

The QUAIL

BULLETIN OF THE MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 53

WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA 94597-0053

(510) AUD-UBON

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Secretary: Beverly Hawley, 947-0479



January 1994

Vol. 40 No. 5

Next Deadline: January 13

January Program:

Natural Pest Control

At our **January 6** general meeting, MDAS member Bob Wisecarver will give us a slide presentation on natural pest control. Concerned by the heavy spraying by the local Mosquito Abatement District, Bob thought that a bat housing project might be a better natural approach to pest control. Two trips to Oregon to visit an organic farmer convinced him that he was on the right track. The farmer had over 1000 bats and 1600 swallows nesting on his property and his insect problems were gone. Next, Bob happened to attend a Sacramento Audubon Society meeting on Barn Owls. This led him to two farmers who are controlling their gopher problems with Barn Owls. Bob is now retired, but his leisure time is more than filled building bat and owl houses and meeting with various farmers, the Nature Conservancy, and our local EBMUD.

For January Birding Information, Norah Bain will present our chapter's collection of bird study skins, offering a new dimension to our observations.

The next MDAS board meeting will be hosted by Mike Williams on Thursday, January 13, at 7:30 p.m., at the Wild Birds Unlimited store, 720 Contra Costa, Pleasant Hill. The board meetings are open to all interested members.

General meetings of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society are held on the first Thursday of every month from September through June. Our meeting place is the Pleasant Hill Senior Center, 233 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill. The meeting times are as follows:

6:30 Doors open
7:00 Birding Information
7:30 Business Meeting
8:00 Social Time
8:30 Program

Curious about what's going on at the other Bay Area Audubon chapters? The newsletters for Audubon chapters can be sent to members of other chapters for a minimal yearly subscription fee. Information for subscription to the newsletters of the other seven Bay Area Audubon Council (BAAC) members is given on Page 5.

Happy New Year!

CONSERVATION NOTES

by Al McNabney

WETLANDS STILL IN TROUBLE

Legislation introduced in the U. S. Senate closely parallels the Clinton administration proposals for "saving" the wetlands. Trouble with both proposals is they are likely to give away the store while striving to save it. Save California Wetlands, which MDAS strongly supports, had these comments on the matter:

"If you thought last year was tough on wetlands, this year is looking, if anything, worse. We are very fortunate to have a champion in Congressman Mineta, the powerful Chair of the House Public Works and Transportation Committee, which has primary responsibility for the reauthorization. However, the Chair of the Water Resources subcommittee co-sponsored last year's (VERY BAD) 'Hayes Bill.' In the Senate, things are even worse. We continue to hope that President Clinton will help frame an environmentally positive wetlands position for the reauthorization struggle....."

Unfortunately, as of now, the President's wetland position is just NOT acceptable. On the positive side, Congressman Don Edwards is again introducing his legislation HR 350. Senator Boxer has introduced similar legislation in the Senate. In the congressional district where most MDAS members reside, Congressman Miller supports the Edwards bill. Congressman Baker has taken no position, preferring to wait and see what amendments may be added. Letters to Senator Feinstein and Congressman Baker urging them to support of HR 350 are needed. Finally, "IF" you have a spare nickle, dime, or dollar, you might send it to: Save California Wetlands, P. O. Box 20651, Oakland, CA 94620-0651.

CATTLE-GRAZING, BIRDS, ETC.

EBMUD's rangers have been studying the effects of intensive cattle grazing on the East Bay watershed. It is clear intensive cattle grazing has had and is having serious, deleterious effects on the habitat necessary to maintain birds and other wildlife. Lisa Drew undertook a similar study involving the Wasatch Mountains near Salt Lake City. She examined a twenty-five mile square area there referred to as Red Butte and her results are informative. The area had been fenced so cattle haven't been on the property for some twenty-five years. Ms. Drew's article, "Whose Home is the Range Anyway," in National Wildlife's December/January 1993 issue was illustrative. She wrote: "The first time University of Utah's graduate student Sue Phillips entered the canyon a few years ago, she recalls, 'I was blown away. I was practically in tears. I couldn't believe there was anything this perfect and rich.'" One other comment by Ms. Drew is illustrative, if a "bit" overstated, "Livestock grazing is without a doubt the greatest threat to western wildlife." Clearly cattle grazing does have an adverse impact on land and land uses IF grazing is too intense and uncontrolled. Cattle grazing does have value in the areas close to human

populations but at the same time the settlement of more and more people in areas heretofore considered open space will have an adverse effect on wildlife unless grazing is fully and carefully controlled. Thus the fuss and to do over cattle on Mt. Diablo.

OUT OF THE MUD GROWS A LOTUS

Or some such thing. As applied locally, the budding Diablo Environmental Science Center is likely to move a step closer to reality because of misadventure involving an oil refinery. To clarify, it is likely a fine levied against a refinery will be allocated all or in part to the DESC project.

EBMUD AND BIODIVERSITY

A goal of the now-ongoing study of EBMUD's watershed lands will be the completion of a major biodiversity study of the District's Bay Area lands. Among other things, the study will aid in decisions concerning the public use of the watershed for hiking, swimming, and fishing, as well as how nature's world will be protected. This major biodiversity study is being considered by a Community Advisory Committee which includes representation from MDAS. It is expected the study and effort will cover a period of five years. Stephen E. Abbors, Project Manager, told the committee that the Conservation Biology Objectives are the following:

- A. Maintain a thorough, ongoing inventory of the plant and animal species.
- B. Preserve viable species populations and maintain essential processes which influence, and are influenced by, the plant and animal species.
- C. Minimize habitat fragmentation and provide functional wildlife corridors.
- D. Protect the keystone species and their associated plant and animal complexes.

