites, grasslands that provide foraging habitat, riparian corridors and coyote brush in fields that provide cover, and an abundance of voles that serve as a source of prey. SAS considers Wavecrest to be the most important habitat for wintering raptors in San Mateo County, as it supports a greater diversity of raptors and number of individuals than any other site.

In the late 1980s, Ocean Colony Partners proposed a massive 750-home, two golf

course development at Wavecrest. Much controversy ended in 1995 with the 2:1 rejection of the development by voters in a city-wide advisory measure. However, in 1999, the City approved a project for 217 homes, commercial and retail space, a new middle school and a Boys and Girls Club. This approval by the City was appealed to the California Coastal Commission, and SAS provided considerable written comment during review of this appeal.

CBC data and other observations by SAS members demonstrates extensive winter use at Wavecrest by Red-tailed Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, White-tailed Kite, Northern Harrier, and American Kestrel, and use also by Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Great Horned Owl, Barn Owl and Short-eared Owl. Many rare raptors have also occurred (some noted on the CBCs), including Ferruginous Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, Golden Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Prairie Falcon, Merlin, Osprey and Swainson's Hawk (the first documented record of overwintering Swainson's Hawk ever in coastal Northern California).

During the 2000 CBC, a remarkable 65 raptor individuals were observed in this 450-acre area: 15 White-tailed Kites, 10 Northern Harriers, 1 Sharp-shinned Hawk, 4 Red-shouldered Hawks, 18 Red-tailed Hawks, 9 American Kestrels, 5 Short-eared Owls and 3 Barn Owls. For my son's middle school science fair project in 2004, I helped him identify birds as he compared three sites, Pillar Point Harbor, Pescadero Marsh and Wavecrest, to see which had the largest bird populations and the greatest number of species. Several visits were made to each site, and timed bird counts were made along transects. After totaling the data for two hours of counts at each site, the number of raptors observed was surprising: 4 raptor individuals seen at Pillar Point Harbor, 12 at Pescadero Marsh, and 74 at Wavecrest!

Wavecrest is the most important wintering site for Short-eared Owl in San Mateo County (only Bair Island comes close). I have seen as many as eight individuals of this

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Monthly Meetings

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

November

Thursday, 8th, 7:00 PM

Program: Raptor ID and Migration Class

December

Thursday, 13th, 6:00 PM

Program: The Behavior of East African Birds and Mammals
Potluck meeting

January

Thursday, 10th, 7:00 PM

Program: Birds and Wildlife of Trinidad and Tobago

Upcoming Field Trips

(See trip details beginning on page 3)

November

Sunday, 4th Less-traveled

Pescadero

Saturday, 10th Hawk Hill *

Saturday, 10th Bair Island

Saturday, 17th Bobcat Ranch

Sunday, 18th Edgewood Park*

Sunday, 18th Pescadero Marsh
Work Day*

December

Saturday & Sunday, 1st & 2nd

Sacramento Wildlife Refuges

Saturday, 15th Crystal Springs

Christmas Bird Count

Sunday, 16th Edgewood Park*

Saturday, Dec 29th Año Nuevo
Christmas Bird Count

January

Saturday, 12th Birding Class Field Trip

(Continued on page 3)

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sas_editor@yahoo.com



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MEETING PROGRAMS

BY SUE COSSINS & PAULA MILLER

Birding Class: Raptor ID & Migration

By Allen Fish
Thursday, November 8, 7:00 PM

Learn about the migrating birds of prey along the Pacific Flyway. The Golden Gate Raptor Observatory (GGRO) is at the Marin Headlands (just north of the Golden Gate Bridge) and is part of the Golden

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.

Gate National Recreation Area. Each fall thousands of raptors migrating along the Pacific Coast pass over the Marin Headlands on their way south. Where do these birds come from and where do they go? The GGRO monitors these bird migrations and studies their movements. Allen Fish is the Director of the GGRO and a hawk expert.

Allen will lead a field trip to Hawk Hill, Marin Headlands, on Saturday, November 10th. Please see the Field Trips listings for details.

The Behavior of East African Birds and Mammals

By Doug Cheeseman
Thursday, December 13, 7 PM

Doug Cheeseman, of Cheeseman Ecology Safaris, shares with us his extensive knowledge of the behavior of East African birds and mammals.

