



The QUAIL

BULLETIN OF THE MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY
P. O. BOX 53
WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA 94596
(415) AUD-UBON

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Education: Norah Bain, 254-4516
Secretary: Britta Cascio, 837-2895

January 1989

Vol. 35 No. 5

Next Deadline: January 12

January Program:

A Voyage to the Revillagigedo Isles - Mexico's Galapagos

Some 320 miles southwest of Baja California Sur, four volcanic islands dramatically emerge from the Pacific floor. Typical of many island chains, these have birds and mammals which have colonized, as well as those which subsequently evolved to become endemic species. As volcanoes do, the northernmost of the archipelago, San Benedicto, underwent a massive eruption in the early 1950s. This drove off most of the local fauna and decimated those animals and plants forced to remain. By the magic of color slides, come join us as we return in "our" 73 foot yawl, *Kia Loa II*, to survey the island species and see the splendor of ecosystems restoring themselves. Among the thousands of nesting sea birds, we will see Masked, Brown, and Red-footed Boobies, Laysan Albatrosses, and one or two other species never before seen in these islands.

Our January 5th speaker, Dr. Steve Bailey, Collections Manager of Ornithology and Mammalogy at the California Academy of Sciences, will conduct this "tour" through the islands. Besides being a colleague of our friend and past speaker, Luis Baptista, Steve is known to us as having recently taught a hummingbird course to members of our chapter. Dr. Bailey is considered one of the nation's foremost birders as he is a member of the California Bird Records Committee and also the Regional Editor of Audubon's *American Birds*. Come join our magical, neo-Darwinian sojourn as we discover some of the world's best kept island secrets.

General meetings of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society are held on the first Thursday of the month, September through June, at the Willow Creek Center, 1026 Mohr Lane, Concord. The agenda for the meetings is as follows:

6:30 Doors open
7:00 Birding Info
7:30 Business Meeting
8:00 Social Half-hour
8:30 Program

Jimm Edgar will present January Birding Information on the pros (but no cons) of Competitive Birding.

The 1988 Christmas Count Potluck dinner will be held at the Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road, Lafayette. For more information, see page 4.

The next board meeting will be Thursday, January 12, at 7:30 p.m., at the home of Norah Bain, 32 Via Farallon, Orinda, 254-4516. The board meetings are open to all interested members.

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL

CONSERVATION NOTES

By Al McNabney

JOHN MUIR - WHAT WOULD HE THINK?

MDAS members had a treat at the November meeting when John Davis walked those present through Yosemite and the surrounding Sierras with John Muir. Contemplation of Muir's ideas, ideals and accomplishments soon brings to mind a comparison between his views and what this generation is accomplishing (?) in the way of maintenance of natural beauties. I'm afraid John Muir would be most distressed were he to look at our land today. California, with its long heritage of productivity, the beauty of the State and its great diversities of bird, plant and wildlife, is rapidly becoming saturated with concrete, freeways, business parks and (sometimes) ticky-tacky housing projects. All in the name of progress, of course. Yosemite, like many of our National Parks is (at times) overcrowded and overused. Authorities talk of limiting public access. Wetlands are mostly gone, the remainder under serious attack from development projects of one sort or another. Our national forests are being clearcut at a disgraceful rate, with the trees being sold off at bargain-basement rates. The devastation left following a clearcut program is great. Thoughtful folks, looking to the future, attempt to encompass parts of our deserts into national parks. Opposition is fierce. It comes not from people who care or worry about the planet on which we live but from individuals (and groups) interested only in use of the wilderness for the pleasure of driving an RV or motorcycle through it. We complain about Brazil permitting the hewing and axing of rainforests. At the same time, so-called developed nations are permitting elimination of thousands of acres of old-growth timber. John Muir would probably start a crusade. I'm certain he would at least be outspoken in opposition to the things we are permitting these days. One could say, quietly, "Oh, where, oh where is OUR John Muir?"

THE GREENHOUSE EFFECT

A leading scientist who has studied the Greenhouse Effect, giving a description of what's happening, said, "When I bought my home in the Berkeley Hills, I didn't realize I was buying beach front property." Exaggerated? Maybe, unless his property is in the lower hills. According to ALL of the scientists I've heard speak on the subject, our atmosphere has already been heated and the effects attributable to that heat are to be felt, without question. ALL of the scientists assert what we do in the next two or three years will determine to some extent how devastating the combined Greenhouse Effects are likely to be. If we act to curb the uses of fossile fuels, reduce the destruction of the world's forests, we "may" be able to get through initial phases without serious trauma and devastation. If we putter around, as our nation has been doing for eight years with the acid rain problems, the Greenhouse Effects can be devastating to whole areas of the earth. California is particularly vulnerable because of the diversity of climate, terrain,

wildlife, and farmable lands. Our park and wildlife protection system may be in serious jeopardy. Think of the parks as islands in which birds and wildlife live. As the Greenhouse Effect moves forward, rainfall amounts are likely to be distinctly different. If an area is today considered to be climatically temperate and it becomes essentially arid, what happens to the wildlife trapped in the park? In centuries past, wildlife could sometimes move with the climate. Some of the wildlife couldn't move and as time passed, it became extinct. Here in California we have extensive water systems, dams, canals, lakes and the like. If, instead of heavy winter snows in the Sierras, we find more rain, and we have snow only at VERY high elevations, we'll have problems. The spring run-off would start and end sooner. Summer, fall, and early winter could be much drier. Autos are a great contributor to the Greenhouse problems. Are we ready to accept severe limitation (through taxes, fees, etc.) on the use of OUR cars? IF we are to attack the Greenhouse problems head-on, that's but one of the areas we'll have to review.

MORE BAD VIBES....

A bulldozer moves in on the vacant field, an area that has been used by man for hiking and looking for years. Who has responsibility for even thinking about the loss of plant, animal, and birdlife before the development project starts? Once the dozer dips its blade into the earth and strips the vegetation down to solid soil, just about all chance to save anything is gone. So a headline in the *NY Times* for December 6 is all the more sobering:

NATIVE PLANTS UNDER SIEGE

"In a grim new timetable, biologists estimate that about 250 American plant species are so endangered by human activity that they face extinction within five years."

One such plant here in California is the *Amsinckia grandiflora* California.

HEADLINE NATIONAL WILDLIFE

"1,000 Bird Species at Risk of Extinction"

"More that 1,000 of the 9,000 species of birds in the world are now at risk of extinction, three times more than a decade ago according to the International Council of Bird Preservation." ".Three Stanford ecologists warn that if human population continues to expand, ' a world of hungry, unhappy people will have only such "weedy" species as starlings, house sparrows and grackles--which thrive in people-altered environments--as their remaining bird companions."

Query: Is this really what we want to leave for the future? It's our world and it'll be what we make of it!!!!!!!

FIELD TRIPS

Trips are open to members and nonmembers alike. Carpool time is departure time. Carpool expense: 5 cents per mile per rider is suggested; tolls and entry fees are shared equally by driver and riders. Bring binoculars, field guide and lunch. Trips go in light rain or drizzle; if in doubt, call leader up to 1/2 hour before carpool time.

Saturday, January 7, Putah Creek. Carpool 7:00 a.m. southwest corner of Sun Valley parking lot. Meet 7:45 a.m. at the intersection of Cherry Glen and Pleasants Valley Rds., approximately 1 mile north from I-80. Park on Cherry Glen. Dress warmly; this is a cold, windy area. About 1 mile total walking, some rough and muddy. Previous highlights include Osprey, Phainopepla, Canyon and Rock Wrens, Wood Ducks, and Hooded Merganser.

Leader: Florence Bennett, 689-3106.

Wednesday, January 11, Los Gallinos Sewer Ponds. Carpool 7:30 a.m. southwest corner of Sun Valley parking lot. Meet 9:00 a.m. at entrance to John McInnis County Park. Go west to Vallejo, take SR37 west to US101 and go south on 101 to Lucas Valley-Smith Ranch exit. Follow Smith Ranch Rd. to its end at the park. Ducks and various water and wading birds are expected. This is a walking trip, level, graveled trails, 2-3 miles.

Leader: Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486.

Thursday, January 19, Palo Alto Baylands. Carpool 7:30 a.m. at Acalanes Ave., off Pleasant Hill Rd., north of Hwy. 24. Meet 9:00 a.m. in parking lot near Nature Center at Baylands. From Bayshore, take Embarcadero exit and go east on Embarcadero to stop sign. Go left toward Yacht Harbor, follow road to end in parking lot on right. This is a high tide day and we should see Clapper Rails and possibly Black Rails. Prepare for muddy conditions and cool breezes. There is a lot of waiting for the rails; probably a total of one mile walking on level, possibly muddy, roads.

Leader: Barbara Vaughn, 376-8732.

Wednesday, January 25, Sunol Regional Park. Carpool 7:30 a.m. El Cerro Blvd., just west of I-680. Meet 8:00 a.m. in parking lot, Sunol Park. Go south on I-80 to Calaveras Rd. Go left under I-80 and 4 miles south on Calaveras Rd.; turn left on Geary Rd. 2 miles to park. Watch and listen for Turkey along Geary Rd. This is a walking trip - 2 to 3 miles roads and trails, some steep. Golden Eagles and other raptors are often seen. Rufous-crowned Sparrow, Dipper, and Canyon and Rock Wrens are possible.

Leader: Kamran Alavi, 831-0617.

Saturday, January 28, Grizzly Island Game Refuge. Carpool 7:00 a.m. southwest corner of Sun Valley parking lot. Meet 8:30 a.m. at Refuge headquarters. Take I-680 north, I-80 east to SR12. Follow SR12 through Fairfield; watch for sign

to Grizzly Island Refuge on right and follow the road to the headquarters. Watch for raptors and Short-eared Owls along the road. This is an outstanding raptor area. Mostly car birding. Leader: John Ascher, 283-7134.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

MOUNTAIN VIEW SANITARY PLANT, November 2.

Twelve members and guests enjoyed a morning of good birding at the Mt. View Wastewater Treatment Plant and the Martinez Shoreline. Weather was cloudy but comfortable. Thirty-nine species were sighted, including Green-backed Heron, Cinnamon Teal, American Bittern, and Common Snipe at the Mt. View W. T. P. Three species of recently arrived ducks at the Martinez Shoreline were Canvasback, Northern Pintail, and Lesser Scaup. Dick Bogaert, a member of MDAS and a biologist at MVWTP, was co-leader.

John Davis

LIMANTOUR, November 5.

Despite an inauspicious start, twelve members saw 102 species on a sunny day at Limantour. A Rough-legged Hawk flew over the Headquarters, and we found a flock of Pygmy Nuthatches, a late House Wren, and numerous woodland species at the Sky Camp parking lot. A Hutton's Vireo was at Muddy Hollow with numerous Townsend's Warblers. From the spit along the Estero, we saw a male Eurasian Wigeon, a Rhinoceros Auklet, a soaring Osprey, and two White Pelicans.

John Ascher

CHARLESTON SLOUGH, November 17.

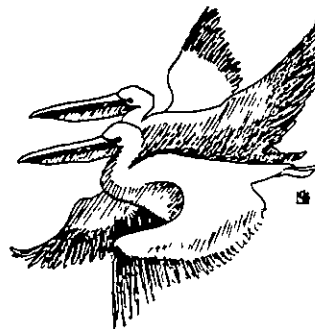
Ten observers enjoyed a beautiful day, clear but windy. There was much excitement over a Little Blue Heron, but the RBA says the bird is a probable hybrid with a Snowy Egret. Another highlight was a female harrier capturing a wigeon. Two Eurasian Wigeons and several Common Moorhens were among the more than 50 species of waterfowl and waders seen.

Elizabeth Dickey

ALAMEDA AND ARROWHEAD MARSH, November 23.

Four members and several guests enjoyed a good morning of birding. The high tide pushed out 6 Clapper Rails and 2 Sora. Two of the Rails were sharing a floating log with a Great Blue Heron. Two Burrowing Owls and a Short-eared Owl were observed at Arrowhead Marsh. A Red-breasted Merganser and a Common Goldeneye were also among the 66 species seen.

Pat MacEachern



OBSERVATIONS

By Donna Peake-Klein

Please send observations to Donna Peake-Klein,
51 Picardy Ct., Walnut Creek, 94596, or call 930-9819.

Please include your telephone number with your observations.

American White Pelican: 28 on 12/3 at Grizzly Island. (W&GY)

Red-necked Grebe: 1 on 11/10 in Arcata near the Coast Guard Station. (RL)

Ring-necked Duck: 11 male and 6 female on 12/3 at Elk Glen Lake in Golden Gate Park. (FB, JR)

Tufted Duck: 2 on 12/3 (FB, JR) and 1 on 12/4 (RL), all at Elk Glen Lake.

Common Merganser: 18 on 11/11 at the Eel River near Pepperwood, Humboldt Co. (RL)

Ferruginous Hawk: 1 on 11/23 along I-680 near Gold Hill Rd., Solano Co. (JR)

Rough-legged Hawk: 6 on 12/3 at Grizzly Island. (W&GY)

Golden Eagle, 1 adult on 11/23 along I-680 near Marshview Rd., Solano Co. (JR)

Peregrine Falcon: 1 on 11/11 at the Eel River. (RL)

American Avocet: Hundreds on 12/3 at Pond 14, Grizzly Island. (W&GY)

Long-billed Curlew: Many on 12/3 feeding in a field along Ramsay Road. (W&GY)

Long-eared Owl: 1 on 11/5, south of Spaletta Plateau near the road, Pt. Reyes. (RL)

Red-breasted Sapsucker: 1 on 11/7 in the Orinda garden of Hugh and Norah Bain.

Costa's Hummingbird: 1 adult male on 11/9 visiting a feeder in her Alamo garden in late afternoon. (JR)

Steller's Jay: 2 on 11/20 being hassled by Scrub Jays, in a persimmon tree in the Pleasant Hill yard of Bill and Marie Toasperm. The first sighting of Steller's Jays here in 33 years.

Golden-crowned Kinglet: 8 still around through 12/6 in her Alamo garden. (JR)

Varied Thrush: 1 on 11/7 in their Orinda garden. (H&NB)

Sage Thrasher: 1 returned on 11/4 to her Walnut Creek garden for one day only. (MW)

Black-and-white Warbler: 1 on 12/4 at Elk Glen Lake. (RL)

American Redstart: 1 on 12/3 (JR) and 12/4 (RL) at Middle Lake, Golden Gate Park.

White-throated Sparrow: 1 on 11/5 at Nunes Ranch, Pt. Reyes. (RL)

"Grey-headed" Junco: 1 in his Moraga garden from 11/19 through at least 12/1. (GA, MOB)

River Otters: 2 on 11/11 at the Eel River. (RL)

Tule Elk: 66 including one bull elk with tremendous antlers on 12/3 at Grizzly Island. (W&GY)

Observers: Garth Alton, Hugh and Norah Bain, Florence Bennett, Robert Landfear, Many Observers, Jean Richmond, Marie and Bill Toasperm, Margaret Wadsworth, and Winifred and Gifford Young.

89th CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

The MDAS Christmas Bird Count will be held on Saturday, December 31, 1988. There will be a New Year's Eve countdown pot-luck dinner at 6:00 p.m. in the Manzanita Room at the Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road, Lafayette. (See AAA map for location.) There is no kitchen or water available. Be prepared. Anyone still interested in participating, please call Maury Stern, 284-5980.

CLASSES AND EXCURSIONS

Through the Orinda Community Center, Norah Bain will teach one class at the Sacramento Valley National Wildlife Refuge on Tuesday, January 17 from 9:30 to 3:30. A series of three field classes will follow on Thursdays, January 19 and 26 and February 2 from 9:30 to 12:30. For details, please call Norah at 254-4516. To register early in January, call the Orinda Community Center at 254-2445.

AUDUBON ECOLOGY CAMPS

National Audubon Society is sponsoring ecology camps and workshops in 1989 as follows:

Audubon Ecology Workshops in Connecticut:

Introductory Field Ecology - 6/25-7/1, 7/2-7/8

Field Ecology for Educators - 7/9-7/15, 7/16-7/22, 7/23-7/29, 7/30-8/5, 8/6-8/12

Audubon Camp in Maine:

Audubon Magazine - Photo Workshop - 7/1-7/7

Field Ecology - 7/17-7/28, 8/7-8/18

Field Ecology (short course) - 7/9-7/15, 7/30-8/5

Field Ornithology Workshop - 8/20-8/26, 8/27-9/2

Audubon Camp in the West - Wyoming:

Nature Photography Workshop - 6/16-6/25

Field Ecology (short course) - 6/23-6/30

Field Ecology - 7/2-7/14, 7/16-7/28, 7/30-8/11

Wilderness Research Backpack Program - 7/2-7/14, 7/16-7/28, 7/30-8/11

Southeast Arizona Audubon Ecology Workshop:

9/4-9/12

International Audubon Ecology Workshop - Kenya:

8/14-8/27

Please contact Norah Bain at 254-4516 for more information and for application forms for a 50% scholarship from MDAS.

TRAVEL CORNER

New England Birding
by John Ascher

Combining a successful birding trip, a family vacation, and interviews at Eastern colleges is definitely a challenge. From July 27 to August 27, I had to find a way to keep my relatives and family happy without missing any most-wanted birds. Using Pettingill, local publications, and my parents' warning, "This is not a birding trip, John," to guide me, I drew up a plan to find as many lifers as possible on my first East Coast trip.

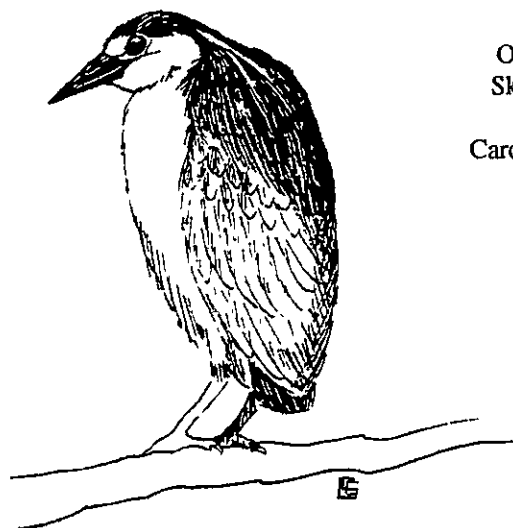
When I arrived at my uncle's house in Wilmington, Delaware, I heard Eastern Screech Owls, an Acadian Flycatcher, a Wood Thrush, and a strange warbler singing from the dense deciduous woods. My first two Eastern Screech Owls flew into an open oak over my head and began duet calls that lasted well into the night. The next morning I located the flycatcher and the Wood Thrush, but the mystery warbler stayed hidden in the poison ivy-dominated underbrush. After an hour of frustration, I realized that only an *Oporornis* could be that secretive. I then tried my Kentucky Warbler tape, and the bird revealed itself only a few yards away at the forest edge. At dawn the next morning, my aunt drove me to the marshes of Delaware City and Bombay Hook NWR. The Least Bittern was at the top of my want list, but I wasn't sure I would find this elusive reed dweller. At my first stop I saw a bird at the top of a cattail that looked like a meadowlark on stilts. The bittern disappeared into the marsh, but a thorough scan of the area revealed four more crouched in the dense vegetation. The mudflats of Bombay Hook Refuge teemed with shorebirds of all types, including thousands of Semipalmated Sandpipers and yellowlegs. A flock of over 100 Stilt Sandpipers joined some Pectorals on a small pool, and an early Hudsonian Godwit stood alone in the midst of some dowitchers. The shorebirds were joined by breeding Black Ducks, Glossy Ibis, a Sedge Wren, and Seaside Sparrows along the salt water channels.

After experiencing the natural beauty and abundant wildlife of Bombay Hook, the incredibly ugly train ride through New Jersey and New York to Connecticut was quite a shock. I spent the following week in the New Haven/Guilford area, driving my uncle's truck in search of lifers while he prepared for his wedding. A tip from Noble Proctor, a local expert, sent me to the Beaver Head Swamp, a damp forest area north of New Haven to find breeding warblers. A fortuitous caterpillar infestation after a rain brought my first Blue-winged, Hooded, and Worm-eating Warblers out into the trees along the road where Scarlet Tanagers, Orchard Orioles, and Yellow-throated Vireos joined in the feast. Next I scrambled down from the road into an overgrown streambed. A movement along the stream revealed a Lousiaina Waterthrush bobbing nearby. When I returned to my cousin's house, good news awaited me. She had arranged a trip to Faulkner Island, where two researchers were

studying Roseate and Common Terns. I spent the night in their shack on the small treeless island and donned a hardhat to help them survey the nests in the colony and band adult terns. Two thousand pairs of Common Terns and one hundred pairs of Roseates dive-bombed us as I learned to identify the graceful Rosies.

I headed north to Chatham, Massachusetts, the town opposite Monomoy NWR. I took a water taxi to the long sandy island refuge to find a Bar-tailed Godwit seen the day before. Without other birders chasing it, I was unable to find the bird, but a flock of 75 Hudsonian Godwits, 2000+ Roseate Terns, 3 Piping Plovers, and a breeding-plumaged Lesser Golden Plover made this effort worthwhile.

The next day I left for Maine via Boston and drove to Port Clyde, the home port of my grandparents, several nesting Ospreys, and the Monhegan Ferry. I woke up early and caught the morning ferry to Monhegan Island, a famous migration hotspot ten miles offshore. After the dense morning fog cleared, hordes of migrant warblers appeared in the trees. Among the dozens of Yellow Warblers were many sought-after species, including Cape May, Blackburnian, Black-throated Green, and Canada Warblers. The island's isolated location attracted three species of southern vagrants, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Blue-winged Warbler, and Prairie Warbler. As suddenly as the flock appeared, it dispersed and I spent the rest of the day enjoying the scenic New England town. On August 18, the fog cleared enough to allow a trip to Matinicus Rock, home of the Atlantic Puffin. The waters around the rock were filled with Black Guillemots and Common Eiders. I identified an immature Great Cormorant, but I was two days too late for the puffin. My luck returned the next day when I tried one last time for the White-rumped Sandpiper at the Weskeag Marsh, a large inland area filled with migrant shorebirds. One White-rumped was with a Baird's and twelve Pectoral Sandpipers. A Solitary Sandpiper and numerous Sharp-tailed Sparrows were along a tidal channel farther into the marsh. My balance between family, school visits, and birding allowed me to spot 19 lifers, 9 more than I expected at the beginning. In spite of my parents' admonition, I found that I was able to combine birding with a family vacation.



Original
Sketches
by
Carol Lutz

THANK YOU

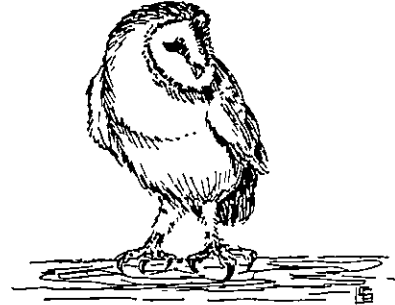
A good start was made this year with 12 classes enrolled in Audubon Adventures through the contributions of eleven MDAS members. We want to thank all of these sponsors. For those unfamiliar with the program, Audubon Adventures provides a bi-monthly newspaper to each class member plus a teacher's guide to expand on the students' newspapers. Subjects covered are birds, trees, snakes, zoos, etc.

Andree Youngson, one of our members and an environmental specialist herself, persuaded her employer, Dow Chemical USA, to donate to the Audubon Adventures program. The donation covers 14 schools and 56 classes in the Pittsburg / Antioch area. She contacted the schools and arranged for the sign-up of all the classes.

A salute to Andree Youngson of Mt. Diablo Audubon and our thanks and appreciation to Dow Chemical USA.

NEW MEMBERS

We extend warm greetings to these new MDAS members and hope to meet them at our activities: Barry Baskin, Christopher Blain, Carl Brandt, Gilbert Byers, R. P. Clayton, Veronica A. Correll, C. Ebey, Susan Evans, Alex Ezersky, John R. Ferris, Robert Field, Jay S. Forni, Douglas Freel, Francella Heighes, Staci Hobbet, Barbara Huguley, B. Iles, Susan James, Kenneth Kennedy, Victor L. Ketellapper, Mrs. E. S. Leonardson, Bill Loftin, R. Marks, Carol Meilandt, Gwen Osberg, Jan Ouren, Laura Penniman, Don Pulver, Barbara Reed, Marv Reif, Gail Snyder, Mrs. C. Taber, Sheryl Trakas, Kathy Tussy, Mrs. Jean Vincent, Lolo Wells, Mr. and Mrs. Chris Wills, and B. Young.



The Quail is published monthly except for the combined July/August issue. Audubon membership includes subscriptions to the Quail and Audubon magazine. To join (\$30/year individual, \$38 family; introductory & senior rates available) write check to National Audubon Society but send it, with letter or subscription card, to Membership Chairperson, Diane Macario, 2425 Maple Ave., Concord, CA 94520. The Chapter benefits financially from membership applications it processes. Full membership is encouraged, but subscription to the Quail is available separate from membership at \$6/year. Check should be made to MDAS and mailed to MDAS Treasurer, Florence Bennett, P.O. Box 31435, Walnut Creek, CA 94598. First class mailing of the Quail to member or nonmember is an additional \$3/year payable to MDAS & sent to Treasurer.

ADDRESS CHANGES AND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION: Consult Diane Macario, (415) 674-0920.

*Barbara Burek, Editor, 157 Mt. Kennedy Dr., Martinez, CA 94553 (415) 229-0394
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TIME VALUE MAIL



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February 1989

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Next Deadline: February 9

February Program:

Wildlife of Kenya

Eastern Africa has long been popular as a place to view exotic wildlife, and Kenya in particular has been the destination of travelers from all over the world. Join us for a safari through central Kenya. We begin at Meru National Park in the lowlands northwest of Nairobi, in typical African dry thornbush. Next we drive up to the lush highlands around Mt. Kenya. From there we descend into the Rift Valley and look at three of the valley lakes. Finally we go west to the Masai Mara, where the river winds through the grasslands. Come enjoy lions, zebras, cheetahs, elephants, rhinos and other wildlife. Discover why a starling can be called "Superb." Share the beauty of more than half a million flamingos, the spectacle which Roger Tory Peterson calls one of the most exciting in the birding world.

At our **February 2** meeting, Dan Van Zile, a fellow MDAS member, recounts the experiences which nine of our members enjoyed last October when we joined Chris Carpenter of Golden Gate Audubon for this exciting trip. Dan spent eight years working in Technical Photography including three at the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory. Since 1974, he has been a Computer Scientist at LBL. Beginning in 1975, he has led numerous backpack trips and treks throughout the western U.S.A. and Canada as a leader in the Boy Scouts of America. He is an avid amateur naturalist and nature photographer.

General meetings of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society are held on the first Thursday of the month, from September through June, at the Willow Creek Center, 1026 Mohr Lane, Concord. The agenda for the meetings is as follows:

6:30 Doors open
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8:30 Program

February Bird Information will be given by Norah Bain on Birds Close-up, the use of study specimens.

The next board meeting will be Thursday, February 9, at 7:30 p.m., at the home of Winifred and Gifford Young, 1451 Janet Ct., Benicia, (707) 745-4134. Board meetings are open to all interested members.

Christmas Bird Count results - page 5

CONSERVATION NOTES

By Al McNabney

I SAW A HAPPY BIRD DURING THE BIRD COUNT. DID YOU SEE IT TOO?

Oh, yes, I saw a Mallard flying rapidly in a northerly direction on December 22. It was easy to figure out why that little bird was smiling, why it was flying north, and why it was flying so fast. That little bird had heard Shell Marsh was again in business. That little bird was told Officers of the Mt. View Sanitary District and California Fish & Game opened valves, running water into Shell Marsh for the first time since the disastrous oil spill last April. Will Shell Marsh "come back"? Still open to question, so say some authorities. (Oh, yes. My smiling little bird told others of the re-opening of Shell Marsh, ergo, the smiling birds seen during the Bird Count.) Shell spent about \$9.5 million on the entire clean-up. Much of that money went into cleaning up and "saving" THE most important wetland in Contra Costa County. Still unsettled is the whole issue of penalties. Court actions are possible. California's Attorney General is in the process of formulating a mitigation package for presentation to Shell. In addition, it is likely that civil penalties will be sought.

Who brings back to life the hundreds of birds that were oiled and died? What of the other wildlife that looked to the area as "home"? Their fate was sealed with the spill. WE can say to those who worked hard to "save" the oiled birds and animals--THANK YOU!!!!!! We should also say to Federal, State and county authorities: If there are laws on the books, ENFORCE THEM. If new laws are needed, WRITE such. To Business leaders we say, YOU TOO have a responsibility to nature and to "we the people". If you assumed your full responsibility, we (probably) wouldn't need the laws. About one-half of Shell Marsh is still in private hands. ALL of the Shell Marsh area and sufficient surrounding land HAS to be deeded to a public agency, such as East Bay Regional Parks. In that way the marsh will NEVER AGAIN be subject to development. We also have the (proposed) additional Benicia Bridge Span to contend with. The California Fish & Game, EPA, Mt. View Sanitary District, and Lindsay Museum all played major roles in overcoming the effects of the disaster. Shell, of course, was a major player; the corporation provided money and cooperation which helped. The Board of Supervisors has established a "Spill Prevention Task Force." That body is looking into ways and means to ensure no future spill can occur.

MORE GOOD NEWS! ANOTHER WETLAND ACTION

The Citizen Committee To Complete the Refuge, in a recently released publication wrote: "We Did It! Refuge Expansion Passes Into Law." October 25, the President signed the law authorizing US Fish & Wildlife Service to double the size of the SF Bay National Wildlife Refuge. The battle's not over yet, but the Refuge WILL be expanded. It will take time. It will take MORE dedicated effort on the part of many interested

people AND it will take money. Incidentally, have YOU visited the SF Bay National Wildlife Refuge? It's a great place.

McAVOY YACHT HARBOR - LATE NEWS

Warnings from regulatory agencies appear to have gone unheeded. The issues involving McAvoy Yacht Harbor and uses of wetlands that appear to have been illegal are still unresolved. The issues will (most likely) be thrashed out in the courts. The battle is to protect Bay wetlands.

GENERAL PLAN CONGRESS BACK AT IT

A draft of a proposed General Plan, developed by County Staff, based on over two years of work by the General Plan Congress, has been circulated to members of the General Plan Congress for review. An initial meeting saw the Congress discuss the document on December 8. Additional meeting will be held in early January. The City of Walnut Creek is also redoing its General Plan. Meetings are to be held in January. Public comment is solicited by the City planning commission and the Walnut Creek City Council.

SOLID WASTE ISSUES BEING RESOLVED?

We are closer to finding a location for disposal of solid waste. That's the GOOD news, for the "stuff" may NOT pile up in your yard (that would be the BAD news). "Yes, Mable," the County is a step closer to creating and selecting a solid waste disposal site. The CCC Board of Supervisors acted, to "Declare our intent to approve the Bailey Road site should it meet the test of EIR review and successfully complete the hearing process." The EIR for the proposed site was forwarded to the County Planning Commission for review. That body in a "strange" (some say unprecedented) action did NOT act on the matter but returned it to the Supervisors. Comments by two of the Supervisors, as reported in the press, infer activities by at least some members of the Planning Commission were not in conformity with the Brown Act. MDAS board member Kent Fickett, having had substantial experience with the technical requirements of the laws, regulations and/or rules involved, layed out a series of steps to the Supervisors. There is a determination to go forward and if present determinations are continued, there will be a solid waste disposal site. That being the case, the so-called "Super site" (an expanded Bailey Road project) will eventually be approved as THE location for solid waste disposal for CCC. In the meantime, substantial opposition is being expressed by residents and officials from the Pittsburg area.

A FEE FOR BIRDWATCHING

Ducks Unlimited and other like organizations have supported payment of license fees by those who wished to hunt ducks. The fees have been used (for the most part) to support habitat and other means of ensuring a continuation of the duck population. Now, Jay D. Hair, President, National Wildlife Federation, writes, "We need a dedicated source of money for 'watchable' - or nongame - wildlife. Through license fees and excise taxes, sportsmen have supported management of game species. Now, songbirds and other watchable wildlife deserve the same attention." (Ed: see also page 6.)

FIELD TRIPS

Trips are open to members and nonmembers alike. Carpool time is departure time. Carpool expense: 5 cents per mile per rider is suggested; tolls and entry fees are shared equally by driver and riders. Bring binoculars, field guide and lunch. Trips go in light rain or drizzle; if in doubt, call leader up to 1/2 hour before carpool time.

Saturday, February 4, Thornton. Carpool 7:30 a.m., southwest corner of Sun Valley parking lot. Meet 8:45 a.m. in park at end of Glascock Rd. Take SR4 to Antioch Bridge (toll), go north along river to Rio Vista. Turn east on SR12 for 11.5 miles, then turn left onto Glascock Rd. Tundra Swans, Sandhill Cranes, hawks, and other grassland birds. Mostly car birding. Trip will go in light rain. If questions, call leader. Leader: Fred Safer, 937-2906.

Sunday, February 12, Cristman Island. Carpool, 6:00 a.m. at El Cerro Blvd., just west of I-680. Meet 7:30 a.m. at the Vintage Fair Mall, north of Modesto, in front of Cocos. From I-580, take Hwys. 205 and 120 through Manteca to Hwy. 99. Go south on 99 about 10 miles to Beckwith Dale Road. This is a new area. Little walking, but may be wet. We will look for water and shore birds. For information, call Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486. **Note this is a Sunday trip.**

Wednesday, February 8, Golden Gate Park. Carpool 8:00 a.m., Acalanes Ave., off Pleasant Hill Rd., just north of SR24. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at North Lake in the park. From Fulton Street, turn left into the park at 43rd Street. If you plan to meet the group there, please be patient - traffic is unpredictable. Park is good for vagrants and ducks. One mile walking, can be muddy. Leader: Barbara Vaughn, 376-8732.

Thursday, February 16, San Francisco Bay Model. Carpool 8:30 a.m. at southwest corner of Sun Valley parking lot. Meet 9:45 a.m. in the parking area of SF Bay Model off Bridgeway in Sausalito. We will have a guided tour of the model. We must have a minimum of 10 persons for the tour. Call Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486, if interested. If we do not have 10 signed up by Sunday, February 5, the tour will be cancelled. After lunch we will bird around Richardson Bay or Tiberon.