Initial results of the biological diversity study have already produced interesting, important information about species that exist on the watershed. The specialists have determined the following number of species will require special management concern:

- 32 animal species
- 37 plant species
- 200 bird species
- 50 mammel species
- 11 amphibian species

There are also a total of 500 plant species on the watershed, with 50 plant species that are rare but not unusual. The study has also found there are 73 ponds and 70 creeks that are either perennial or intermittant. The study shows that while oak woodlands now do exist, there are not sprouting trees in some areas, particularly where there has been heavy cattle grazing. Observing the study results, as the knowledge being developed is compared with present land uses, not only in Contra Costa County but throughout the state, is pretty worrysome. It is little wonder that literally hundreds of native California species are now on the threatened or endangered lists.

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

Note: Because of problems this winter due to bad weather or road conditions, field trips may be cancelled by the leader the day of the trip at the carpool location. If you have doubts, call the leader up to 1/2 hour before departure time.

Saturday, January 8, **Putah Creek**. Carpool 7:30 a.m. southwest corner of Sun Valley parking lot. Meet 8:15 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. Possible Osprey, Phainopepla, Canyon and Rock Wrens, and Hooded Merganser. Leader: Florence Bennett, 689-3106 Category 1

Wednesday, January 12, **Lake Merritt**. Carpool 8:00 a.m. at Acalanes Ave., off Pleasant Hill Rd., just north of Hwy. 24. Meet 8:45 a.m. at aviary at Lake Merritt. From SR 24, take Grand Ave. exit. Straight ahead at 1st light; at 2nd light, go left onto Grand Ave. Turn right into park at Fairyland. Park in lot between boat house and the large aviary. We will see ducks and other waterbirds. This is a good opportunity for new birders to see ducks at close range. Leader: Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486 Category 1

Saturday, January 22, **Grizzly Island Refuge**. Carpool 7:00 a.m. southwest corner of Sun Valley parking lot. Meet 8:15 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 road to headquarters. Watch for raptors and Short-eared Owls along the road. This is an outstanding raptor area. Mostly car birding. Leader: Maury Stern, 284-5980 Category 1

Thursday, January 27, **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. Golden Eagles, raptors; Rufous-crowned Sparrow, Dipper, and Canyon and Rock Wrens possible. Call Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486, for more information. Category 2

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

MT. VIEW SANITARY PLANT, November 4.

Fourteen birders enjoyed a clear, mild, beautiful morning at the Mt. View Sanitary Plant and Shell Marsh, both near Martinez. Moorhens are multiplying and thriving at the Sanitary Plant. Although many once clear ponds are now filled with cattails, 34 species were seen at the Plant and at Shell Marsh en route. Highlights were good views of a Green-backed Heron, a Sora and a Loggerhead Shrike. Only three migrating Cinnamon Teal had arrived.

Shirley Ellis

LIMANTOUR, November 6.

Eighteen members spent another glorious day at the Pt. Reyes Headquarters and the Limantour area in 65°-70° weather. 105 species were seen by the group. Highlights included Sooty Shearwater, 14 species of ducks including one hybrid American-Eurasian Wigeon, Black and White-winged Scoters, Osprey, Virginia Rail, Sora, Townsend's Warbler, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Eastern subspecies of Fox Sparrow, and Red Crossbill.

Maury Stern

CHARLESTON SLOUGH, November 10.

On a cool, overcast day, eight members met for an interesting exploration of the ponds at high tide. Virginia and Sora Rails were calling. Only a Sora was seen bathing. The highlight was an Eurasian Wigeon. Moving on to Palo Alto Baylands for lunch, we found a Clapper Rail, a Peregrine Falcon, and a Merlin. The day was completed at Foster City Shell Beach. There we called it a day with a heavy rain. 82 bird species were tallied for the day

Betty Gallagher

ALVISO, November 20.

The weather was calm and warm when sixteen birders explored the southeast corner of San Francisco Bay. The day began with a good view of a Peregrine Falcon sitting on a post. After a long walk and a long wait, most of the group had good views of the immature Sabine's Gull which had been at the salt ponds for several days. We also had good views of Clark's Grebe and Marsh Wren among a total of 72 species seen or heard.

Elizabeth Dickey

YOLO COUNTY CHECKLIST

Yolo Audubon Society is proud to present the latest edition of their county checklist (revised March, 1993). It includes a brief description of the area, seasonal distribution and habitat codes for every bird species seen in Yolo County through January, 1993, and a map, list, and description of Yolo hotspots. The cost including shipping is \$3.25 for one checklist, \$6.00 for two, \$9.00 for three, and \$11.75 for four. Send your check payable to Yolo Audubon to Yolo Audubon Society, P. O. Box 886, Davis, CA 95617-0886.

OBSERVATIONS

by Steve Glover

Please send observations to Steve Glover,
333 Goshen Ct., San Ramon, CA 94583, or call 829-7207.
Please include your telephone number with your observations.

Pacific Loon: 3 on 12/5 at Clifton Court Forebay. (BR) Rare anywhere inland.

Red-necked Grebe: 1 on 12/5 at Clifton Court Forebay. (BR) Probably the same individual as in the past two years.

Black-vented Shearwater: 2 on 11/30 off Pescadero Beach, San Mateo County. (JR)

Cattle Egret: 2 on 11/27 (BR, RC) and 11/28 (SG) along Mountain House Rd., N. E. Alameda County.