Doug and his wife, Gail, have led over 50 safaris to Africa and have come to love the continent, its people, and its extraordinary wildlife. We'll catch their enthusiasm as Doug takes us on a photographic journey to Kenya and Tanzania, where he has observed and photographed the behavior of East African birds and mammals over the last 25 years. Bring all your questions about the behavior of East African birds and mammals with you! It promises to be a most exciting evening.

The Cheesemans have six spaces left for their safari, Feb 9 - Mar 1, due to cancellations. If you are interested, please contact the Cheesemans at doug@cheesemans.com.

This program will be preceded by a potluck beginning at 6:00 PM.

Doors open at 5:30 PM. Bring a plate, cup, utensils, and a side dish to share; we will provide a main course, coffee, and dessert.

Birds and Wildlife of Trinidad and Tobago

Joseph Morlan
Thursday, January 10, 7 PM

In January 2007, Joe Morlan and Robbie Fischer explored Trinidad and Tobago on their own. These islands offer a unique mix of South American and Caribbean fauna. Joe will be sharing their adventures with a presentation of original digital photographs illustrating the islands' unique birds and animals. We will be treated to Bearded Bellbirds, mysterious cave-dwelling Oilbirds, Rufous-tailed Jacamars, Blue-crowned Motmots, and the cryptic Common Potoo. Colorful honeycreepers, hummingbirds, and tanagers will be featured. White-bearded and Golden-headed Manakins will be shown in breeding display. We will see Red-billed Tropic Birds on their nesting islands as well as a variety of spiders, butterflies, frogs, and lizards. Join us for what promises to be an entertaining and informative program.

Joseph Morlan is a professor of ornithology at City College in San Francisco, where he has taught Field Ornithology for over 30 years. He currently serves as vice-chairman of the California Bird Records Committee and "Featured Photo" editor for the journal *Western Birds*.

Condor Romance

By Linda Kincaid & Richard Calhoun
Thursday, February 14, 7:00 PM

Somehow February 14th, Valentine's Day, seems the appropriate evening to talk about the California Condors and

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FIELD TRIPS

BY CAROL MASTERSON

Less-traveled Trails of Pescadero State Park

Sunday, November 4, 8:00 AM – 1:00 PM

We'll meet at the Water Lane entrance for Pescadero Marsh at 8:00 AM sharp. Possible birds include roosting Barn Owl, White-tailed Kite, Northern Harrier, Townsend's Warbler, Virginia Rail, Peregrine Falcon, and Blue-grey Gnatcatcher. If rarities have been reported from the park, we'll include them in our itinerary. **Remember to turn your clocks back one hour on Saturday night!**

Directions: To get to the Water Lane entrance, from Hwy 1 turn east onto Pescadero Road, then left onto Water Lane. Drive to the end of Water Lane and park by the buildings. (Please leave room for the State Park Ranger vehicles.) Bring binoculars, liquids, snacks, a hat, and sunscreen. Dress in layers.

Leader: Jennifer Rycenga 650-440-0063; gyrrlfalcon@earthlink.net

Beginner/Advanced Birding

Hawk Hill and Raptor Migration

Saturday, November 10, 9:30 AM
Join Allen Fish, Director of the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory (GGRO), for a day at Hawk Hill during the peak of raptor migration. Expect to see accipiters (Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks); falcons, (Kestrels, Merlins, and perhaps Peregrines); Buteos (Red-tailed, Red-shouldered, and maybe Broad-winged and Ferruginous Hawks), TV's and Northern Harriers. We will also look for migrants in the trees around the hill. Bring binoculars, lunch, and liquids. The weather can change within minutes so dress in layers for warm to cool, windy, and foggy weather. Meet at the base of Hawk Hill at 9:30 AM. This walk is part of a lecture and field trip class. There is a \$5 fee for the instructor's time. Check out the GGRO's great web site at <http://www.ggro.org/index.html>.

Directions: Drive north from San Mateo and cross the Golden Gate Bridge. Take the first exit – Alexander Ave. Make an immediate left and drive under the freeway and then left again as though you were going to get back on the

Bridge. Take the road immediately on your right going up hill (Conzelman Road). Follow it along the coastline to where it becomes one-way; there is a parking area. Park and meet at the fire road gate – you will see a brown "Hawk Hill" sign pointing the way.