Saturday-Sunday, February 25-26, Honey Lake (Sage Grouse). Those going should call the leader for details of time and meeting places. We will bird Honey Lake NWR and other areas. Raptors and Northern Shrike are among the other possibilities. It is about a mile walk to the lek up a muddy dirt road before daylight. Bring a flashlight and lots of warm, layered clothing and hot liquids. Expect cold. Fast route (but higher pass), I-80 to Reno and US 395 north. At Johnstonville, US 395 turns east toward Litchfield and Honey Lake NWR, SR 36 goes north to Susanville and food and lodging.

A slower but lower elevation route is SR32 out of Chico to SR36 and east to Susanville. This is also a birdier route. To reach the NWR headquarters, turn south on Mapes Rd. from US395 (about 3 miles east of Litchfield). Leader: Maury Stern, 284-5980.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

GREY LODGE, December 3.

There was beautiful weather for the ten members and guests. Thousands of Snow Geese were seen, with numerous Ross' Geese scattered among them. We explored some other areas in the afternoon, finding a large flock of Tundra Swans and 2 Rough-legged Hawks. A total of 68 species was seen.

Elizabeth Dickey

SACRAMENTO VALLEY NWR, December 4.

Five early risers were rewarded by an exquisite sunrise complete with a crescent moon. Hundreds of geese and ducks flew into the refuge to be joined by 70 Tundra Swans. A bittern was observed feeding as a Marsh Wren and Black Phoebe flew in and out of the scope view. By 10 o'clock, the group increased by 10 members and 2 guests. Highlights of the day were an immature Golden Eagle raising up clouds of Snow Geese, the 70 Tundra Swans and 3 White Pelicans. In the afternoon, the three remaining birders observed a perched Peregrine Falcon. That and a second bittern and the Golden Eagle on a close-in snag added spice to the total of 68 species for the enjoyable day.

Hugh and Norah Bain

ALTAMONT PASS, December 10.

Eleven members cruised the Altamont Pass area looking for hawks. In the morning, it was dead calm and hawking was very poor. After lunch, however, they really got up and we had great birding on both sides of Patterson Pass. Highlights included 6 Golden Eagles, several Rough-legged and Ferruginous Hawks, a beautiful great Horned Owl, 4 Rock Wrens, and 18 Mountain Bluebirds.

George Finger

NILES CANYON GRAVEL PITS, December 15.

The day of the Niles Canyon field trip dawned with winds of 50 mph being common. They continued throughout the day and as I drove to the meeting site, I thought, "What if they gave a field trip and nobody came?" Sure enough, no one was at the carpool location, but I had to scout the area for the Ohlone Christmas count 3 days later, so I drove to the meeting place. Two brave souls were there and we spent a good day together, even with the wind. We saw 71 species with some notable highlights. A Golden Eagle flew low overhead a number of times, giving us excellent looks at this majestic bird. Two White-fronted Geese were unusual on the gravel pit ponds. Eight Spotted Sandpipers were seen, which is common for the area. We had lunch with a Black Phoebe at a small pool and, all in all, had a wonderful day.

Jimm Edgar

OBSERVATIONS

By Donna Peake-Klein

Please send observations to Donna Peake-Klein,

51 Picardy Ct., Walnut Creek, 94596, or call 930-9819.

Please include your telephone number with your observations.

Cattle Egret: 1 on 12/13 at the north end of Lake Merritt in Oakland. (FB, JR, et al.)

Tundra Swan: 2000 on 12/15 at the Oroville State Recreation Area. (H&NB)

Redhead: 1 male on 12/13 on Lake Merritt, (FB, JR, et al.); 32 on 12/20 at Berkeley Aquatic Park (JR, FB, et al.).

Oldsquaw: 1 on 1/9 at Glen Cove of South Regatta Drive, Vallejo, (PG); seen through 1/11 (W&GY).

Barrow's Goldeneye: 5 male and 8 female on 12/13 at the south end of Lake Merritt (JR, FB, et al.); 3 male and 2 female on 12/20 at Berkeley Aquatic Park (FB, JR).

Bald Eagle: 6 young adult or adult on 12/15 at Oroville State Recreation Area. (H&NB)

Sharp-shinned Hawk: 1 on 12/19 in their Benicia yard. (W&GY)

Rough-legged Hawk: 4 on 12/7 at Bodega Bay. (JR, FB)

Golden Eagle: 2 immature on 12/10 at Sacramento Wildlife Refuge. (W&GY)

Black Oystercatcher: 5 on 12/7 at Bodega Head. (FB, JR)

Shorebirds: A feeding mass on 12/20 on the grass beside the parking lot at North Waterfront Park near the Berkeley Marina included 25 Black-bellied Plovers, 8 Killdeer, 15 Willets, 25 Marbled Godwits, 15 Red Knots, 2 Sanderlings, 25 Western Sandpipers, 300 Least Sandpipers, 50 dowitcher species, and 1 Ring-billed Gull. (FB, JR)

Bonaparte's Gull: Large flock on 1/11 at Skaggs Island. (W&GY)

White-throated Swift: 70 on 12/21 seen circling about the Lafayette Reservoir. (G&MJM)

Golden-crowned Kinglet: A flock of 8 on 1/5 still around her Alamo home. (JR)

Hooded Oriole: 1 young male from 12/29 through 1/11 at the feeders in her Alamo garden. (JR)

Observers: Hugh and Norah Bain, Florence Bennett, George and Molly Jane Monheit, Jean Richmond, and Winifred and Gifford Young.

IN APPRECIATION

MDAS would like to gratefully acknowledge a donation from Mary McCarroll of Walnut Creek honoring the 50th Wedding Anniversary of Lee and Jean Stallcup of Albany.

CLASSES AND EXCURSIONS

Peter Pyle of the Point Reyes Bird Observatory will be the speaker at the next meeting of the Northern Chapter of the Cooper Ornithological Society. His topic will be "Weather Patterns and the Timing of Seabird Breeding on Southeast Farallon Island." The talk will be at 8:00 p.m., Monday, February 20, at the Audubon Richardson Bay Sanctuary, 376 Greenwood Beach Road, Tiburon. All bird lovers are welcome.

The Fremont Adult School is offering two field trip birding classes. The Birds of the Delta class is a one-day field trip to observe birds in the Delta, on Saturday, February 11, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The Tuesday Birding Field Trip Class will meet on six Tuesdays from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., starting February 28 and ending April 11. There will be no class on March 21. Both classes will be taught by Alice Hoch. For more information, call the Fremont Adult School at 791-5841.

The Lindsay Museum has a full program of classes and trips for the winter and spring. For forms and information, call 935-1978 or visit the Museum at 1901 First Avenue, Walnut Creek, between 11:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Early registration is advised as enrollment is limited.

NATURE SALES

From MDAS Sales:

Birding Northern California, by Jean Richmond. Guide to 72 best birding sites. \$10.65 pickup, \$12.00 mail.

Birder's Handbook, Essential companion to your *Identification Guide*, by Paul R. Ehrlich et al. Encyclopedia on habits, habitats, breeding, nesting, etc. of 650 species. 785 pages. \$13.00 pickup, \$14.50 mail.

Hawks Field Guide, William Clark & Brian Wheeler. \$12.00 pickup, \$13.50 mail.

Audubon Daily Field List: Birds of Northern California. \$0.10 pickup, \$0.25 mail plus self-addressed stamped envelope.

Checklist, Birds of Contra Costa County. \$0.25 pickup, \$0.35 mail plus self-addressed stamped envelope.

Field List of California Birds, by the Western Field Ornithologists. \$1.25 pickup, \$1.50 mail.

Order from MDAS or call Sales Manager, Gifford Young, (707) 745-4134.

From Richardson Bay Audubon Center:

Richardson Bay Audubon Center's bookstore, THE BOOK NEST, has just published its 1989 mail order catalog of field and site guides for birds, video and audio cassettes for birding, and environmental education books. The catalog is free. If you want it mailed by first class postage, please send a \$0.25 stamp to: THE BOOK NEST, RBAC, 376 Greenwood Beach Rd., Tiburon, CA 94920.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT RESULTS

The 1988 MDAS Contra Costa County Christmas Count occurred Saturday, December 31, 1988, a cold, foggy day. In spite of the less than ideal weather, 94 participants in 17 parties and 4 feeder watchers saw 152 species and 36,385 individual birds. In addition, five species (cp) were seen in the three days before or after the count day. This is a tribute to the hard work of everyone involved in the count. I want to thank the section leaders, friends from Napa-Solano, Ohlone, and Golden Gate Audubon chapters, and Joe Morlan (the voice of the Rare Bird Summary). Special thanks to Denise Wight, Barbara Vaughn, and Britta Cascio for their organization of the post-count pot-luck dinner.

Several rare or unusual birds were seen: a Northern Goshawk by Joe Morlan on Mt. Diablo, a Hooded Oriole by Jean Richmond at her feeder, a Tufted Duck and 2 Eurasian Wigeons by Bob Richmond at Mallard Reservoir, 3 Semipalmated Plovers and a White-winged Scoter by Bud Widdowson and the Gallaghers at Concord Naval Weapons Station, 2 Rough-legged Hawks by Joel Herr, Kent Fickett and Ed Hase in the PG&E marshes, a Barrow's Goldeneye at Heather Farms by Peggy Gross in Barbara Vaughn's group, and a Mountain Bluebird and a Lewis's Woodpecker at Black Diamond Mines by George Finger's group. We have seen over 190 species of birds in the 35 years that our Christmas Count has gone on. Our next goal is 160 species and even more participants in 1989.

Maury Stern, Compiler

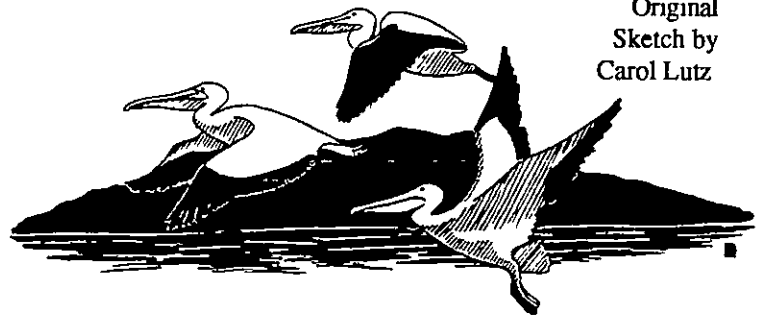
Red-throated Loon	Sharp-shinned Hawk	Rock Dove	Townsend's Solitaire (cp)
Pied-billed Grebe	Cooper's Hawk	Band-tailed Pigeon	Hermit Thrush
Eared Grebe	<u>Northern Goshawk</u>	Mourning Dove	American Robin
Western Grebe	Red-shouldered Hawk	Common Barn Owl	Varied Thrush
<u>Clark's Grebe</u>	Red-tailed Hawk	Western Screech-owl	Wrentit
American White Pelican	Rough-legged Hawk	Great Horned Owl	Northern Mockingbird
Double-crested Cormorant	Golden Eagle	Short-eared Owl	California Thrasher
American Bittern	American Kestrel	White-throated Swift	Water Pipit
Great Blue Heron	Merlin	Anna's Hummingbird	Cedar Waxwing
Great Egret	<u>Peregrine Falcon</u>	Belted Kingfisher	Phainopepla
Snowy Egret	<u>Prairie Falcon</u>	<u>Lewis' Woodpecker</u>	Loggerhead Shrike
Green-backed Heron	Ring-necked Pheasant	Acorn Woodpecker	European Starling
Black-crowned Night-heron	California Quail	Red-breasted Sapsucker	Hutton's Vireo
Canada Goose	Black Rail	Nuttall's Woodpecker	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Wood Duck (cp)	Virginia Rail	Downy Woodpecker	Townsend's Warbler
Green-winged Teal	Sora	Hairy Woodpecker	Common Yellowthroat
Mallard	Common Moorhen	Northern Flicker	Rufous-sided Towhee
Northern Pintail	American Coot	Black Phoebe	Brown Towhee
Cinnamon Teal	Semipalmated Plover	Say's Phoebe	Rufous-crowned Sparrow
Northern Shoveler	Killdeer	Horned Lark (cp)	Lark Sparrow
Gadwall	Black-necked Stilt	Tree Swallow	Sage Sparrow (cp)
<u>Eurasian Wigeon</u>	American Avocet	Steller's Jay	Savannah Sparrow
American Wigeon	Greater Yellowlegs	Scrub Jay	Fox Sparrow
Canvasback	<u>Lesser Yellowlegs</u>	American Crow	Song Sparrow
Ring-necked Duck	Willet	Common Raven	Lincoln's Sparrow
<u>Tufted Duck</u>	Spotted Sandpiper	Chestnut-backed Chickadee	Golden-crowned Sparrow
<u>Greater Scaup</u>	Western Sandpiper	Plain Titmouse	White-crowned Sparrow
Lesser Scaup	Least Sandpiper	Bushtit	Dark-eyed Junco
Surf Scoter	Dunlin	White-breasted Nuthatch	Red-winged Blackbird
White-winged Scoter	Long-billed Dowitcher	Brown Creeper	Tricolored Blackbird
Common Goldeneye	Common Snipe	Rock Wren	Western Meadowlark
<u>Barrow's Goldeneye</u>	Bonaparte's Gull	Canyon Wren (cp)	Brewer's Blackbird
Bufflehead	Mew Gull	Bewick's Wren	Brown-headed Cowbird
Hooded Merganser	Ring-billed Gull	Winter Wren	Purple Finch ^{<u>Hooded Oriole</u>}
Common Merganser	California Gull	Marsh Wren	House Finch
Ruddy Duck	Herring Gull	Golden-crowned Kinglet	Pine Siskin
Turkey Vulture	Thayer's Gull	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Lesser Goldfinch
Black-shouldered Kite	Western Gull	Western Bluebird	American Goldfinch
Northern Harrier	Glaucous-winged Gull	<u>Mountain Bluebird</u>	House Sparrow

A FEE FOR BIRDWATCHING

The California Department of Fish and Game has announced a program which charges people to view wildlife in selected areas, beginning this spring. Guides, interpretive centers and new wildlife trails will be made available in nine state wildlife areas. It will cost \$2 a day to visit one of the areas, available at the new interpretive centers. Annual passes will also be available for \$10, at the same sporting goods stores and other outlets that sell hunting and fishing licences. Hunting and fishing will still be permitted in the wildlife areas and those with hunting and fishing licences will not need additional wildlife viewing permits. Wildlife viewing areas will be made off limits to hunters during times that there might be potential conflicts, however. The Department of Fish and Game hopes to raise \$3 million yearly for wildlife habitat management. Ninety thousand acres of state Fish and Game wildlife areas will be included in the program. The areas closest to the Bay area where fees will be charged are Elkhorn Slough Reserve for shorebirds and migratory waterfowl located near Moss Landing in Monterey County, the Grizzly Island Wildlife Area in Solano County, and Gray Lodge Wildlife Area north of Sacramento in Sutter and Butte Counties.

NEW MEMBERS

We are happy to greet these new MDAS members and hope to meet them at our activities: Albione Becnel, Daren Burke, Ara O. Call, Joan Cornelius, R. Cranefield, Mrs. T. M. Erwin, Shire Farrell, Mary Ann Flett, Linda A. Follette, Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Gallogly, Paul Jazarus, Mrs. Wm. J. Kari, Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Landis, Elaine Larussa, J. Marino, Constance Moore, Janie Olofson, Cecelia Pritchard, Gail Rodens, Mark and Faylene Roth, Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Silva, John Vimont, Mrs. B. Wilgus, Philip Young, and Ronald Zampa.



Original
Sketch by
Carol Lutz

The Quail is published monthly except for the combined July/August issue. Audubon membership includes subscriptions to the Quail and Audubon magazine. To join (\$30/year individual, \$38 family; introductory & senior rates available) write check to National Audubon Society but send it, with letter or subscription card, to Membership Chairperson, Diane Macario, 2425 Maple Ave., Concord, CA 94520. The Chapter benefits financially from membership applications it processes. Full membership is encouraged, but subscription to the Quail is available separate from membership at \$6/year. Check should be made to MDAS and mailed to MDAS Treasurer, Florence Bennett, P.O. Box 31435, Walnut Creek, CA 94598. First class mailing of the Quail to member or nonmember is an additional \$3/year payable to MDAS & sent to Treasurer.

ADDRESS CHANGES AND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION: Consult Diane Macario, (415) 674-0920.

Barbara Burek, Editor, 157 Mt. Kennedy Dr., Martinez, CA 94553 (415) 229-0394

Exchange bulletins for MDAS to Mt. Diablo Audubon Society, P. O. Box 53, Walnut Creek, CA 94596, please.

Mt. Diablo Audubon Society
P.O. Box 53
Walnut Creek, CA 94596

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The QUAIL

BULLETIN OF THE MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY
P. O. BOX 53
WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA 94596
(415) AUD-UBON

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VP Conservation: Al McNabney, 945-1785
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Field Trips: Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486
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Hospitality: Denise Wight, 228-2601
Education: Norah Bain, 254-4516
Secretary: Britta Cascio, 837-2895

March 1989

Vol. 35 No. 7

Next Deadline: March 9

March Program:

Penguins in Antarctica

Penguins hold a surprising fascination for many people, considering few will ever see them in their native Antarctic and South American waters. These sixteen species of flightless birds have modified their wings into flippers, allowing them to swim superbly. On land, their upright stance is distinctive, and they hop or walk in an amusing waddle. Many are strongly marked, dark above and light below, often giving the appearance of being in formal attire. Most of these species are widespread in the southern hemisphere, breeding on sub-Antarctic islands and coasts. While some species, such as Rockhopper and Emperor Penguins, are familiar from television programs and nature shows, other species are less well known. Our March 2 program will introduce you to three of these species.

Geoff Geupel and Janet Kjelmlyr are biologists with the Point Reyes Bird Observatory. They will present an illustrated talk on a five-year study they have done in Antarctica on the behavior and ecology of the Adele, Chinstrap, and Gentoo Penguins. Geoff is program manager of the Land Bird Research Program at PRBO and his wife Janet is with the Pacific Flyway Project.

General meetings of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society are held on the first Thursday of the month, from September through June, at the Willow Creek Center, 1026 Mohr Lane, Concord. The agenda for the meetings is as follows:

6:30 Doors open
7:00 Birding Info
7:30 Business Meeting
8:00 Social Half-hour
8:30 Program

The Bird Information for March will be given by Rich Radigonda, a vice-president of the California Waterfowl Association and active in the preservation of wetlands. He will show some unusual slides of water birds in flight.

The next board meeting will be Thursday, March 9, at 7:30 p.m., at the home of Barbara Vaughn, 59 Donna Maria Way, Orinda, 376-8732. Board meetings are open to all interested members.

CONSERVATION NOTES

By Al McNabney

WHERE, OH, WHERE HAS OUR WATER GONE

Water, a commodity essential to life of man, bird, animal, and plant. In addition to the uses to which water is put in the San Francisco Bay area, Southern California's Metropolitan Water Department (MWD) wants water too. The State Water Quality Control Board issued a draft report which allocated standards, even though inadequate to Bay waters. Allegedly bowing to intensive pressure from MWD and San Joaquin Valley "Ag" people, the Board withdrew the report. The Chairman, in responding to questions by state Senators said he felt there was NO legal requirement that the Board allocate standards for the Bay. There is disagreement among water authorities on that point. State Senator Quentin Kopp introduced SB277 which would REQUIRE the Board to allocate standards to the Bay to ensure future protection for this important ecological treasure. The water battle is likely to generate lots of heat. In the meantime the Committee for Water Policy Consensus is still moving to form a consensus throughout the State so scarce water resources can be allocated equitably and NOT just on the basis of raw political power.

GENERAL PLAN CONGRESS

After more than two years of work, the General Plan Congress reviewed the staff's draft report that summarized the work done. Having so done, the Congress, by majority vote, disbanded. THAT does not mean the work product is satisfactory. It is NOT! The next step will involve presentation to the Board of Supervisors.

McAVOY YACHT HARBOR

Regulators that don't regulate. Agencies with oversight responsibilities that can't do their job because they haven't enough staff to do the work. This is a legacy of the times. Notwithstanding these problems, BCDC served a Cease and Desist Order on the owners of the McAvoy Yacht Harbor. BCDC Officers heard evidence as to probable violations of laws, rules, etc., on January 17. To the (probable) sorrow of the owners, it appears the wetlands on which much of the work has been done is habitat for at least one endangered species. MDAS has been told the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has turned the issue over to the U. S. Department of Justice for further action.

CRYSTAL RANCH: A DEVELOPMENT WHOSE TIME SHOULD NEVER COME

Will it (development) never end? NO! Not until people say, "Enough!" The Crystal Ranch development call for 770 units, with massive destruction of existing hills and terrible impacts on the Lime Ridge Open Space (some of which was bought and paid for with funds produced by the Cities of Concord, Clayton, and Walnut Creek). The proposed development com-

pletely contradicts Concord's General Plan so it is proposed to change the General Plan and various other restrictive arrangements to fit the project.

PROBLEMS

- The project doesn't meet existing standards.
- Additional services required are not funded.
- 8,000 new car trips per day will be added to Ygnacio Valley Road.
- Additional police will be required.
- There are no plans to add additional personnel.
- The proposal would likely make Concord ineligible for Measure C funds.
- The terrain is unstable.

If **YOU** have a view on the matter, WRITE: Colleen Coll, Mayor - Concord, 1950 Parkside Dr., Concord, CA 94519. Also attend the public hearing March 28, at the same address.

DOES ANYBODY CARE?

OR, JUSTICE UNDONE

ROSSMOOR: Hummingbird feeders about all year long and so are hummers.

NEXT: A decision to renovate a lawn bowling facility.

SCENE: A tree next to the proposed work area. An alert photographer notes a hummingbird nest, complete with egg and a tiny "mom" hummer. Photo taken. Printed in the Rossmoor news with the following caption:

"The wondrous time clock of Mother Nature goes on, not unlike the mail through fog and frost. But will she be able to out maneuver the man-made obstacles? This little hummingbird has built her tiny nest next to the Lawn Bowling Mat House, which is scheduled for renovation, and in a tree which is to get the axe."

Calls to the appropriate Rossmoor department bring the sad finale. An outside individual was employed to "do some of the work." Interested, concerned personnel went to the scene of the work to warn the individual who was to do the work of the nesting hummer and to say, "Hold up on the work." Too late!

On arrival at the scene they found the equipment backed into "THE" tree. The little bird was watching frantically from a short distance, trying to return to her nest but obviously afraid. The equipment was finally moved. Again, TOO LATE! The little mother hummer hasn't returned to the nest. Result: NO production from all the effort. So, who's to blame? How do WE protect our birds and wildlife from our own depredations?



Original
Sketch
by
Carol Lutz

FIELD TRIPS

Trips are open to members and nonmembers alike. Carpool time is departure time. Carpool expense: 5 cents per mile per rider is suggested; tolls and entry fees are shared equally by driver and riders. Bring binoculars, field guide and lunch. Trips go in light rain or drizzle; if in doubt, call leader up to 1/2 hour before carpool time.

Wednesday, March 1, **Hayward Regional Shoreline**. Carpool 7:30 a.m. at El Cerro Blvd., just west of I-680. Meet at 8:30 a.m. in the parking lot at the entrance to Shoreline. Take I-680 south to Crow Canyon Rd. and Crow Canyon to I-580. From I-580, go south on I-880 (Nimitz) to Winton exit and go west to the end of Winton Avenue. This is a good area for shore birds and water birds. 1-2 miles level walking; some trails can be muddy.

Leader: Florence Bennett, 689-3106.

Saturday, March 4, **Bodega Bay - Owling**. Carpool 7:00 a.m. Sun Valley. Meet 9:00 a.m. at the Tides Restaurant in Bodega Bay. Bodega is a good area for loons, grebes, diving ducks; possible sea birds seen from the Head. Little walking. For owling, meet at the Tides parking lot at 5:30 p.m. We will owl up Willow Creek Road to Occidental. Those interested in having dinner at Occidental, call Maury Stern.

Day leaders: Winnie and Gifford Young, (707) 745-4134.

Owling leader: Maury Stern, 284-5980.

Thursday, March 9, **Five Brooks - Bolinas Lagoon**. Carpool 7:00 a.m. at the southwest corner of Sun Valley parking lot. Meet 8:30 a.m. in front of Audubon Canyon Ranch. Go west through Vallejo and continue west on SR37 to Atherton Blvd. On crossing 101, Atherton becomes San Marin Drive. At junction with Novato Blvd, turn right and continue to end at Pt. Reyes - Petaluma Rd. Turn left and go to SR1; left again on SR1 to Audubon Canyon Ranch. This round-about route should avoid most of the commute traffic. About 1 mile walking at Five Brooks, steep in one place; can be muddy.

Leader: George Finger, 933-2468.

Thursday, March 16, **Berkeley Shoreline**. Carpool 8:00 a.m. off Pleasant Hill Rd., just north of Hwy. 24. Meet at 8:30 a.m. in the parking lot at the north end of the Emeryville Marina. Take Hwy. 24, turn north onto I-80. Take the first exit, Powell St., turn left under the freeway and follow Powell to the end. Turn right and drive along Marina Road to the turning circle at the end and park in the lot of the left. Cold, windy, short walks at each stop. Many interesting birds turn up along this waterfront each year. Loons, grebes, bay ducks.

Leader: Barbara Vaughn, 376-8732.

Saturday, March 25, **Briones Reservoir**. Meet 7:30 a.m. at Briones Staging area, intersection of Happy Valley and Bear Creek Roads. 2-3 miles walking. This is the beginning of spring migration.

Leader: Neal Welsh, 798-0213.

Thursday, March 30, **North Briones Wildflower Walk**. Meet 9:00 a.m. in parking lot at north entrance to Briones Regional Park. From Hwy 24 take Pleasant Hill Rd. north to Taylor Blvd. At 4th signal, turn left onto Pleasant Hill Rd., which becomes Alhambra Ave. At 3.1 miles make a sharp left at the stop light onto Alhambra Valley Rd. Go right at the stop sign and then left onto Briones Rd. to end. 2-3 miles walking, unpaved and up and down. We will see grassland and woodland wild flowers as well as birds.

Leader: John Davis, 228-9516.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

PUTAH CREEK, January 7.

Our group of 24 birders enjoyed a good, but cold, day of birding with 83 species seen. Highlights included 2 pairs of Osprey, 8 Hooded Mergansers, Common Mergansers, 3 Lewis' Woodpeckers, a Canyon Wren and a Rufous-crowned Sparrow.

Florence Bennett

LOS GALLINOS SEWER PONDS, January 11.

Eleven members braved the wind on a clear day. The bird of the day was an immature eagle - well-seen while perched but not identified to everyone's satisfaction. Good views of Green-winged and Cinnamon Teal, Ring-necked Ducks and other dabblers. A flock of Long-billed Curlews were observed feeding in a pasture. Many other waders were in the ponds. 68 species were seen in all.

Elizabeth Dickey

PALO ALTO BAYLANDS, January 19.

Thirteen members and guests searched in vain for the Black Rail (and any rails, for that matter), but the day was fine and a good variety of waterfowl was seen. A perky Burrowing Owl, standing high on his long legs, was viewing us, it seemed.

Barbara Vaughn

SUNOL REGIONAL PARK, January 25.

Twelve member and eight guests went out on this cold, sunny day. Birding was good despite the fact that the usual eagles and Pygmy Owl were absent. 55 species were seen and Mary Jane Culver was named Most Valuable Birder of the day for the Best Find: an obliging American Dipper seen just beyond the S. F. water district fence, in the stream.

Kamran Alavi

GRIZZLY ISLAND, January 28.

Twenty members enjoyed the raptors and waterbirds at Grizzly Island. In the eucalyptus groves, we located a Barn Owl, four Great Horned Owls, and an unusual dark-phase Red-tailed Hawk. An American Bittern in the open on the side of the road allowed amazing views. White-fronted Geese, several Rough-legged Hawks, an Orange-crowned Warbler, and a flock of Black-necked Stilts were among the 79 species seen. After the official trip ended, 6 members saw 3 Tundra Swans from the Joyce Island Bridge.

John Ascher

OBSERVATIONS

By Donna Peake-Klein

Please send observations to Donna Peake-Klein,
51 Picardy Ct., Walnut Creek, 94596, or call 930-9819.

Please include your telephone number with your observations.

Little Blue Heron: 1 on 12/29 at mouth of the Tiajuana River Estuary, Mexico. (BL)

Cattle Egret: 1 on 12/26 (JR, RR) and again on 12/28 (JR, FB) at Lake Merritt.

Greater White-fronted Goose: 1 on 1/9 at Heather Farms. (JE)

Snow Goose and Ross's Goose: still 1000's on 1/31 at Sacramento NWR and Gray Lodge WMA and surrounding areas. (FB, JR)

Wood Duck: 1 female on 1/17 near the Duck Pond at the Palo Alto Baylands. (FB, JR, et al.)

Blue-winged Teal: 2 males, 1 female on 1/25 at Mt. View Sanitary District (JR), and 1 on 1/19 at Arrowhead Marsh (ED, JH).

Eurasian Wigeon: 4 on 1/10 at Heather Farms (JE), and 3 on 1/28 at Arrowhead Marsh (MJC, BG).

Redhead: 2 males, 1 female on 1/26 (JR,RR) and a pair seen 1/28 (JR,FB) at Lake Merritt.

Tufted Duck: a pair on 1/19 (ED, JH) and seen again on 1/28 (FB, JR) at the old Sutro Baths by the Cliff House.

Oldsquaw: 1 female on 1/18 at Arrowhead Marsh (MJC) and a female on 1/24 at Princeton Harbor (FB, JR).

Barrow's Goldeneye: 1 on 1/9 at Heather Farms (JE); 18 males, 12 females on 1/26 at Laney College Estuary, Oakland, (JR, RR); 12 males, 6 females on 1/28 at Lake Merritt (JR, FB).

Hooded Merganser: 8 on 1/10 at Heather Farms. (JE)

Common Merganser: 2 on 1/9 at Heather Farms. (JE)

Sharp-shinned Hawk: 1 on 1/24 in an Antioch yard. (DS)

Northern Goshawk: 1 on 1/15 at Deer Flat. (BC)

Ferruginous Hawk: 2 on 1/31 on W. Butte Rd., Sutter Co. (FB, JR)

Rough-legged Hawk: 4 on 1/20 at Drakes' Beach, Bodega Bay, (ED, JH); 2 on 1/24 at Pigeon Pt., San Mateo Co. (FB, JR); 2 on 1/31 near Gray Lodge WMA and W. Butte Rd. (FB, JR).

Golden Eagle: 1 on 1/31 at Sacramento NWR. (JR, FB)

Merlin: 1 on 12/29 feeding in a Martinez neighborhood and on 1/5 flying over a Martinez yard. (DW)

Peregrine Falcon: 1 on 1/10, Foster City (JE), and 1 on 1/17 at Palo Alto Flood Control Basin (JR).

Prairie Falcon: 1 on 1/13 flying over her Alamo yard. (JR)

Sandhill Crane: several on 1/3 along N. Butte Rd. (FB, JR)

Black Oystercatcher: 14 on 1/24 at Pebble Beach, San Mateo Co. (FB, JR)

Rock Sandpiper: 1 on 1/18 (ED, JH) and 1 on 1/24 (JR, FB) at Pebble Beach.

Lewis' Woodpecker: 1 on 1/31 on N. Butte Rd. (JR, FB)

Greater Pewee: 1 on 12/29 on the grounds of the San Diego Zoo. (BL)

Yellow-billed Magpie: 400+ on 1/31 along Sycamore Slough Rd., Colusa Co. (FB, JR)

Phainopepla: 1 on 1/21 at Deer Flat (BC) (Note: Bill has now seen this species here in all 4 seasons); a pair seen on 1/27 on North Gate Rd., Mt. Diablo S. P. (MJC, BG).

Orange-crowned Warbler: 1 on 1/17 in a Martinez Garden. (DW)

American Redstart: 1 on 1/18 at Pescadero (ED, JH) and an adult male on 1/24 along Pescadero Creek (JR, FB).

Sharp-tailed Sparrow: 1 on 12/21 at Palo Alto Baylands. (BL)

White-throated Sparrow: 1 tan-striped phase beginning 1/15 and at least through 2/1 in her south Walnut Creek garden. (RH)

Brewer's Blackbird: part albino, 1/21 - 1/24, in an Antioch yard. (DS)

House Finch: part albino, 2/9 in a Walnut Creek Garden. (DK)

Observers: Florence Bennett, Bill Chilson, Mary Jane Culver, Elizabeth Dickey, Jimm Edgar, Betty Gallaher, Jan Hilton, Ralph Higgins, Donna Klein, Bob Landfear, Jean Richmond, Rich Richmond, Doreen Stadler, Denise Wight.

CLASSES AND EXCURSIONS

TERN CLASS

We are very happy to announce that Dr. Stephen F. Bailey will return to our area to present his class on "Terns." This three-session class has filled immediately when offered in San Francisco. Dr. Bailey will introduce each of the Northern California species, covering their distribution, seasonal status, habitat preferences, identification and plumages. The slide lecture will be interspersed by discussions using study skins. Information on the conservation efforts with the endangered Least Tern will be included. Collections Manager for Ornithology and Mammalogy at the California Academy of Science, Dr. Bailey is the senior scientist working with the Least Tern project. Regional Editor for "American Birds" and Vice-secretary of the California Bird Records Committee are other commitments, so we are indeed fortunate that Dr. Bailey is willing to travel to our area. Classes will be Tuesdays, April 11, 18, and 25, from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. in the Stanley Intermediate School, 3455 School Street, Lafayette. Space is limited. Please register in advance by mailing a \$17.00 check made out to Mt. Diablo Audubon Society to Norah Bain, 32 Via Farallon, Orinda, CA 94563. Be sure to include your address so that we may return your check if the class is filled. Assume you are enrolled if your check is not returned.

GALAPAGOS TOUR

Biologist and birder Joe Brogles, head of the Science Department at the Athenian School in Danville, will be leading a trip to the Galapagos Islands from June 18 through July 6, 2 full weeks in the Galapagos. The trip is being organized by Doug and Gail Cheeseman, (408) 741-5330, of Cheeseman's Ecology Safaris and is limited to 10 non-smokers. The cost is \$2400, plus airfare of \$1100. Participants will be able to visit over 20 sites on more than a dozen islands.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Barbara Vaughn

As I enter the last trimester of my first year as president, I feel fortunate to have had the cooperation and willing efforts of so many board members and also auxiliary helpers not listed on the masthead of *The Quail*. The old saying, "Many hands make light work" applies here, for few of the jobs are time-consuming to the point of becoming burdensome. However, it does take the efforts of many to conduct the obvious as well as the less visible facets of the organization.