Tundra Swan: 8 on 11/25 and 9 on 11/28 at the Marsh Creek Reservoir (SG); 1000 on 11/16 along Staten Island Road, San Joaquin Co. (FB, MJC, HH).

Wood Duck: a pair present through at least 12/6 at Oak Hill Park at the end of Stone Valley Rd. (PK)

Eurasian Wigeon: 1 male on 11/16 at Arrowhead Marsh. (JR)

Harlequin Duck: 1 pair on 11/3 at the Pt. Reyes Fish Docks. (FB, MJC, BG, HH)

Black Scoter: 15 on 11/3 at the Fish Docks. (FB, MJC, BG, HH)

Barrow's Goldeneye: females, 1 on 11/19 and 2 on 11/23, at Hayward Regional Shoreline. (BR)

Hooded Merganser: 4 on 11/16 (BR, KH) and 2 on 11/17 (JR, RR) at San Pablo Reservoir, north of Orinda; 3 on 11/23 at Lake Lucerne in San Mateo Co. (FB, MJC, HH, EL); 12 on 11/30 along Chileno Valley Rd., Marin Co. (MJC, EL, HH, FB); 7 females and 1 male on 11/28 (SG) and 4 on 11/5 (SG, KH, JL) along Bruns Rd. near Byron; 1 female from 11/25 to 11/30 at 7 Hills School, Walnut Creek (HH, FB).

Red-shouldered Hawk: at least 4 on 11/16 at the San Pablo Reservoir. (KH, BR)

Swanson's Hawk: 1 immature on 12/4 and on 12/5 along the Altamont Pass Rd. (JL) This is very late for the East Bay.

"Harlan's" Red-tailed Hawk: 1 immature on 11/27 (BR) and 11/28 (SG) along Patterson Pass Rd. Rare in California.

Merlin: 1 on 11/20 at Pescadero Beach (JR); 1 on 11/28 at Patterson Pass (SG).

Peregrine Falcon: 1 on 11/28 at Patterson Pass. (BR)

Gyr Falcon: 1 immature first seen on 11/27, also seen 11/30, at Patterson Pass. (BR, RC) Although this bird is young and has no jesses, it is very difficult to know whether an extralimital Gyr Falcon is wild or an escapee. About 3 records accepted for the state.

Clapper Rail: 1 on 11/13 at Hayward RS. (HC, BR, SG) Apparently recolonizing this site.

Sandhill Crane: 3000 on 11/16 along Staten Island Rd. (FB, MJC, HH)

Long-billed Curlew: 70 on 11/25 along Dear Valley Rd., south of Antioch. (SG)

Ruff: 1 juvenile on 11/20 on private property near Santa Fe Grade Rd. (BR, LF)

Little Gull: 1 first winter bird on 11/20 on private property near Santa Fe Grade Rd. (BR, LF) Very rare in California.

Ancient Murrelet: 1 on 11/16 (BR, KH) and 11/17 (JR, RR) at San Pablo Reservoir. Said to have been present as long as two weeks prior to this. First county record.

Ground-Dove: 1 dove, described as cinnamon brown, fat, and shorter than nearby Mourning Doves, on 11/22 in her Lafayette yard. (LC) Neither Common nor Ruddy Ground-Dove has yet been observed here, although both are possible.

Short-Eared Owl: 1 on 11/13 at Hayward RS. (BR, HC, SG) Now rare here.

Tropical Kingbird: 1 on 11/3 at Drake's Beach, Pt. Reyes. (BG, MJC, HH, FB)

Mountain Bluebird: 157 on 11/27 in the Altamont Pass/Corral Hollow area (BR, RC); 14 on 11/25 along Dear Valley Rd. near Chadbourne Rd. (SG); 2 on 11/28 at the intersection of Marsh Creek Rd. and Camino Diablo (SG).

Clay-colored Sparrow: 1 in his Hayward yard on 11/25 (HC), seen again 11/26 (BR).

Sage Sparrow: 1 on 11/23 at Hayward RS (BR); 1-2 singing on 12/4 along North Gate Rd., Mt. Diablo State Park (KH, SG).

White-throated Sparrow: 1 adult on 11/17 in her Concord yard. (MJC)

Lawrence's Goldfinch: 1 male on 11/28 at Patterson Pass. (BR)

Observers: Florence Bennett, Rich Cimino, Louise Clark, Dr. Howard Cogswell, Mary Jane Culver, Leona Feeney, Betty Gallagher, Steve Glover, Hugh Harvey, Kevin Hintsa, Pam Keiser, Eugenia Larson, Jim Lomax, Bob Richmond, Jean Richmond, and Rich Richmond.

Note: The Rare Bird Alert Number 528-0288 is now to be used solely for reporting observations. There is no weekly summary tape. The daily update number is 524-5592.

DONATIONS TO MDAS

Our society has from time to time received generous bequests, gifts, and donations given in memory of friends or relatives or as spontaneous contributions to the society's activities. These donations are welcomed as a significant support of our goals of wildlife appreciation and conservation.

This month MDAS would like to express its appreciation for a donation from Elizabeth and Marriott Dickey. Their generosity is very much valued.

CLASSES AND EXCURSIONS

Norah Bain's field classes for both beginning and intermediate birders will meet on the following THURSDAYS: January 13 and 20, February 24, and March 24 and 31. Classes meet from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. We have a reservation to visit Cypress Grove Preserve, a property belonging to Audubon Canyon Ranch. Resident biologist John Kelly will be our host. The Orinda Community Center class brochure will be available on December 20. Registration is by mail, to be received before January 4, at the Orinda Community Center, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563. The fee is \$29 for Orinda residents, \$31 for others. For more information, call Norah at 254-4516.