Leader: Allen Fish at the GGRO 415-331-0730

Beginner/Family Trip

Wetland Restoration and Canoe Trip to Middle Bair Island, Redwood City

Saturday, November 10, 9:00 AM – 2:30 PM
Join Save the Bay for a hearty canoe paddle out to this island site where we will prepare for winter planting projects by removing non-native plants. Sequoia Audubon was instrumental in helping to save Bair Island; we can now help to restore the island. Learn about the future plans for full restoration. This is a full day of activity with a moderate canoe trip. Boating equipment and instruction provided; no experience is necessary. No one under 10 years old. Bring lunch, fluids, sun hat, and sunscreen. Dress in layers. Join us for a day of fun and service. This is a Save the Bay program. There is a \$25 fee for members of Save the Bay; \$35 for non-members.

Contact: Jeanne Pardi at 510-452-9261, x119 or email bayevents@saveSFbay.org

Restoration Activity

Bobcat Ranch – Yolo County

Saturday, November 17, 8:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Join us on a visit to this new 6,800-acre, California Audubon Bobcat Ranch property. The ranch was recently purchased by California Audubon, with help from local chapters, including Sequoia Audubon. This beautiful area of rolling Blue Oak grasslands will be managed both as a working ranch and for its wildlands. Bobcat Ranch is part of a jigsaw puzzle of public and private lands known as the Blue Ridge Berryessa Natural area covering 750,000 acres. Putah Creek on the south side of the ranch is a well-known migratory bird vagrant trap. A Taiga Flycatcher was spotted last year in the fall. We will look

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Upcoming Field Trips

Saturday, 12th Wavecrest

Sunday, 20th Pescadero Marsh

Work Day*

Saturday & Sunday, 26th & 27th

Los Banos and Panoche Valley

Sunday, 27th Edgewood Park*

February

Saturday, 2nd Cosumnes River Preserve

Saturday, 9th Pillar Point

Saturday - Monday, 16th - 18th

Klamath Basin – Alturas Weekend

Sunday, 17th Pescadero Marsh Work Day*

Saturday, 23rd Big Sur Condors*

Sunday, 24th Edgewood Park*

*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, sun block, and hat; wear sturdy walking shoes or boots, 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**.

(Field Trips, continued from page 3)

for Lark Sparrow, Rufus-crowned Sparrow, Golden Eagle, Lewis's Woodpecker, Rock and Canyon Wren, to name just a few. We will also be on the lookout for Bobcat, Mountain Lion, and if we are really lucky, Black Bear. Dress in layers; bring a lunch, snacks, water, a hat, and sunscreen. Wear boots or good walking shoes. There are no restrooms at the ranch, but there are lots of trees and bushes. Please bring a plastic bag to pack out waste paper and trash.

Directions: Take 101 North through San Francisco and across the Bay Bridge (which is I-80). Take I-80 East. Take exit 56 (Winters/Redding) to 505 North. Go towards Winters. Exit in downtown Winters (CA 128) and turn left (west) and proceed to the corner of Railroad and 128. Turn left (south) on Railroad then left (east) on Main St. We will meet at **Steady Eddy's** at 5 East Main St., a coffee house a couple of blocks south of the corner of Railroad and CA 128 at **8:00 AM sharp**. It should take about 1.5 hours to get to Winters. (The phone number at Steady Eddy's is 530-795-3588.)

Leader: Vance Russell, Director, Landowner Stewardship Program for Audubon California. Be sure to ask him about how ranchers and conservationists can work together to preserve birding habitat. 530-795-2921. Take a look at the website: www.brbna.org.

Beginner/Advanced Birding Hike

Edgewood Park Walk

Sunday, November 18, 8:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Fall migration should be in full swing. Visiting migrants and resident birds can be seen at this unique habitat. With grassland, oak woodland and chaparral, we should see lots of birds. Ask the leader 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: 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: Marilyn Travis 650-592-7733

Beginner/Advanced Birding

Pescadero Marsh – Sequoia Audubon Trail Event Day

Sunday November 18, 9:00 AM - NOON

Come and discover Pescadero Marsh. The California State Park docents will lead a field trip to learn about the Marsh. This beautiful park has a mile-long shoreline, rocky cliffs, and of course a world-famous marsh. The birding will just be getting good. The docents will point out the plants and animals that inhabit this San Mateo County treasure. Come early and help work on the Sequoia Audubon Trail. Meet at 9:00 AM; the nature walk will start at 10:00 AM. If it is not raining, meet in the parking lot just over the bridge at Pescadero State Beach. Look for the blue minivan with the sign in the window – "SAS Sequoia Audubon We are on the Trail." Come early and help us carry a bamboo rake, a pair of loppers, or a weed whacker. We will work for about one hour. If you would rather bird or read a book or cheer us on that is also fine. Have fun and help the birds and wildlife. Contact Norma Vite 650-560-9740 or email nolema@coastside.net.