It is not too early to ask our members who have previously not done so to really consider becoming a more active part of our organization. I will be happy to talk with any of you about the type of volunteer work YOU would be willing to undertake next year.

Finally, the chapter expresses its sincere appreciation to Neal Welsh, who has resigned for personal reasons, for his excellent program planning during the past two and a half years.

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

Al McNabney and the Conservation Committee are calling on all members who want to take a more active part in preserving our world. They can use your help in writing letters, making telephone calls, or attending meetings. Your concern and willingness to help are more important than being an expert on the current conservation issues of the chapter. If you are able to lend a hand for this important work, please send the application form below to: Conservation Committee, MDAS, P. O. Box 53, Walnut Creek, CA 94596.

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE APPLICATION

I would be willing to help the conservation committee with the following:

Letter-writing: _____

Comments or suggestions:

Telephoning: _____

Attending meetings: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

NEWS FROM NATIONAL

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

As part of their magazine advertising sales effort, the National Audubon Society conducted a survey to provide an overall demographic profile of the members. An eight-page questionnaire was sent to 2,000 members asking a variety of questions. They received a completed questionnaire from 69 percent of those sampled. From the questionnaire, the reasons the members gave for joining the National Audubon Society were as follows:

To further my knowledge of the natural world	80%
To support a wildlife organization	76
To receive <i>Audubon</i> magazine	71
To further my interest in birds	61
To become active in environmental affairs	21
To participate in local chapter activities	18

Have YOU thought about why you joined the Audubon Society and what we could be doing to further your purpose in joining?

NEW MEMBERS

In his October letter to the Chapter presidents, Peter Berle asked how chapters involve new members in their activities and make them feel welcome. (Ed.: Considering the results of the survey given above, this becomes an important question.) In his most recent letter, he asked what chapters do to involve members in positions of leadership as officers and/or members of chapter boards. With nominations due soon for next year's board and committees, our chapter is considering both these questions.

Have you thought about what YOU could do to support our chapter? Have you thought about what we all could do to encourage new members as well as older but inactive members to become more active? Let us have your help and ideas.

THE ENDANGERED SPECIES OF CALIFORNIA



*The American Peregrine Falcon
(one of 252 native
California species at risk)*

**You can help them survive
by filling in LINE 45
on your State Tax Return.**

California has more than 250 animal and plant species that face the threat of extinction. We urge you to help them survive with a tax-deductible contribution on LINE 45 of your State Tax Return. Please help if you can. The loss of just one living species hurts us all.

NEW MEMBERS

We warmly welcome these new MDAS members and hope to meet them soon at meetings and field trips: Mary Alexander, D. Berryman, Eileen Bordenave, Vi Buck, Arleen Fraser, Peter Kozy, Greg Kumataka, Michal Mader, Mary Manders, Melissa Manlove, William McCormick III, Ed Meifert, James Moore, Matthew Mullan, Mary Odmark, Laurences Orthotics, Elaine Pageler, Denise Perras, Dean Richesin, Tim Rossi, Julie Scharmer, David Scherer, Dr. Selleck, Mr. and Mrs. Russell Smith, Chris Statton, Leslie Takenaka, Gwen Tittle, Robert Tull, Melissa Walsh, Gail Wilcox and Michael Williams.

MDAS PATCH

The brand new MDAS patch is now available! This handsome 3" diameter sew-on patch shows our California Quail in front of Mt. Diablo in striking colors. The patch will be available at meetings for \$3.00 and by mail for \$3.75. To order your patch, contact our Sales Manager, Gifford Young, 1451 Janet Ct., Benicia, CA 94510, (707) 745-4134.

The Quail is published monthly except for the combined July/August issue. Audubon membership includes subscriptions to the Quail and Audubon magazine. To join (\$30/year individual, \$38 family; introductory & senior rates available) write check to National Audubon Society but send it, with letter or subscription card, to Membership Chairperson, Diane Macario, 2425 Maple Ave., Concord, CA 94520. The Chapter benefits financially from membership applications it processes. Full membership is encouraged, but subscription to the Quail is available separate from membership at \$6/year. Check should be made to MDAS and mailed to MDAS Treasurer, Florence Bennett, P.O. Box 31435, Walnut Creek, CA 94598. First class mailing of the Quail to member or nonmember is an additional \$3/year payable to MDAS & sent to Treasurer.

ADDRESS CHANGES AND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION: Consult Diane Macario, (415) 674-0920.

Barbara Burek, Editor, 157 Mt. Kennedy Dr., Martinez, CA 94553 (415) 229-0394

Exchange bulletins for MDAS to Mt. Diablo Audubon Society, P. O. Box 53, Walnut Creek, CA 94596, please.

Mt. Diablo Audubon Society
P.O. Box 53
Walnut Creek, CA 94596

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The QUAIL

BULLETIN OF THE MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY
P. O. BOX 53
WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA 94596
(415) AUD-UBON

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VP Conservation: Al McNabney, 945-1785
Treasurer: Florence Bennett, 689-3106
Sales Manager: Gifford Young, (707) 745-4134
Field Trips: Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486
Membership: Diane Macario, 674-0920
Publicity: Shirley Ellis, 939-9091
Hospitality: Denise Wight, 228-2601
Education: Norah Bain, 254-4516
Secretary: Britta Cascio, 837-2895

April 1989

Vol. 35 No. 8

Next Deadline: April 13

April Program:

South Bay Album

Those of you who attended the Western Regional Conference at Asilomar last March were treated to Tom Rountree's **South Bay Album**, a slide and music presentation. Tom began photographing water birds of the South San Francisco Bay seven years ago but wanted a new approach to bird photography. Consequently, his photographs are taken truly from a bird's eye view - some from even below the eye level of the subject. Join us on **April 6** for this unusual presentation.

The April Bird Information will be given by Cam Wolff, who, as many of you will remember, gave the excellent dowitcher "look-alike" talk last year. Cam has new information on San Francisco Bay's relationship to the Pacific Flyway and will concentrate on distinguishing Western and Least Sandpipers and Dunlins.

General meetings of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society are held on the first Thursday of the month, from September through June, at the Willow Creek Center, 1026 Mohr Lane, Concord. The agenda for the meetings is as follows:

- 6:30 Doors open
- 7:00 Birding Info
- 7:30 Business Meeting
- 8:00 Social Half-hour
- 8:30 Program

The next board meeting will be Thursday, March 9, at 7:30 p.m., at the home of Elizabeth Dickey, 113 Hillcrest Dr., Orinda, 254-0486. Board meetings are open to all interested members.

CONGRATULATIONS, MDAS

MDAS was honored on March 3 at a reception at Richardson Bay Audubon Center when Mr. Marshall Case, NAS Vice-president for Education presented an "Outstanding Educational Achievement Award" for our sponsorship of 72 Audubon Adventures classes and 2,142 students during the 1988-89 school year. This year's sponsors were:

Barbara Vaughn	Florence Cole
John A. Davis	Judith Moorad
Al McNabney	Edna Mass
Andree Youngson	June Mallory
Elizabeth Landfear	Jane Ritter
Betty and Robert Gallagher	Dow Chemical USA

In his remarks, Mr. Case compared our program with those of larger chapters, including New York City with only 12 classes sponsored. Credit is due to Dana Jordan's efficient administration of the program in 1988-89 and to Andree Youngson whose work with Dow Chemical Company boosted our sponsorship numbers.

As Education Chairperson, I thank all the generous MDAS members who supported our Audubon Adventures program, especially during the difficult early years. **YOU HAVE MADE A DIFFERENCE, MDAS.** Thank you!

Norah Bain

CONSERVATION NOTES

By Al McNabney

WILL WE FIND COAL IN YELLOWSTONE PARK?

YOU thought our parks, wildlife refuges and wilderness areas were safe from MINING!!!! NOT SO. On December 27, the Reagan Administration proposed an unprecedented release of federally protected lands to mining interests. These proposed releases of lands threaten:

FOUR MILLION ACRES of Federally protected lands, including National Wildlife Refuges, National Parks, Wilderness Areas, and Wild and Scenic Rivers

ONE MILLION ACRES in state public parks and historic sites.

FORTY-FIVE MILLION ACRES in buffer zones.

If you find a strip mine in the center of YOUR favorite refuge tomorrow, you'll know protests didn't prevail.

GARY BOGUE & NESTING BIRDS

A MDAS call to Contra Costa Times columnist Gary Bogue produced a GOOD suggestion:

MDAS has requested each city AND the Contra Costa County Supervisors to "look at trees (where permits are required before axing them) to see if there are any occupied bird nests in said trees. If a nest is spotted, hold off the cutting 'til the flock has been raised."

Bogue, responding, wrote: "I would like to see your proposal extended through Alameda and the other Bay Area counties and even the state!" Bogue also wrote: "The destruction of wild habitat around the world - from the massive clear-cutting of the tropical forests of South America to the development of waterfowl nesting areas in Canada - is affecting bird populations like it never has before. People are forever asking me what can they do to help dwindling wildlife populations. Adopt a nestful of birds... and then leave them alone."

Bird watching is educational, interesting, provides exercise, and knowledge. All of THOSE GOOD THINGS are based on birds being there. If we continue to despoil avian habitat, the birds just won't be there.

WHERE, OH, WHERE HAVE OUR FORESTS GONE?

If you drive through many areas of forest, owned incidentally by you and me (for many are U. S. Forests), you probably don't even realize the damage, nay, destruction now taking place. Tree stands are left along the highways, BUT what's back a short distance? NOTHING! The trees are GONE!

Gone are the days when the trees were harvested in a prudent manner. Today the watchword is CLEARCUT as much and as fast as possible. Only 20% of the Old Growth redwood are left (outside of parks, etc.) and many of those trees, hundreds of years old, are in the ownership of ONE company. That company has been clear-cutting huge acreages of trees with little to no regard for the future.

California Assemblyman Byron Sher proposes legislation to restrict the cutting of redwood trees in California forests. If you agree, drop the Honorable Sher a line at the State Capitol, Sacramento, California. Typical of the problem today is the situation near Roslyn, Washington, where forest cutting is moving apace. A management spokesman agreed that the company's plan to cut all its trees in the next 10 years, rather than gradually harvest them as they had been doing, would mean few timber jobs in the future. "Let's face it, the market forces and the threat of stock market take-overs won't let us do otherwise. If you keep a lot of this timber on the books, you're undervalued and you become an easy takeover target." One could say, tell THAT to a bird, a bird needs trees for life.

CCC MOVES EVER CLOSER TO GRIDLOCK

Every month developers bring MORE proposed housing and/or business developments to planning commissions in the cities or the county. There are already some 50,000+ approved projects in the cities and county. Thousands of additional dwellings are in the pipeline. Voters, told that a vote FOR Measure C last November would, through the 1/2% sales tax, produce monies to be used for alleviating the traffic problems, voted FOR the ballot proposition. There is now (seemingly) a rush to have projects approved before C becomes effective. But unless the planning councils, mayors, city councils, and supervisors look at the CUMULATIVE impacts of the various proposals, the traffic mess will NOT be eased, it will in fact get worse.

PUT YOUR GARBAGE HERE!

The final process for selection of a site for disposal of CCC's solid waste is moving forward. Environmental Impact Report preparation is underway. MDAS, in a series of questions, has outlined the aspects of the problems that must be considered in developing the EIR.

"SAN FRANCISCO BAY IS BEING SOLD DOWN THE RIVER"!!!!!!

Thus announced the Committee for Water Policy Consensus after the State Water Resources Quality Control Board "caved in to massive pressure from special interests in the Central Valley and Southern California. The Board withdrew its own draft standards which were designed to partially protect the SF Bay-Delta Estuary from the impacts of fresh water diversion." Birds, wildlife, and, yes, even we humans have a tremendous stake in all this "to do" about water. If YOU want to help protect the Bay/Delta Estuary, call Dave Fullerton at the Committee for Water Policy Consensus: (415) 682-6633, and ask for postcards and information. The Bay is gasping. It's life-line is threatened. Help with the resuscitation.

FIELD TRIPS

Trips are open to members and nonmembers alike. Carpool time is departure time. Carpool expense: 5 cents per mile per rider is suggested; tolls and entry fees are shared equally by driver and riders. Bring binoculars, field guide and lunch. Trips go in light rain or drizzle; if in doubt, call leader up to 1/2 hour before carpool time.

Saturday, April 1, **Garin Regional Park**. Carpool 7:15 a.m. at El Cerro Blvd., just west of I-680. Meet in parking lot at end of Garin Rd., 8:00 a.m. Take I-680 south and I-580 west to SR238 (Mission Blvd.). Go south to Garin Rd. and turn left to park. 2-3 miles walking on fire trails, with some grades. Grasslands, some streamside; Grasshopper Sparrow is one possibility.
Leader: Bob Richmond, 537-7408.

Wednesday, April 12, **Lake Lagunitas**. Carpool 7:15 a.m. at Acalanes Ave., off Pleasant Hill Rd., just north of Hwy. 24. Meet 8:30 a.m. in parking lot at lake (\$2.00 entrance fee). Cross San Rafael Bridge north to US 101, take San Rafael exit two blocks, turn left and go through town. Turn right onto Sir Francis Drake Blvd. In downtown Fairfax, turn left, then right onto Broadway, 1/2 block; turn left onto Bolinas Ave., and left again onto Old Fairfax - Bolinas Rd. Watch for signs for park entrance. 2-3 miles up and down trail walking. Both land and water birds, spring migrants. This is a good place for Pileated Woodpecker.
Leader: Jimm Edgar, 658-2330.

Saturday, April 15, **Donner Canyon**. Meet at 7:00 a.m. at trail head at the end of Regency Dr. From I-680, go east on Ygnacio Valley Rd., (becomes Marsh Creek Rd. in Clayton), turn right onto Regency Dr. about 1/2 mile past the center of Clayton. This is a steep, rugged 5 mile hike; interesting scenery, good birds. Carry lunch and liquids.
Leader: George Finger, 933-2468.

Thursday, April 20, **Ida Clayton Road**. Carpool 6:30 a.m. southwest corner of Sun Valley parking lot. This area is north of Calistoga in the Napa County mountains. This is a car birding trip and we will not have a meeting place in Napa County. Carpooling is important because of limited parking space on some roads. Mountain Quail have been reported in this area. Also many wildflowers.
Leader: Florence Bennett, 689-3106.

Thursday, April 27, **Briones Regional Park - West**. Meet at 8:00 a.m. in the parking lot on the right hand side of the west entrance road, off Bear Creek Rd. Many spring birds; Lazuli Buntings are usually abundant. Also wildflowers. 2-3 miles walking, part up hill, mostly fire trails. Poison oak along shaded trails.
Leader: Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486.

Saturday, April 29, **Mines Road**. Call Elizabeth Dickey for reservations and carpool instructions. Because of limited turnout space along Mines Road, we must limit to 6 cars, with at least 4 people per car. This is a long car birding trip with little walking; the canyon can be hot. Bring lunch and liquids. Wild Turkey, Phainopepla, Lawrence's Goldfinch, Costa's Hummingbird, Roadrunner, and Lewis's Woodpecker are all possibilities.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

THORNTON, February 4.

Eleven members and one guest braved the cold to enjoy a pleasant day birding the Thornton area. 69 species were seen. Highlights included lots of Sandhill Cranes, some dancing, a Prairie Falcon, the 333 Jahant Road Bendire's Thrasher, and a Rough-legged Hawk. Snow flurries accompanied our lunch, but did not stop the birding.

Fred Safier

GOLDEN GATE PARK, February 8.

Three MDAS members and eight San Francisco guests braved a fiercely cold morning and saw 35 species. The lack of rarity sightings was compensated for by the enthusiasm of the group, some of whom were first-time birders.

Barbara Vaughn

CHRISMAN ISLAND, February 12.

Fourteen MDAS members joined six from the Modesto chapter for a tour through private ranch lands west of Modesto. The heavy fog lifted and the morning turned warm and clear. We were able to see at least three of the four forms of Canada Geese which winter in California. This is the chief wintering area for the endangered Aleutian form and may become a wildlife refuge. White-fronted and several Ross' Geese, Rough-legged Hawk and Prairie Falcon were also among the 65 species seen. Many thanks to Eric Kane, of the Modesto chapter, who led the trip.

Elizabeth Dickey

SAN FRANCISCO BAY MODEL, February 16.

Eleven members enjoyed a short tour of the S. F. Bay Model in Sausalito. By operation of this scale model of the Bay and Delta, some engineering disasters have been avoided and we can predict the effect of future proposals. Following the tour, we birded on both sides of Richardson Bay. Both Clark's and Western Grebes and a number of Common Loons were among 54 species seen.

Elizabeth Dickey

HONEY LAKE, February 25-26.

Thirteen members and guests had an eventful weekend trip in the Great Basin habitat of the Susanville area, without any snow or bad weather. The Sage Grouse lek was visited twice. Saturday we arrived too late and saw 8 grouse flying off over the next rise, but did have some good views. On Sunday, much better views at the lek were obtained by those who went back.

(Continued on page 4)

OBSERVATIONS

By Donna Peake-Klein

Please send observations to Donna Peake-Klein,

51 Picardy Ct., Walnut Creek, 94596, or call 930-9819.

Please include your telephone number with your observations.

Clark's Grebe: 1 on 1/28 at Benicia State Park (Glen Cove). (JA, K&PA, SF, DM)

American Bittern: 1 on 2/15 crossing the road in very slow motion at Los Banos WMA. (FB, MJC, BG, JR)

White-faced Ibis: many on 2/15 along Santa Fe Grade Rd., Merced Co. (FB, MJC, BG, JR)

Tundra Swan: over 2,500 on 2/15 along SR 4 on Victoria Island, San Joaquin Co. (FB, JR); 2 seen on 2/18 flying over her Concord yard (FB).

Snow and Ross's Geese: huge flock on 2/15 along Santa Fe Grade Rd., Merced Co. (FB, MJC, BG, JR)

Mallards: a pair on 3/1 in an above-ground Doughboy Pool. Laid an egg on patio; no attempts to sit on egg. In and out of yard the next few days, feeding on seed dropped from feeders. (B&BG)

Blue-winged Teal: 2 on 2/28 at Mt. View Sanitary District Marsh (seen regularly here during the winter). (DB)

Eurasian Wigeon: 1 male on 2/4 at Arrowhead Marsh in San Leandro Bay. (JR, RR)

Surf Scoter: seen on 1/28 at Benicia State Park (Glen Cove). (JA, K&PA, SF, DM)

Bald Eagle: 1 adult on 2/14, Calaveras Reservoir, opposite MP 03.03. (FB, JR, et al.)

Sharp-shinned Hawk: 1 on 2/4 at Benicia State Park at the main entrance off Columbus Parkway (SF); 1 on 2/12 taking a junco outside their Martinez kitchen window (BB, DVZ).

Ferruginous Hawk: 1 on 2/7, Mountain House Rd., eastern Alameda Co. (JR); 1 on 2/15 at Los Banos WMA and Panoche Valley (FB, MJC, BG, JR); and 1 on 2/28 at Patterson Pass, Alameda Co. (FB, JR).

Rough-legged Hawk: 1 on 2/7, Woodbridge Rd., Clifton Court area, (FB, JR); 1 on 2/15, Los Banos WMA & Panoche Valley Rd. (FB, MJC, BG, JR); 1 on 2/28 along SR 4 west of Stockton (FB, JR).

Merlin: a female on 2/23 perched in a tree in their Concord yard from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Only preening and resting; no attempts to feed. (B&BG)

Peregrine Falcon: 1 on 1/21 at Hayward Regional Shoreline atop a high tension tower above freeway. (SF, CW, MOB)

Prairie Falcon: 1 on 2/15 in Panoche Valley (FB, MJC, BG, JR); 1 on 2/16 over her Alamo garden (JR).

Sora: 1 on 3/3 at Mr. View Sanitary District Marsh. (DB)

Mountain Plover: 2 on 2/5 off Clifton Rd. (BR), and also on 2/7 off Byron Hwy. just north of Clifton Rd. (FB, JR, et al.).

Spotted Sandpiper: 1 on 1/28 at Benicia State Park. (JA, K&PA, DM, SF)

Franklin's Gull: 1 immature on 2/7, Stockton Sewer Ponds. (FB, JR, et al.)

Little Gull: 1 adult on 2/7 (FB, JR) and on 2/28 (FB, JR, et al.) in a pond along SR 4, 0.4 mile west of I-5.

Short-eared Owl: 1 on 2/15 at Los Banos WMA. (FB, MJC, BG, JR)

Anna's Hummingbird: nest with incubating female on 1/28 by Middle Lake, Golden Gate Park (FB, JR); 2 good-sized young seen here on 2/21 (FB, JR).

Allen's Hummingbird: 1 on 2/4 (SF) and on 2/5 (G&WY) at Benicia State WLR.

Belted Kingfisher: 1 on 1/21, Hayward Regional Shoreline. (SF, CW, MOB)

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: 1 on 2/4 at Benicia State WLR. (SF)

Mountain Bluebirds: many on 2/15 along Little Panoche Rd., and a large flock 0.5 mile up BLM Access Rd. (FB, MJC, BG, JR); at least 15 on 2/28 along Patterson Pass Rd. near MP 5.47 (FB, JR, et al.).

Bendire's Thrasher: 1 on 2/7 near Lodi. (FB, JR, et al.)

Water Pipit: 1 on 1/21 at Hayward Shoreline. (SF, CW)

Loggerhead Shrike: 1 on 2/4 at Benicia State WLR. (SF)

Black-and-white Warbler: 1 on 2/21 at North Lake, Golden Gate Park. (FB, JR, et al.)

Red Crossbill: several on 2/21 heard over Middle Lake, Golden Gate Park. (FB, JR, et al.)

Observers: John Ascher, Kamran & Patricia Alavi, Florence Bennett, Dick Bogaert, Barbara Burek, Mary Jane Culver, Sharyn Fernandez, Bob & Betty Gallagher, Many Observers, Diane Marcario, Bob Richmond, Jean Richmond, Rich Richmond, Dan Van Zile, Cam Wolff, Gifford & Winifred Young.

CLASSES AND EXCURSIONS

TERN CLASS

There are still some places available in Dr. Stephen Bailey's Tern Class. The class will meet April 11, 18 and 25 from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. in Room 13 of the Lafayette Stanley Intermediate School, School Street, Lafayette. Please send a \$17.00 check made out to Mt. Diablo Audubon Society to Norah Bain, 32 Via Farallon, Orinda, CA 94563. Put your address on the check, which is your receipt.

Field Trip Reports, *Cont'd.*

At Honey Lake, we saw hundreds of Tundra Swans, tens of thousands of Snow Geese, thousands of Canada Geese, several Red-heads with 11 duck species, an adult Bald Eagle, many Rough-legged Hawks, dozens of Sandhill Cranes, two Great Horned Owls, and many Black-billed Magpies. On Sunday, we tried a new area north of Susanville with excellent results. Highway 139 goes north from Susanville, climbs about 800 feet into a sage, pinyon pine and juniper forest with many open fields of pastures and grain, and goes to Eagle Lake in about a 25 mile trip. Highlight birds included Golden Eagle, Prairie Falcon, Tree Swallow, Clark's Nutcracker, Pygmy Nuthatch, Mountain Bluebird, Townsend's Solitaire, Red Crossbill, and Evening Grosbeak. After we had ended the "official" trip, 4 Ferruginous Hawks and a flock of Pinyon Jays were seen.

Maury Stern

TRAVEL CORNER

Southeastern Arizona in the Winter by Jimm Edgar

A good friend of mine was willing to let me use a roundtrip ticket on U. S. Air that was good for anywhere they flew in the western U. S. The catch was that the ticket had to be used by December 31 and this was December 12. Because I was doing five Christmas counts already and doing a wedding for a friend two days before Christmas in Seattle, my choices were slim if I wanted to use the ticket. I wanted to do a Christmas count that might produce a life bird if possible. After searching the Christmas Count edition of *American Birds*, I found the Green Valley/Madera Canyon count south of Tucson had seen three species last year that would be life birds for me. So I flew to Tucson on December 26 and borrowed a friend's car. The compiler was very nice and put me with an area that would give me the best chance of seeing the birds I hoped for.

I had birded southeastern Arizona a couple of times in the summer, but now the hummers, trogons, becards, etc. were all far to the south. Winter can still be an exciting place to bird this area, and I went to bed that night anticipating a good day.

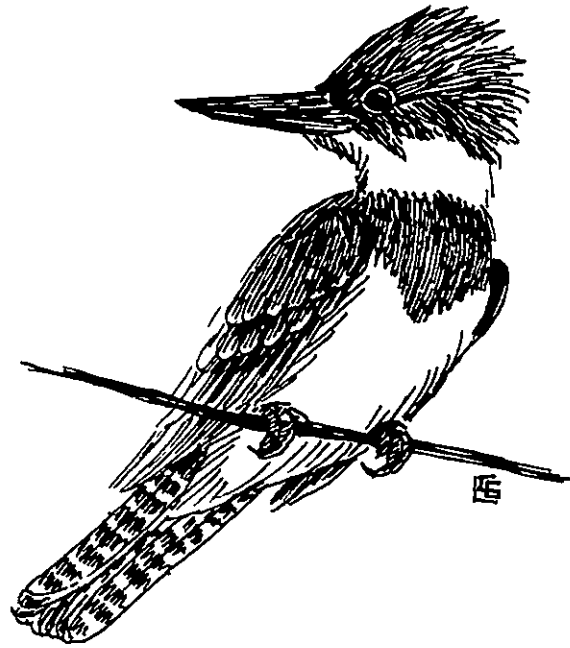
It had rained the day before, but I arose on the 27th to clear skies and 21 degrees. Ice and frost were everywhere. I drove the thirty miles south to Green Valley and met Sandy Upson, who was leading our group of five up rugged Chino Canyon, which is famous in summer for Black-capped Gnatcatcher. Sandy is a carpenter from Oakland and comes here every winter to do as many counts as he can. He was very familiar with the area and had scouted it twice during the week, but feared that the cold may have driven many birds out of the valley. I told him I hoped to see the Crissal Thrasher and the Rufous-winged Sparrow for life birds. He thought we would have no problem. I began to look forward to the day with even more anticipation.

We started out by covering a small section of the Santa Cruz River that flows south out of Tucson on its way to Mexico. It would produce four of the only eight species of ducks seen that day on the entire count and two of the three shorebirds, far different from the S. F. Bay count I had done the week before. (The Chihuahuan Ravens along the river were also different.) We had to use Sandy's four-wheel drive now to get up the rugged Chino Canyon Road. As we stopped to bird the dry creek beds and thickets, the birds so familiar to the desert began to appear: Bridled Titmouse, Northern Cardinal, Pyrrhuloxia, Curve-billed Thrasher, Ladder-backed Woodpecker, and others. By noon we had seen twelve species of sparrows, including Brewer's, Vesper, Cassin's, Black-throated, and Black-chinned. This count has had at times the national high number of Black-chinned Sparrows, and 100 that day would have been possible if we had taken the time. We had also gotten good looks at Crissal Thrasher, a life bird for me, and the one White-throated Swift that would be seen during the count. The afternoon was

devoted to some specialty birds and things we had missed. We found a small flock of Rufous-winged Sparrows (another lifer for me) which was our seventeenth species of sparrow. Black-tailed Gnatcatcher, Verdin, and a lone Peregrine Falcon were added. By now it was almost dark. We stopped at the river on our way out and in the fading light, I remarked that the Greater Yellowlegs near the river's edge was a nice bird. Sandy turned his gaze quickly and looked. He was excited. Never before had a Yellowlegs been recorded on the Green Valley count. How was I to know?

That night at dinner I presented 3 *Birding Northern California* books by Jean Richmond to be awarded to the three best birds of the day. A Wood Duck won one of the books, an Osprey received one, and the Greater Yellowlegs. (I gave the book to someone else.)

It was a great day! Some life birds, very nice people, the thrill of the count, and birding southeastern Arizona in the winter - a new experience.



Original
Sketch
by
Carol Lutz

1989 BIRDATHON

Mt. Diablo Audubon will again be participating in the National Audubon Society's Birdathon. We are designating half of the money raised for the Western Regional office of NAS and the other half for the purchase of a new scope for the chapter. Why not get some sponsors this year and help out? It's a fun way to help a worthy cause. We will be doing the count some time in May, but you can pick a day anytime between April 1 and May 20 to do your own count. We will have official forms at the next general meeting.

Jimm Edgar
Birdathon Chairman

NEW MEMBERS

It is with great pleasure that we greet these new MDAS members and hope to meet them soon: Mary Aacn, Jim and Laura Abernathy, Mrs. Charles Accatino, E. Allen, Nancy Anderson, Betty Atkins, Brian Atwood, Karla Bean, Peter Bierre, Carolyn Bill, Lory Billeter, Ronald Blasquez, Janice R. Briggs, Jennifer Brodie, Mr. and Mrs. P. Brossard, David A. Browne, Thomas J. Burns, Betty Lou Cartwright, Deborah Churchill, Ruth Clarke, J. E. Clinch, Wendy Cote, Horace Crawford, Frank Cross, Bob Crwickshank, Russ Cunningham, Christine Czerkies, Norma Daniels, Nancy Davis, Kathryn Dehaven, Sharon Demonbrun, Joyce Denioff, Leo Dominguez, Dorothy Dorsett, Melinda Eido, J. Emrich, Daniel Fournet, Joan Fox, John French, Neil Fruman, Norma Garcia, Robert Geyer, Mr. and Mrs. William Gibbon, Aron S. Gilmartin, Nancy Goreth, Erle C. Hanson, Donald Hareid, Bob and Janet Harrison, M. J. Helbig, Lucinda Henderson, Ross F. Hidy, George Hildebrand, K. Hoisington, Donald Holst, J. Holthuis, Brad Howell, John Jahn, Lucy Jones, C. A. King, Sally King, Charles Kluth, M. Koenig, Marie Lake, J. C. Lashagway, Tim Lovewell, Paul Malte, Stephen Mason, Fereidoon Matin, Charles Matuk, Steven McHaney,

Bonnie McRobbie, Robin Meadows, Robert Medina, Beth Moeller, Sandra Morgan, W. E. Mullin, Jess Muro, Gemma Niermann, Mrs. Louis Norberg, Iola O'Grady, J. Otto, Margaret Panton, Diana Patrick, Dorothy Penman, Herbert Ploch, George L. Ponomareff, Edgar Rainin, Carl Rasmussen, Pam Regatuso, Kelly Richards, John Ridgway, Barbara Rothway, Norman R. Rubin, Lloyd Scaff, T. Schofield, Paula Scofield, Robert Sorensen, Herbert Spielman, Roger Stromgren, L. J. Strout, Mrs. Nanette Sullivan, V. Sundquist, Michael Tischler, Patricia E. Totman, J. W. Towar, Ann Traut, C. Welty, Mr. Dana Westphal, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Wicks, Grace Williams, Susanna Wong, and Ralph Wright.

MDAS PATCH

The brand new MDAS patch is now available! This handsome 3" diameter sew-on patch shows our California Quail in front of Mt. Diablo in striking colors. The patch will be available at meetings for \$3.00 and by mail for \$3.75. To order your patch, contact our Sales Manager, Gifford Young, 1451 Janet Ct., Benicia, CA 94510, (707) 745-4134.

The Quail is published monthly except for the combined July/August issue. Audubon membership includes subscriptions to the Quail and Audubon magazine. To join (\$30/year individual, \$38 family; introductory & senior rates available) write check to National Audubon Society but send it, with letter or subscription card, to Membership Chairperson, Diane Macario, 2425 Maple Ave., Concord, CA 94520. The Chapter benefits financially from membership applications it processes. Full membership is encouraged, but subscription to the Quail is available separate from membership at \$6/year. Check should be made to MDAS and mailed to MDAS Treasurer, Florence Bennett, P.O. Box 31435, Walnut Creek, CA 94598. First class mailing of the Quail to member or nonmember is an additional \$3/year payable to MDAS & sent to Treasurer.

ADDRESS CHANGES AND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION: Consult Diane Macario, (415) 674-0920.

Barbara Burek, Editor, 157 Mt. Kennedy Dr., Martinez, CA 94553 (415) 229-0394
Exchange bulletins for MDAS to Mt. Diablo Audubon Society, P. O. Box 53, Walnut Creek, CA 94596, please.

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The QUAIL

BULLETIN OF THE MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY
P. O. BOX 53
WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA 94596
(415) AUD-UBON

President: Barbara Vaughn, 376-8732
VP Conservation: Al McNabney, 945-1785
Treasurer: Florence Bennett, 689-3106
Sales Manager: Gifford Young, (707) 745-4134
Field Trips: Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486
Membership: Diane Macario, 674-0920
Publicity: Shirley Ellis, 939-9091
Hospitality: Denise Wight, 228-2601
Education: Norah Bain, 254-4516
Secretary: Britta Cascio, 837-2895

May 1989

Vol. 35 No. 9

Next Deadline: May 11

May Program:

The Ecology of South American Rain Forests

Although occupying a small percentage of the earth's surface, tropical rain forests contain as much as 80% of the world's species, which are disappearing into extinction at an alarming rate. Doug and Gail Cheeseman believe that taking people to these areas can achieve a positive goal in convincing third world countries that the rain forests as tourist attractions outweigh their value as lumber and grazing land. One facet of the rain forests' importance is that plants in these fragile communities yield approximately 25% of the pharmaceuticals that are being used in the United States today.

Gail and Doug Cheeseman have been leading natural history trips overseas for over ten years and have a special interest in the tropical rain forests of the world. Doug teaches molecular biology, zoology, and ecology at De Anza College and is also Director of the Environmental Study Area on the campus

At our **May 4** meeting, the Cheesemans will use slides to present the complex relationships between plants, insects, amphibians, birds, and mammals, with emphasis on the rain forests in Brazil, Peru, and Ecuador. Come join us for what promises to be a fascinating program.

For May Bird Information, George Finger will give an illustrated talk about nesting time and how to recognize when birds are nesting in your area.

At the May meeting, we will also elect the new MDAS officers. Offices to be filled and the current candidates are as follows:

President: Barbara Vaughn
VP Conservation: Al McNabney
Treasurer: Florence Bennett
Secretary: Britta Cascio

Nominations will also be accepted from the floor. In addition to the elected officers, MDAS needs people to serve on various committees. Members who have not served are encouraged to volunteer.