Take wing to Venezuela on a 19 day tour (April 16 - May 4, 1994) offered by Cheeseman's Ecology Safaris and arranged by the Venezuela Audubon Society as a fundraiser for Santa Clara Valley Audubon and Venezuela Audubon. Houston Audubon President-elect Lynne Aldrich and resident Venezuelan guide David Ascanio will lead this birding tour, which is limited to ten people. Highlights include the Rio Grande Forest Reserve, home to the Harpy Eagle, 4 days on La Escalera, with Guianan specialties including the Guianan Cock-of-the-Rock, and on to the Gran Sabana, famed for its spectacular tepuis. We take in Amazonas a boat trip up the Orinoco River to a national park in Columbia replete with Umbrellabird. Tour members will sojourn 4 days in the heart of the Lower Llanos at Hato El Frio. Laguna de Mucubaji at 12,000 feet in the northern Andes and Sierra Nevada National Park provide total contrast to Amazonas and the Llanos. Tour cost is \$2,750, including the domestic flights (\$220) in Venezuela. A three-day extension to Henri Pittier National Park is available. For further details, contact the Cheesemans at (408) 867-1371 or (800) 527-5330.

PCL'S 11TH ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

The Planning and Conservation League's Eleventh Annual Symposium will take place January 8 and 9 at Sacramento City College at 3835 Freeport Blvd. in Sacramento. This year's theme, "Environmental Leadership for California," will provide excellent opportunities for informational exchange with political and citizen leaders. PCL will be presenting ten panels designed to inform Symposium attendants about various areas of concern affecting the environmental quality of life in California and to present an opportunity for dialogue with the experts in those fields. Registration for the Symposium will begin at 8:30 a.m. Saturday and 9:00 a.m. Sunday. The fee for the entire conference including meals is \$85, for Saturday only \$60, and for Sunday only \$50. All fees are \$10 lower for PCL members. You can register by writing to Sue Hirsch at PLC, 926 J Street, #612, Sacramento, CA 95814, or calling (916) 444-8726, extension 7.

FELLOW BAAC MEMBERS

One request by several members in the recent *Quail* survey was more information on the activities of other Audubon chapters and conservation groups in our area. Because of space and time constraints for publishing the *Quail*, it is impossible to include information on regular activities of all other local chapters and organizations. As a substitute, information about subscribing to the newsletters of the seven other Bay Area Audubon Council (BAAC) members is given below. Information on the other conservation organizations will be given in a future issue.

To receive a chapter's newsletter, send a check made out to the chapter for the given amount to the given address. The area in parens after some of the newsletter names is the area served by that chapter.

\$10 for *The Gull* (San Francisco and the East Bay)
Golden Gate Audubon Society
2530 San Pablo Avenue, Suite G
Berkeley, CA 94702

\$10 for *Madrone Leaves*
Madrone Audubon Society
c/o Joan Dranginis
601 Buena Vista Dr.
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

\$10 for *The Redwood Log*
Marin Audubon Society
c/o Ben Castaneda
593 Pennsylvania Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94107

\$6 for *Song Sparrow*
Napa-Solano Audubon Society
c/o Una Beth Baxley
732 Wilson Avenue
Vallejo, CA 94590

\$10 for *The Kite Call* (Southern Alameda County)
Ohlone Audubon Society
c/o Mary Nordstrom
1608 Walden Court
Fremont, CA 94539

\$10 for *The Avocet*
Santa Clara Valley Audubon
22221 McClellan Road
Cupertino, CA 95014

\$10 for *Sequoia Needles* (San Mateo County)
Sequoia Audubon Society
30 W. 39th Avenue, #202
San Mateo, CA 94403-4561

NEW MEMBERS

We extend warm greetings to these new MDAS members and hope to meet them at our activities: John Adams, Mark Baaba, Evelyn Beattie, Betty Bones, Mrs. B. Callahan, Susan Castle, Margaret Clarkson, Jack Freeman, Fran Harrison, Caren Hult, Jensen-Weeter, Phillip Lerma, James Montgomery, Kimberly Morse, Mrs. Harold Pinney, Gail Powers, Barbara Raabhall, Henry Sanders, David Scherer, Robert Schlag, Rose Shramick, Rosanne Stone, Ben Trejo, B. Tymczak, R. R. Winter, and Mrs. Donald Wort.

DON'T READ THE *QUAIL*?

Two members who responded to the MDAS survey indicated that they do not read the *Quail*. If one of them is you, or if you are one of the 1000 members who did not send back the survey and you also do not read the *Quail*, save yourself the trouble of throwing the *Quail* out each month, save the chapter some money, and save a tree or two. Call our president Jim Lomax, 825-1513, or any board member, and tell us to remove your name from the *Quail* mailing list. Be sure to spell your name and give your address. **YOU WILL STILL BE A MEMBER OF NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY!** You will also be welcome at any chapter functions and can ask to resume receiving the *Quail* at any time.

The Quail is published monthly except for the combined July/August issue. Audubon membership includes subscriptions to the Quail and Audubon magazine. To join (\$35/year individual, \$38 family; introductory rates available), write your check to National Audubon Society but send it, with letter or subscription card, to the Membership Chairperson, Mike Williams, 1172 Larch Avenue, Moraga, CA 94556. The Chapter benefits financially from membership applications it processes. Full membership is encouraged, but subscription to the Quail is available separate from membership at \$10/year. The check should be made out to MDAS and mailed to the MDAS Treasurer, Pam Keiser, 505 Wild Flower Place, Danville, CA 94526. First class mailing to member or nonmember is an additional \$3.50/year payable to MDAS & sent to the Treasurer.