Directions: Go south from Half Moon Bay on Hwy 1, about 12 miles. Just past the bridge over Pescadero Creek, look for the south parking lot. If you get to the intersection of Pescadero Road and Hwy 1 you have gone too far.

Beginner/Family Nature Hike and Restoration Activity Sacramento Wildlife Refuges Weekend Trip

Saturday – Sunday, December 1 – 2

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, White-fronted and Ross's Geese, hawks, sparrows, woodpeckers and lots of ducks. 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 requested so we will know how many to expect. Bring lunch, fluids, binoculars, scope, cameras, and FRS radios if you have them.

Directions: Take Hwy 80 east towards Sacramento and go north on Hwy 505 to meet Hwy 5 North towards 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 and Martha O'Neal 650-692-8138; cell phone 650-291-6196

Beginner/Advanced Birding

Edgewood Park Walk

Sunday, December 16, 8:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Get in practice for the Christmas Bird Counts. Come and visit this unique habitat with oak woodland, grasslands, and chaparral. We will look for kites, hawks, sparrows, warblers, thrushes, kinglets, and more. Starting at 8 AM increases the chance of seeing all the interesting fall birds at Edgewood. Heavy rain cancels.

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: Marilyn Travis 650-592-7733

Beginner/Family Hike

2007 Christmas Counts

Saturday, December 15th — Crystal Springs

Saturday, December 29th — Año Nuevo

See page 8 for details.

Birding Field Trip with Joe Morlan

Saturday January 12, Time and Location TBA

This Saturday morning field trip is a follow-up to the Thursday, Jan 10th evening program. Time and place for the field trip will be announced at the Thursday evening program. There will be a \$5 fee for the instructor's time.

Leader: Joe Morlan. For information contact Paula Miller 650-773-5656.

Wavecrest Raptors & Short-Eared Owls

Saturday, January 12, 3 PM – Sunset

The North Wavecrest area is considered by the Sequoia

(Continued on page 5)

(Field Trips, continued from page 4)

Audubon Society as the most important habitat for wintering raptors in San Mateo County. It supports a greater diversity of raptors and number of individuals than any other site. Recent plans by POST to purchase the Wavecrest property has come as great news, because any development of this area would impact this very unique habitat for raptors on the coastside. Gary Deghi will talk about the long fight to save Wavecrest from developers. We expect to see Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawk, Northern Harrier, White-tailed Kite, American Kestrel and then at dusk we will make a special effort to see the Short-eared Owl, a species of special concern, which winters here every year. If we are lucky, we may see rarities such as Ferruginous Hawk or Rough-legged Hawk.

Directions: Take Hwy 1 South from Hwy 92. Turn right (west) on Wavecrest Road. Meet at the ball field at the end of Wavecrest Road at 3:00 PM.

Leader: Gary Deghi 650-726-1340

Beginner/Advanced/Family Birding Trip

Pescadero Marsh – Sequoia Audubon Trail Event Day

Sunday January 20, 9:00 AM – NOON

Please see details in November 18 listing

Edgewood Park Bird Walk

Sunday, January 27, 8:00 AM – 11:00 AM

For details, please see November 18 listing.

Los Banos Area Refuges and Panoche Valley

Saturday – Sunday, January 26 – 27, 9:00 AM – Dark

Winter is a really great time of year to visit the central valley. Waterfowl are abundant. We will be on the lookout for White-faced Ibis, Sandhill Crane, and a large variety of waterfowl, geese, shorebirds, ducks, raptors, and owls. Bring lunch, fluids, binoculars, scopes if you have them, cameras and lots of birding energy!

Come for one day only or both days. Day 1 will be at the Los Banos Area Refuges; Day 2 will be in Panoche Valley area. If you attend for both days you can stay overnight in a hotel in Los Banos. Check with AAA or on the web for hotels.

Directions: Meet each morning at the McDonald's parking lot in Santa Nella at 9:00 am. You should allow 2 hours to get there from the Bay Area. On Highway 101 go about 4 miles south of Gilroy. Take Hwy 152 east over Pacheco Pass and go past the San Luis Reservoir and O'Neill Forebay. Go left (north) on Hwy 33 toward Gustine and Santa Nella.