General meetings of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society are held on the first Thursday of the month, from September through June, at the Willow Creek Center, 1026 Mohr Lane, Concord. The agenda for the meetings is as follows:

6:30 Doors open
7:00 Birding Info
7:30 Business Meeting
8:00 Social Half-hour
8:30 Program

The next board meeting will be Thursday, May 11, at 7:30 p.m., at the home of Shirley Ellis, 353 Westcliffe Circle, Walnut Creek, 939-9091. All board meetings are open to all interested members.

CONSERVATION NOTES

By Al McNabney

OIL - MORE OIL

PEOPLE USE THE STUFF,
BUT BIRDS CAN'T LIVE WITH IT.....

Alaska, the last frontier. Wildlife, wild beauty and nature at its finest. All true before THE EXXON oil spill. Inaction, or inappropriate action, after the tanker struck the submerged reef allowed the oil to spread. As the oil slick widened, effects on wildlife, birds, otters, sea lions, fish AND people all grew worse. There is at least the possibility that entire species of some water birds, animals and fish may be wiped out.

Much was learned a year ago from the Shell Marsh oil spill. **MAJOR NEEDS:** Clean-up materials and people to do the work. In the Alaskan spill, neither resource was available. Tony Rusinello, TV reporter for Channel 7, said, "Seeing one little boat with a skimmer tied behind it demonstrated just how ineffective was the Exxon clean-up effort." A disaster of this magnitude will take place. So said many Audubon folks. Business and political people argued, "We have the technology and know-how to overcome ANY spill, so worry not." One Congressman observed that the industry has pressured governmental bodies to weaken and/or discontinue safety regulations. The Alaskan disaster is a predictable result of years of pressure, public relations, and our good friend Rosy Scenario, speaking with great gusto to convince us about the safety of oil drilling in sensitive places. Already the arguments are going forward concerning drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The President has put a few of the proposed oil lease sales along the California Coast "on hold," while a study is done. Your Senators are Alan Cranston and Pete Wilson. A note to them at the Senate Office Building, Washington, D. C. 20510 should let them KNOW what YOU think. Your 7th District Congressman is George Miller, House Office Building, Washington, D. C. 20515. Let him know your views.

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY:

WILL IT BE, "HOW GREEN IS MY VALLEY,"
OR WILL IT BECOME "THE L.A. OF THE NORTH"

As you read this, the Rancho Pariazo development project will have been approved.

Based on everything seen at this time, the Crystal Ranch project will have been FURTHER considered. Crystal Ranch is a particularly bad project. The City of Concord has a good hillside ordinance in effect. The hillside ordinance does NOT permit the number, types and location of many of the proposed houses. So, what happens? Easy! Repeal and change the hillside ordinance so it fits the proposed development. That means houses on steep hills, massive grading, and leveling of

hills and filling of valleys. Such things as traffic increases are to be discounted. IF the project is finally approved, many Contra Costa County people will live, for years to come, with the traffic jams being created and Mt. Diablo's north face will be forever marred.

A large Rossmoor development project is stirring questions and opposition. To accomplish the finished development, it is proposed that more the 3100 trees have to be cut down. A creek is to be filled, piped and run underground. The area is one of the most beautiful in the entire valley. Brazil is roundly criticized for permitting the ruination of rain forests, but we (seemingly) permit similar acts in the USA in the name of progress.

A KINDER, GENTLER NATION?????

Actions speak louder than words. Clayton Yeutter, Secretary of Agriculture, has nominated one James F. Cason to fill the position of Assistant Secretary of Agriculture (Special Services). In so doing, he has incurred the wrath of just about every environmental organization in the USA. "Why," you ask, "is everyone upset with Mr. Cason?" For one thing, the position of Assistant Secretary is the highest ranking office with major environmental responsibilities, including authority over the Forest Service. In handling issues over the fate of the Spotted Owl, environmentalists and others assert Mr. Cason improperly pressured the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service to base its determination not to list the northern Spotted Owl as an endangered species on factors other than the pertinent biological data, contrary to law. He also authorized publication of the infamous "mining in the parks" rule, which would weaken protection against coal and strip mining afforded by Congress to our national interest lands. This appointment is but one of several, having environmental implications that is causing great concern.

McAVOY YACHT HARBOR: THE DEED IS DONE!

The BCDC Staff, calling the situation at the McAvoy Yacht Harbor the most serious violations they have had to look into, called attention of the Enforcement Committee on April 11 to THREE MAJOR WETLAND VIOLATIONS:

1. Placement of solid fill, e. g., dirt, within the Commission's "Bay" jurisdiction.
2. Placement of pile-supported fill and the mooring of floating structures in basin #2.
3. Placement and storage of material such as tires, scrap metal, wood, broken concrete, and stored vehicles in the Commission's Bay or "shoreline band."

The maximum fine per violation is \$20,000. Following the Staff's recommendations, the Enforcement Committee voted 4 to 1 to impose fines of \$20,000 for Violation No. 1, \$20,000 for Violation No. 2, and \$12,000 for Violation No. 3. In addition, a Cease and Desist Order requires the owners to clean out all illegal fill, remove objects, i. e. tires, scrap metal, broken concrete, etc., and to remove illegal floating appurtenances added to the Marina without proper permit.

FIELD TRIPS

Trips are open to members and nonmembers alike. Carpool time is departure time. Carpool expense: 5 cents per mile per rider is suggested; tolls and entry fees are shared equally by driver and riders. Bring binoculars, field guide and lunch. Trips go in light rain or drizzle; if in doubt, call leader up to 1/2 hour before carpool time.

Thursday, May 4, **Lake Merced - Golden Gate Park.** Carpool 8:00 a.m. Acalanes Avenue, just off Pleasant Hill Rd., north of Hwy 24. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at Sunset Circle, San Francisco. From the Bay Bridge, go south on US 101 and I-280. Take SF State exit one block, turn right on Sagamor St., right onto Brotherhood Way, and right onto Lake Merced Blvd. Watch for left turn lane for the Sunset Circle parking lot. We should see Bank Swallows, Marsh Wrens, and possibly water birds. Half mile walk on beach to see swallows; some walking in Golden Gate Park.

Leader: Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486.

Saturday, May 6, **Mitchell Canyon.** Meet 9:00 a.m. Mitchell Canyon parking lot. There is a \$2.00 parking fee on weekends. From I-680 in Walnut Creek, take Ygnacio Valley Rd. to Clayton Rd. Turn right on Clayton and right again on Mitchell Canyon Rd. to the end. This trip takes most of the morning with emphasis on wild flowers. Birders can continue in afternoon to look for gnatcatchers, summer sparrows, etc. 1-2 mile walk up gently sloping dirt road. Hot! Carry liquids and lunch if birding later.

Leader: Mary Jane Culver, 682-0509.

Thursday, May 11, **Mount Diablo.** Carpool 7:30 a.m. El Cerro Blvd., just west of I-680. Meet 8:00 a.m. in first parking lot on left after entering South Gate. There may be a \$2.00 entrance fee. Sage, Rufous-crowned, and maybe Black-chinned Sparrows, Lazuli Buntings, gnatcatchers, hawks, and sometimes a warbler wave. Hot! Carry liquids. 1-2 miles walking on varied narrow, steep, or rough trails.

Leader: Jimm Edgar, 658-2330.

Saturday, May 13, **Bothe-Napa.** Bothe-Napa State Park is on the west side of SR 29 between St. Helena and Calistoga. Parking is difficult, so carpool at 3:30 p. m. at Sun Valley. It is a steep 1 hour hike up a jeep road to the Spotted Owl site. Pygmy, Western Screech, and Great Horned Owls are also in the area. Trip will last to dusk or later. For information, call Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486.

Wednesday, May 31, **East Contra Costa County.** Carpool 6:30 a.m. southwest corner of Sun Valley parking lot. Meet 7:00 a.m. on Cypress Rd. just beyond Shortstop Market. Go north on I-680, east on SR 4 through Oakley, and turn left onto Cypress Rd. Possibilities include Blue Grosbeak, Black-chinned Hummingbird, Yellow-breasted Chat, flycatchers, and Burrowing Owl. Hot; 1 mile level walking along levee in search of chats. Other birds usually seen close to the cars. For information, call Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

HAYWARD REGIONAL SHORELINE, March 1.

Twelve members and guests saw 73 species on an overcast day with light drizzle during lunch. The rain held off until we headed home. Thousands of shorebirds were seen including hundreds of avocets. We had 15 species of ducks, including all 3 of the teals. Two Burrowing Owls were seen.

Florence Bennett

BODEGA BAY, March 4.

An all-day rain, heavy at times, made birding difficult for the 12 members and 2 guests. While observing at the headlands whale spouts were seen, as well as Marbled Murrelets, Common Murres, and Pigeon Guillemots. After getting rather soaked there, it was decided to separate with each one birding as convenient. Assembling sightings later showed a total of 86 species, including Brant, all four grebe species, and Virginia Rails. Marsh Wrens were heard but not seen. The owling trip to have been led by Maury Stern was cancelled because of the wet, unpaved roads.

Gifford and Winifred Young

FIVE-BROOKS - BOLINAS LAGOON, March 9.

The field trip was cancelled because of the weather.

BERKELEY SHORELINE, March 16.

The day was as inauspicious for birdwatching (or any other outdoor activity, for that matter) as you could imagine. Not a soul met the intrepid leader at Acalanes Avenue, where it was raining buckets, but two Berkeley residents, who obviously had obtained a different weather forecast, made a trio at the Emeryville Marina. The day turned fine immediately, and a goodly number of water birds starting their spring plumage were sighted. 59 species were tallied in all.

Barbara Vaughn

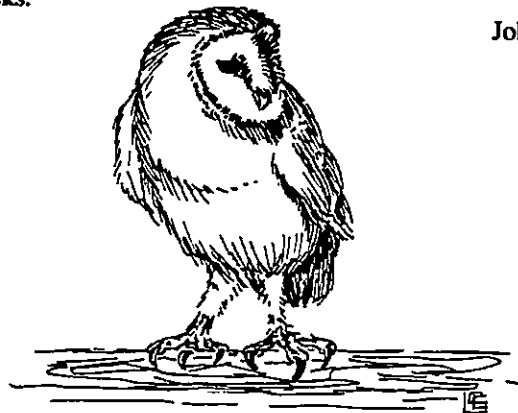
BRIONES RESERVOIR, March 25.

The field trip was cancelled because of the weather.

NORTH BRIONES WILDFLOWER WALK, March 30.

A lovely, warm, sunny day was enjoyed by 30 members and guests. The display of wildflowers was as good as any for that date that I can remember. Twenty-five species of wildflowers were found, with the best displays being those of the lupin and blue-dicks.

John Davis



OBSERVATIONS

By Donna Peake-Klein

Please send observations to Donna Peake-Klein,
51 Picardy Ct., Walnut Creek, 94596, or call 930-9819.

Please include your telephone number with your observations.

White Pelican: 3 on 3/7 at Nicasio Reservoir. (FB, JR)
Wood Duck: 1 pair seen on 3/21 at MP 0.2 on Mines Rd. and 2 pair on the pond beside Del Puerto Canyon Rd. just east of San Antonio Junction (FB, JR, et al.); 2 on 3/26 at Veteran's Park, Livermore (KH).
Green-winged Teal: 250 on 4/5 in San Pablo Bay, surrounded by Canvasback. (RR)
Ring-necked Duck: 2 pair on 4/4 at Lake Lagunitas. (FB, JD, MJ&BG)
Harlequin Duck: male on 3/14 along SR 1 at Bolinas Lagoon, MP 15.26 to 15.53, seen calling and apparently courting an immature male Surf Scoter (which vaguely resembles a female Harlequin). (FB, JR)
Osprey: 1 on 4/7 at Pine Canyon, Mt. Diablo (KH); 1 with a large fish seen over Nicasio Reservoir (W&GY).
Cooper's Hawk: 1 pair on 3/29, Pine Canyon, seen defending last year's nest. (KH)
Golden Eagle: 1 on 4/9, Route 37 west of Searfor more information and to register's Pt. Road on a power tower (W&GY). Also, Audubon Canyon Ranch was closed temporarily when nesting egrets became very nervous due to the presence of an immature Golden Eagle. (W&GY)
Little Gull: 1 adult on 3/21 at Stockton Sewage Ponds. (FB, D&GS)
Thayer's Gull: 1 on 3/22 at Sunol Regional Park. (KH)
Costa's Hummingbird: 1 female on 3/21 on MP 5.6 along Del Puerto Canyon Rd. (FB, JR, et al.)
Rufous Hummingbird: 1 male from 3/29 to 4/2 in her Alamo Garden. (JR)
Lewis' Woodpecker: 1 on 3/14 at MP 9.41 on Chileno Valley Rd., Marin Co. (FB, JR, et al.)
Pileated Woodpecker: 1 pair on 4/4 at Lake Lagunitas. (FB, JD, MJ&BG)
Western Flycatcher: 1 on 3/26 at Veteran's Park, Livermore. (KH)
Western Kingbird: 1 on 3/29, Pine Canyon. (KH)
Bank Swallow: 1 on 3/29 at Pine Canyon. (KH)
Cliff Swallow: 3 on 3/7 at Pine Canyon. (KH)
Barn Swallow: several on 3/11 along Lime Ridge (SF) and on 3/13 at Veteran's Park (KH).
Common Raven: 50+ on 3/21 circling in thermals near MP 3.00 on San Antonio Valley Rd., south of the San Antonio Junction. (FB, JR, et al.)
Canyon Wren: 1 on 3/29 at Pine Canyon. (KH)
House Wren: 2 on 3/21 at Pine Canyon. (KH)
Winter Wren: 1 on 3/22 at Sunol Regional Park. (KH)
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: 1 on 3/21, Pine Canyon. (KH)
Varied Thrush: 1 on 4/4 at Lake Lagunitas. (FB, JD, MJ&BG)

Water Pipit: 400+ on 3/4 at MP 1.5 on Chileno Valley Rd. (FB, JR, et al.)

Cedar Waxwing: Several on 4/9 seen in the creek area on San Miguel near Treat Blvd., Walnut Creek. (SF)

Warbling Vireo: 1 on 3/14, Pine Canyon. (KH)

Audubon's Warbler: Pair seen on 3/22 in the back yard of Castlewood Apartments, Walnut Creek. (MB)

Black-throated Gray Warbler: 1 on 4/4 at Lake Lagunitas. (FB, JD, MJ&BG)

Wilson's Warbler: 1 on 3/22 at Sunol Regional Park. (KH)

Yellow-breasted Chat: 40-50 on 3/22 in an old tree, Alhambra Valley. (J&BS)

Sage Sparrow: 1 on 3/7, Pine Canyon. (KH)

Dark-eyed Junco: A pair seen building a nest on 3/29 at Pine Canyon. (KH)

Hooded Oriole: 3/18 in their Lafayette garden, 3 weeks earlier than usual (G&MJM); 1 male on 3/22 in Walnut Creek (MB); a pair on 3/26 in her Alamo garden (JR); 3/26 in Town & Country Village, Concord (SF).

Northern Oriole: 1 on 3/21, Pine Canyon. (KH)

Lawrence's Goldfinch: 1 on 3/22, Pine Canyon. (KH)

Observers: Mike Beeve, Florence Bennett, Jane Dang, Sharyn Fernandez, Mary Jane & Bill Greene, Kevin Hints, George & Molly Jane Monheit, Rich Radigonda, Jean Richmond, Donna & Gene Schluter, Jean & Barry Stockdale, Winifred & Gifford Young.

CLASSES AND EXCURSIONS

Norah Bain will teach a field class for beginning and intermediate birders May 23 and 30 and June 6. For more information and to register, please call the Orinda Community Center, 254-2445.

The Fremont Adult School is offering a weekly class, called "Birding Field Trips," taught by Alice Hoch. The class will visit a different top birding spot each week. The class will meet on Tuesday mornings from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. for six weeks beginning April 25. Registration will be held in Room 1 of the Fremont Adult School, 4700 Calaveras Road, on April 24. For more information call the Fremont Adult School at 791-5841.

San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory announces a combination camping and birding tour. The tour will be under the expert guidance and leadership of Don Starks. It will be a tour to Michigan in late June. Call Don at the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory (408) 946-6548 or at home (408) 226-4134 for more information or write him at the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory, P. O. Box 247, Alviso, CA 95002.

TRAVEL CORNER

Florida in Early April
by Barb Burek and Dan Van Zile

Taking a page from John Ascher's *Travel Corner*, we decided to try to combine three family visits with a birding trip in Florida early this month. After two days in the Tampa-St. Petersburg area, we left very early Saturday morning to visit the Myakka River State Park. The park opened at 8:00, which seemed late to us birders, but there were still lots of birds around. At one pond along the main drive, we had six different herons and egrets, an Osprey on a nest, and several shorebirds and ducks. While we were watching, a Red-shouldered Hawk flew in and caught its breakfast. It then flew to a nearby stump and proceeded to eat. At the boardwalk area, we found our first warblers of the trip - Parula, Palm and Yellow-rumped - foraging in the trees. After three hours, we had seen 36 species, but the best was yet to come. On our way out of the park, I noticed a flock of large white birds circling overhead. When we stopped, it turned out to be a mixed flock of American White Pelicans and Wood Storks. A most unusual combination to see together.

From Myakka, we drove south to Sanibel Island, picking up a flock of Sandhill Cranes in a cow pasture along the way. Sanibel is one of our favorite places in Florida, not only for the birds, but also for the beautiful beaches. It is also the home of the Ding Darling National Wildlife Refuge, one of the best places to find herons, egrets, shorebirds, and other wading birds. We drove the main loop that evening and again the next morning, and saw eight species of herons and egrets, including Tricolored and Reddish Egrets, a large flock of Roseate Spoonbills, White Ibis, and a Yellow-crowned Night-heron rookery. Large flocks of shorebirds were feeding on the mud flats and a number of the nesting platforms for the Ospreys were being used. There are also numerous alligators and turtles along the banks.

On Monday morning we got an early start again, driving to National Audubon Society's Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary. Poor Corkscrew! It should be called Corkscrew Mudflats right now. The ponds where we had watched Little Blue Herons fish and alligators slumber in previous years were completely dry and turning to grasslands with Palm Warblers feeding in the tussocks. The naturalists couldn't tell us if it was because of the lack of water, but the sanctuary was filled with Gray Catbirds, more than we had ever seen there before. The Painted Buntings and Northern Bobwhites were again at the feeders at the headquarters, and Great-crested Flycatchers were singing everywhere. A small feeding flock produced White-eyed and Solitary Vireos, Black-and-white, Yellow-throated, Pine, Palm, and Northern Parula Warblers, Tufted Titmice, and Carolina Wrens. The best bird of the Sanctuary, however, was a Barred Owl, who called several times to let us know he was there, then sat posing 20 feet from the boardwalk.

From Corkscrew, we drove to our final stop of the trip, Homestead and the Everglades National Park. We spent two early mornings birding the Everglades and saw 58 species. A walk down the Snake Bight Trail, recommended by Lane, produced looks at White-crowned Pigeons but not the hoped-for Black-whiskered Vireo. It also produced the only real mosquito swarms of the trip. A Purple Gallinule turned up on the Anhinga Trail, a Swamp Sparrow was found at Eco Pond, and a Black-throated Blue Warbler was feeding at West Lake.

The best find of the trip was not at the Everglades at all, however, but in Homestead. There is a little park called Castellow Hammock Park there which was hosting Painted and Indigo Buntings, White-winged Doves, and a vagrant Western Kingbird the day we were there. Even better than these birds, though, was meeting the park's naturalist, who is compiling a list of the rarities of Dade County and where they can be found. Anyone interested in knowing where birds are in the Miami area is advised to check out Castellow Hammock Park. Contributions for feed are gratefully accepted.

At the end of our week of birding in Florida, we had seen over 100 species of birds. Warbler migration had not gotten into full swing, but we renewed our acquaintance with some old bird friends and laid the groundwork for another trip in the future. A very nice way indeed to end a good trip.

MEDIA DAY AT GRIZZLY ISLAND

by Barbara Vaughn

On April 13th, the California Department of Fish and Game held a kickoff for the new "Save Our Wild Places" program at Grizzly Island Wildlife Area, one of nine California Preserves to benefit from revenues generated from a \$2 admission and sales of "non-consumptive" native species stamps. The invited guests included a variety of newspaper and television people, representatives from local and state government, environmental and sporting organizations. Glenn Olson and John Borneman from National Audubon and the presidents of the Napa-Solano and Mt. Diablo Audubon chapters were invited. The monies generated will be used to increase habitat maintenance plus additional interpretive services, guided tours and nature walks, and photographic blinds.

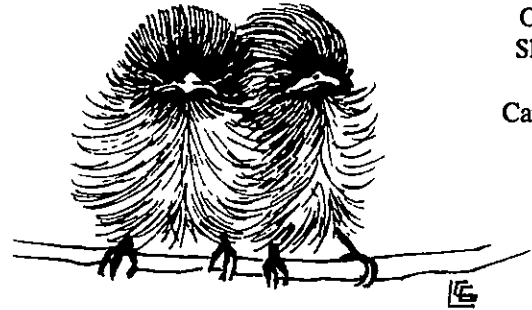
After the obligatory speeches -- all short-- the original painting of the Peregrine Falcon commissioned for the first stamp was unveiled by Harry Adamson, its artist. The two hawks, a Red-tailed and a Rough-legged, from the Davis Rehabilitation Center, were released into the wild -- a splendid sight. After a delicious box lunch, we were taken in vans for a tour of the wildlife area. The people in the van I was in were the most fascinated by the Tule elk, although we did see a great variety of birds, including a Golden Eagle. After buying my stamp, I headed home, feeling sure a very positive step had been taken to protect and enhance our California wild areas.

NEW MEMBERS

We extend a warm welcome to these new MDAS members and hope to meet them at our activities: David Allen, Susan Bailey, Kathleen Baird, Claude P. Benedix, Byron and E. Campbell, Christine Canapro, Michael Clark, Andrew Doig, Sandra Dyer, Lura Dymond, K. M. Edmonds, William Egan, Crystal Elledge, J. Ellison, Susie Fogg, Melinda Frazer, James Fribley, John Geary, Sylvia Gehres, Samuel Groff, David Guinivere, Martin Hampton, Donald Hansem, Carol Harkin, Marilyn Hecox, Mark Heiderick, Mr. and Mrs. Claudia Hein, Nancy Henderson, Jean Hering, Edward W. Howell, Mr. and Mrs. John Jordan, Stephen Joseph, Lesley Kaduk, L. Keller, Jane A. Kingston, Wendell Knoshaug, Jim Koonce, Zuva Kriletich, Diane Krpan, Randy Lassus, Stephen Laymon, C. Maruyama, K. R. Mulcahy, Felix Mullan, David Oline, Gloria Olson, June Owens, Helen Parker, Barbara Paulson, Judith Preble, Theresa Robinson, Jonathan Rothschild, Mr. and Mrs. Evert Schlinger, Albert D. Seeno, Richard Servetnick, Jeanne Simmons, J. Sinclair, John Stahler, Edward Stanislawski, Joseph Starr, Margaret Stephen, Erik Sveen, Susan Thiele, Susan Trachtenberg, Everett Utterback, Brenda Vermont, Steve W. Vest, Germaine Viscuso, Holly Whitaker and Edward Wick.

MDAS PUBLICATIONS

Members may not be aware that Jean Richmond's book, *Birding Northern California*, may be purchased at a number of nature book stores, museums, and parks, as well as from the MDAS Sales Manager. In Contra Costa County, the book is sold at the John Muir Natural Historical Site in Martinez, the Lindsay Junior Museum in Walnut Creek, the Nature Company in downtown Walnut Creek, Natural Instincts in Danville, and Natural Wonders at Sun Valley. For information on other retail outlets, write or call the MDAS Sales Manager Gifford Young, 1451 Janet Ct., Benicia, CA 94510, (707) 745-4134.

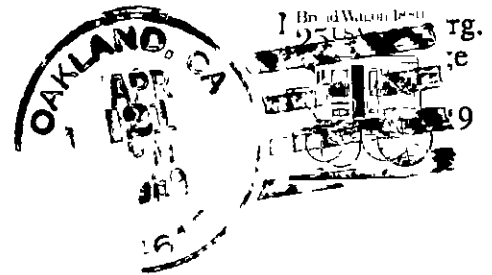


Original
Sketches
by
Carol Lutz

The Quail is published monthly except for the combined July/August issue. Audubon membership includes subscriptions to the *Quail* and *Audubon* magazine. To join (\$30/year individual, \$38 family; introductory & senior rates available) write check to National Audubon Society but send it, with letter or subscription card, to Membership Chairperson, Diane Macario, 2425 Maple Ave., Concord, CA 94520. The Chapter benefits financially from membership applications it processes. Full membership is encouraged, but subscription to the *Quail* is available separate from membership at \$6/year. Check should be made to MDAS and mailed to MDAS Treasurer, Florence Bennett, P.O. Box 31435, Walnut Creek, CA 94598. First class mailing of the *Quail* to member or nonmember is an additional \$3/year payable to MDAS & sent to Treasurer.
ADDRESS CHANGES AND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION: Consult Diane Macario, (415) 674-0920.

Barbara Burek, Editor, 157 Mt. Kennedy Dr., Martinez, CA 94553 (415) 229-0394
Exchange bulletins for MDAS to Mt. Diablo Audubon Society, P. O. Box 53, Walnut Creek, CA 94596, please.

Mt. Diablo Audubon Society
P.O. Box 53
Walnut Creek, CA 94596



TIME VALUE MAIL



The QUAIL

BULLETIN OF THE MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY
P. O. BOX 53
WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA 94596
(415) AUD-UBON

President: Barbara Vaughn, 376-8732
VP Conservation: Al McNabney, 945-1785
Treasurer: Florence Bennett, 689-3106
Sales Manager: Gifford Young, (707) 745-4134
Field Trips: Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486
Membership: Diane Macario, 674-0920
Publicity: Shirley Ellis, 939-9091
Hospitality: Denise Wight, 228-2601
Education: Norah Bain, 254-4516
Secretary: Britta Cascio, 837-2895

June 1989

Vol. 35 No. 10

Next Deadline: June 8

June Program:

END OF THE YEAR POTLUCK

The next meeting of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society will be on Thursday, June 1, at 6:30 p.m., at the Willow Creek Center, 1026 Mohr Lane, Concord. This will be the end-of-the-year potluck. Please bring a salad, casserole, or dessert for ten as well as your own table service and any serving utensils you may need. Coffee and punch will be provided.

6:30 Doors open
7:00 Dinner

The program will be provided by the members. Do you have natural history slides or pictures? Give us your best shot! Have you found a bird nest or built an unusual feeder or house? Bring them along to share with the group! All members are encouraged to participate.

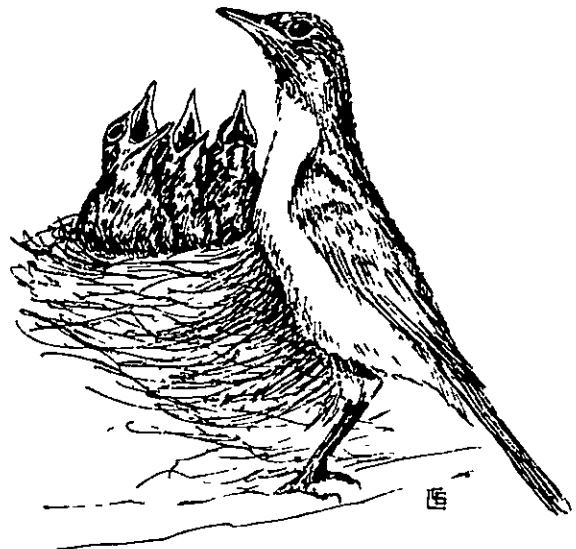
FUTURE EVENTS

The next board meeting will be Thursday, June 8, at 7:30 p.m., at the home of Britta Cascio, 432 Veda Dr., Danville, 837-2895. All board meetings are open to all interested members.

The Yosemite weekend field trip will be July 8 and 9. If you are planning to attend, you should make your reservations soon. Again this year there will be no group campground. More details will be given in the July *Quail*.

SUMMERTIME MEANS TRAVEL TIME

As you travel this summer, ask for an extra copy of the facility map and any bird lists or check lists when you visit parks, refuges, or sanctuaries. Pass extras along to Jean Richmond to place in the chapter file. Also when planning a trip, contact Jean at 837-2843 for information on the area you plan to visit and what birds to expect there. If you would be willing to share your experiences - good or bad - with other members, write a Travel Corner and send it to the *Quail* editor, Barbara Burek, 157 Mt. Kennedy Dr., Martinez, CA 94553. Have a wonderful summer!



CONSERVATION NOTES

By Al McNabney

THE GOOD NEWS

Shell Marsh has again hit the headlines, this time in a hopeful way. NOT as a result of the huge oil spill that took place just over a year ago. The Good News! Senator Dan Boatwright and Assemblyman William Baker are sponsoring a funding proposal that could ensure the future of Shell Marsh. Initially developed by MDAS and the Planning and Conservation League, the proposed study would be conducted by the California Department of Fish and Game. The study would determine the feasibility of establishing an interpretative center in the Shell Marsh area. A permanent facility would be constructed, to be used by the public and others for study of migrating, shore, and water birds. Envisioned, for example, are walkways leading to "hides" to be used by people for close observance and study of birds. Land ownership issues remain unresolved. MDAS has proposed, as a part of the overall disposition of the obligations to be undertaken by Shell as a result of last year's major oil spill, that the actual land be donated to a non-profit agency, such as California Fish and Game for management purposes. Incidentally, birdlife has returned to the area. There now seem to be different species and there "may" be lesser numbers. It is still too soon to understand the full effects of the oil spill. If you think the study is a good idea, a note of appreciation to the Honorable Daniel E. Boatwright, Senator, State of California, 1035 Detroit Ave., Concord, CA 94518 and the Honorable William P. Baker, Assemblyman, California, 1676 No. California St., Suite 690, Walnut Creek, CA 94596, would be appreciated.

CRYSTAL RANCH DEVELOPMENT

This unholy project is, like molasses creeping across a city street, moving toward final reviews. Concord residents have a particular stake in the development (aside from the loss of the beautiful Lime Ridge area). The city's "hillside" ordinance would preclude much of the proposed project. It appears the hillside ordinance, created years ago by the citizenry to protect the community from just such development, is to be changed by the City Council. The ordinance (we understand) is to be changed so that the proposed Crystal Ranch project can go forward. Concord residents should contact members of the City Council. Let them know what **YOU** think of any proposed change in the "hillside" ordinance. Walnut Creek residents also have a BIG stake in the outcome. The traffic impacts on Ygnacio Blvd. alone are likely to be substantial.

AGRICULTURE IN CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

Determined efforts to include valuable agricultural (AG) lands in the Cities of Brentwood and Oakley create major concerns for the future of agriculture in the County. One group purporting to represent farming and cattle interests has urged the "giving up" on farming in the County. They propose that

most AG lands (in the long term) be considered as subject to development. The CCC Board of Supervisors, now heading toward finalizing a new General Plan, are urged to consider that, in the long term most AG areas should be developed. The Supes have been requested to so draw up the new (final) General Plan. In the meantime, some individuals, interested in working AG lands are proposing an agricultural park in East CCC.

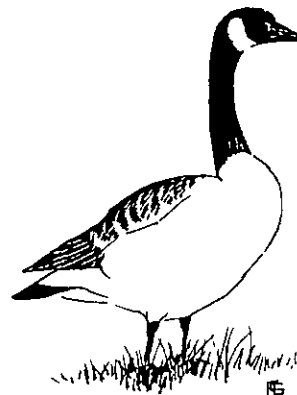
LONG-TERM WATER CONTRACTS AN ABOMINATION
MDAS members, joining with officialdom and "just plain people" throughout the State, have written letters, complaining about "long-term" (40 year) water contracts. The first of these infamous contracts have been signed by the Bureau of Land Management. These contracts, rushed to completion without study, under Interior Secretary Lujan (now where's our Environmental President?), are considered ill-advised. These contracts provide a source of water for San Joaquin Valley agriculture. California's long-term water needs dictate more study before ANY long-term water contracts are established. Strong opposition also comes from many in the Congress, including George Miller, CCC - 7th District. It is likely the issues will be settled either in the courts or through congressional action.

MONO LAKE: A GOOD NEWS ITEM

The future of Mono Lake appears assured. Legal action by Audubon and others finally produced a California Supreme Court decision that in effect tells the City of Los Angeles, "You can't destroy the lake by diverting water to pipelines, thereby sending water to the City of Los Angeles, from four creeks that have fed Mono Lake for centuries." An important victory. "We the people" win ecologically. Birds that use Mono Lake as a nesting and breeding ground were also BIG winners. It is quite doubtful the birds fully understand the victory, nor will any report be made available to us humans on the bird's hot line. The Supreme Court decision also preserves the unique beauty of the area for future generations. A worthwhile effort. It is probable that money to cover court costs will still be needed.

ADDENDUM

HOT FLASH: Failure to mention or research bird and animal life if the EIR caused LAFCO to **KILL** the Carriage Hills West project. Research by interested (non-biased) individuals determined the presence of the endangered Aleutian Canada geese in the vicinity of the project.



FIELD TRIPS

Trips are open to members and nonmembers alike. Carpool time is departure time. Carpool expense: 5 cents per mile per rider is suggested; tolls and entry fees are shared equally by driver and riders. Bring binoculars, field guide and lunch. Trips go in light rain or drizzle; if in doubt, call leader up to 1/2 hour before carpool time.

Saturday, June 3, Annadel State Park. Carpool 6:30 a.m. southwest corner of Sun Valley parking lot. Meet 8:00 a.m. parking lot of Annadel Park. Go north on I-680, turn west on I-780, go through Vallejo, and west on SR 37 to SR 121. Turn left onto SR 12 for about 17 miles past Sonoma. Turn left onto Los Alamos Rd., right on Melite Rd., then left on Montgomery Rd. for 0.6 mi. Turn left on Channel Dr., 2 mi. to road end. In the past we have found Yellow-breasted Chats and MacGillivray's Warblers. Pileated Woodpeckers are also possible. 1-1 1/2 miles walking on dirt trails.
Leader: Barbara Vaughn, 376-8732.

Thursday, June 8, Las Trampas Regional Park. Meet 7:00 a.m. in parking lot at park entrance. From I-680, go west on Crow Canyon Road, and right onto Bollinger Canyon Road. Parking lot is to the left at the end of the road. Carry plenty of liquids, the area can be hot. 1-1 1/2 miles walking, mostly on roads, some of it steep. Grasshopper Sparrows are usually found as well as other grassland and oak wood birds.
Leader: Jean Richmond, 837-2843.