ADDRESS CHANGES AND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION: Consult Mike Williams, (510) 376-1631.

Barbara Burek, Editor, 157 Mt Kennedy Dr, Martinez, CA 94553 (510) 229-0394
Exchange bulletins for MDAS to Mt Diablo Audubon Society, P O Box 53, Walnut Creek, CA 94597-0053, please.

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February 1994

Vol. 40 No. 6

Next Deadline: February 10

February Program:

How Do Birds Fly?

For our February 3 meeting, Tom Steller will give a slide presentation entitled "Avian Adaptions for Flight." His presentation will look at birds as high-performance flyers, focusing on the evolution of the many highly specialized adaptations that make avian flight possible. Tom will discuss flight performance, feather structure and function, requirements for high performance flight, avian metabolism, circulation and respiration as they pertain to flight, skeletal and physiological adaptations relevant to flight, and the dynamics of avian flight.

Tom Steller has had an interest in natural history, and particularly birds, since the age of ten. He has a B.A. in Biology and is currently the Senior Curator of the Natural Science Department for the Oakland Museum. He has been with the Oakland Museum for seventeen years in various positions, including both taxidermist and exhibit preparator. He enjoys birding, researching birds, and investigating other ecological topics. Tom was very active in Mt. Diablo Audubon in the late 1970's.

Birding Information will focus on the role of birds in toxicology and environmental conservation. MDAS International Conservation Chair Jill Hedgecock will discuss for us the historical importance of birds as the indicators of environmental health as well as the continuing role birds play in conservation efforts.

General meetings of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society are held on the first Thursday of every month from September through June. Our meeting place is the Pleasant Hill Senior Center, 233 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill. The meeting times are as follows:

6:30 Doors open
7:00 Birding Information
7:30 Business Meeting
8:00 Social Time
8:30 Program

The next MDAS board meeting will be at the home of Elizabeth Dickey, 113 Hillcrest, Orinda, 254-0486. Board meetings are open to all interested members.

Introducing the **Weekend Birding Break**. At the request of our members, the MDAS Field Trips is starting a new type of trip: a short (no more than three hours), local weekend field trip for those who can't attend weekday trips and have only limited time on weekends. Our first Weekend Birding Break will be on Sunday, February 20, at Hidden Lakes Park in Martinez, currently the site of a rare Field Sparrow. See Field Trips, Page 3, for more details on this trip, and Observations, Page 4, for more details on the Field Sparrow.

CONSERVATION NOTES

by Al McNabney

VOLUNTEERISM: A PUBLIC SERVICE OR THE GESTAPO?

Audubon's annual Christmas bird counts draw press and praise throughout the length and breadth of our land. Data collected each year, when compiled (by AUDUBON), present historical fact and are used by researchers, students, and professionals. "So, you ask "what does our Christmas count have to do with the Gestapo?" Well, folks, it's this way. The US Department of Interior supported H.R. 1845 designed to create the National Biological Survey. Its purpose is to assess more accurately the biological resources of this nation. As introduced, the bill contained a provision that permitted the government to make use of volunteers when biological studies were undertaken. Clear enough. Ah! But read on. During the debate on the House floor, the bill was amended. The provision dealing with (possible) use of volunteers was eliminated. Jack Fields of Texas roared to the assembled legislators:

"Our complaint is that the volunteers, non-science volunteers with a special agenda ... are going to be part and parcel of ... the survey... You start with bad science, you end up with bad science... "

Representative Fields also made these "interesting" comments:

"It is hard to believe that an interest group could actually be one of the volunteers, that we could have the ... AUDUBON (emphasis supplied) Society ... qualify as volunteers to go out and collect data... In essence we are creating an environmental Gestapo that will go on people's private property... "

The editor of the Santa Clara Audubon *Avocet* made these apt comments:

"The members (of Congress) who supported this amendment insult the quality and integrity of volunteers whose efforts date back almost a century. If opponents of the National Biological Survey have their way, the Secretary of the Interior would be prohibited from putting CBC results and other volunteer-generated data into any national data base. This would be a disaster for bird monitoring programs--CBC's and Breeding Bird Surveys, to name two--most of which rely heavily on volunteers in the field."

I've talked to and observed many so-called professionals who observe birds and bird affairs. I would put many Audubon "bird" people in the range of superb experts, and the ONLY reason Audubon people aren't professionals is because they aren't paid for their work. You say, "So what?" I think these congressmen and all the others who support their views have highly insulted EVERY AUDUBON BIRDER and I don't think any of us should take such insults without a response. I suggest that every MDAS member write to Senators Feinstein

and Boxer and your congressmen expressing outrage at being aligned with Gestapo and urging them to see that provisions dealing with use of volunteers be reinstated in H.R. 1845. You can write to the Senators:

Honorable Diane Feinstein, U.S. Senator
Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

A letter to Senator Barbara Boxer should be sent to the same address. Letters to congressmen should be addressed:

Honorable George Miller
U.S. Congressman - California
House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

A letter to Bill Baker should be sent to the same address.

DON'T FORGET AUDUBON'S WESTERN REGIONAL CONFERENCE "BIRDS IN THE BALANCE"

If one wonders "what Audubon is doing," arrange to attend the Western Regional Conference, March 26-29, at Asilomar. The program will bring home to everyone just what's happening to our migratory bird populations. You will also find out what Audubon proposes to do and IS in fact doing to try to ensure the long term survival of avian populations. You will meet hundreds of "bird" folks. You will hear experts talk about birds, Audubon, the present and future. It will be a rewarding experience for all who attend. Get your reservations in early. [Ed.: Registration deadline is February 22. For information, call the Audubon Western Regional Office, (916) 481-5332.]