McDonald's is at the intersection of Hwy 33 and Henry Miller Rd. in Santa Nella. Bring your FRS radios if you have them.

Trip reservations are requested so we will know how many to expect.

Leader: Joe Macho 650-692-8138; cell phone 650-291-6196

Beginner/Advanced Weekend Birding Trip

Cosumnes River Preserve – South of Sacramento

Saturday, February 2, 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM

We will meet in Foster City at the Bridge Pointe Shopping Center in the parking lot by Home Depot at 7:00 AM. We will car pool or caravan to Lodi Lake Park and Cosumnes River

Preserve and finish at Woodbridge Road, where we should see thousands of Sandhill Crane, Tundra Swan, Ross, Snow and Greater White-Fronted Geese fly as they fly in and land for the night in nearby fields. We should be back in the Bay Area by 7:00 PM. Please bring your FRS radios if you have them and pack a lunch and fluids. **Trip reservations are requested** so we will know how many to expect. Please call us for more information and carpool info.

Leader: Joe Macho 650-692-8138; cell phone 650-291-6196

Beginner/Advanced Birding Trip

Pillar Point – Coastside Birding

Saturday, February 9, 9:00 AM till Noon

This is the only sheltered harbor between Santa Cruz and San Francisco, so Pillar Point is a prime birding area. This area is a stopover point for shorebirds and a favorite for seabirds. Not only does the harbor usually have one or two surprises, but the nearby willows, cypresses, and grassland have proven to be first-rate areas for warblers and sparrows.

Directions: Take Hwy 92 to Hwy 1. Follow Hwy 1 north to Capistrano Rd. and turn left at the lights. Turn left at the first opportunity and we will meet in the parking lot at the east end of the harbor near the boat launch ramp. This will be a morning walking trip along the beach and rocky areas, so boots or sturdy shoes are recommended. Wear clothing in layers for cold and windy to sunny weather. Heavy rain cancels.

Leader: Gary Deghi 650-726-1340

Beginner/Advanced Birding

Pescadero Marsh – State Park Docent Nature Walk

Sunday February 17, 2008, 9:00AM -12:00 NOON

For details, please see listing for November 18.

The Eagles of the Klamath Basin and Alturas/Surprise Valley Long Weekend

Saturday – Monday, February 16th –18th

This Presidents' Day weekend trip to Tule Lake and Klamath Lake Refuges will allow us to view the largest concentration of wintering Bald Eagles south of Alaska. Drawn to the area by an incredible number and variety of waterfowl, they sit in wait for the weak and sick among the ducks and geese. In February any open water is dominated by the Tundra Swans' regal dignity. We will look at swans for a possible Trumpeter and throughout the area for raptors, Northern Shrike, Tree Sparrow and other northern and eastern wanderers as well as the expected concentrations of Bald and Golden Eagle. On Sunday night and Monday we will visit the Alturas area. The exact itinerary will depend on the weather and birding conditions. **WEATHER REQUIRING THE USE OF TIRE CHAINS TO GET TO THE KLAMATH BASIN WILL CANCEL THE TRIP.** Due to the Bald Eagle Conference and Presidents' Day weekend in Klamath Falls, it is advisable to make motel reservations as soon as possible. **Trip reservations are requested** so we will know how many to expect. We have maps of where and when we would meet and also motel listings. Please bring lunch, binoculars, scopes, cameras, and FRS radios if you have them. We plan on staying in Klamath Falls, Oregon at the Holiday Inn Express, 2500 S. 6th Street on February 16 and 17. 541-884-9999.

(Field trips, continued from page 5)

We will stay in Alturas at the Best Western Trailside Motel, 343 N. Main St. on February 18. 530-233-4111

Leaders: Joe Macho and Martha O'Neal; Home phone 650-692 8138; cell phone 650-291-6196 or 650-922-8844

Beginner/Advanced Weekend Field Trip

Condor Field Trip – Big Sur

Saturday, February 23, Noon -- Dusk

Linda Kincaid and her partner, Richard Calhoun, will lead a tour **starting at noon** at the Big Sur Lodge at 47225 Highway 1, in Big Sur. We will meet in the lobby near the fireplace. We'll have a 30 minute Condor 101 and then we'll caravan down Hwy 1 to locations where condors are frequently observed. There will be telemetry equipment to help locate the birds. Wear layered clothing, as weather can be changeable. Bring snacks and water. The locations we will visit are all accessible, and the tour is appropriate for all ages and abilities. There will be a \$5 fee to cover the instructor's time. **Registration required. Contact condorchick@gmail.com to register. Group size limited to 16.** **Beginner/Family Birding Hike**

Edgewood Park Walk

Sunday, February 24, 2008 8:00AM – 11:00 AM

For details, please see November 18 listing.