Saturday, June 10, Outer Point Reyes. Carpool 6:00 a.m. Acalanes Ave. off Pleasant Hill Rd., just north of Hwy 24. Meet at Drake's Beach, 8:00 a.m. Cross San Rafael Bridge. From I-101 north, take San Rafael exit. Go 2 blocks, turn left and continue west to Sir Francis Drake Blvd. Right on Sir Francis; at SR 1, turn right 1/2 mile, left onto Bear Valley Rd. about 3 miles, and onto Sir Francis Drake Blvd. again. Continue about 14 miles to Drake's Beach Rd. on left. This trip is for spring vagrants and may turn up anything. About 1/2 mile walk on good road to Lighthouse; 1/2 mile rough trail to the New Willows. On some trips the weather has been unpleasantly hot, on others, cold and windy.
Leader: Maury Stern, 284-5980.

Saturday and Sunday, June 17-18, Yuba Pass. Saturday we bird Yuba Pass for mountain birds. Sunday, we go into Sierra Valley for basin birds. Motels in Sierra City: Herrington's Sierra Pines, (916) 862-1151; Sierra Chalet, (916) 862-1110; Shannon's Cabins (rustic, but less expensive), (916) 862-1287. Forest Service campgrounds at Chapman Creek and Yuba Pass.
Leader: Barbara Burek, 229-0394.

Saturday, June 24, Tilden Breakfast Walk. Meet at 6:00 a.m. in parking area at Nature Center for an early morning walk to enjoy bird songs. This will be a fairly short trip, followed by a bring-your-own picnic breakfast.
Leader: Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

GARIN REGIONAL PARK, April 1.

Eight members enjoyed a hike through rolling hills under partly cloudy skies. Spring migration was well under way. Northern Oriole, Black-headed Grosbeak, Orange-crowned Warbler, Rough-winged Swallow, Rufous Hummingbird, Western Flycatcher, and Warbling Vireo were among the 61 species seen and heard.

Elizabeth Dickey

LAKE LAGUNITAS, April 12.

The field trip was attended by ten members and guests. It was a beautiful day in a lovely place and we even saw some nice birds. The special bird - Pileated Woodpecker - eluded us, at least by sight. We heard at least two, but could not find them. 60 species were seen, including perhaps 8 Osprey, Ash-throated Flycatcher, good looks at many Western Flycatchers and Black-throated Gray Warblers, a very late Red-breasted Sapsucker, and two pairs of Hairy Woodpeckers.

Jimm Edgar

DONNER CANYON, April 15.

Ten members and guests started on the trail on a cool morning up Donner Canyon, Mt. Diablo. Later the weather turned sunny and very pleasant and we were joined by five others that caught up with us on the trail. The wild flowers were at their peak. The March rains must have done wonders since they were as beautiful and lush as we had ever seen them. 57 species of birds were seen or heard including two Golden Eagles, good looks at a Hammond Flycatcher, seven species of warblers, Lazuli Buntings, Rufous-crowned Sparrows, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, a Hooded Oriole, many Black-headed Grosbeaks, and a Western Tanager. A very satisfactory outing.

George Finger

IDA CLAYTON ROAD, April 20.

Nine birders enjoyed the 50 birds seen or heard and a wonderful display of wildflowers. Lewis' Woodpeckers, Lawrence's Goldfinches and an Osprey were highlights.

Florence Bennett

BRIONES REGIONAL PARK - WEST, April 27.

There was beautiful weather for the 15 members and guests. Spring birds were found, especially Lazuli Buntings and Ash-throated Flycatchers. A total of 42 species were seen.

Elizabeth Dickey

MINES ROAD, April 29.

Eighteen members and guests enjoyed a perfect day of birding, with early sun going to partial overcast to keep temperatures moderate. Highlights of the over 80 species seen included Wild Turkey, Common Barn-Owl, Lewis' Woodpecker, California Thrasher, Phainopepla, Lazuli Bunting, and Lawrence's Goldfinch. A special treat was finding the Golden Eagle nest with young and two parents flying overhead.

Kamran Alavi

OBSERVATIONS

By Donna Peake-Klein

Please send observations to Donna Peake-Klein,
51 Picardy Ct., Walnut Creek, 94596, or call 930-9819.
Please include your telephone number with your observations.

Red-throated Loon: 60 seen on 4/25 circling overhead at the Pt. Reyes fish docks. (FB, MJC, BG)

Leach's Storm-petrel: on 3/30 at Trinidad. (BW)

Fork-tailed Storm-petrel: on 3/30 at Trinidad. (BW)

Green-backed Heron: 1 on 4/18 at Detert's Reservoir, east of Middleton. (FB, MJC, BG)

Gadwall: 2 pair on 4/25 at the Pt. Reyes schooner bay. (FB, MJC, BG)

Black Scoter: 1 on 4/25 at the Pt. Reyes lighthouse area. (FB, MJC, BG)

White-winged Scoter: 10 on 4/25 at Pt. Reyes fish docks, seen flying very low over observers. (FB, MJC, BG)

Cooper's Hawk: 1 on 5/4 at Pine Canyon. (FB, MJC, BG)

Peregrine Falcon: 1 on 4/18 along Ida Clayton Rd. (FB, MJC, BG)

Solitary Sandpiper: 4/30 at Arcata, CA. (BW)

Calliope Hummingbird: 2 seen mid-April, White Canyon, Mt. Diablo (GF); 1 seen 4/30 Arcata (BW).

Pileated Woodpecker: 1 on 4/18 on Ida Clayton Rd. (FB, MJC, BG)

Lewis's Woodpecker: 1 pair seen 4/8, Morgan Territory Park (MB); 6 on 4/18 at Defert's Reservoir (FB, BG, MJC).

Steller's Jay: 1 albino or leucistic bird seen 4/16 at Mitchell Canyon. (DW, LG-L, JC)

Black-throated Gray Warbler: 2 seen 4/16 at Mitchell Canyon. (DW, LG-L, JC)

Hermit Warbler: 1 on 4/25 at Hidden Lake, Martinez. (DW)

Lazuli Bunting: 5-6 males seen mid-April White Canyon Rd., Mt. Diablo. (GF)

*Green-tailed Towhee: 1 on 5/4, Mt. Diablo; believed to be only the 3rd sighting in CCC. (JE)

Chipping Sparrow: 1 seen on 4/8 in Morgan Territory Park. (MB)

Clay-colored Sparrow: 1 on 4/30, Arcata. (BW)

*Black-chinned Sparrow: 1 on 5/4 on Mt. Diablo. (JE)

Lawrence's Goldfinch: 1 pair on 4/8 at Morgan Territory Park (MB); 4 on 4/18 at Defert's Reservoir; on 5/4, Pine Canyon (FB, MJC, FB).

Orcas: 2 were seen on 4/30, visible from Eureka Piers, Humbolt Co. (BW)

CORRECTION: Last month it was reported that 40 to 50 Yellow-breasted Chats were seen on Alhambra Blvd., Martinez. Only 1 was seen, observed by Jean and Barry Stockdale. (Sorry!)

Observers: Mike Beeve, Florence Bennett, Mary Jane Culver, Jan Cooper, Jimm Edgar, George Finger, Betty Gallagher, Lita Gloor-Little, Mark Siddall, Bud Widdowson, Denise Wight.

CLASSES AND EXCURSIONS

BIRDING AND CAMPING TRIP

Join naturalist and birdwatcher Phil Gordon for an excursion into the remote parts of California to explore habitats and their birdlife. This year will be devoted to northeastern California and southeastern Oregon including areas such as Lower Klamath Lake, Tule Lake, Goose Lake, Warner Mountains, and Malheur National Wildlife Refuge. Arrangements for camping along the way, as well as assistance for those using motels, will be provided. Expenses of travel and food are those the participants. Cost for seven days is \$18 per day or \$23 per day for anyone wishing to join the group for fewer days. One coordination meeting about two weeks prior to departure will be announced. Leave Sunday, July 30, and return Saturday, August 5. Contact Phil Gordon, (415) 538-3550 evenings or write to 4634 Mira Loma St., Castro Valley, CA 94546.

SOUND RECORDING WORKSHOP

The Nature Sound Society of the Oakland Museum will hold its fifth annual sound recording workshop from Friday to Sunday, June 9 to 11, at San Francisco State University's Yuba Pass Field Station. The featured speakers include Luis Baptista and Marie Mans. For information, call (415) 273-3884.

WILDLIFE SURVEY

San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory is looking for volunteers to help with a new study censusing shorebirds, waterfowl, and gulls approximately twice a month on a few saltponds near Alviso in the south bay. Other on-going projects which can also use more help include the Colonial Nesting Bird Surveys and the Alviso California Gull colony monitoring project. Results from these important projects will aid the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge and Leslie Salt personnel in their management decisions, as well as the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish & Game. For further information, contact the Executive Director, Don Starks, at (408) 946-6548 or write SFBBO, P. O. Box 247, Alviso, CA 95002.

FIELD TRIP CAR PROBLEMS

On each of two recent field trips, a driver has locked the keys of his car in the car. Considering the remoteness of some of the field trip locations, this is a crisis! It has been suggested that each driver have an extra key on his binocular strap or other equipment. This would be a good idea for anyone out birding, especially by themselves in a remote location. It is also suggested that birders alert a friend who is not going birding with them when they are going out as to the location and the expected time of their return. Should problems even more serious than a locked-in key occur, someone will know where to send a search party.

REVISION OF CONSTITUTION

At the May 11 meeting of the Board of Directors, a revision of the November 19, 1970, Constitution and By-Laws, as amended through April 6, 1978, was approved by a majority vote. The full text of the revised Constitution and By-Laws will be available and voted on by the membership at the September meeting. The changes made to the Constitution and By-Laws are detailed below.

Article II. Membership Meetings.

To reflect the growth of MDAS, a quorum at a membership meeting was changed from fifteen members to fifty members.

Article III. Officers.

Section 2. The President of the Society is now specifically allowed the option of designating any board member or officer to preside in conducting meetings of the Society in the event the President is unable to conduct the meeting in person. The President may also designate the immediate past president to conduct meetings.

Section 3. The office of Vice-President for Programs has been eliminated.

Section 5. The Secretary is specifically enjoined from taking minutes of the meeting of the Board of Directors by means of a tape recorder, unless a request is made to the Board at the start of the meeting and such permission is granted by a majority vote.

Article IV. Board of Directors.

The meetings of the Board of Directors are now specified to be in regular session, at a time and location to be announced in the Society bulletin. Additionally, the Board will meet when deemed necessary by the President.

Article V. Nominations.

The Nominating Committee shall become a standing committee of the Society. The President shall appoint a Nominating Chairperson, who, in turn, will select two members in good standing as the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee will present names of nominees for the elective offices of the Society to the general membership at the April meeting. The officers shall be elected at the May meeting. Additionally, in case of incapacity of an elected officer, the Nominating Committee shall recommend a candidate to the Board of Directors, and the Board shall approve the interim appointment.

Article VI. Membership Committee.

This article was eliminated as redundant, as the Membership Committee is a Standing Committee, as defined in Article VII.

Article VII. Standing Committees.

The Standing Committees are specified to include Nominating, Program, Publicity, Field Trips, Membership, Hospitality, Conservation, The *Quail*, Education, Christmas Count, and

Sales Manager. The Bird Information Committee has been incorporated into the Program Committee, whose chairperson shall arrange both the program and bird information for the membership meetings. The Exhibit Committee has been eliminated. Added to the Standing Committees are the Nominating Committee, as defined in Article V, and the Sales Manager, who shall handle the sales and inventory of publications and other items.

WILDLIFE PROTECTION INITIATIVE

California's threatened mountain lions and other wildlife are the beneficiaries of a new statewide initiative which began last April. 600,000 signatures are needed to qualify the California Wildlife Protection Act for the June ballot of 1990. This new campaign seeks to stop permanently the trophy hunting of the California mountain lion and to provide thirty million dollars a year for thirty years to acquire diminishing habitat for deer and endangered species. Funds would come from several different existing state taxes.

Between 1907 and 1963 more than 12,400 mountain lions were slaughtered for bounty. From 1963 to 1969 they were shot on sight as "varmints." From 1969 to 1971 they were reclassified as game mammals and legally killed for sport. Between 1971 and 1985, the State Legislature and the Governor declared a moratorium on mountain lion hunting. Influenced by the State Fish and Game Commission's recommendation, Governor Deukmejian in 1985 vetoed the legislature's extension of the moratorium. Only two lawsuits, led by the Mountain Lion Preservation Foundation, have successfully prevented sanctioned game hunting of the mountain lion.

The California Wildlife Protection Act will take the decision of whether or not to shoot mountain lions for trophies out of the hands of the Fish and Game Commission and the Governor and place it in the hands of the voter. To help with this campaign, fill out the coupon enclosed in this month's *Quail* and return it to the California Wildlife Protection Committee, 2980 Adeline Street, Suite D, Berkeley, CA 94703, or call David Vinokur at (415) 548-0885.

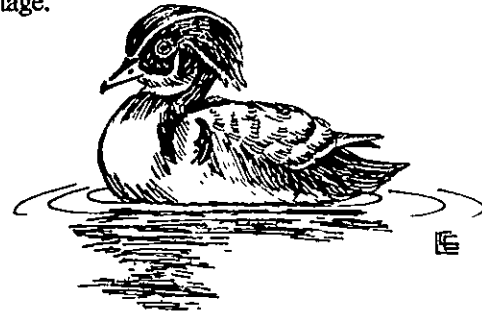


NEW MEMBERS

We are happy to welcome these new MDAS members and hope to meet them at our activities: Charles and Laura Angelen, Diane Aven, Kristen Baker, Mike Behrend, Jim Blickenstaff, Pauline Bonilla, Jennifer Brock, Harry Burrowes, Pat Caldeira, Jerry and Judy Blinn, Michael Caples, Duncan Copland, Alec Cruz, Richard Daugherty, A. H. Donovan, Nadean Earl, C. Eulingbough, Helen Foster, Mrs. Joseph Fox, Tim Ghirardelli, Barbara Hagen, Norma Harrison, Jeanne Hastings, James Head, Hugh Hoganson, Leslie Holst, Scott Ingebretson, Karen James, Betty Keil, Jeanne Lundkin, Jefferey Marchese, Beth Martin, Bill and Lola McCall, Joan McKim, Diane McKay, Anne McQueen, James Moore, Joyce Ong, Joyce Osmundson, Betty Owiecki, Gary Padgett, Dorothy Pearson, Mrs. R. B. Petrie, Robert Pocta, Alan Pope, Michael Proudfoot, Gloria Quick, Arthur Reimers, Constance Reyes, Daniel Rich, Janine Schlarb, Tim Scramstad, Gloria Sears, Anne Sheldon, Cindy Siegel, William Silva, M. L. Silvey, Carol Sitton, Alice Small, C. Smith, Vernon Snapp, Dorenda Soite, Howard Sturtz, Shirley Sutton, Alice Thompson, R. J. Todoroff, Carolyn Vanderbilt, Fred Vann, Brenda Williams, and Laurence Wyner.

MDAS PUBLICATIONS

In the May issue of the *Quail*, book stores in Contra Costa County that sell *Birding Northern California* were listed. The Lafayette Bookstore, 3579 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, also carries this useful publication. Birders are using *The Birder's Handbook* more frequently to help identify birds under difficult conditions, as in forests. It gives clarifying details of a specific bird's behavior, nest location, etc. Copies may be picked up at MDAS meeting for \$13.00 or may be ordered from the MDAS Sales Manager Gifford Young, 1451 Jarret Ct., Benicia, CA 94510, (707) 745-4134, for \$14.50 which includes the sales tax and postage.



Original
Sketches
by
Carol Lutz

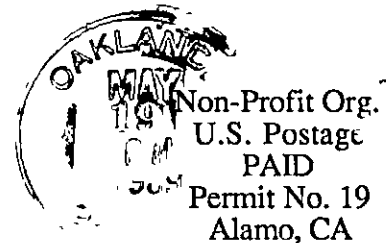
The Quail is published monthly except for the combined July/August issue. Audubon membership includes subscriptions to the *Quail* and *Audubon* magazine. To join (\$30/year individual, \$38 family; introductory & senior rates available) write check to National Audubon Society but send it, with letter or subscription card, to Membership Chairperson, Diane Macario, 2425 Maple Ave., Concord, CA 94520. The Chapter benefits financially from membership applications it processes. Full membership is encouraged, but subscription to the *Quail* is available separate from membership at \$6/year. Check should be made to MDAS and mailed to MDAS Treasurer, Florence Bennett, P.O. Box 31435, Walnut Creek, CA 94598. First class mailing of the *Quail* to member or nonmember is an additional \$3/year payable to MDAS & sent to Treasurer.

ADDRESS CHANGES AND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION: Consult Diane Macario, (415) 674-0920.

Barbara Burek, Editor, 157 Mt. Kennedy Dr., Martinez, CA 94553 (415) 229-0394

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Mt. Diablo Audubon Society
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Walnut Creek, CA 94596



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The QUAIL

BULLETIN OF THE MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY
P. O. BOX 53
WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA 94596
(415) AUD-UBON

President: Barbara Vaughn, 376-8732
VP Conservation: Al McNabney, 945-1785
Treasurer: Florence Bennett, 689-3106
Sales Manager: Gifford Young, (707) 745-4134
Field Trips: Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486
Membership: Diane Macario, 674-0920
Publicity: Shirley Ellis, 939-9091
Hospitality: Denise Wight, 228-2601
Education: Norah Bain, 254-4516
Secretary: Britta Cascio, 837-2895

July/August 1989

Vol. 35 No. 11

Next Deadline: August 10

Upcoming Events:

Again this year, there will be no general meeting of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society in July or August. The next general meeting will be on September 7. Details will be given in the September issue of the *Quail*. Have a good summer!

The next board meeting will be on Thursday, July 13, at 7:30 p.m., at the home of Barbara Vaughn, 59 Donna Maria Way, Orinda, 376-8732. The August board meeting will be on Thursday, August 10, at 7:30 p.m., at the home of Jean Richmond, 125 Via Serena, Alamo, 837-2843. Board meetings are open to all interested members.

The ANNUAL PICNIC will be held on Friday, July 21, at 6:30 p.m. The location of the picnic will be on the MDAS telephone message machine, AUD-UBON, after July 1. Bring your own picnic dinner and table service. After supper, we may look for owls, so bring binoculars as well as supper.

The yearly Field Trip planning meeting will be on Thursday, July 20, at the home of Elizabeth Dickey, 113 Hillcrest Drive, Orinda. If you have requests, suggestions, or special birds you are interested in, or if you would be willing to lead a field trip, call Elizabeth, 254-0486. Anyone interested in helping plan next year's field trips is welcome to attend.

A new summer field trip has been added to the schedule, to the **Bobelaine Sanctuary** on the Feather River. For those unable to join the walk on July 15, the sanctuary has an open house on the first Saturday of every month, with trained docents. To reach the sanctuary, take I-80 east from I-680. At the Yolo Bypass, stay on I-80 to I-5, then go north on I-5 to SR 99-70. When SR 99 splits off, follow SR 99 and the signs toward Yuba City. Two miles after SR 99 crosses the Feather River, turn right on Laurel Avenue to Bobelaine Sanctuary at the end of the road on the levee.

1989 BIRDATHON

Five members of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society made a special effort to get friends, family, and business acquaintances to pledge to them for our 1989 Birdathon. It looks like, when all pledges are in, we will have raised about \$1500. The majority of this money will be given to the Western Regional Office of National Audubon in Sacramento to further their tremendous efforts in conservation matters. We are keeping a portion of the Birdathon money in our chapter to be used toward the purchase of a new chapter spotting scope. Thanks to all of you who pledged.

Jimm Edgar

CONSERVATION NOTES

By Al McNabney

AN EXPENSIVE ACTIVITY

McAvoy Yacht Harbor has been in the news due to (alleged) violations of existing Laws, Rules, and Regulations which have continued over a L O N G time. BCDC's Commission met in formal session June 1, considered the McAvoy Yacht Harbor, and proposed fines and a Cease and Desist Order.

The BCDC Enforcement Commission report read in part:

"The Commission concludes that the violations that have occurred at the McAvoy Yacht Harbor are substantial and represent one of the largest and most significant enforcement matters with which the Commission has been concerned in recent years."

With one vote abstaining, the Commissioners voted to:

1. Impose a fine of \$20,000.00 (maximum) for placement of solid fill at the site, and
2. Impose a fine of \$20,000.00 (maximum) for placement of pile-supported fill and floating fill in basin #2, and
3. Impose a fine of \$12,000.00 (maximum) for other various forms of fill, e. g., tires, scrap metal, concrete, stored vehicles, and so on.

The Commission issued a Cease and Desist Order reading, in part, as follows:

"Within 45 days of the date of this order, submit to the Commission a written removal plan for the removal of all fill that paragraphs I-B requires to be removed..."

The US Army Corps of Engineers has NOT YET acted, other than to have issued (long ago) two Cease and Desist Orders (which were NOT complied with).

CRYSTAL RANCH

By the time this item is in print, it is likely the Concord City Council will have:

1. Changed the hillside ordinance.
2. Amended the City General Plan.
3. Be attempting to authorize the development to proceed.

Changing of the hillside ordinance and General Plan (if carried out by the Council) will set aside long standing protections against hillside development. Under that ordinance, projects such as Crystal Ranch could NOT be approved.

AGRICULTURAL LANDS & THE UPCOMING NEW COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

There MAY yet be hope and a future for agriculture in Contra Costa County. A recent edition of the *Contra Costa Times* reported an action of the Supervisors as follows:

"County Supervisors pledged their support Tuesday for keeping housing development off East County's prime agricultural land, at least for the next 20 years."

MDAS has consistently urged that prime AG lands in CCC be held for that purpose. If you agree such action to have been important, you might so advise the Supes by dropping a note to the Honorable Tom Torlakson, Chairman, and Members, Board of Supervisors, Contra Costa County, 651 Pine St., Martinez, California 94553.

CLEARCUTTING OLD GROWTH FOREST

Byron Sher, California Assemblyman, has introduced AB 390, which, if enacted, would outlaw clearcutting of old growth forests on private land. A hearing on this important conservation measure was scheduled before the Assembly Natural Resources Committee early in June. The clearcutting of old growth redwood trees on private lands threatens to denude large areas now covered with California's famous redwood trees.

THE THICK-BILLED PARROT

Conservation and captive-breeding efforts have once again brought the Thick-billed Parrot to rural Arizona. These birds used to be indigenous to the area, usually migrating from Mexico. However, over time mankind, predators, and the like caused the decline and total disappearance of the parrots from Arizona. Captive-bred birds, conditioned for release, have been returned to the wilds of Arizona. NOW, as you go birding, keep an eye open for these magnificent birds. The Thick-billed Parrot is now the ONLY psitticine type considered to be a wild bird in the continental USA.

A QUESTION,

POSED BY THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION:

"Is the Watt era back?" All caused by the nomination of James Cason, former official in the Watt-led Interior Department, to become Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Special Services. Cason was involved in the "Spotted Owl fuss." It is alleged he improperly pressured the Fish and Wildlife Service NOT to list the Northern Spotted Owl as an endangered species and ordered drafts of a BLM report on the status of the Spotted Owl to be destroyed. The report suggested endangered species listing for the owl was a possibility if current logging practices continues. He also supported selling off tens of thousands of acres of federal oil shale lands for \$2.50 per acre.

Ken Parrish of the NWF wrote: "Cason's record of siding with commercial interests at the expense of the environment and the public interest plus his propensity for confrontation and polarization make him unqualified for a position of public resource stewardship."

FIELD TRIPS

Trips are open to members and nonmembers alike. Carpool time is departure time. Carpool expense: 5 cents per mile per rider is suggested; tolls and entry fees are shared equally by driver and riders. Bring binoculars, field guide and lunch. Trips go in light rain or drizzle; if in doubt, call leader up to 1/2 hour before carpool time.

Saturday and Sunday, July 8-9, **Yosemite**. Call Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486, if you are planning to go on the Yosemite trip. Unless you have already made reservations, do not plan to camp.

Saturday, July 15, **Bobelaine Sanctuary**. Carpool 6:00 a.m. southwest corner of Sun Valley parking lot. Meet 8:00 a.m. at the entrance to the sanctuary. For directions, see Page 1. A member of the Sacramento Audubon chapter will lead the trip. This is riparian habitat. The target bird is the Yellow-billed Cuckoo; other possibilities include Blue Grosbeak and Swainson's Hawk.

Saturday, July 29, **San Mateo Coast**. Carpool 7:15 a.m. at El Cerro Blvd, west of I-680. Meet at 8:30 a.m. in parking lot off SR 1 opposite Pescadero Road. Cross San Mateo Bridge, continue west on SR 92 to Half Moon Bay, go left on SR 1 for 15 miles to Pescadero Rd., turn right into parking lot. Can be cold and windy, sometimes hot. 1-2 miles walking at Ano Nuevo State Reserve, partly over sand dunes. Possible early shorebirds, Black Swift, Bank Swallow, Marbled Murrelet. Leader: Barbara Vaughn, 376-8732.

Saturday, August 13, **Bodega Bay**. Carpool 6:30 a.m., southwest corner of Sun Valley parking lot. Meet 8:30 a.m. at the Tides Restaurant. Go north on US 101. Take the Washington St. exit in Petaluma, go west on Bodega Hwy. to SR 1, turn left to Bodega Bay. The Tides is on left, opposite a Union station. Can be cold and windy; little walking. Early shorebirds, waterbirds, rails, post-breeding migrants. Call Elizabeth Dickey for more information.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

LAKE MERCED-GOLDEN GATE PARK, MAY 4.

Only the leader showed up. It was very foggy, but swallows were abundant; six species including many Bank Swallows were seen. A total of 42 species were seen at the lake and on the adjoining ocean beach.

Elizabeth Dickey

MITCHELL CANYON, MAY 6.

Late spring rains produced beautiful flowers for viewing in Mitchell Canyon; over 50 species from the plant list provided by Genevieve Sattler were observed. There were two "new" plants added to the list after consultation with Mary Bowerman, author of *The Flora of Mt. Diablo*. The group enjoyed

good birding as well, with Lazuli Bunting, Western Wood-Pewee, Western Flycatcher, Black-headed Grosbeak and a soaring Golden Eagle to add to the enjoyment of the morning in the canyon.

Mary Jane Culver
Genevieve Sattler

MOUNT DIABLO, MAY 11.

This May day was rather cool and quite foggy as we drove through the South Gate entrance to Mt. Diablo, so foggy that we drove higher up the mountain just to escape the fog. The day turned clear and beautiful, however, and the 17 guests and members had a great field trip. The Black-chinned Sparrow was cooperative and was a life bird for many as it sat close by and sang for us all. Hermit Warblers, along with MacGillivray's, Wilson, Townsend, and Orange-crowned, kept us looking up in the trees. Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were abundant, too, and also fun to see, and rounded out the 52 species seen and heard on the mountain.

Jimm Edgar

BOTHE-NAPA, MAY 13.

About ten members and guests for once enjoyed a successful owling trip, thanks to Robin Leong of the Napa-Solano chapter. The group enjoyed a long look at a Spotted Owl over the trail, front, back, and sides. We also had a good look at the head and upper body of a gray-phase Western Screech Owl. Not many other birds were seen, but with these, who needed them.

Elizabeth Dickey

EAST CONTRA COSTA COUNTY, MAY 31.

Eighteen members and guests saw 54 species on a beautiful summer day birding Jersey and Bethel Islands. Blue Grosbeaks (male, female and first year male) were seen well in 2 locations. At least two Yellow-breasted Chats were heard but not seen. A Barn-Owl with one downy young was on Jersey Island. We had good looks at a Yellow Warbler and a Townsend's Warbler as well as a Black-chinned Hummingbird visiting a feeder. After adjourning for the day, two carloads of birders were fortunate to see ten Burrowing Owls in a field along Delta Road in Knightsen. This included at least three recently fledged young.

Maury Stern

OBSERVATIONS

By Donna Peake-Klein

Please send observations to Donna Peake-Klein,
51 Picardy Ct., Walnut Creek, 94596, or call 930-9819.
Please include your telephone number with your observations.

- Pelagic Cormorant: 1 pair seen on 5/14 at Russian Gulf State Park, Mendicino Co. (MB)

Black-crowned Night-heron: 1 on 5/17 at Lafayette Reservoir. (G&MJM)

(Observations continued on Page 4.)

Observations, continued.

Harlequin Duck: male seen on 6/4 at Bolinas Lagoon, possibly the same one reported last month, as he was seen in close proximity to a male Surf Scoter. (J, D, & MJ)

Osprey: 1 on 6/4 at Lake Lagunitas, seen perched and flying overhead. (J, D, & MJ)

Sharp-shinned Hawk: 1 on 5/17 hunting in the back yard of a Martinez residence. (MS)

Red-shouldered Hawk: 1 on 5/24 on Mt. Diablo. (JE)

Caspian Tern: 5 seen on 5/17 at Lafayette Reservoir. (G&MJM)

Pileated Woodpecker: male seen on 5/13 at Jug Handle State Reserve in Mendicino Co. (MB); 1 on 5/14 at Russian Gulf State Park (MB).

Ash-throated Flycatcher: 2 seen on 5/17 at Lafayette Reservoir. (G&MJM)

Gray Jay: 1 on 5/13 at Jug Handle State Reserve. (MB)

Phainopepla: 1 pair seen on 5/24 on Mt. Diablo, possibly nesting (JE); 1 nesting pair on 5/30 at Solano County Park, Putah Creek (MJC, BG).

Indigo Bunting: 1 on 5/24 in Death Valley. (JE)

Observers: Mike Beeve, Mary Jane Culver, Jimm Edgar, Betty Gallagher, John, Dana, and Margaret Jordan, George and Molly Jane Monheit, Mark Siddall.

NEW MEMBERS

We greet these new MDAS members and hope to meet them at our meetings and field trips: Beverly Airriess, B. D. Babcock, Addie Barbee, Jan Cooper, Gary Cottle, Peter Coussovliis, R. W. Davis, Janice Day, Sandra Edwards, Gale Fairbrother, Joan Field, Ronald Gammon, Larry Gray, Jennifer Hamiter, Ann Heywood, Mr. and Mrs. W. O. Holmes, Susan Hopkins, James Hudson, Jeannie Kalivoda, Valerie Karpenko, Timothy Keller, Alan Kent, Joe and Carol Lacey, Ann Martin, Joyce Mason, Bernadette McKinnon, Scott Morfeld, Robert B. O'Dell, Kate Olsen, Midora Rafanan, Michael Ring, Arthur Robinson, Chris Rodgers, Michael and Joanne Ross, Steven M. Saless, Mark Siddall, Ron and D. Slater, Doris Stephens, Anne Vellom, Bethe Vosper, and Bobby Young.

THANK YOU

At the end of my second year as editor, I again want to thank all those who contribute to the *Quail*. In particular this year, I want to express a special thank you to Mary Jane Culver, who is stepping down as head of the crew which assembles and mails the *Quail*. It couldn't have been done without you!

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Programs: Maury Stern, 284-5980
Field Trips: Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486
Membership: Diane Macario, 674-0920
Publicity: Shirley Ellis, 939-9091
Hospitality: Winifred Young, (707) 745-4124
Secretary: Britta Cascio, 837-2895

September 1989

Vol. 36 No. 1

Next Deadline: September 14

September Program:

Raptor Identification

Welcome back! The first meeting of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society will be on **September 7**.

Allen Fish, Coordinator of the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory, will return to present the September program. Last October, Allen gave an excellent talk on hawk migration as it related to "Hawk Hill" in the Marin Headlands. This year he will talk about raptor identification. Come refresh your hawk-watching skills with an expert, in time for the annual fall raptor migration.

Birding information for September will be given by Ed Hase. He will speak on vagrant fall-migration songbirds.

The revision of the MDAS Constitution and By-Laws approved by the Board of Directors last May will be voted on by the membership at the September meeting. The full text of the revised Constitution and By-Laws will be available at the meeting.

The Board of Directors has decided to make membership badges the responsibility of the members. The current badges will be available for members to pick up and take home at the September, October, and November meetings. Any unclaimed badges will then be discarded. Start the year out right! Come to the meeting and claim your badge!

General meetings of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society are held on the first Thursday of every month from September through June at the Willow Creek Center, 1026 Mohr Lane, Concord. The agenda for meetings is as follows:

6:30 Doors open
7:00 Birding Info
7:30 Business Meeting
8:00 Social Half-hour
8:30 Program

The next board meeting will be Thursday, September 14, at 7:30 p.m., at the home of Barbara Burek, 157 Mt. Kennedy Dr., Martinez, 229-0394. The board meetings are open to all interested members.

Year Field Trip Schedule - Page 3

Due to space limitations in this issue of the *Quail*, the yearly financial report will not be printed. The report will be available at the September meeting.

The October program will be given by George Peyton on the birds of Mt. Everest.

CONSERVATION NOTES

By Al McNabney

CRYSTAL RANCH: LET THE PEOPLE DECIDE

When is a Ranch not a ranch? Hard to say in all instances, but the Crystal Ranch project near Concord is NO ranch. In fact it is a proposed, PRIVATE enclave on the Mt. Diablo foothills, next to Lime Ridge Open Space. The GOOD NEWS is that the efforts of Concord citizens produced over 10,000 signatures urging the matter to be placed on the ballot in November. Subsequent to turning the petitions in to the Concord City Clerk, signatures and voting status of the petition signers were checked, verified, and certified. More than 9,000 valid signatures (about 15% of Concord's registered voting population) asked the issue of approval of the Crystal Ranch project be placed on the November ballot. It is reported the developer challenged the credibility of the petitions, arguing the petitions had to have ALL of a 273 page report attached, so the signers would know the FACTS about the issues. Those working on the signature drive indicated MANY signers KNEW a great deal about the Crystal Ranch project and they knew they didn't like it. The Concord City Attorney reviewed the complaint and the petitions and found the complaint to be without merit. The petitions were found to be in compliance with the law, rules, and regulations.

Tuesday, August 8, the Concord City Council has to review the petitions and issues and then either rescind approval of the project or approve placement of the matter on the November ballot. Lime Ridge Open Space, purchased some years ago by the cities of Concord, Clayton, and Walnut Creek, would be seriously impacted, as would Mt. Diablo, if the project goes forward as presently planned. It is expected that the Concord Council will refer the issue to the voters and it will appear on the November ballot. It is not presently known whether or not the developer will challenge the City in such an action. Concord MDAS members lent important assistance as a part of the petition circulating activity.