WATER

That stuff we learned about in high school chemistry, i.e., H₂O is going to be one of THE major issues in California in the next few years. Reports developed by essentially ALL the major suppliers in the Bay Area demonstrate there will be a substantial shortfall of water to meet all of the needs now seen as essential. Alameda and Contra Costa predict water available for potable use will NOT meet anticipated demands within the next 20 years. The shortfall will arrive much sooner IF there is another drought. To demonstrate how some planners are thinking, we quote, without comment, from a recent report:

"If institutional uncertainties can be eliminated, it could reduce the need for new facilities or overbuilding for reliability. (Examples of uncertainty include the Endangered Species Act, regulatory requirements, changing standards, (e.g., the Clean Water Act and the Bay-Delta Estuary standards), and the Central Valley Project Improvement Act.) What is the cost of unresolved issues and requisite reliability? What changes in public policy are needed in order to achieve a safe, reliable, quantity of water?"

If all of the above items were eliminated or made ineffective, the results for birds, fish and other wildlife could be disastrous. We would go so far as to predict the effects on humans would likely be disastrous as well. There needs to be resolution of some of the issues as to how future water supplies will be used. Such is not going to occur IF all interests continue to seek solutions only through the courts.

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

Note: Because of problems this winter due to bad weather or road conditions, field trips may be cancelled by the leader the day of the trip at the carpool location. If you have doubts, call the leader up to 1/2 hour before departure time.

Saturday and Sunday, February 5 and 6, **Los Banos and the Panoche Valley**. Saturday in the Los Banos area we look for ducks and geese. Sunday up in the Panoche Valley we look for Mountain Plover and Mountain Bluebirds. There will be a group dinner Saturday at the Woolgrower's Restaurant in Los Banos. Call trip leader Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486, for more information. Make motel reservations now. In Los Banos is the Bonanza Motel, (209) 826-3871. Nearby in Santa Nella are Best Western (Pea Soup) Andersen's Inn, (209) 826-5534, Holiday Inn Mission de Oro, (209) 826-4444, and Motel 6, (209) 826-6644.

Wednesday, February 9, **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 SR 4 to Antioch Bridge (toll), go north on SR 160 along river to Rio Vista. Turn right on SR 12 for 11.5 miles, then turn left onto Glascock Rd. Tundra Swans, Sandhill Cranes, hawks and grassland birds. Trip will go in light rain. If questions, call the leader. Leader: Barbara Vaughn, 376-8732 Category 1

Saturday, February 19, **Bodega Bay**. Carpool 7:15 a.m., southwest corner of Sun Valley parking lot. Meet 9:00 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 right to Bodega Bay. The Tides Restaurant is on left, opposite a Union station. Can be cold and windy. Leader: Shirley Ellis, 939-9091 Category 1

Sunday, February 20, **Hidden Lakes Park**. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the end of Glacier Dr. in Martinez. From Contra Costa Blvd., turn west on Center and continue west to Glacier. Turn left to end. A **Weekend Birding Break** trip. Leader: Denise Wight, 370-7342 Category 2

Thursday, February 24, **Berkeley shoreline**. Carpool 8:00 a.m. at Acalanes Ave., 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 to the end of the road. Park in parking lot. May be cold and windy. Loons, grebes, and bay ducks.

Leader: Denise Wight, 370-7342

Category 1

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

ALTAMONT, December 2.

Nine members birded this hilly area on a lovely day looking for raptors and Mountain Bluebirds. Among eleven hawk species seen were more Red-Tails, including many dark morphs, than in recent years, several Golden Eagles, a Merlin, a Prairie Falcon, and the "Harlan's" Red-Tail, which was finally seen late in the trip. Over 100 Mountain Bluebirds along Patterson Pass Rd., 2 Cattle Egret, and 3 Burrowing Owls were also among the 63 species tallied.

Jean Richmond

NILES CANYON GRAVEL PITS, December 8.

Trip was cancelled due to rain.

PALO ALTO BAYLANDS, December 11.

Although it was raining during this field trip, three birders were crazy enough to go. Very few birds were seen, but the group did find Clapper Rails and two were patient enough to see the two Black Rails.

Elizabeth Dickey

LAFAYETTE RESERVOIR, December 29.

Fourteen birders walked 3.7 miles around Lafayette Reservoir on a cool but clear morning. Highlights of the trip were Ruby-crowned Kinglets everywhere, some showing the small, rufous patch atop the head but one displaying a magnificent ruffled crest of red feathers. A real surprise was sighting not one but two Soras at opposite ends of the reservoir. 39 species seen.

Barbara Vaughn

SPRING BIRDING CLASSES

Evening bird classes taught by Joe Morlan will start February 8, 9, and 10. All classes meet from 7:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. in Room 222, Marina Middle School, 3500 Fillmore at Bay Street, San Francisco. Field Ornithology I meets on Tuesdays and is an introduction to birds and birding. Field Ornithology II meets on Wednesdays and is a continuing study of water birds, including shorebirds and gulls. Field Ornithology III meets on Thursdays and is a continuing study of land birds, including thrashers, vireos, and warblers. Each class has two seven-week parts. Classes are endorsed by Golden Gate Audubon Society. Fees are \$65 for each seven-week course. Pre-registration is recommended. For further information, call the City College of San Francisco, Continuing Education Office, (415) 561-1840.