(Programs, continued from page 2)

their remarkable environmental success story. With only 22 condors remaining in 1982, a VERY successful captive breeding program has brought the population to over 300 individuals. Now, about 150 condors fly free, including about 40 in the Big Sur area. In 2007, two condor chicks hatched in the Big Sur area, the first in over 100 years. Linda Kincaid, a volunteer for High Mountain Condor Lookout, will explain how the California Condor was nearly lost and how it is being brought back to the skies above California. She will present slides of these remarkable birds in flight.

Linda Kincaid and Richard Calhoun have been condor enthusiasts since they saw their first condors in the wild at Pinnacles in 2005. Since then, they have been active in raising awareness of the condor recovery and raising support for various condor programs. They volunteer for the High Mountain Condor Lookout, and they lead condor tours for various environmental groups. Richard maintains the website: www.WildCondors.com.



Short-eared Owl

(Wavecrest, continued from page 1)

state-designated species of concern at one time, but the number of wintering individuals usually ranges between one and five. I am the leader for an annual SAS field trip to Wavecrest in January, commencing late in the day so we have a chance to see the Short-eared Owls at dusk. With as many as 40 people, this has become one of SAS's most popular field trips.

In September of 2007, exploding vole populations resulted in Wavecrest being overrun by roosting White-tailed Kites. The White-tailed Kite is a gregarious species that sometimes forms large roosts during late fall and winter, especially in California and Texas. One evening, I counted 65 White-tailed Kites while standing in one spot, and estimated about 100 kites roosting primarily in the row of cypress trees just north of the ballfields. About this same time, Alvaro Jaramillo counted 15 Barn Owls in a nearby Wavecrest field. It will be interesting to see if the population of voles sustains these birds into the winter.

Ecologically important wetlands are scattered throughout Wavecrest, and Virginia Rails can often be heard calling on winter mornings. Species of concern found here include nesting pairs of Saltmarsh Common Yellowthroat in the wetlands south of the baseball fields, and Loggerhead Shrikes which often winter. Rare birds that make the local rare bird alert have been seen as well, including rare species of sparrows, warblers and longspurs, not to mention species such as Thick-billed Kingbird, Red-throated Pipit, Snow Bunting and Bobolink. Once while I was helping coach my son's little league game, a flock of 20 White-faced Ibis flew over the ballfields! SAS has always been quick to point out that the many birders visiting this area also eat lunch, buy gas and maybe spend the night, pouring dollars into the local economy.

Wavecrest is also home to the federally-listed threatened California red-legged frog, documented at the site by a California Academy of Science biologist in 2004, and, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, serves as habitat for the federally-listed endangered San Francisco garter snake.

SAS wishes to thank POST and Bruce Russell, CEO of Kenmark Real Estate Group and representative of the land's sellers, for realizing the natural resource importance of this area and having the insight to reach agreement on preservation of this area for future generations of raptor lovers.



California Condor

THE BIRD BOX

RARE BIRD

ALERT

415-681-7422

SAS PROGRAM UPDATES



PESCADERO MARSH – Sequoia Audubon Trail Event Days, Sundays, 9:00 AM – Noon

October 21 November 18 December 16 January 20

Thank you to the Trail Center of Palo Alto. On August 18, they spent a long and hard day working at Pescadero Marsh. They cleared a lot of the beginning trail, leveled some of the eroded trail, and widened the trail at the meeting of the creeks. It is a pleasure to take a walk in the areas they have worked on.

Winter is coming and that means rain, and that means the grass will grow again. This would be a good time to think about next year and coming to the Marsh on the third Sunday of the month to keep these trails open. We meet at 9 AM and work about two hours. Helping to carry the equipment to the work site is a big part of the job. After helping with that, you can bird while someone else works, then carry back the equipment when we are done. Remember, you can select your own level of endurance. Please call Norma at 650-560-9740, or just come out, weather permitting, and look for the blue van with the sign in the window that says: SAS -- WE ARE ON THE TRAIL. Looking forward to seeing you.