GARBAGE - YOU THOUGH IT WAS ALL OVER

Rearing its ugly head is the spectre of mounds of garbage, looking for a home. CCC does not appear to be in crisis right now, due to actions taken to "temporarily" haul garbage elsewhere. WHERE CCC's garbage (solid waste, to be polite) is to be placed IN the county continues to be a major problem seeking an answer. MOST IMPORTANTLY, the MARSH CANYON site continues to be a NO-NO insofar as MDAS is concerned.

The Keller Canyon (Keller-Bayley) Landfill Area will be the subject of public hearings:

Tuesday, August 15, to Thursday, August 17, at 7:30 p.m.
Board of Supervisors Chambers Room 107
561 Pine Street, Martinez

The Contra Costa Planning Commission will hold public

hearings and consider amendments to the County General Plan. If YOU are interested, attend one or more of the hearings. Tell the Planning Commission what YOU think about the issue. Similar hearings will be conducted for other proposed sites.

WATER, WETLANDS, AND DELTA ISLANDS

John Winther, President, Delta Wetlands Project, has written in reference to the Holland Tract (a delta island) which has been flooded, drained, seeded, and observed. At the request of the Department of Fish and Game, various watergrass seeding methods were compared with growth in unseeded areas. The results show we will be producing over 15 times more natural waterfowl food than the amount currently produced in the islands by usual farming methods, reported Winther. This is an overwhelming success by any measurement. MDAS has general permission to "bird" the area. It is believed significant species counts will be located in the Holland Tract during the annual Christmas Count.

OIL ON TROUBLED WATERS - AN UPDATE

Will EXXON finish the Alaskan "clean-up?" Who will assess the damage to the environment, bird, fish and wildlife? One government agency tried to set arbitrary amounts of money on dead birds, fish and other wildlife, as an indication of the values involved in the huge Alaskan oil spill. A test issue in the courts resulted in a ruling that the agency's proposal was flawed. So it's back to the drawing board. All MDAS members should tell Senators Alan Cranston and Pete Wilson and Congressman George Miller how they feel about the matter. EXXON either MUST clean up the mess or be required to pay FULL cost if someone else falls heir to finishing the clean-up.

BIRDS LOSING OUT TO THE "LUSH LAWN" SYNDROME

For our small songbirds, the drought "may" be a hidden plus. "Why?" you ask. Observations by U. S. Fish and Wildlife experts indicate songbirds are dying from pesticide poisoning. The good news is that lack of water is probably reducing the usage of toxics (pesticides) on our "lush" lawns, ergo the birds don't become loaded with pesticides and die. The National Academy of Sciences reports show homeowners "tend to use (on lawns) at up to 10 times more (toxic chemicals) per acre than are generally used on agricultural land." The chemical producers argue the toxic sprays are completely safe, "when used correctly." The problem is, no one knows just how closely the homeowner follows the application instructions. The EPA suggests "changing lawn-care techniques to avoid overuse of pesticides." One expert urges homeowners to let the lawn grow to a longer length. A "genius" suggests the best way to avoid the entire problem is for the homeowner "to live with the weeds." Diaxinon is one of the chemicals the EPA tried to ban for golf course use and certain turf farms. "The product is toxic to fish and wildlife, so states the label on the container." BUT the product is still widely used for lawn care. A question: "How do you care for your lawn?" After you think about that, then ask your visiting birds what they think about it.

(Source: The Sunday *Punch*, Claudia Levy, author.)

1989-90 FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE

Thanks to Elizabeth Dickey and her planning committee for an interesting schedule of field trips for the upcoming year. Also thanks to those people who will be leaders. Changes may occasionally be made in the schedule, and shifts between Wednesday and Thursday may be made to take advantage of tides or other opportunities. Weekend trips may be done either day alone. The trip marked * is a new area.

Sept	9	Sat.	San Mateo Coast	Mar.	1	Thurs.	Hayward Regional Shoreline
	20	Wed.	San Francisco Bay Refuge		7	Wed.	Five Brooks - Bolinas Lagoon
	23	Sat.	Salinas River - Elkhorn Slough *		10	Sat.	Tomales Bay State Park
	28	Thur.	Lincoln Park		22	Thurs.	Briones Reservoir
					31	Sat.	Garin Regional Park
Oct.	7	Sat.	Pt. Reyes	Apr.	4	Wed.	Briones Park - North
	11	Wed.	Point Diablo - Marin Headlands		12	Thurs.	Lake Lagunitas
	19	Thurs.	Tilden		14	Sat.	Donner Canyon
	28	Sat.	Abbott's Lagoon		18	Wed.	Ida Clayton Road, Napa Co.
					26	Thurs.	Del Puerto Canyon
Nov.	4	Sat.	Limantour		28	Sat.	Mines Road
	8	Wed.	Mt. View Sanitary Plant	May	2	Wed.	Briones Park - West
	16	Thurs.	Charleston Slough		5	Sat.	Mitchell Canyon - Wildflowers
	29	Wed.	Lafayette Reservoir		10	Thur.	Mt. Diablo
Dec.	2	Sat.	Altamont		19	Sat.	East Contra Costa County
	7	Thur.	Niles Canyon		23	Wed.	Caswell State Park
	13	Wed.	Palo Alto Baylands		31	Thurs.	Las Trampas Regional Park
	30	Sat.	CHRISTMAS COUNT	June	2	Sat.	Outer Point Reyes
Jan.	6	Sat.	Putah Creek - Lake Solano		6	Wed.	Annadel State Park
	10	Wed.	Lake Merritt		14	Thurs.	Bobelaine Refuge
	18	Thur.	Sunol Regional Park		23-24	S-S	Yuba Pass - Sierra Valley
	24	Wed.	Grizzly Island Wildlife Refuge	July	7-8	S-S	Yosemite
	27	Sat.	San Mateo Coast		20	Fri.	Picnic
Feb.	1	Thurs.	Thornton - Stockton Ponds		28	Sat.	San Mateo Coast
	10-11	S-S	Los Banos	Aug.	11	Sat.	Bodega Bay
	14	Wed.	Berkeley shoreline				
	24	Sat.	Bodega Bay				

FIELD TRIPS

Trips are open to members and nonmembers alike. Carpool time is departure time. Carpool expense: 5 cents per mile per rider is suggested; tolls and entry fees are shared equally by driver and riders. Bring binoculars, field guide and lunch. Trips go in light rain or drizzle; if in doubt, call leader up to 1/2 hour before departure time.

Difficulty of field trip:

- Category 1: Easy, little or no walking, smooth paths
- Category 2: Moderate, 1 mile or more, possibly rough
- Category 3: Difficult, extensive walking, rough terrain

Saturday, September 9, **San Mateo Coast**. Carpool 7:00 a.m. at El Cerro Blvd., west of I-680. Meet at 8:45 a.m. in parking lot off SR1 opposite Pescadero Road. Cross the San Mateo Bridge, continue west on SR92 to Half Moon Bay, go left on SR1 for 15 miles to Pescadero Rd., turn right into parking lot. Can be cold and windy, sometimes hot.
Leader: Maury Stern, 284-5980. Category 2

Wednesday, September 20, **San Francisco Bay Refuge**. Carpool 8:00 a.m. El Cerro Blvd., west of I-680. Meet 9:15 a.m. at parking lot at entrance to refuge. We will first bird on the flats east of Thornton Ave.; look for people with binocs on the levee. Traffic is difficult. As an alternate route to I-880 and SR84, take I-680 south to Fremont; exit Washington Ave. and continue to end. Go right on Fremont Blvd., and turn left onto Stevenson to I-880. Go north on freeway to Thornton exit and to west (to left) on Thornton Rd. This will eventually bring you to the refuge entrance.
Leader: Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486. Category 1

Saturday, September 23, **Salinas River and Elkhorn Slough**. Carpool 6:00 a.m. El Cerro Blvd., west of I-680. Meet 9:00 a.m. at Jetty Rd. off Highway 1 in Moss Landing. This is a new trip and we will be exploring new birding areas, including the Salinas River mouth. Water and shore birds, possibly vagrants.
Leader: Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486. Category 3

Thursday, September 28, **Lincoln Park**. Carpool 7:30 a.m. at Acalanes Ave., off Pleasant Hill Rd. just north of SR24. Meet at 9:00 a.m. along El Camino Del Mar, just beyond the Legion of Honor. From Kennedy Dr. in Golden Gate Park, go north on 30th Ave. to Clement St., left to 34th Ave., and right on Legion of Honor Dr. Fall migrants and vagrants.
Leader: Barbara Vaughn, 376-8732. Category 2

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

ANNADEL, June 3.

The gods smiled on thirteen MDAS members who congregated for hiking and birding on a cool, overcast day between a stretch of uncomfortable heat the day before and showers the day after. 35 species were observed. Although the Pileated Woodpecker was neither seen nor heard, good views of the Yellow-breasted Chat were had by most of the group.

Barbara Vaughn

LAS TRAMPAS, June 8.

Ten members made the trip to Las Trampas Regional Park. There were only 46 species seen or heard, including two Black-throated Gray Warblers seen by one participant along Valley Trail and two Grasshopper Sparrows seen plus several others heard on the hillside above Rocky Ridge fire road. The day was cold, very foggy, and extremely windy, all of which made birding difficult at best. The trip ended shortly before 11:00 a.m.

Jean Richmond

PT. REYES, June 10.

Fourteen members and guests spent an overcast, cool day at Pt. Reyes, fortunately without wind. Jim Ketsdever spotted the bird of the day, a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher on a roadside fence wire between Spaletta and Mendoza ranches. The bird stayed perched for a long period, allowing full viewing through telescopes. At Nunes Ranch, an Ovenbird was found singing loudly. Other highlights included an active Osprey nest with an adult feeding two young Ospreys at St. Columba's Church in Inverness, a fledgling Great Horned Owl with one parent at Drake's Beach and two Great Horned Owls near the Fish Docks area. Several Grasshopper Sparrows were heard on the hillsides at the Fish Docks on the way to the New Willows. 62 species were seen overall.

Maury Stern

YUBA PASS, June 17-18.

Nine members and guests enjoyed a weekend of sunny weather and good birding. Saturday was spent at the pass. Highlights there included a Townsend's Solitaire, American Dipper, and Hammond's Flycatcher. Black-backed and White-headed Woodpeckers and Williamson's Sapsuckers were seen feeding young in their nests. Sunday morning was spent in the Sierra Valley. Highlights there included Black Terns, Mountain Bluebirds, White-faced Ibis, a Wilson's Phalarope, a young Golden Eagle, a Swainson's Hawk, and Sage Thrashers. 95 species were seen or heard, and 12 nests of 11 species were found.

Barbara Burek

YOSEMITE, July 8-9.

Eight members and guests enjoyed a pleasant weekend. The wildflowers were in full bloom. Birding highlights included the Pine Grosbeak at Porcupine Flats and a pair of Blue Grouse at Badger Pass. 42 species total were seen.

Elizabeth Dickey

(Continued on page 5)

BOBELAINE, July 15.

Twenty-three members and guests visited Bobelaine National Audubon Sanctuary on the Feather River. This is one of the few untouched riparian areas in the Sacramento Valley. Three members of the Sacramento chapter led us in exploring the sanctuary. Highlights were the Yellow-billed Cuckoo, which answered our tape, and a Swainson's Hawk. This sanctuary has docents on the first Saturday of each month, but birders may enter at any time (see direction in the July *Quail*). 59 species were seen.

Elizabeth Dickey

SAN MATEO COAST, July 23.

Eleven Mt. Diablo Audubon members set out on a cool and overcast day to search for returning shorebirds, as well as a look at the elephant seals at Ano Nuevo. A Virginia Rail and a Sora popped out near the entrance to Pescadero Marsh almost simultaneously. As expected, six species of swallows were seen, and 78 species were sighted in all.

Barbara Vaughn



WANTED

Field trip leaders are wanted for birdwalks in the MARTINEZ area, such as Briones Park, Shoreline Park, and the Mt. View Water Treatment Plant. Years ago John Davis, a member of MDAS, under the promotion of the JOHN MUIR NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE, initiated and then was the sole leader for these field trips. It is hoped now that others in MDAS will be willing to share leading.

Birdwalks are usually held every other week, beginning at 9:00 a.m., with a duration of 2 to 3 hours. You do NOT have to be an expert birder, only a birder who is willing to share your time, enthusiasm and knowledge with an attentive group of persons. If interested and willing to lead a group, even if only on a bi-monthly basis, please contact:

Linda Moon Stumpff, Chief of Interpretation
JOHN MUIR NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE
4202 Alhambra Ave.
Martinez, CA 94553
228-8860

OBSERVATIONS

By Donna Peake-Klein

Please send observations to Donna Peake-Klein,
51 Picardy Ct., Walnut Creek, 94596, or call 930-9819.
Please include your telephone number with your observations.

- Bare-headed Grebe: several on 6/21 at Mono Lake. (H&NB)
White Pelican: several on 7/2 at Bodega Bay (H&NB); 26 on 7/25 at Doran Beach, 20 on 8/5 along SR33, and 200+ on 8/5 at White Slough (W&GY).
Brown Pelican: 6 on 7/25 at Doran Beach. (W&GY)
Great Blue Heron: 1 on 7/25 at Hole in the Head. (W&GY)
Black-crowned Night-heron: 4 on 7/25, 2 adult, 2 immature, at Hole in the Head. (W&GY)
Wood Duck: 1 male on 6/27 on North Lake in Golden Gate Park. (FB, JR, et al.)
Osprey: 1 on 7/25 eating a fish at Doran Beach and possibly again at Bodega Bay. (W&GY)
Swainson's Hawk: 1 on 7/2 over I-5 near junction with I-580, Stanislaus Co. (JR)
Golden Eagle: 2 immature on 6/20 along west slope of Yosemite, 2 sub-adults on 6/21 in Lee Vining Canyon. (H&NB)
Clapper Rail: 1 on 7/14 at Elsie Roemer Sanctuary, Alameda. (H&NB)
Semipalmated Plover: a large group of exhausted-appearing plovers on 8/5 along SR 37. (W&GY)
American Black Oystercatcher: 4 on 7/25 at Hole in the Head. (W&GY)
Whimbrel: 1 on 7/18 at Hayward Shoreline. (H&NB)
Ruddy Turnstone: several on 7/25 at Doran Beach. (W&GY)
Wilson's Phalarope: 1 with chick on 7/27 at Lake Tahoe. (H&NB)
Red-necked Phalarope: several on 6/21 at Mono Lake and several on 7/18 at Hayward Shoreline. (H&NB)
Glaucous-winged Gull: 1 on 7/25 at Bodega Head. (W&GY)
Caspian Tern: several on 7/25 at Bodega Bay and on 8/5 at White Slough. (W&GY)
Pigeon Guillemot: 1 on 7/2 at Bodega Bay. (H&NB)
Western Wood-pewee: several on 7/27 at Lake Tahoe. (H&NB)
Tree Swallow: several on 7/27 at Lake Tahoe. (H&NB)
Steller's Jay: several on 7/27 at Lake Tahoe. (H&NB)
Clark's Nutcracker: several on 7/27 at Lake Tahoe. (H&NB)
Pygmy Nuthatch: several on 7/27 at Lake Tahoe. (H&NB)
American Dipper: a pair at nest with young on 6/22 in the Yosemite Valley. (H&NB)
Green-tailed Towhee: 1 on 6/21 at Mono Lake. (H&NB)
Hooded Oriole: 1 female (their second oriole ever) at their hummingbird feeder on 8/1 (W&GY); several through 8/10 in her Alamo garden (JR).

Observers: Hugh and Norah Bain, Florence Bennet, Jean Richmond, Winnie and Gifford Young.

For information and updates on rare birds in the Bay Area and northern California, call the Northern California Rare Bird Alert, (415) 528-0288.

CLASSES AND EXCURSIONS

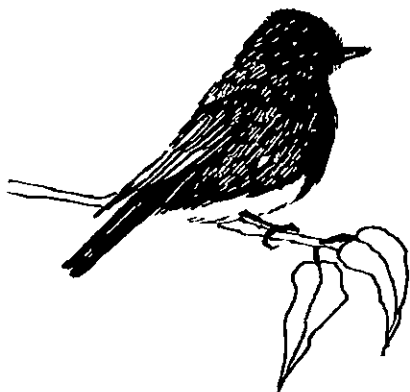
A five week class for beginning and intermediate birders, one classroom session and four field sessions, will be taught by Norah Bain through the Orinda Community Center. Emphasis will be on shorebirds and waterfowl. Classes meet 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Tuesdays, from October 17 through November 14. Register beginning September 7 at the Orinda Community Center, Orinda Way. Class size is limited. Orinda residents \$44, others \$46. For more information, call Norah at 254-4516 or the Orinda Community Center at 254-2445.

Three evening bird classes taught by Joe Morlan will start on September 5, 6, and 7. All classes meet 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. in Room 222, Marina Middle School, 3500 Fillmore at Bay St. in San Francisco. Class I is an introduction to birds and birding, Class II studies terns, alcids and vultures in-depth, and Class III covers land birds, including warblers and sparrows. For more information, call the San Francisco Community College, Community Services Office at 776-8247.

Birding field trip classes will be taught by Alice Hoch, through the Fremont Adult School, starting September 12, for six Tuesdays, from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The class will visit a different birding spot each week. Register by mail or in person at the Fremont Adult School, 4700 Calaveras Ave., Fremont, CA 94538. Include a \$45 check, made out to the Fremont Adult School. For more information, call 791-5841.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society will sponsor boat trips on Sunday, September 24, and Saturday, October 7, on Monterey Bay to view seabirds and marine mammals. Reservations may be made by sending \$25 per person to Golden Gate Audubon Society, 1250 Addison Street, #107B, Berkeley, CA 94702. For more information, call 843-2222.

The Fourth Annual Richardson Bay Champagne Brunch and Auction will be held Sunday, September 24, at 10:30 a.m., at the Richardson Bay Audubon Center and Sanctuary. Proceeds will support the Center and Audubon's education programs. A delicious salmon brunch will be served as well as champagne and other beverages. Tickets are \$35 per person. Send your check to: Richardson Bay Audubon Center, 376 Greenwood Beach Road, Tiburon, CA 94920. For more information, call 399-2524.



Original
sketches
by
Carol Lutz

SFBBO SEEKS INFORMATION

The San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory is interested in hearing from anyone with knowledge of colonial bird nesting sites in the North Bay. If you know if a Great Blue Heronry (one pair is even of interest) or nesting Forster's Terns, egrets, etc., they would like to hear from you. The surveys conducted by SFBBO volunteers greatly add to the knowledge of these colonial nesters so that wise management decisions can be made by government agencies. Drop the observatory a note or call SFBBO, P. O. Box 247, Alivso, CA 95002, (408) 946-6548.

PUBLICATIONS

A new birding site guide is available: *Best Birding in Napa and Solano Counties*. Published by Napa-Solano Audubon Society, it is an 8 x 11 inch booklet that describes 21 birding hot spots, and includes significant bird occurrences, map sketches, and photographs of certain areas. Supplements Jean Richmond's *Birding Northern California*. Copies are available from the MDAS Sales Manager, Gifford Young, for \$4.00 if picked up, \$5.30 by mail, including sales tax.

AUDUBON ADVENTURES

School is approaching and it is time to think of the Audubon Adventures program. Audubon Adventures is a bi-monthly newspaper for each student, plus a teacher's guide, for third through sixth graders. Last year we had 68 classes sponsored. The newspaper covers areas of environmental education. The topics for this school year are:

August/September	Spiders
October/November	Endangered Species
December/January	Conifers
February/March	Mammals/Tracks
April/May	Migration
June/July	Invertibrates

Won't you think about sponsoring a class? Help our young people appreciate their world. The fee is \$30.00 per class. Make checks payable to National Audubon Society and mail to Dana Jordan, 1236 Lindell Dr., Walnut Creek, CA 94596.

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TRAVEL CORNER

Highlights of Birding China *by Gen Graves*

Our tour was called West China Pheasant Tour and most of it was conducted in the province of Sichuan (formerly called Szechuan) which is known more for its spicy food than for its birds. It has a bird list of over 600 species, and includes 35 of China's 47 endemic species in an area the size of France. It is a tour for the hardy, those liking to hike and who do not mind staying in primitive buildings with few facilities. We had mist, fog, snow, cold, rain, and mud, as well as sun. When I get home, though, I tend to forget the hardships of travel and remember the beautiful birds and striking scenery.

We stayed 7 nights at the Wolong Panda Reserve and it was here that we saw many of our most sought birds. Golden Pheasants were seen with the sun picking up all their yellow highlights. Six White-eared Pheasants were feeding on the slopes, and so conspicuous were they with their pale silvery white plumage that one wondered how they had escaped being hunted to extinction. In fact, they may only be found in a reserve. The Chinese Monal Pheasants we saw on a distant hill displaying and affording us good scope views in the sunlight. Looks at the Common Pheasant were interesting, for this eastern race lacks the ring about the neck. One of the most striking pheasants seen was Temminck's Tragopan, an incredible vision with its golden-orange crest and crown, bright blue face and chin, and brick-red back and wings which were entirely covered with black-encircled blue-gray spots. Its lower body was also red and covered with diamond-shaped white spots.

All was not pheasants here, though, for we studied a pair of Snow Partridge in their preferred environment, snow, and also the Tibetan Snowcock with its black, white, and gray streaked body and thick red legs and feet. Our leader played a tape of the call of the Monal Partridge and an excited pair responded and scurried across a snow-covered gully as we stood on the road looking down at them. Several pairs of Crimson-breasted and Darjeeling Woodpeckers gave us smashing views as did Yellow-billed and Red-billed Choughs. Three accentors were seen, the Alpine, Rufous-breasted and Maroon-backed. One of the most stunning birds was the Firethroat of the Turdidae family, well named indeed and responding beautifully to the tape. Other Turdidae seen here were the Chestnut Thrush (just imagine the American Robin being a bright chestnut all over), White-bellied Redstart, and the Blue-fronted Redstart. I can't leave this family without a few words for that grand thrush, the Grandala. Seen at a distance and in poor light, it is just a dark bird, but seen close by in good light and against the snow, the male became an incredible glistening cobalt blue. We also did

well at Wolong by the Parrotbills, that strange family of birds with their very short, much compressed and sharply curved bills, from which their name is derived, seeing five species. They like bamboo thickets and long grasses. Wolong was also a good place for bush warblers and we got superb views of seven species. The tits also really performed for us and we saw eight species, our favorite being a pair of Fire-capped in courtship display.

Our leader has been to Wolong Panda Reserve seven times and so rare and so shy is this animal that he has only seen it once. He warned us that our chances of seeing a panda were nil, so we were not disappointed. However, we did see plenty of fresh scat including that of a young one.

One of the most beautiful spots we birded, with its startlingly turquoise lakes and waterfalls was Jiuzhigou. Here we saw two more pheasants, the Blue-eared and the Splendid Blood Pheasant. The latter was especially accommodating in showing its red throat and face and its crimson undertail coverts as it ran along a log. It was in this forest among these exotic Chinese endemics that I picked up a lifer that I've always missed in North America, the Three-toed Woodpecker. I'm always tickled when I can do that. Laughing Thrushes are long-tailed, showy birds and it was here that we saw the Plain, Snowy-cheeked, White-browed, Giant, and Elliot's Laughing Thrushes. Bar-tailed and Common Tree Creepers were seen on the same trunk so we could compare field marks. A male displaying Gould's Sunbird got hurrahs for showing off. A pleasant surprise were the Wallcreepers we saw on the cliffs and closeup along the margin of the lake. This striking member of the nuthatch family with its crimson wings is not usually so common.

We were fascinated by the Tibetan grasslands with the great herds of yaks, sheep and goats, and it was here that we saw one of the rarest and most endangered of the world's fifteen crane species, the Black-necked Crane. One wonders how long this grassland will be able to support any wildlife for it is much used and abused. Our leader estimates that since 1961 there has been a 1000% increase in people and their domestic animals on the plateau. The once lush knee-high grasses have been reduced to less than an inch off the ground. Nevertheless, besides the crane, we saw Saker Falcon, Tibetan Ground-jay, Tibetan Lark, Azure-winged Magpie, Greylag Goose, Spot-billed Duck, Gargany, Ferruginous Pochard, Imperial Eagle, and many others. The Little Owl was common, as was the Common Tern, the Oriental Skylark, and the Red-throated Thrush.

It is not possible in this space to write of all we saw, for some of us also did three days of pre-trip birding in Hong Kong and five days of post-trip birding in Kuming and Shanghai. It was a good trip and my total list of birds seen was a bit over 300, of which 127 were life birds. We left China several days before the violence at Tiananamen Square and were not affected by the peaceful demonstrations we witnessed in the larger cities. The future of birding tours in this troubled land is not clear and our leader wonders if he will be going back next year.

NEW MEMBERS

We extend warm greetings to these new MDAS members and hope to meet them at our activities: Joan Avila, Peter Bedford, Peter Belvel, Robert Bowers, Sunny Bradshaw, John S. Breed, Janet Carroll, Laird Craig, Patricia DeAngelis, John Denton, Mr. and Mrs. B. Elder, Kenneth Esperson, Millicent Evans, Sheila Fahy, Mary G. Fernandez, George Gates, Sara Grajek, Michael Kenning, S. Kerr, George Longchamps, Fred Lorenzetti, Joanne Mailman, James Martinez, Shirley Mattes, Dick McDonald, Gladys Merrill, Mrs. M. Moreland, Evan Morgan, James Morton, Diane Mustard, Virginia Nagy, C. Laib Norris, David Nye, Dorothy Odowda, Michael Oldfield, Gail Overaa, Kirk Robinson, Donna Rodegard, William Solomon, Andrea Staley, A. David St. Pierre, Martin Stuart, Joan Sullivan, Mike Tschida, D. E. Walker, and Jean Walker.

IN MEMORIAM

We are sad to announce the death, on July 17, of Merv Ortez, a long-standing member of MDAS and a dear friend to many of us. Merv was Membership Chairman for several years when the position included greeting at the beginning of the meetings. With his friendly, cheerful personality and interest in people, Merv was particularly suited to these activities in which he was ably supported by his wife Norma. New members were warmly welcomed by means of a gracious letter from Merv. He also regularly led field trips and served on several nominating committees. We will miss his warmth, sincerity and kindness. His wife Norma survives Merv; her address is 2857 Ptarmigan Drive, Walnut Creek, CA 94595. Contributions may be sent to Hospice Home Care, Kaiser Permanente, 1425 N. Main St., Walnut Creek, CA 94596.

Submitted by Norah Bain

The Quail is published monthly except for the combined July/August issue. Audubon membership includes subscriptions to the Quail and Audubon magazine. To join (\$30/year individual, \$38 family; introductory and senior rates available), write a check to National Audubon Society but send it, with letter or subscription card, to the Membership Chairperson, Diane Macario, 2425 Maple Ave., Concord, CA 94520. The Chapter benefits financially from membership applications it processes. Full Audubon membership is encouraged, but subscription to the Quail is available separate from membership at \$8/year. The check should be made to MDAS and mailed to the MDAS Treasurer, Florence Bennett, P.O. Box 31435, Walnut Creek, CA 94598. First class mailing of the Quail to member or nonmember is an additional \$3/year payable to MDAS & sent to the Treasurer.

ADDRESS CHANGES AND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION: Consult Diane Macario, (415) 229-0920.

Barbara Burek, Editor, 157 Mt. Kennedy Dr., Martinez, CA 94553 (415) 229-0394

Exchange bulletins for MDAS to Mt. Diablo Audubon Society, P. O. Box 53, Walnut Creek, CA 94596, please.

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The QUAIL

BULLETIN OF THE MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY

P. O. BOX 53

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(415) AUD-UBON

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Hospitality: Winifred Young, (707) 745-4134

Secretary: Britta Cascio, 837-2895

October 1989

Vol. 36 No. 2

Next Deadline: October 12

October Program:

The Birds of Mount Everest

Mount Everest is located between Nepal and Tibet in the Himalayas. At 29,000 feet, it is the highest mountain in the world. In April of 1986, George Peyton joined a sixteen-day expedition led by Bob Fleming which climbed the Everest base camp trek from 8,900 feet to 18,200 feet. April meant spring migration in Nepal, but instead of warbler waves, they saw such exotics as Himalayan Griffon-vultures, White-capped River-chats, Snow Pigeons, Lammergeiers, and Kalij Pheasants, the national bird of Nepal. This was also a good time for blooming spring flowers, including the native rhododendrons which soared tree-like 20 to 30 feet high. They didn't find yeti but did see Himalayan Tahr (a mountain goat) and the rare Musk Deer. Come join us on **October 5** for an evening exploring this remote yet fascinating corner of our world.

George Peyton is a man of many parts - lawyer, wine expert, raconteur, and world traveler. He also is a long-time member of Golden Gate Audubon and served six years on the National Audubon Society board. As a lawyer, he has spent many pro bono hours working for Mono Lake and Audubon Society causes. His travels have taken him to many parts of the world, including China which he spoke to our chapter about in March, 1985. Let's welcome him back to Mt. Diablo Audubon.

Birding information for October will be a "hands on" look at publications, books, and bookstore catalogs pertaining to birding, presented by Florence Bennett. She will bring samples for close-up examination at the start of the meeting.

General meetings of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society are held on the first Thursday of every month from September through June at the Willow Creek Center, 1026 Mohr Lane, Concord. The agenda for meetings is as follows:

6:30 Doors open
7:00 Birding Info
7:30 Business Meeting
8:00 Social Half-hour
8:30 Program

The next board meeting will be Thursday, October 12, at 7:30 p.m., at the home of Al McNabney, 1161 Leisure Lane, #7, Walnut Creek, 945-1785. The board meetings are open to all interested members.

The November program will be given by Jules Evens on the history of the Pt. Reyes peninsula.

CONSERVATION NOTES

By Al McNabney

GARBAGE: MORE & MORE & MORE

Contra Costa County moves ever closer to decision time for siting a solid waste location to handle garbage (solid waste) for the next twenty years. Beginning September 19, the Board of Supervisors will hold public hearings and consider amendments to the General Plan, for five (5) proposed sanitary landfill areas (garbage dumps). The areas being considered are:

Keller Canyon (Keller-Bailey) Landfill Area
Marsh Canyon Landfill Area
Kirker Pass Waste Management Landfill Area
East Contra Costa Sanitary Landfill Area
Bay Pointe Sanitary Landfill

Marsh Canyon is a NO, NO! Located on and about Round Valley, one of the MOST beautiful spots in the County, the dump would essentially ruin the area for MUCH needed park and open space. East Bay Regional Park Directors have long eyed the area as being necessary for the providing of open space for "the people" in years to come. Involved: some five acres of riparian wetland and 99 acres of oak woodland. Often described as the Yosemite of Contra Costa County, sans the waterfalls, it provides habitat and nesting sites for Golden Eagles, Northern Harriers, and a breeding population of Rough-legged Hawks, to say NOTHING of the other wild and plant-life found there.

The Blue-ribbon Task Force appointed by the Supes to look at and recommend a solid waste site selected Bay Pointe as THE Committee's preferred site. That site now appears to be completely out of consideration due to proposed upscale housing developments. Keller, now Keller-Bailey, was high on the Committee's list, while Marsh Canyon was deemed the least desirable of the sites recommended. If YOU want to have a say as to where garbage is going to be dumped in the next twenty years or so, either attend the public hearing or write to the Board of Supervisors, expressing your views:

Board of Supervisors
Contra Costa County
651 Pine St.
Martinez, CA 94553

EDITOR'S NOTE: Sara Hoffman, Contra Costa County's Solid Waste Manager, will answer questions and talk about landfills and solid waste at a meeting open to the public and sponsored by the Mt. Diablo Regional Group Sierra Club on Wednesday, November 8, at 7:30 p.m. in the Acalanes High School Cafeteria.

EXXON LEAVES ALASKA

There were thousands of dead seabirds, hundreds of dead eagles, and dead otters by the score, to say nothing of other animals whose lives were snuffed out because of the Alaskan oil spill. That is the tale now unfolding. EXXON, after what has been described as "at least" a public relations disaster for itself and other oil companies, FINALLY got busy. Money was spent like water. Everyone agrees the clean-up effort has been partially effective. NOW EXXON is leaving. The work isn't done. State officials assert the cleanup will continue and the costs will be **billed** to EXXON. To the eternal discredit of EXXON, an announcement has also been made that the effort to save and rehabilitate "oiled" birds and animals will also cease. In retrospect, it is crystal clear that neither EXXON nor the various state and federal authorities were in any way prepared for ANY oil spill. We, who depend on oil for much of our way of life, commerce, and so forth, cannot afford the waste of such a commodity. We cannot stand idly by and see hapless birds, trapped in gooey, watery oil with almost NO chance of survival. We cannot see our population of native birds, such as the eagles, decimated because of such a disaster. The private company that took so much for granted and got government to eliminate various protective requirements MUST be heavily censured. The company MUST be held totally responsible for the entire disaster. Governmental agencies, having responsibility for overseeing the safety of oil transport MUST also be criticized for not having done the job they were entrusted to do. Unless and until ALL such conditions are remedied "we the people" must insist NO oil drilling in sensitive areas.

THE THICK-BILLED PARROT

Great excitement! The Thick-billed Parrot is back in the wilds of Arizona. Released from captive breeding sources, the now - wild Thick-billed Parrots have been observed most regularly in the Chiricahua Mountains. One fledgling from 1988 is still with the flock, but the other disappeared last January. Other birds have been reported in the central and eastern sections of Arizona. A credible report indicates some of the birds are in western New Mexico. Authorities are attempting to prevent too much public exposure, lest the birds come to some harm. Arizona Game and Fish authorities are monitoring some of the birds through use of radio telemetry. Release of the Thick-billed Parrots into the wild, from captive breeding sources, is hailed as a success. Further information may be obtained by writing to:

Thick-billed Parrot Project
c/o Terry B. Johnson
Arizona Game and Fish Department
2222 W. Greenway Rd.
Phoenix, Arizona 85023-4399

Johnson has a word for birdwatchers: "If you are out birdwatching in Arizona, anywhere, keep your eyes peeled and your ears open. If you detect Thick-bills, let us know. Even if you don't detect them, just thinking about such possibilities adds to the pleasure of being outdoors. Thanks for helping!!"

FIELD TRIPS

Trips are open to members and nonmembers alike. Carpool time is departure time. Carpool expense: 5 cents per mile per rider is suggested; tolls and entry fees are shared equally by driver and riders. Bring binoculars, field guide and lunch. Trips go in light rain or drizzle; if in doubt, call leader up to 1/2 hour before departure time.