OBSERVATIONS

by Steve Glover

Please send observations to Steve Glover,
333 Goshen Ct., San Ramon, CA 94583, or call 829-7207.
Please include your telephone number with your observations.

Pacific Loon: 1 on 12/31 at Marina Bay Harbor, Richmond. (SG, JA)

Leach's Storm-Petrel: 1 on 1/8 at the Hayward Regional Shoreline. (BR) Extremely rare in the Bay.

Ashy Storm-Petrel: 1 on 1/8 and 1/10 at Hayward RS. (BR)

American White Pelican: 8 on 12/18 over Mitchell Canyon, Mt. Diablo State Park. (KA, EL, H&RH, C&SH)

Cattle Egret: 1 on 12/28 and 1/1 at Lake Merritt. (FB, MJC)

Tundra Swan: 2 adults, 4 immatures on 1/2 over his San Ramon home. (KH)

Wood Duck: 3 pair on 12/13 at San Pablo Reservoir (KH); 16 on 12/29 along Putah Creek, Solano Co. (FB, MJC, EL); 1 female on 1/6 at Hidden Lakes Park (JA).

Blue-winged Teal: 6 on 1/10 at Hayward RS. (BR)

Blue-winged Teal x Cinnamon Teal hybrid: 1 male on 12/13 at Mt. View Sanitary District. (KH)

Eurasian Wigeon: 2 males on 12/18 at Mallard Reservoir. (BR, SG)

Ring-necked Duck: 500 on 12/13 at San Pablo Reservoir. (KH)

Tufted Duck: 1 male on 12/18 at Mallard Reservoir. (BR, SG)

Oldsquaw: 1 on 12/21 (JR), 12/28 (FB, MJC), and 1/1 (FB, MJC) at Lake Merritt.

Barrow's Goldeneye: 50 on 12/21 (JR) and 70 on 12/28 and 1/1 (FB, MJC) at Lake Merritt; 1 immature male and 1 female on 12/31 on the Bay at the foot of California St., Rodeo (SG, JA).

Hooded Merganser: 35 on 12/21 and 12/29 at Putah Creek (FB, JD, MJC, EL); 2 females on 12/18 along Waterfront Rd. (SG, BR)

Bald Eagle: 1 adult on 1/1 along Dougherty Rd. east of San Ramon. (KH)

Merlin: 1 on 12/18 at Mallard Reservoir (BR, SG); 1 on 1/13 near the intersection of Lennon and Wiget Lanes, Walnut Creek (MS).

Prairie Falcon: 1 on 12/18 at Mallard Reservoir (SG, BR); 1 on 12/19 and 1/9 at Hayward RS (BR, KH, SG).

Peregrine Falcon: 1 on 12/18 at Mallard Reservoir. (BR)

Black Rail: 2 on 12/10 at Palo Alto Baylands (HH, MJC, FB); 8 on 12/18 in the Pittsburg marshes (BC), found on the Christmas Count, this number will likely be the high for the nation.

Black Oystercatcher: 3 on 12/31 at the old Albany dump. (SG, JA)

Lesser Yellowlegs: 4 on 12/18 along Waterfront Rd. (SG, BR)

Glaucous Gull: 1 immature on 1/8 at Hayward RS. (BR)

Greater Roadrunner: 1 reported on 1/6 from Sibley Regional Park by an unknown party. If true, this would be very exciting, as roadrunners were thought extirpated from the Berkeley Hills decades ago.

Common Poorwill: 1 on 12/18 on N. Gate Rd., Mt. Diablo State Park. (KH) Very rarely detected in winter.

Acorn Woodpecker: 8-10 on 12/7 at Golden Gate Park. (JR) Very rare at this park.

Phainopepla: 1 female on 1/5 at Hidden Lakes Park. (KH, GF, BR)

Warbling Vireo: 1 on 1/11 near the intersection of Lennon and Wiget Lanes. (MS) Probably the first winter record for the East Bay.

Chipping Sparrow: a flock of at least 40 on 1/8 at Putah Creek, Solano Co. (SG, RL)

Field Sparrow: 1 found 1/4 at Hidden Lakes Park, Martinez, by Denise Wight, present through at least 1/13. Fourth record for California, second winter record for California, and first mainland record for Northern California. In terms of rarity for the state, no bird ever found in Contra Costa County even comes close.

Vesper Sparrow: 1 on 1/12 at the Alhambra Creek parking lot of Briones Regional Park. (JA) Now rare in the county.

White-throated Sparrow: 1 adult on 12/5 in her Concord yard (MJC); 2 in her Danville yard from 12/31 to at least 1/13 (NC); 1 on 12/18 at Wall Ridge, MDSP (KH).

Harris' Sparrow: 1 since 12/15 in his Danville yard. (DJ)

Observers: Kamran Alavi, John Ascher, Florence Bennett, Bill Chilson, Norma Clary, Mary Jane Culver, Janice Dinatale, George Finger, Steve Glover, Hugh and Rosita Harvey, Claudia and Scott Hein, Kevin Hintsa, David Jesus, Eugenia Larson, Ron Lindeman, Bob Richmond, Jean Richmond, Maury Stern, and Denise Wight.

Note: The Rare Bird Alert Number 528-0288 is now to be used solely for reporting observations. There is no weekly summary tape. The daily update number is 524-5592.