VOLUNTEER COMPUTER JOBS

Webmaster

Help maintain and update our website: www.sequoia-audubon.org. If you have experience with web design, HTML, and simple photo files, we need you. We need about 30 min to 2 hours per month at your convenience. You can work from home and update site files via FTP.

Contact: Carol, carolmasterson@sbcglobal.net or Norma, nolema@coastside.net

Update our SF Peninsula Bird Guide for the 21st Century

SAS needs assistance updating its local birding guide, *San Francisco Peninsula Birdwatching*. First published in 1984 and revised in 1996, it stands as a major accomplishment of Sequoia Audubon Society. It is time to publish a new edition and place it online at the Sequoia Audubon website. This is a major project that will take shape over time. We will begin with scanning the contents of the 1996 edition and then gradually update the info, one birding site at a time. We need lots of help with many different activities:

- Double check local area bird records for accuracy.
- Inventory habitats, flora, and fauna.
- Prepare visual materials and copy for the web.
- Update location maps
- Visit birding sites around the Peninsula and provide pictures and updated information.

If you have computer knowledge (or want to learn), or if you are a birder with knowledge of local sites, we need your help. Possible college credit/internship for students.

Contact: Jennifer Rycenga, gyrrlfalcon@earthlink.net or Carol, carolmasterson@sbcglobal.net

Membership Database

Our members are our most important asset. We want to keep track of them! You can help if you have experience with data entry. Work from your home or the Sequoia office computer, about 2 – 4 hours each month, depending on the time of year. We will train you on FileMaker Pro for this important job.

Contact: Carol, carolmasterson@sbcglobal.net

THANKS TO OUR FIELD TRIP LEADERS

Birding is at the very core of what SAS is all about -- exploring nature and watching and learning about birds. By sharing your time, knowledge and love of birds, you make it possible for new and advanced birders alike to explore great birding areas. We could not do it without you. Three cheers and a round of applause to all our field trip leaders!

Bill and Peggy Bechtell
Roy Carlson
Sue Cossins
Gary Deghi
Paul Donahue
Allen Fish
Leslie Flint
Lee Franks
Sue James
Rita Jennings
Ranger Nelle Lyons
Joe Macho

Paula Miller
Marilyn Nasatir
Martha O'Neal Macho
The Pescadero Marsh Docents
Donna Petersen
Sue Peterson
Vance Russell
Jennifer Rycenga
Debi Shearwater
Inge Svoboda
Francis Toldi
Marilyn Travis



Camp Ta-Ki-Ma 2007 at Cub Scout summer Camp

Sue Cossins, Sonny Mencher, Eileen Kay, Linda Votteri, Carol Masterson, and Paula Miller all helped lead almost 100 boys on birding walks at Coyote Point. Photo courtesy of Sonny Mencher.

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

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2007 Annual Christmas Bird Counts

The Audubon Christmas Bird Count (CBC) is the oldest and largest wildlife survey in the world. The CBC was started in 1900 by the National Audubon Society. Ornithologist Frank Chapman asked birders across North America to go out on Christmas Day and count the birds in their home towns and submit the results as the first "Christmas Bird Census". Little did he know that his suggestion would create an annual holiday tradition for over 50,000 birders in over 1,800 locations in the US, Canada, Pacific Islands, Central and South America. This year the SAS counts are scheduled for:

Crystal Springs Count – Saturday, December 15, 2007

Año Nuevo Count – Saturday, December 29, 2007

Why is the Christmas count important? Birds are indicators of the overall health of our environment. Bird count data over time in any given area can provide insights into the long-term health of bird populations and the environment. This valuable data helps scientists chart changes in bird populations and geographical shifts in winter ranges.

Sign up today for the counts by contacting Leslie Flint, lflint@earthlink.net or Gary Deghi, gdeghi@h-bgroup.com. When you sign up for the Christmas Count, please let us know your phone number, email address, experience, and whether you would prefer counting bayside or coastside. Be prepared to spend the day having fun and 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. For info about the dinners, call Norma Vite (650) 560-9740.

Why is it important to be a local member of Sequoia Audubon?

Did you know there are two ways to become a member of Sequoia Audubon? If you join National Audubon, you automatically become a member of your local county Audubon society. But Sequoia Audubon only receives a fraction of the dues you pay to National. If you join as a local member of Sequoia Audubon, all your dues will go directly to programs in San Mateo County. Local membership ensures that Sequoia Audubon will remain a strong advocate for birds and natural resources in San Mateo County.

**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.