Difficulty of field trip:

Category 1: Easy, up to 1 mile walking, smooth paths

Category 2: Moderate, 1 mile or more, possibly rough

Category 3: Difficult, extensive walking, rough terrain

Saturday, October 7, **Outer Point Reyes**. Carpool 6:30 a.m., Acalanes Ave., off Pleasant Hill Rd., just north of SR24. Meet at Drake's Beach at 8:30 a.m. Cross San Rafael Bridge. From US 101, take San Rafael exit, go 2 blocks, turn left onto 3rd St. In San Anselmo, turn right onto Sir Francis Drake Blvd. At SR1, turn right 0.25 mile, left onto Bear Valley Rd. for about 3 miles, then onto Sir Francis Drake again. Continue 14 miles to Drake's Beach Rd. on left. Easy walking except for 0.25 mile of rough trail to the New Willows.

Leader: Barbara Vaughn, 376-8732.

Category 1

Thursday, October 12, **Point Diablo (Hawk Hill)**. Carpool 8:00 am, Acalanes Ave., off Pleasant Hill Rd., just north of SR24. Meet at 9:15 a.m. in parking area at upper lagoon. Take the San Rafael Bridge and US 101 south to the SECOND Sausalito exit. NOTICE!! THE TUNNEL INTO THE HEADLANDS IS PERMANENTLY CLOSED. At the stop sign, go left UP the hill. At the intersection, go right downhill. At the next stop sign, turn left and continue on to the parking lot at the upper lagoon. If weather is clear, we should see migrating hawks and possibly swifts, and waterfowl and shorebirds around the lagoons. If weather is suitable, we will carry lunch and stay on Hawk Mountain until mid-afternoon. Bring liquids; it can be hot.

Leader: Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486.

Category 2

Thursday, October 19, **Tilden Regional Park**. Meet at 8:00 a.m. in parking lot at entrance to the Nature Center, at the north end of the park.

Leader: Mary Jane Culver, 682-0509.

Category 1

Saturday, October 28, **Abbott's Lagoon**. Carpool 7:00 a.m., Acalanes Ave., off Pleasant Hill Rd., just north of SR24. Meet 8:30 a.m. at Bear Valley Visitor's Center, Point Reyes. Cross the San Rafael Bridge. From US 101, take the San Rafael exit, go 2 blocks, and turn left onto 3rd St. In San Anselmo, turn right onto Sir Francis Drake Blvd. At SR1, turn right 0.25 mile, left onto Bear Valley and left again into the Visitor's Center. We should see waterfowl, shorebirds, and possibly hawks or eagles. We will carry lunch and liquids.

Leader: Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486.

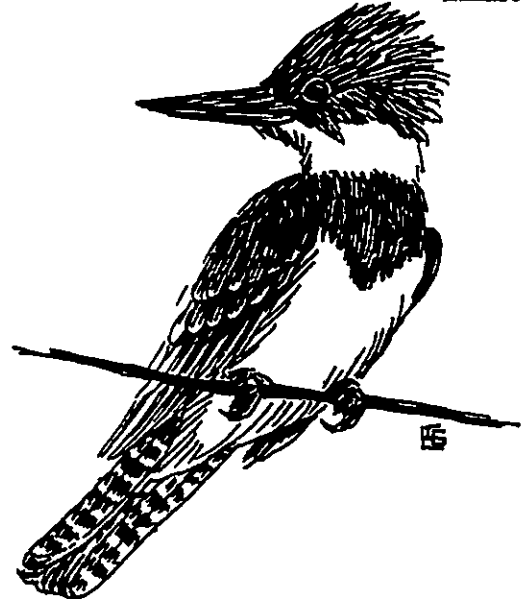
Category 3

FIELD TRIP REPORT

BODEGA BAY, August 12.

Nineteen birders enjoyed a beautiful day on the coast. Trip highlights included 22 Arctic Loons and 6 Black Oystercatchers, including 3 oystercatchers in a "piping display" (dance). A total of 67 species was seen.

Elizabeth Dickey



THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF BIRDING ETIQUETTE

by Victor Emanuel

1. Do not approach nesting birds too closely.
2. Obey all posted rules when visiting sanctuaries or preserves.
3. Do not enter private property without permission.
4. Do not use tape recorders in heavily birded areas during the nesting season. In other areas, use recorded bird vocalizations or imitations with discretion.
5. Be careful not to obstruct the view of fellow birders by stepping in front of them.
6. When the leader gets a bird in the scope, take a quick look when it is your turn, then come back for a second view after everyone has seen the bird.
7. Don't smoke in vehicles or near your fellow birders.
8. Be careful not to spray on insect repellent while standing near or upwind of other birders or while in vehicles.
9. Alternate position in the vehicles and on the trails so that everyone has a chance to have the best position.
10. In general, keep conversation to a minimum while on the forest trails. Bird vocalizations are the best way to locate forest birds and are difficult to hear above conversation.

(Reprinted with permission of the author.)

OBSERVATIONS

By Donna Peake-Klein

Please send observations to Donna Peake-Klein,
51 Picardy Ct., Walnut Creek, 94596, or call 930-9819.

Please include your telephone number with your observations.

Pied-billed Grebe: female with 3 chicks, 8/24, Neary's Lagoon, Santa Cruz. (W&GY)

Red-necked Grebe: 1 on 9/6 at Drake's Beach area, Pt. Reyes. (FB, MJC)

Wood Duck: 1 female on 8/24, Neary's Lagoon. (W&GY)

King Eider: male in eclipse plumage on 9/12 at the New Willows Cove area of Pt. Reyes. (FB, MJC, BG, MOB)

Harlequin Duck: an adult male in eclipse plumage on 9/2 at Pacific Grove. (F&GS)

Osprey: seen this month above Lake Cascade, Orinda. (H&NB)

Golden Eagle: 1 on 6/20, Concord Naval Weapons Station (GC); 3 on 8/11 at Briones (JC, DW); 1 on 8/25, the bay at Pacific Grove, being harassed by a gull (W&GY).

Black Rail: 1 heard on 7/2 off Highway 37 at juncture of Sonoma Creek and Napa Slough. (SF)

Virginia Rail: 3 adults and 3 juveniles on 6/12 at Carmel River State Beach (EB, SE); 3 on 8/29 at Bolinas Sewage Pond (FB, MJC, BG).

Lesser Golden Plover (fulva race): 1 on 8/29, Bolinas Sewage Pond. (FB, MJC, BG)

Solitary Sandpiper: 1 on 8/16, Bolinas Sewage Pond (ED, JH); 1 on 8/25, Limantour area of Pt. Reyes (FB); 1 on 8/29, Bolinas Sewage Pond (FB, MJC, BG).

Bar-tailed Godwit: 1 juvenile on 8/24 at Pescadero Creek mouth. (FB, MJC, MOB)

Marbled Godwit: 3 seen on 7/7 at Discovery Bay Golf course, E. Contra Costa County. (JE)

Baird's Sandpiper: 1 on 8/29, Bolinas Sewage Pond (FB, MJC, BG); 1 on 9/3, Stauffer Chemical Company pond, Martinez (R&JR).

Stilt Sandpiper: 1 on 8/25, Bolinas Sewage Pond. (FB)

Wilson's Phalarope: 1 on 8/24 in Pescadero Marsh area. (FB, MJC)

Little Gull: 1 adult on 9/6 at Horseshoe Pond area of Pt. Reyes. (FB, MJC, MOB)

Heermann's Gull: several seen on 8/25 along the waterfront at Pacific Grove. (W&GY)

Elegant Tern: 10 on 9/6 at Drake's Beach area of Pt. Reyes. (FB, MJC)

Marbled Murrelet: 1 seen on 8/22 in Bodega Bay harbor. (FB, MJC, BG)

Greater Roadrunner: 1 on 8/26 in the Carmel Valley on the west sides of Pinnacles. (W&GY)

Willow Flycatcher: 1 on 9/12 at the lighthouse area of Pt. Reyes. (FB, MJC, BG)

Western Kingbird: flock seen on 8/26, Carmel Valley. (W&GY)

Nashville Warbler: 1 immature on 8/11 at the U.C. Botanical Gardens. (DW)

Black-throated Gray Warbler: 1 on 8/11 at Briones. (JC, DW)
Warblers: on 9/12 at Pt. Reyes, 2 immature Bay-breasted at Mendoza Ranch, 1 Hermit at Nunes Ranch and 1 at the Lighthouse, 1 Black-and-white at Nunes Ranch, 1 American Redstart at the Lighthouse, 1 MacGillivray's in New Willows. (FB, MJC, BG)

Lark Sparrow: flock seen on 8/26, Coyote Reservoir. (W&GY)

Hooded Oriole: 1 fledgling being fed by a female, 7/30, Towne & Country Mobile Park (SF); 1 pair from 8/4 through 9/2 in her Concord yard (FB); up to 3 through 9/14 in their Alamo garden (R&JR).

Gray Fox: 1 on 8/26, Gilroy Hot Springs Road. Winnie and Gifford report the fox was about 15 feet from their car and remained, unafraid, for some time.

Observers: Hugh and Norah Bain, Ethel Beckerman, Florence Bennett, Anne and Elmer Brinkerhoff, Jan Cooper, George Cottle, Mary Jane Culver, Elizabeth Dickey, Jimm Edgar, Shirley Ellis, Sharyn Fernandez, Betty Gallagher, Jan Hilton, Many Observers, George and Molly Jane Monheit, Rich and Jean Richmond, Fred and Gabrielle Safier, Denise Wight, Winifred and Gifford Young.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE!

School has begun, but it's not too late to become a sponsor for the Audubon Adventures program. Audubon Adventures is a bi-monthly newspaper for each student, plus a teacher's guide, for third through sixth graders. The newspaper covers various areas of environmental education. The topics for this school year are:

August/September	Spiders
October/November	Endangered Species
December/January	Conifers
February/March	Mammals/Tracks
April/May	Migration
June/July	Invertebrates

Make an investment in the future. Act now to help our young people appreciate the world around them and its treasures. The fee is \$30.00 per class. Send a check, payable to the National Audubon Society, to Dana Jordan, 1236 Lindell Dr., Walnut Creek, CA 94596.

SPONSOR: Name: _____
Address: _____
New _____ Renewal _____

SCHOOL NAME: _____
Grade _____ No. Students _____
Teacher's name: _____
School Address: _____

CONFERENCES AND EXCURSIONS

COME TO THE FESTIVAL!

Mt. Diablo Audubon will be part of a community festival on Saturday, October 21, from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and on Sunday, October 22, from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. The festival will be at Castle Rock Park, 1700 Castle Rock Rd., Walnut Creek. We need help in setting up our booth and to greet visitors. We also would like to take people on short birding walks. Please call Diane Macario at 674-0920 if you can help us so we can have a great booth.

SPOTTING AND BINOCULAR SHOW

On Saturday, October 28, from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m., the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory and the Santa Clara Audubon Society will host a spotting scope and binocular show at the San Francisco Bay NWR Environmental Education Center in Alviso. Major manufacturers will show their spotting scopes and binoculars, and there will be lectures and demonstrations on the selection, use, care, and cleaning of optics. The public is invited and admission is free. For more information, please contact SFBBO at (408) 946-6548. If you only need directions to the Environmental Center, call (408) 262-5513.

ROUNTREE'S SHOREBIRDS

Thomas Rountree's photographs of shorebirds will be on display in the Natural Sciences Special Gallery of the Oakland Museum from September 16 through January 28. Rountree treated our chapter to his slide and music presentation last April. Those who missed that show, and those who would like to visit again with his shorebirds, can do so during this exhibition.

CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS CONFERENCE

The 1989 California Wilderness Conference, sponsored by the California Wilderness Coalition, celebrates the 25th anniversary of the Wilderness Act, enacted by Congress in September of 1984. The conference will include workshops and speeches on wilderness management, desert protection, ancient forests, passing legislation, and more, as well as an art show, music, entertainment, and slide shows. The conference is scheduled for October 19 through 22 at the Visalia Convention Center. For more information, contact Jeanette Colbert, Conference Coordinator, 2665 Portage Bay East, Suite 5, Davis CA 95616, (916) 758-0380.

PROJECT GREENLAND AND HUDSON BAY

Cruise to Greenland and Hudson Bay in July, 1990, on board the *Society Explorer*, under the sponsorship of the Mono Lake Committee. Emphasis will be on the wildlife of the sea, air and land, and seeing prehistoric sites as well as present-day life of the Inuit in fishing villages along the way. The tour cost starts at \$5300, and 10% of the fare is a tax deductible donation to the Mono Lake Foundation. For details, send a self-addressed business envelope to Mono Lake Committee, c/o M. Bennett, 2719 Marin Ave., Berkeley, CA 94708.

STARLINGS AND HOUSE SPARROWS

The Lindsay Museum is collecting information on starlings and house sparrows and their impact on native species in the Bay Area and California. They would like to see if these introduced species are as detrimental here as they seem to be on the East Coast. If you have any information, please send it to Susan Heckly, c/o The Lindsay Museum, 1901 First Ave., Walnut Creek, CA 94596, or call 935-1988.

MARTINEZ FIELD TRIP LEADERS WANTED

Field trip leaders for birdwalks in the Martinez area are needed. Birdwalks are usually held every other week, beginning at 9:00 a.m., with a duration of two to three hours. You do NOT have to be an expert birder, only a person who is willing to share time, enthusiasm, and knowledge with an attentive group of persons. Contact Linda Stumpff, Chief of Interpretation, John Muir National Historic Site, 4202 Alhambra Ave., Martinez, CA 94553, 228-8860.

GLEANINGS

A SURPRISE AT YUBA PASS

George Monheit reports from Yuba Pass that on Saturday, July 1, his party of four observed three species of woodpeckers all feeding a young woodpecker. The first to arrive was a Hairy Woodpecker, who fed a bug to the squeaking youngster, then left. Two minutes later, a Black-backed Woodpecker arrived and fed the baby. He left and a couple of minutes later a White-headed Woodpecker came and fed the young one. George and his party originally believed that the young one was a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, but a later report from Peter Allen of Golden Gate Audubon indicated the nest had originally been excavated by a Hairy Woodpecker. Mr. Allen did not see the young bird being fed, however. The feeding routine continued the entire time George and his party remained.

SHOREBIRD CENSUS RESULTS

The fall 1989 San Francisco Bay shorebird census run by the Pt. Reyes Bird Observatory was a success. On San Francisco and San Pablo bay, they found at least 320,000 shorebirds, 1900 herons, egrets and rails, 200 raptors, and 3500 White Pelicans along the tidal flats and adjacent wetlands.

PEREGRINE FALCONS ON MT. DIABLO

Nine state and local agencies and conservations groups were able to cross-foster two Peregrine Falcon chicks successfully in the nest of a Prairie Falcon this spring. The baby falcons were placed in a nest on the north side of Mt. Diablo on May 12, but kept secret until they had successfully fledged and could fly. The Prairie Falcon chicks were later reintroduced to another Prairie Falcon nest south of Mt. Diablo. The nest the Peregrine Falcon chicks were introduced into was a historic Peregrine nest site. It is hoped that these chicks will return to the mountain when they are ready to nest and attract mates from the more densely populated coastal nesting sites.

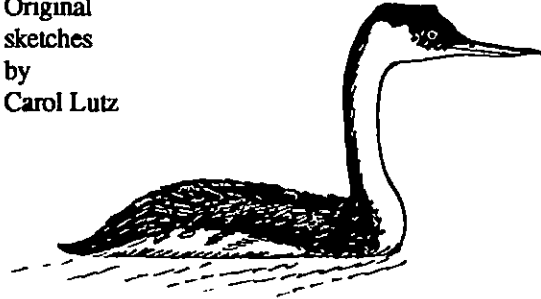
NEW MEMBERS

We warmly greet these new MDAS members whom we hope to meet in person at meetings and trips: Ronald Anderson, R. L. Ashworth, Roy Bailey, Joan Ballard, Thomas Bishop, James Bradt, Patricia Brady, Joe Breazeale, Jerry Britten, C. F. Chavez, Janet Chilton, Don Chorley, Charlotte Clark, Joseph Coggins, Jan Cremolini, Mrs. John Davis, Ethel Day, Sidney DeGoff, J. Diepenbrock, Joan and Bill Dougherty, Lovelle Drachman, Susan Elices, Sam M. Ersan, Liz Everitt, G. A. Gustavson Falck, B. Feldman, A. Gaspari, Ray Gaudinier, Robin George, T. Gillis, Charlotte Graham, Margaret Harlow, Robert Hoppe, Nira Horees, F. L. Howard, Jane Jacobs, G. Kinsey, Jack Klosterman, Marilyn Lamm, William Larsen, Jeanne Maggi, L. J. Mahoney, Narendra Malani, Annabelle Metzler, Patricia Milby, Ruth Morse, Dennis Nelson, Florence Oldham, Viri Puri, Julie Redmond, Mrs. Quentin Reynolds, A. A. Rocchi, Shannon Rogers, Toni L. Rose, Jim and Nikki Rowley, John Ruzek, Bob Schmitt, Alan Siegle, Talbert Smith, Robert Todd, Herbert Vore, Oddrun Wapman, Ralph and Carol Weinstein, Don White, Bill Whitman, R. Williams.

DONATIONS AND BEQUESTS TO MT. DIABLO AUDUBON

Our chapter has from time to time received generous donations and gifts in memory of friends or relatives or as spontaneous contributions to the society's general activities. These gifts, donations, and bequests are welcomed as significant support of our goals of wildlife appreciation and conservation. Donations are tax deductible, and will be acknowledged in the Quail as well as personally on behalf of Mt. Diablo Audubon Society.

Original
sketches
by
Carol Lutz



The Quail is published monthly except for the combined July/August issue. Audubon membership includes subscriptions to the Quail and Audubon magazine. To join (\$30/year individual, \$38 family; introductory and senior rates available), write a check to National Audubon Society but send it, with letter or subscription card, to the Membership Chairperson, Diane Macario, 2425 Maple Ave., Concord, CA 94520. The Chapter benefits financially from membership applications it processes. Full Audubon membership is encouraged, but subscription to the Quail is available separate from membership at \$8/year. The check should be made to MDAS and mailed to the MDAS Treasurer, Florence Bennett, P.O. Box 31435, Walnut Creek, CA 94598. First class mailing of the Quail to member or nonmember is an additional \$3/year payable to MDAS & sent to the Treasurer.

ADDRESS CHANGES AND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION: Consult Diane Macario, (415) 674-0920.

*Barbara Burek, Editor, 157 Mt. Kennedy Dr., Martinez, CA 94553 (415) 229-0394
Exchange bulletins for MDAS to Mt. Diablo Audubon Society, P. O. Box 53, Walnut Creek, CA 94596, please.*

Mt. Diablo Audubon Society
P.O. Box 53
Walnut Creek, CA 94596

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The QUAIL

BULLETIN OF THE MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY
P. O. BOX 53
WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA 94596
(415) AUD-UBON

President: Barbara Vaughn, 376-8732
VP Conservation: Al McNabney, 945-1785
Treasurer: Florence Bennett, 689-3106
Sales Manager: Gifford Young, (707) 745-4134
Programs: Maury Stern, 284-5980
Field Trips: Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486
Membership: Diane Macario, 674-0920
Publicity: Shirley Ellis, 939-9091
Hospitality: Winifred Young, (707) 745-4134
Secretary: Britta Cascio, 837-2895

November 1989

Vol. 36 No. 3

Next Deadline: November 9

November Program:

Old Growth Forests in the Pacific Northwest

Dan Taylor, Western Regional Representative of the National Audubon Society, will update us at our **November 2** meeting on the controversial position of the Audubon Society in regard to the Old Growth Forests of the Pacific Northwest. The Audubon Society and its representatives have had death and bomb threats for their support of preservation of the ancient forests. Currently the threat of an economic boycott has forced multiple large national corporations to withdraw support of Audubon's television show on the Turner Broadcasting Station. (See Conservation Notes, p. 2)

Dan Taylor is a local person, who grew up in Pittsburg and Martinez and attended DVC. He earned a bachelor's degree from UC Davis in zoology and a master's degree in botany from Cal State Fullerton. He began working for the regional office of the NAS in 1978 and has been especially involved in the Mono Lake battle and now the ancient forest fight. Help us welcome him back to Mt. Diablo Audubon and hear what he has to tell us about this important issue.

Birding information for November will be presented by Sarah Blodgett. She will give a slide show and talk about her experiences at the Audubon camp in Maine.

General meetings of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society are held on the first Thursday of every month from September through June at the Willow Creek Center, 1026 Mohr Lane, Concord. The agenda for meetings is as follows:

6:30 Doors open
7:00 Birding Info
7:30 Business Meeting
8:00 Social Half-hour
8:30 Program

The next board meeting will be Thursday, November 9, at 7:30 p.m., at the home of Florence Bennett, 689-3106. Please call for directions. The board meetings are open to all interested members.

The December program will be given by Jules Evens on the history of the Pt. Reyes peninsula.

Our 90th annual Christmas Count will be December 30 this year. Maury Stern and Jimm Edgar will be co-compilers. Save this day on your calendar!

CONSERVATION NOTES

By Al McNabney

A BOYCOTT OF THE RIGHTS OF "WE THE PEOPLE"
 "Rage Over Trees," Audubon's major effort to bring facts to the people about what's happening to OUR forests, was aired on September 24. The informational show was aired on the Turner Broadcasting Station with NO commercial sponsorship. The program documents public debate over protection of the Northwest's remaining ancient forests on public lands.

EVERY COMMERCIAL SPONSOR TO THE PROGRAM TOLD TED TURNER BROADCASTING OFFICIALS THEY DECIDED TO PULL THE TV (sponsorship) ADS, as a result of threats and intimidation by the timber industry.

A major supporter, Stroh's Brewery, cancelled underwriting for the entire Audubon television series. While the company was undergoing some financial problems, the timber industry launched a letter-writing campaign and threatened the brewery with a boycott! (What! NO beer - hmmm). Audubon President Peter Berle said, "This is the last gasp in a desperate effort to stop the American people from seeing a major documentary film about the public debate over protection of the Northwest's remaining ancient forests on public land." Free speech, a basic tenet of our nation's First Amendment, has been seriously impaired by the actions of logging/timber interests. Corporations that cancelled their commercial air time for this program include the Ford Motor Company, Dean Witter Reynolds Company for their Discover card, ITT Rayonier Inc., the Hartford Insurance Group, Exxon, Michelin Tire Corp., Stroh's Brewery, New York Life, and Citicorp. Turner Broadcasting took the financial risk of airing the documentary, even without sponsors. ALL Audubon members are urged to write Ted Turner Broadcasting, 1 CNN Center, Atlanta, GA 30348-5366, expressing support and also asking him to continue sponsoring the Audubon TV specials. This is an opportunity for each Audubon member to lend a hand in furtherance of a good cause.

FARMS IN BRENTWOOD?

Just because there is agriculture in East CCC TODAY doesn't mean that activity will ALWAYS be there. In fact, a group of people interested in selling ag land have been working to create a General Plan that will accommodate conversion of ag land to development. Another group, the East County Farmer, has hired a consulting firm to do a study to determine the viability of agriculture in the east county in the next few years. We believe the issue involves much more. The following letter appeared in the October 11 *New York Times*:

WE CAN'T KEEP TURNING FARMS INTO CITIES

TO THE EDITOR:

William Safire's suggestion to put new American cities in "wide open spaces" (column, September 25) may sound good, but he misses important points. Much of the wide open spaces constitutes valuable farmland. True, such land can be developed for housing, shopping malls, and the like. Every foot so developed probably means less high-grade farmland. In some cases, the land is fertile, has adequate water and is reasonably close to cities. Produce can be grown on it and transported to markets in cities at a reasonable price. As high-grade farmland is used for development, farm produce has to be grown on land that is less fertile, where water conditions may not be ideal. In the end, produce for human consumption will have less variety and poorer quality and cost more. And as we take fine, open farmland for development, we remove habitats for birds, animals, and plants of all sorts. In some instances, we don't even know what we are destroying in the name of development because too little is known about the flora and fauna of the region. Use of the farmlands for development will ultimately mean more auto, bus, and truck traffic on roads, streets, and freeways. Such congestion means higher transport costs and increased demand for costly freeways. If we continue the pace of development of good farmland, our society will be paying a heavy price in future years.

If YOU as an Audubon member agree with those thoughts, tell your Contra Costa County Supervisor.

GARBAGE

Inching forward like molasses creeping out of the bottle in freezing weather, the decision process for selection of a new solid waste landfill site is moving forward. Five sites have been adopted for final consideration. Included is MARSH CANYON. That site impinges on Round Valley, a jewel for Contra Costa for a park/open space. Also included for consideration are the East County site, Keller/Bailey, and Kirker Pass. YOU, as a citizen in CCC, can and should express your views to the Supervisor in your district. The final decision probably will be made shortly after the first of next year. The Keller/Bailey site has all of the attributes necessary for a solid waste landfill.

FIELD TRIPS

Trips are open to members and nonmembers alike. Carpool time is departure time. Carpool expense: 5 cents per mile per rider is suggested; tolls and entry fees are shared equally by driver and riders. Bring binoculars, field guide and lunch. Trips go in light rain or drizzle; if in doubt, call leader up to 1/2 hour before departure time.

Difficulty of field trip:

Category 1: Easy, up to 1 mile walking, smooth paths

Category 2: Moderate, 1 mile or more, possibly rough

Category 3: Difficult, extensive walking, rough terrain

Saturday, November 4, **Limantour**. Carpool 7:00 a.m. at Acalanes Avenue off Pleasant Hill Rd., north of Fwy. 24. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the headquarters of Pt. Reyes National Seashore. Cross the San Rafael Bridge. From US 101, take the San Rafael exit, go 2 blocks, turn left onto 3rd St. In San Anselmo, turn right onto Sir Francis Drake Blvd. At SR1, turn right 0.25 mile, left onto Bear Valley and left again into Visitor's Center. Shore birds, seabirds, and waterfowl, as well as land birds on the ridge. Trails may be muddy.

Leader: Maury Stern, 284-5980.

Category 2

Wednesday, November 8, **Mt. View Sanitary Plant**. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the parking lot at the plant. Take the Pacheco Blvd. exit from I-680, turn right onto Arthur and go under the freeway. Arthur turns left, then right; at the second turn, turn sharp left onto a non-county maintained road. Follow the road into the sanitary plant. This is a good place for close looks at ducks and other water birds; we have often had bittern and Green-backed Herons. Trails may be muddy.

Leader: John Davis, 228-9516.

Category 1

Thursday, November 16, **Charleston Slough**. Carpool 7:00 a.m. El Cerro Blvd., just west of I-680. Meet at the end of Terminal Rd., Mountain View. Take Dumbarton Bridge and go south on US 101 to San Antonio exit. Go north and east on San Antonio and turn right on Terminal. Park near end. This has been a good area for water and salt marsh birds. Trails may be muddy.

Leader: Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486.

Category 2

Wednesday, November 29, **Lafayette Reservoir**. Meet 8:00 a.m. in the parking lot at the top of the dam. Parking costs \$3.00 and is prohibited at the bottom of the hill. A good place to learn local birds, and always a chance of a surprise on the lake. For field trip information, call Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486.

Category 2

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

SAN MATEO COAST, September 9.

Seventeen members and guests spent a foggy morning and a sunny but windy afternoon between Pescadero and Ano Nuevo State Park. We saw 88 species under less than ideal conditions; there was no water in Pescadero Marsh and there were high winds at Ano Nuevo. Highlight birds included an American Bittern at the Ano Nuevo pond; a very cooperative Virginia Rail at Pescadero Marsh; Black Oystercatcher, Surfbird and Wandering Tattler along the rocky shoreline; Baird's Sandpiper; hundreds of Red-necked Phalarope; a Vaux's Swift flying over Gazos Creek Rd.; and a Solitary Vireo in the willows along the channel running through Pescadero Marsh. Unfortunately at the Pescadero parking lot, one of the cars had its door window smashed but no items were stolen. Of special note, we saw a long-distance hiker with his solar-powered lap-top computer, and his dog with its own backpack, travelling from Muir Woods to John Muir College at U. C. San Diego.

Maury Stern

SAN FRANCISCO BAY REFUGE, September 20.

Five members plus two guests from Ohlone Audubon had a foggy morning that cleared before noon. Among the shorebirds, both Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs and an early Dunlin were seen. A Hermit Thrush was observed closely. Lunch was accompanied by four species of warblers - Yellow, Yellow-rumped, Wilson's, and Black-throated Gray - and two over-friendly raccoons. 45 species total were seen.

Elizabeth Dickey

SALINAS RIVER, September 23.

Twelve observers spent a long, cool, overcast day in the Salinas area. Pectoral Sandpiper, Red Knot and Lesser Yellowlegs were the outstanding shore birds. There was also a good opportunity to compare a Western Grebe and a Clark's Grebe as they preened next to each other on the shore at the Moonglow Dairy. Best find of the trip was an American Redstart which was seen well at the Moss Landing Wildlife Area. 90 species total were seen.

Elizabeth Dickey

NOTE: The Moss Landing Wildlife Area opens up a large area on the north side of Elkhorn Slough for birders. Access is from SR 1 about 0.25 mile north of the road to Zmudowski State Beach, via a farm road. There is a sign which is very hard to see when driving north.

LINCOLN PARK, September 28.

Five members and two guests spent an overcast but mild and pleasant morning at Lincoln Park. Willows were scanned for warblers, but nothing rare was sighted. North Lake in Golden Gate Park was drained for repairs; however, a huge flock of Pygmy Nuthatches in the nearby conifers held our attention for some time. A total of 38 species was seen.

Barbara Vaughn

OBSERVATIONS

By Donna Peake-Klein

Please send observations to Donna Peake-Klein,

51 Picardy Ct., Walnut Creek, 94596, or call 930-9819.

Please include your telephone number with your observations.

King Eider: 1 on 9/19 at the New Willows cove, Pt. Reyes (FB, NB); 1 on 9/24 at Pt. Reyes (JE); 1 male in eclipse plumage on 9/26 at the New Dock, just east of the Fish Docks at Pt. Reyes (FB, JR, et al.)

Harlequin Duck: 1 male on 9/17 near Lover's Point, Pacific Grove. (SE)

Lesser Golden-plover: 4 *dominica* race, 2 *fulva* race on 9/26 in ROA station field at Pt. Reyes (FB, JR, et al.); 3 on 9/28 at Pt. Reyes (JE).

Wandering Tattler: 2 on 9/12 on breakwater at Elsie Roemer Sanctuary, Alameda South Shore. (JR, RR, et al.)

Red Knot: 1 on 9/17, Elkhorn Slough. (MW)

Pectoral Sandpiper: 1 on 9/17, Elkhorn Slough (MW); 1 on 10/3 at Spaletta Ranch slop pond, Pt. Reyes. (FB, JR)

Ruff: 1 Ruff on 9/17 at Salinas Slough (MW, CG); 2 Reeves on 9/28 at Pt. Reyes (JE).

Curlew Sandpiper: 1 on 9/18 at Lake Merced, SF. (FB, JR, RR, MOB)

Red Phalarope: 5 seen on 8/31 at Hole in the Head, Bodega Bay. (SE)

Pomarine Jaeger: 1 on 9/12 chasing terns off the foot of Park St., Alameda South Shore. (JR, RR, et al.)

Little Gull: 1 on 9/10 at Pt. Reyes. (MW, CG)

Rhinoceros Auklet: 1 on 9/18 flying by off the Cliff House, SF. (JR, FB)

Caspian Tern: several hundred on 9/15 seen on the beach with numerous Heermann's Gulls at Moss Landing Harbor. (SE)

Elegant Tern: 3 seen on 9/10, Jetty Rd. (MW, CG)

Vaux's Swift: 3 on 9/19 over her Alamo home. (JR)

Lewis' Woodpecker: 1 on 10/1 in his Walnut Creek garden. (RH)

Black-throated Blue Warbler: 1 on 9/28, Pt. Reyes. (JE)

Palm Warbler: 1 on 9/19 at Mendoza Ranch, Pt. Reyes (FB, NB); on 10/3, 1 at Mendoza Ranch and 3 or 4 at Nunes Ranch, Pt. Reyes (FB, JR, et al.)

Blackpoll Warbler: 1 on 9/28, Pt. Reyes. (JE)

MacGillivray's Warbler: 1 on 9/19 at the Fish Docks, Pt. Reyes. (FB, NB)

American Redstart: 1 on 10/3 at Mendoza Ranch. (FB, JR)

Wilson's Warbler: 1 in her Concord yard. (FB)

Hooded Oriole: 3 at her Alamo home through 9/22. (JR)

Observers: Norah Bain, Florence Bennett, Jimm Edgar, Shirley Ellis, Chuck Groff, Ralph Hudgens, Jean Richmond, Rich Richmond and Mike Williams.

Northern California Rare Bird Alert: (415) 528-0288

CLASSES AND EXCURSIONS

RICHARDSON BAY SEMINAR

Please join Richardson Bay Audubon on November 13 at 8:00 p.m. at the Richardson Bay Audubon Center, 376 Greenwood Beach Road, Tiburon, for a talk entitled: "Results of the Fish and Wildlife Service's Seasonal Wetland Study in the San Francisco Bay Area." The speaker will be Ruth Pratt, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologist. The seminar is co-sponsored by the Northern California Chapter of the Cooper Ornithological Society and the Richardson Bay Audubon Center.

POINT REYES FIELD SEMINARS

The Point Reyes Field Seminars Programs offers courses in the birds of Point Reyes, photography, the natural world of Point Reyes, maritime history, and arts and natural crafts. The class size is generally limited to 18-24 participants and the fees cover administrative costs, instructors' fees, and materials. For further information, write Seminar Coordinator, Point Reyes Field Seminars, Point Reyes, CA 94956, or call (415) 663-1200.

FAREWELL, BROWN TOWHEE

Our familiar Brown Towhee, seen so often in our yards and on our lawns is no more. The Thirty-seventh Supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union Check-list of North American Birds has split the Brown Towhee into the California Towhee (*Pipilo crissalis*) and the Canyon Towhee (*Pipilo fuscus*). The former is the species found in California, as the name for once would indicate, while the Canyon Towhee will be found in the interior southwest. Two other splits affect birds commonly seen in California. The Western Flycatcher has been split into the Pacific-slope Flycatcher (*Empidonax difficilis*) and the Cordilleran Flycatcher (*Empidonax occidentalis*). The Pacific-slope is the expected species in California, while the Cordilleran will be found in the mountains of the Great Basin and in the Rocky Mountains. However, neither Empid species will be any easier to identify. The California Gnatcatcher (*Poliopitila californica*) has been split from the Black-tailed Gnatcatcher (*Poliopitila melanura*), and again is the species expected in California.

In other changes, the Water Pipit (*Anthus spinoletta*) has been renamed the American Pipit (*Anthus rubescens*). The Northern Hawk-Owl has lost its hyphen, becoming the Northern Hawk Owl, and the Common Pauraque has become less common by becoming just the Pauraque. The Common Barn-Owl has done both, becoming simply the Barn Owl. Perhaps the best news from this Supplement, however, is the absence of lumps (consolidation of two or more species into one), ensuring that this time around, at least, we will at worst stay the same on our lists and happily may gain a new species or three.

TRAVEL CORNER

Discovery in the Galapagos by Joe Broyles

Last June, I served as co-leader and escort for a Cheesemans' Ecology Safari tour to the Galapagos Islands of Ecuador. After assembling in Quito, Ecuador, and having a tour of the old part of the city, our group of eight tourists and I flew out on June 20 to Baltra (South Seymour) Island in the Galapagos where we were met by our outstanding naturalist and the crew of the motor/sail vessel, *Cachalote*. For the next fifteen days, we traveled from island to island, usually at night, in order to have more time ashore in the daytime. In all we made twenty-four landings on fourteen islands.

We visited various habitats: sandy beaches, brackish lagoons, rock (lava) shores, cinder-cone uplands, vast lava flows, upland dry forests, the volcanic crater of Daphne Major, and the moist highlands of Santa Cruz (Indefatigable) Island, the site of the tortoise reserve. In addition, we swam at several locations and snorkeled at three sites. Whenever we were underway by day, we searched for pelagic birds.

Though the islands are volcanic, isolated, and relatively small, we encountered an astounding variety of plants, fish, and birds in addition to the reptiles and mammals we usually associate with the Galapagos. Swimming and snorkling yielded close encounters with reef sharks, sea lions, numerous invertebrate species, Green Sea Turtles, a penguin, and a thirty species of fish. We also saw about seventy species of plants during our excursions ashore. The weather for the most part was balmy, which no doubt helped encourage wildlife to be out and active.

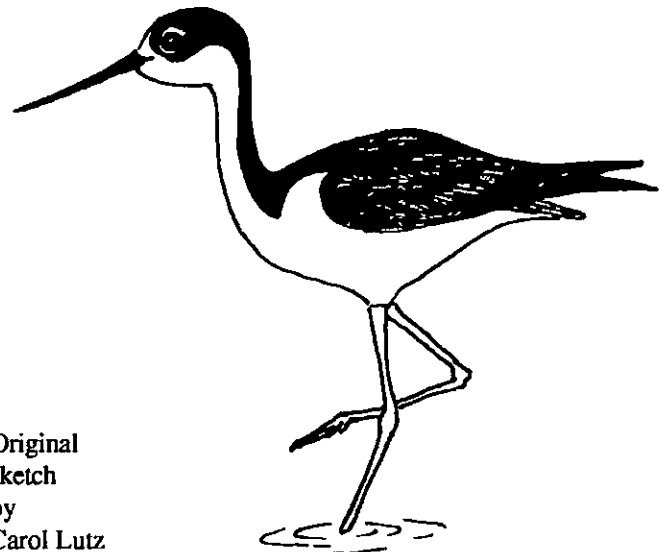
Birding highlights were numerous. Many species of birds were nesting while we were there. We found Blue-footed Boobies nesting by the hundred in colonies on Espanola (Hood), Isabela (Albemarle), and Daphne Major. There were both Great and Magnificent Frigatebirds, Red-footed Boobies, and Wedge-tailed Storm-petrels nesting on Genovesa (Tower). Swallow-tailed Gulls and Red-billed Tropicbirds found homes on Genovesa and South Plaza, while the Masked Boobies were on Genovesa and on Daphne Major. The Waved Albatross nested on Espanola exclusively, but Brown Pelicans were found on Rabida (Jervis), Isabela, and Santiago (James). The Flightless Cormorants nested on Isabela and Fernandina (Narborough), and the Greater Flamingoes on Rabida.

In addition to these nesting species, we saw all of the Darwin's finches except the Mangrove Finch, which somehow eluded us, and the Medium Tree Finch, which lives only in the highlands of Floreana (Charles) Island, which was not on our itinerary. The Vermilion Flycatchers were common in the Santa Cruz highlands, where we also saw Smooth-billed Anis. Yellow Warblers greeted us at every landing except one. We saw only

a couple of sandpipers the whole time, but the warblers seemed to fill the niche of the sandpipers in that they were seen almost exclusively on beaches where they fed mostly on tiny flies. On Bartolome, we saw a kettle of forty-one Galapagos Hawks - ten percent of that species! There were many birds species native to North America; perhaps the most surprising to me (save one) being the numerous Wandering Tattlers.

The ornithological highlight of the trip for me came on our third day out, on Genovesa. I saw a glimpse of a fast-moving bird flying away from me, out from under a young red mangrove and into some lava rocks by a tide pool. Much black and white, plus some flashes of pink made me guess it was a Rose-breasted Grosbeak, which I expected would be on the "accidentals" list of Michael Harris' *Birds of the Galapagos*. I found the bird in the lava and my hunch was correct. A tourist in our group identified it independently and the two of us took photographs. However, the grosbeak was not in Harris. The ornithologist at the Darwin Research Station could find no record of the species in the islands. I subsequently checked with Michael Harris, who confirmed that this is a first record.

In all, we saw sixty-one species of birds in the Galapagos. A day trip to the Pasochoa preserve outside Quito on our return to Ecuador yielded another two dozen species; drizzle conditions precluded a larger count. For me, a biologist, this was a fascinating first visit to the birthplace of the theory of evolution, and I am looking forward to my next visit.



Original
sketch
by
Carol Lutz

Editor: Joe Broyles and the Cheesemans will be leading another trip to the Galapagos in March, 1990. For more information, call Joe evenings at 837-1279, or the Cheesemans anytime at (408) 741-5330. A full schedule of their tours can be obtained by writing to Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris, 20800 Kittredge Rd., Saratoga, CA 95070.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome with pleasure these new MDAS members and hope to meet them soon: Juan Alvear, the Baghery family, Harry Bows, Ben Brenner, Claudia Bubeck, Dana Campbell, Martha Campbell, Jack Dempsey, W. DeProsse, L. Dobbins, Bruce D. Douglas, Grace Downer, Susan B. Ferro, Roger Fiske, Betty Glick, Mary Greathouse, Terry Haefner, William M. Hamlin, Ralph Hammond, Barbara Hauge, Jeffery Hess, Alice Hewlett, W. Hogue, Jacqueline Hopkins, Ann Hyde, Donna Irvine, Earl Kambic, Carol Kern, Gary Lucido, Nelson Luke, Harald Lyche, Virginia Meier, Sharon Meigs, P. Miller, Barbara and Greg Millikan, Mr. and Mrs. S. Niethammer, Michael Perrus, Patricia Philbin, Helen Phillips, K. Rudolph, Evon Sarment, G. Sciacqua, Paul Sherman, Nancy S. Smith, Kent Smith, R. Stone, Marian Stratton, Marcia Sturm, the Torpey family, Julia G. Wahl, A. Walker, S. Watkins, Bette Wentzel, and Janet Young.

MT. DIABLO SALES

Are you stuck, thinking about what to get that special person for Christmas? How about something from the Mt. Diablo bookshelf? The following books are available from the MDAS Sales Manager, Gifford Young, 1451 Janet Ct., Benicia, CA 94510, (707) 745-4134.

Birding Northern California, by Jean Richmond. 72 local sites with exceptionally good birding possibilities are described. \$12.05 by mail, including tax and handling; \$10.70 at MDAS meetings.

The Birder's Handbook, by Paul R. Ehrlich, David A. Dobkin, and Darryl Wheye. After you identify that bird, find out more about it from this companion to your field guide. Information on nesting, courtship, eggs, diet, behavior, conservation, and more. \$14.75 by mail, \$13.00 at MDAS meetings.

The Quail is published monthly except for the combined July/August issue. Audubon membership includes subscriptions to the *Quail* and *Audubon* magazine. To join (\$30/year individual, \$38 family; introductory and senior rates available), write a check to National Audubon Society but send it, with letter or subscription card, to the Membership Chairperson, Diane Macario, 2425 Maple Ave., Concord, CA 94520. The Chapter benefits financially from membership applications it processes. Full Audubon membership is encouraged, but subscription to the *Quail* is available separate from membership at \$8/year. The check should be made to MDAS and mailed to the MDAS Treasurer, Florence Bennett, P.O. Box 31435, Walnut Creek, CA 94598. First class mailing of the *Quail* to member or nonmember is an additional \$3/year payable to MDAS & sent to the Treasurer.

ADDRESS CHANGES AND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION: Consult Diane Macario, (415) 674-0920.

Barbara Burek, Editor, 157 Mt. Kennedy Dr., Martinez, CA 94553 (415) 229-0394

Exchange bulletins for MDAS to Mt. Diablo Audubon Society, P. O. Box 53, Walnut Creek, CA 94596, please.

Mt. Diablo Audubon Society
P.O. Box 53
Walnut Creek, CA 94596



TIME VALUE MAIL



The QUAIL

BULLETIN OF THE MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY
P. O. BOX 53
WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA 94596
(415) AUD-UBON

President: Barbara Vaughn, 376-8732
VP Conservation: Al McNabney, 945-1785
Treasurer: Florence Bennett, 689-3106
Sales Manager: Gifford Young, (707) 745-4134
Programs: Maury Stern, 284-5980
Field Trips: Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486
Membership: Diane Macario, 674-0920
Publicity: Shirley Ellis, 939-9091
Hospitality: Winifred Young, (707) 745-4134
Secretary: Britta Cascio, 837-2895

December 1989

Vol. 36 No. 4

Next Deadline: December 14

December Program:

Natural History of the Point Reyes Peninsula

We are fortunate to have Jules Evens speak to us at our **December 7** meeting on the natural history of Point Reyes. Jules received his early education in natural history in the hardwood forests and marble quarries and along the trout-rich rivers of the Green Mountains of Vermont. Later he was educated in the liberal arts and natural sciences at Kent School in Connecticut, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the College of Marin, and California State University.

An active field biologist for the last 15 years, Jules is currently a Research Associate with Point Reyes Bird Observatory, Audubon Canyon Ranch, and Marin Municipal Water District. He is currently involved in several ongoing projects, including the reproductive success of Osprey, wetland habitat evaluation and restoration, and the population ecology of several threatened and endangered species.

Formerly a regional editor for the journal *American Birds*, Jules recently completed *The Natural History of the Point Reyes Peninsula*. He writes a natural history column in the local weekly, the *Point Reyes Light*, and has authored various research articles. Currently he is working on two non-fiction natural history books.

The December birding information will be on the **1989 Christmas Bird Count**. More information on the Christmas Count is on page 5.

General meetings of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society are held on the first Thursday of every month from September through June at the Willow Creek Center, 1026 Mohr Lane, Concord. The agenda for meetings is as follows:

6:30 Doors open
7:00 Birding Info
7:30 Business Meeting
8:00 Social Half-hour
8:30 Program

The next board meeting will be Thursday, December 14, at 7:30 p.m., at the home of Jimm Edgar, 4614 Jacobus Ave., Oakland, 658-2330. Board meetings are open to all interested members.

The January program will be given by Jim Lomax on birds of Southeastern Arizona.

Best Wishes for a Happy Holidays
from
the Mt. Diablo Audubon Board

CONSERVATION NOTES

By Al McNabney

CRYSTYL RANCH

Right doesn't always make right, but determination, hard work, perspicacity, and dedicated individuals can help achieve such an end. The Crystyl Ranch effort involved a cause that was RIGHT!!!!!!! A City Council that seemingly gave little to NO heed as to what "the people" were saying, helped because the Council so clearly rejected the people's views. All those elements came together and created important opposition to the Crystyl Ranch project. This great open space, close to the areas purchased for open space by the cities of Clayton, Concord, and Walnut Creek, would have been essentially ruined, had the huge development project been finalized.

Mount Diablo State Park. It belongs to ALL of the people. The park would have been seriously impacted. Greater impact would come in the future, when other developers will propose projects that would further make use of land that should be a part of that wonderous area. Interestingly, those supporting the project spent MORE money than had been spent on any similar Concord project, \$200,000+. November 7 became "D" Day for the Crystyl Ranch project. That was the day voters of the City of Concord voted OVERWHELMINGLY to reject the proposed development. The matter now goes back to the City Council. That body, if they follow the mandate given by the people, will reinstate the elements of the City General Plan that had been overridden, the Hillside ordinance and the Newhall Plan (which should have been followed in the first place). The people have proven it is possible to turn back BAD development proposals. Other opportunities will be at hand to exercise opposition to BAD development programs. Need we say more? Seth Adams, in co-ordinating the overall effort, showed once again, David (even if his name is Seth) CAN meet a Goliath and WIN!

THE FOX IN THE CHICKEN COOP

The LA Times editorialized on November 8:

CASON IS DEFINITELY NOT THE MAN

"As it is, the U. S. Forest Service has not won many awards for protection of the environment, and if James E. Cason is confirmed by the U.S. Senate as overseer of the nation's 191 million acres of forest lands, the prospects for improvement would be bleak indeed. Therefore, the Bush Administration should withdraw Cason's nomination as assistant secretary of agriculture of natural resources and the environment. If it will not do so, the nomination should be rejected by the Senate."

We agree! If you have any thoughts on the matter: contact IMMEDIATELY the Honorable Alan Cranston, Senator, and the Honorable Pete Wilson, Senator, at the Senate Office Building, Washington, D. C. 20510

MARSH CREEK AND FLOOD CONTROL

In 1988, the CCC Supes "ordered" the County Flood Control District to do an Environmental Impact Report BEFORE any further dredging, grading, or major digging was undertaken on Marsh Creek. This year, a developer obtained permission to excavate a part of Marsh Creek in the Brentwood area, and thousands of yards of high grade sand and gravel were removed and used to level and fill land being developed. The ordered EIR had NOT been done. Objections to the Board of Supervisors produced quick action. Flood control representatives brought together a number of interested individuals. The Flood Control Department staff made a major presentation concerning activities taking place on Marsh Creek. Queried about the status of the EIR, those present were informed the document would be completed about mid-February, 1990. The 1988 Board-ordered EIR had obviously been put on hold. Flood control authorities explained the plans being developed, taking a long-range view, so flooding could be prevented when the east county build-out was complete. Officials indicated they would allow no more Marsh Creek excavation projects unless and/or until the EIR has been completed.

ITEM from the National Wildlife Federation

"According to a recent report by the U. S. General Accounting Office, nearly 60 percent of the nation's 452 wildlife refuges are used for purposes that harm wildlife. The report documented refuge lands being drilled for oil and gas, tracked by off-road vehicles and denuded by cattle and sheep. One of the responsibilities of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service is to prevent activities that conflict with the purposes of refuges - to protect wildlife."

OFFSHORE OIL DRILLING....

Did We Win? Congress has banned the feds from using ANY money for (oil) lease exploration in areas off the coasts of northern California and other coastal locations around the U.S. New (proposed) legislation would extend or add leasing bans in areas from southern California to Alaska's Bristol Bay. The battle's not yet OVER. The odds that NO drilling will occur in the near future appear to be very HIGH. Let your Senators (Alan Cranston and Pete Wilson) AND your Congressman (or woman) know why YOU think oil exploration (drilling) along the California coast should be a BIG NO, NO!!!!

PLANNING GOES FORWARD, BUT --

WHERE'S THE GENERAL PLAN?

Two major Environmental Impact Reports are now OUT. One has to do with proposed development around Oakley in east CCC; the other involves major development of Bethel Island. These EIR's have been completed in what appears to be "somewhat" of a rush. The County General Plan which seems to have been under review for an eternity (in reality, several years) has not yet been completed. Objection is being raised to the piecemeal development of major sections of CCC prior to having the General Plan completed. A public hearing will be held on the Bethel Island EIR on November 13 at 7:30 p.m. in the Antioch City Council Chambers, 3rd and H Streets.

FIELD TRIPS

Trips are open to members and nonmembers alike. Carpool time is departure time. Carpool expense: 5 cents per mile per rider is suggested; tolls and entry fees are shared equally by driver and riders. Bring binoculars, field guide and lunch. Trips go in light rain or drizzle; if in doubt, call leader up to 1/2 hour before departure time.

Difficulty of field trip:

Category 1: Easy, up to 1 mile walking, smooth paths

Category 2: Moderate, 1 mile or more, possibly rough

Category 3: Difficult, extensive walking, rough terrain

NOTE: Due to unpredictable traffic resulting from the closure of the Bay Bridge after the earthquake, only carpool times for midweek field trips will be given. If you plan to go on one of these field trips and not carpool, please call the field trip leader before the trip.

Saturday, December 2, **Altamont Pass.** Carpool 7:00 a.m. at El Cerro Blvd., west of I-680. A caravan trip, with mostly car birding. We will be look for migratory hawks, Mountain Bluebirds, and the usual grassland species.

Leader: George Finger, 933-2468

Category 1

Thursday, December 7, **Niles Canyon Gravel Pits.** Carpool 8:00 a.m., El Cerro Blvd., just west of I-680. Meet at Vallejo Mill Historical Park in Fremont. Take I-680 south through Dublin to SR 84, and go west 7 miles to park entrance on the left. Varied habitats; Green-backed Heron, Spotted Sandpiper, Ring-necked Duck, many land birds often found. Can be muddy.

Leader: Jimm Edgar, 658-2330

Category 2

Wednesday, December 13, **Palo Alto Baylands.** Carpool 7:30 a.m. at Acalanes Ave., off Pleasant Hill Rd., north of Hwy. 24. Meet in parking lot near Nature Center at Baylands. From Bayshore, take Embarcadero exit and go east on Embarcadero to stop sign. Go left toward Yacht Harbor, follow road to end in parking lot on right. This is a high tide day and we should see Clapper Rails and possibly Black Rails. Prepare for muddy conditions and cool breezes. There is a lot of waiting for the rails.

Leader: Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486

Category 1

Saturday and Sunday, February 10-11, **Los Banos.** It is not too early to make reservations for the Los Banos weekend trip. In Los Banos is the Bonanza Motel, (209) 826-3871. Nearby in Santa Nella are the Best Western (Pea Soup) Andersen's Inn, (209) 826-5534, and the Holiday Inn Mission de Oro, (209) 826-4444. More information in the January *Quail*.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

PT. REYES, October 7.

Little sun was seen all morning, as is often the case at the Point. Rarities were hiding, with the exception of a Bobolink spotted at Drake's Beach, which fluttered from bush to tree to ground, giving all 20 members of the group a good view. Three species of owl were sighted, including a Burrowing Owl on the Spaletta Plateau, which also yielded several Lesser Golden-Plovers. 58 species were seen.

Barbara Vaughn

POINT DIABLO-MARIN HEADLANDS, October 11.

The day was overcast and foggy and, unfortunately, never cleared enough for us to get much of a chance to look for the sought-after migration of raptors on Hill 129 of the Marin Headlands. It was, however, a very successful and enjoyable day for the twelve people who came. Of the 75 species that were seen during the day, the highlight for everyone had to be the **Clay-colored Sparrow** that was found by Kevin Hints. It was a life bird for many on the trip and certainly an uncommon visitor to the west coast. The great thing about the trip to this area is the diversity of birds that we see. We had a few shorebirds, a good number of waterfowl that have just returned, landbirds including some warblers, and enough raptors to round out the day's fairly impressive number.

Jimm Edgar

TILDEN PARK, October 19.

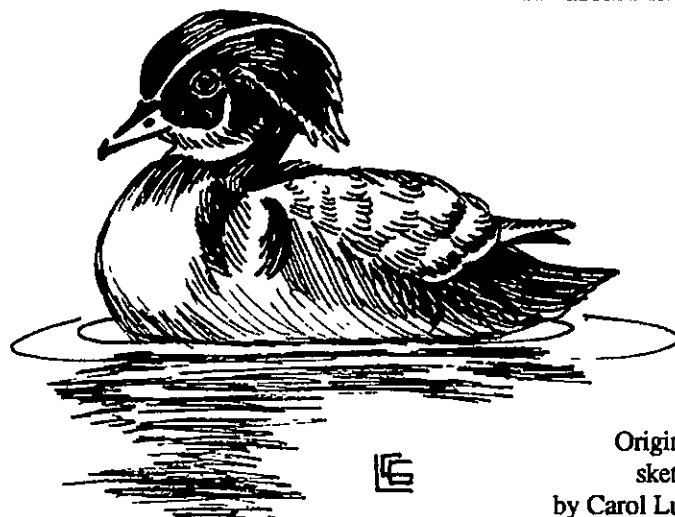
The weather was lovely but the birds were very quiet. Varied Thrushes were heard but not seen. The best bird was a Black-throated Gray Warbler. 28 species total were seen.

Elizabeth Dickey

ABBOTT'S LAGOON, October 28.

The weather was great with little wind. Eight birders found 72 species, plus five on the extension trip to Bolinas Sewer Ponds. A Lesser Golden-Plover was found in the plowed field beside the Abbott's Lagoon trail, and a Red-shouldered Hawk was flying around the upper Abbott's pond.

Elizabeth Dickey



Original sketch
by Carol Lutz

OBSERVATIONS

By Donna Peake-Klein

Please send observations to Donna Peake-Klein,
51 Picardy Ct., Walnut Creek, 94596, or call 930-9819.

Please include your telephone number with your observations.

Green-backed Heron: 1 seen on 10/29 at Lafayette Reservoir (G&MJM); 1 on 10/22 at Hidden Lakes, Martinez, and 1 on 10/25 at Mt. View Sanitary District (H&NB).

Tundra Swan: 27 seen on 10/29 in a flooded field by Del Rio Brothers Drive on Woodbridge Road. (W&GY)

Canada Goose: 24 on 10/29 beside Ramsay Rd., near I-680. (W&GY)

Blue-winged Teal: 1 on 10/25 at Mt. View Sanitary. (H&NB)

Gadwall: 4 females on 11/2 at Lafayette Reservoir, a first for the Monheits, who frequently bird this area. (G&MJM)

Eurasian Wigeon: 1 male on 10/14 at Bodega Bay Sewage Plant pond. (FB, DC)

Ring-necked Duck: 1 on 10/28 at Marin Headlands. (H&NB)

King Eider: 1 male on 10/12 at the New Willows cove area of Pt. Reyes. (FB, DC)

Harlequin Duck: 1 female on 10/14 in Bodega Bay harbor. (FB, DC)

Red-tailed Hawk: 15 on 10/29, circling in a kettle above a field being harrowed 1 mile west of Potato Slough on Bouldin Island, Rte. 12. (W&GY)

Ferruginous Hawk: 1 on 10/17 at Buchanan Field. (RH)

Golden Eagle: 1 immature and 1 adult seen 10/28 at Hawk Hill. (H&NB)

Merlin: 1 with a Scrub Jay on 10/14 at Castle Rock Park, Walnut Creek (SF); 1 on 11/4 at Preston Ranch in northern Moraga (JH).

Peregrine Falcon: 2 on 10/28 at Hawk Hill. (H&NB)

Clapper Rail: 3 on 10/16 at Alameda South Shore. (H&NB)

Greater Yellowlegs: 1 on 11/2 at Lafayette Reservoir, also a first here for the Monheits. (G&MJM)

Common Snipe: 1 on 10/29 at Lafayette Reservoir, seen next to the Green-backed Heron. (G&MJM)

Long-billed Curlew: 74 on 10/29 at Ramsay Road in a field bordering a pond. (W&GY)

Sandhill Crane: 2500+ along Woodbridge Road near Thornton. (W&GY)

Parasitic Jaeger: 1 on 10/21 at Bodega Bay. (H&NB)

Bonaparte's Gull: ~50 for a few days up to 10/29 at Lafayette Reservoir. These were seen in a huddled, floating group for the most part, while some were observed feeding tern-like near the water's surface. (G&MJM)

Elegant Tern: 1 on 10/17 at Alameda South Shore. (H&NB)

Common Tern: 1 on 10/17 at Alameda South Shore. (H&NB)

Arctic Tern: 1 on 10/26 at the Stockton Sewer Ponds. (JR, FB)

Tufted Puffin: 2 immatures on 9/18 flying past the Cliff House in SF. (FB, JR)

Spotted Owl: 1 on 10/14 at Tomales Bay. (H&NB)

Acorn Woodpecker: 1 on 11/2 at Lafayette Reservoir; the first seen for many years here by the Monheits. (G&MJM)

Say's Phoebe: 1 on 10/3, Monterey Peninsula. (H&NB)

Red-breasted Nuthatch: 1 on 10/14 in pines across the street from her Alamo home; seldom have them there. (JR)

Pygmy Nuthatch: 1 on 10/5, Pt. Lobos. (H&NB)

Golden-crowned Kinglet: 1 on 10/28 at Marin Headlands. (H&NB)

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: 1 on 10/10 in their Orinda garden. (H&NB)

Varied Thrush: 1 on 10/21 in their Orinda garden. (H&NB)

Bendire's Thrasher: 1 on 10/26 on Jahant Rd. in Lodi. (JR, FB)

Phainopepla: 1 on 10/24 at Hidden Lakes Park, Martinez. (DW, JC, NC)

Yellow Warbler: 1 on 10/16 at Moss Landing. (H&NB)

Palm Warbler: 1 on 10/12 in the Lighthouse area of Pt. Reyes (FB, DC); 2 on 10/10 at Mendoza Ranch, Pt. Reyes (JR, RR).

Common Yellowthroat: 1 on 10/16 at Alameda South Shore. (H&NB)

Observers: Hugh & Norah Bain, Florence Bennett, Jan Cooper, Deanna Cox, Nathan Crawford, Sharyn Fernandez, Joel Herr, Ralph Hudgins, George & Molly Jane Monheit, Jean Richmond, Rich Richmond, Denise Wight, and Winifred & Gifford Young.

CLASSES AND EXCURSIONS

EDUCATION CHAIRPERSON NEEDED

MDAS needs a chairperson for the Education Committee. The chairperson is responsible for coordinating requests for speakers from school and civic groups, organizing of the Audubon Camps programs, and arranging classes for the chapter. The chairman is also responsible for the chapter slide collection. This is a very important committee which reaches out to the community and spreads MDAS's commitment to conservation and the environment. For more information, call former education chairperson Norah Bain, 254-4516.

TEACHING AIDS AVAILABLE

Former Education Chairperson Norah Bain announces that the chapter slide collection is now available for members' use when giving talks, classes or programs. There is also a collection of bird skins, nests, and feathers. For a list of slides and skins, call Norah at 254-4516. New materials for the collection are welcomed. Dead birds in perfect condition should be delivered to Norah for freeze-drying. When found, the birds should be put into zip-lock freezer bags with a note on location, cause of death if known, date, name, and telephone of finder. Freeze as soon as possible, within a few hours. Contact Norah to arrange pick-up. Our chapter's salvage permit numbers are California Permit 0479 and U. S. Federal Permit 723026.

90TH CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

The MDAS Christmas Bird Count will be Saturday, December 30, 1989. All members and interested guests are invited to participate. Every pair of eyes can be helpful in seeing birds; you do not need to be an expert birder to participate. Last year we had 98 participants who tallied 36,000 individual birds of 152 different species.

Nationally, there are about 1500 counts each year. Valuable bird population knowledge has been learned over the years. Our count will cover the 15-mile diameter circle centered near Treat and Cowell; this includes most of Mt. Diablo, Black Diamond Mines, the Pittsburg marshes, some of Briones park, Heather Farms, the suburban creeks of Walnut Creek, Lafayette, and Alamo, and many other green places in Contra Costa County. We also need feeder and home garden watchers.

A pot-luck dinner will follow at the San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church, 902 Danville Blvd., Alamo. The church is 1.3 miles south of Stone Valley road. All members and guests are invited to attend. Please bring your own table service and a salad, main dish, or dessert for 8 to 10 people plus any serving utensils needed. Please call Barbara Vaughn, 376-8732, for more information about the potluck.

Co-compilers this year are Maury Stern (284-5980) and Jimm Edgar (658-2330). Please call them or sign up at the December meeting or return this form to Maury Stern, 939 Carol Lane, Lafayette, CA 94549. The cost is \$4.00, to cover the expense of publishing the annual Christmas Count issue of *American Birds*. Feeder watchers have no charge.

EVERYONE SHOULD GO ON A FIELD TRIP

by Jimm Edgar

This is an observation from one field trip that our chapter takes every year to Hawk Mountain and Rodeo Lagoon. The trip is primarily to see the migration of raptors that concentrate over the Marin Headlands and then make their dash across the open waters of the Golden Gate. Field trips are designed to visit a particular area at a particular time of year because whatever is special about that area happens at a given time. For instance, we go to Palo Alto Baylands when the extremely high tides of December bring out the rails. We visit Point Reyes in late September when the fall migration is in its peak. The summer is the best time to head for the Sierra. But too often I think we say to ourselves, "I've been there before" or "I've seen the birds there" and we miss out on just going on a trip and being out in Nature. Let me illustrate with this trip and a few experiences we have had while on the trip.

Some years ago as we looked for shore birds at the ocean just beyond Rodeo Lagoon, we saw a small whale just off shore and thought that was odd. A few hours later as we stood on top of Hill 129 watching for hawks, we saw the same whale move under the Golden Gate Bridge and into the Bay. This was to be the beginning of the saga of Humphery the Whale and we were there to see it! Last year as we stood on the road between the upper and lower lagoon, someone spotted a Bobcat on the far shore and we all were excited to see this shy and seldom-seen animal. It disappeared into the brush and we felt quite lucky to have had the opportunity to see the cat if only briefly. About five minutes later as we watched a small flock of ducks close to our observation point, suddenly out of the brush flew the Bobcat. Flying about six feet in the air, it landed on a surprised duck, in front of a very surprised group of birdwatchers! With its prey in its mouth, the Bobcat swam back to shore and once again disappeared into the brush. All of this took place not 50 feet in front of us. That was a once in a lifetime experience. This year the field trip was not that exciting, but it was different and unexpected. As we stood watching the Bay it so happened that it was the conclusion of Fleet Week and all of the Navy ships were going out under the bridge: submarines, cruisers, aircraft carries. What a great sight to see!

So, as you can read, everyone should go on a field trip. You never know what you will see or have a chance to experience. Maybe not a whale or a Bobcat, and maybe not even the birds that you came to see. It is always a joy to be out in creation, however, and to enjoy the world around us.

_____ I would like to bird with one of the field groups on Christmas Bird Count Day, December 30, 1989.

_____ I would like a hiking area.

_____ I would like a less strenuous area.

_____ I can monitor a feed or garden.

Name: _____

Telephone: _____

Address: _____

NEW MEMBERS

Season's greetings to these new MDAS members whom we hope to meet at our activities soon: Michelle Abbott, Ruth Battle, Sam H. Beard, Voth Bornhum, Eli Burdine, Jacqueline Carson, Bradley Chase, Barbara Cornell, Christine Costello, Becky Davies, William Dickinson, Helen Duane, Sara Edman, Betty Ewing, Yolán Fairgrief, Barbara Fuller, S. Golvineaux, Grace Haggerty, Ken Hamberg, Ronald Hodgman, Carolyn Hunter, Elwin Kelsey, Mary Krupa, Robert Kudlich, Leslie Leale, Marilyn MacLay, Edward Marek, Mrs. M. Maronek, Helen Martin, Mr. and Mrs. Laurence McEwen, Elizabeth McKeon, Mrs. H. McPherson, Andrew Mercado, Karen Moonitz, Dorothy Mortenson, Marilyn Myers, Patricia Partidge, Connie Peak, Marilyn E. Reilly, John Ross, Marie Simons, Susan Slaughter, Edward Smith, Renee Smith, R. L. Spears, Mr. and Mrs. Helmuth Spieler, Clark Sprague, Andrew Steele, Bert W. Steinberg, Sandra Stites, Lee Strueh, John and Mary Sullivan, Leslei Tremaine, Mrs. M. Underwood, Susan Wong, and Dean Wright.

MT. DIABLO SALES

Are you stuck, thinking about what to get that special person for Christmas? How about something from the Mt. Diablo bookshelf? The following books are available from the MDAS Sales Manager, Gifford Young, 1451 Janet Ct., Benicia, CA 94510, (707) 745-4134.

Birding Northern California, by Jean Richmond. 72 local sites with exceptionally good birding possibilities are described. \$12.05 by mail, including tax and handling; \$10.70 at MDAS meetings.

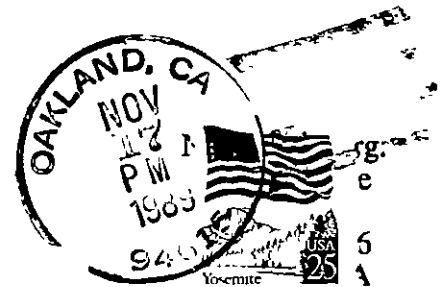
The Birder's Handbook, by Paul R. Ehrlich, David A. Dobkin, and Darryl Wheye. After you identify that bird, find out more about it from this companion to your field guide. Information on nesting, courtship, eggs, diet, behavior, conservation, and more. \$14.75 by mail, \$13.00 at MDAS meetings.

The Quail is published monthly except for the combined July/August issue. Audubon membership includes subscriptions to the *Quail* and *Audubon* magazine. To join (\$30/year individual, \$38 family; introductory and senior rates available), write a check to National Audubon Society but send it, with letter or subscription card, to the Membership Chairperson, Diane Macario, 2425 Maple Ave., Concord, CA 94520. The Chapter benefits financially from membership applications it processes. Full Audubon membership is encouraged, but subscription to the *Quail* is available separate from membership at \$8/year. The check should be made to MDAS and mailed to the MDAS Treasurer, Florence Bennett, P.O. Box 31435, Walnut Creek, CA 94598. First class mailing of the *Quail* to member or nonmember is an additional \$3/year payable to MDAS & sent to the Treasurer.

ADDRESS CHANGES AND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION: Consult Diane Macario, (415) 674-0920.

Barbara Burek, Editor, 157 Mt. Kennedy Dr., Martinez, CA 94553 (415) 229-0394
Exchange bulletins for MDAS to Mt. Diablo Audubon Society, P. O. Box 53, Walnut Creek, CA 94596, please.

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