INTERNATIONAL CORNER

by Jill Hedgecock

BRAZIL STOPS LOGGING AND ENFORCES IT

During the course of 1993, the issue of logging the indigenous reserves in South Para, Brazil, bounced back and forth. In May, an injunction to halt the logging was overturned. However, a historic decision enforcing the injunction was handed down in September, when a Brazilian logger was fined over \$200,000 (U. S. dollars) for illegal extraction. Bird species, such as the Osprey and the Barn Swallow, which breed in the United States, migrate to Brazil during the winter.

THE 1993 CHRISTMAS COUNT RESULTS

The 1993 Mt. Diablo Audubon Christmas Count yielded 156 species, which is about our average over the last five years. Highlights included Eurasian Wigeon, Tufted Duck, Barrow's Goldeneye, Peregrine Falcon, Mountain Bluebird, and Townsend's Solitaire. One new bird, never seen before on our Christmas Counts, was added: a Common Poorwill was seen on Mt. Diablo. Despite generally good weather, numbers were significantly down. Last year over 80,000 individuals were seen, this year 51,785. No one is exactly sure why. I want to thank the 65 volunteers who went out on December 18, as well as the six feeder-watchers, for making this a great day as well as a fun day. Finally, once again, special thanks go to Gloria Louten and her crew for arranging a marvelous dinner.

Jimm Edgar, Compiler

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

NEW MEMBERS

We are happy to greet these new MDAS members and hope to meet them at meetings and trips: K. Anderson, Nancy Ayres, Alan Babcock, Roy Bailey, Bill Beck, Dana Bowers, William Davis, Kennett Dempster, Louise Forant, David Fujikawa, Jackie Gomes, James Hale, Mrs. Kenneth Hamberg, Chip Hurley, Elizabeth Jackson, Robert Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. Dana Kilgore, William Klinck, Eugenia Larson, Lora Lemons, Don and Shirley Livingston, Susan Mann, K. Minard, Steven Moore, Tom Petrich, Daniel Pistone, Stephanie Pitts, Kate Taylor, Samantha Tobias, Andrew Verdi, Sheila Williamson.

NEWS FROM WILD BIRDS

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WINTER SUPER SALES

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(Sale ends 2/14/94)

The Quail is published monthly except for the combined July/August issue. Audubon membership includes subscriptions to the Quail and Audubon magazine. To join (\$35/year individual, \$38 family; introductory rates available), write your check to National Audubon Society but send it, with letter or subscription card, to the Membership Chairperson, Mike Williams, 1172 Larch Avenue, Moraga, CA 94556. The Chapter benefits financially from membership applications it processes. Full membership is encouraged, but subscription to the Quail is available separate from membership at \$10/year. The check should be made out to MDAS and mailed to the MDAS Treasurer, Pam Keiser, 505 Wild Flower Place, Danville, CA 94526. First class mailing to member or nonmember is an additional \$3.50/year payable to MDAS & sent to the Treasurer.

ADDRESS CHANGES AND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION: Consult Mike Williams, (510) 376-1631

Barbara Burek, Editor, 157 Mt. Kennedy Dr., Martinez, CA 94553 (510) 229-0394

Exchange bulletins for MDAS to Mt. Diablo Audubon Society, P. O. Box 53, Walnut Creek, CA 94597-0053, please.

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The QUAIL

BULLETIN OF THE MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 53

WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA 94597-0053

(510) AUD-UBON

President: Jim Lomax, 825-1513

VP Conservation: Al McNabney, 945-1785

Treasurer: Pam Keiser, 838-8840

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Programs: Denise Wight, 370-7342

Field Trips: Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486

Membership: Mike Williams, 376-1631

Publicity: Jill Hedgecock, 256-8270

Hospitality: Gloria Lotten, 866-1619

Education: Sheree Doucette, 682-6278

Secretary: Beverly Hawley, 947-0479



March 1994

Vol. 40 No. 7

Next Deadline: March 10

March Program:

Birding "Down Under"

For our **March 3** general meeting, MDAS Program Chair Denise Wight will give a slide presentation on her recent trip to Australia. Denise spent the entire month of November birding the east coast and "Top End" of Australia by herself and with knowledgeable local birders. While in the rainforest, she recorded some bizarre bird sounds, including Green Catbird, Eastern Whipbird, Wompoo Pigeon, and many more which she will also share with us. Her trip was a wonderful adventure and included standing knee-deep in crocodile-infested mangrove mud to see the elusive Chestnut Rail, petting a live, wild python while it was in the process of swallowing a wallaby, having Crimson Rosellas and King Parrots land on her head, hand-feeding wild Regent Bowerbirds, and driving around Brisbane. Denise will give us tips on how to bird Down Under.

Consider the Raven. For Birding Information, Jimm Edgar will consider not only the raven, but also other "black" birds.

The next MDAS board meeting will be Thursday, March 10, at the home of Pam Keiser, 505 Wild Flower Place, Danville, 838-8840. Board meetings are open to all interested members.

General meetings of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society are held on the first Thursday of every month from September through June. Our meeting place is the Pleasant Hill Senior Center, 233 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill. The meeting times are as follows:

6:30 Doors open
7:00 Birding Information
7:30 Business Meeting
8:00 Social Time
8:30 Program

Weekend Birding Break. Our next short, local weekend field trip will be on Sunday, March 20 to Lafayette Reservoir. Beginning bird-watchers and members new to our area are encouraged to join us for these weekend get-aways. See p. 3 for details.

Upcoming Event: Mark your calendar! The 1994 MDAS Birdathon will be on Saturday, April 30. If you have ideas or suggestions for making this our best Birdathon ever, call Denise Wight, 370-7342, or Barbara Burek, 229-0394.

CONSERVATION NOTES

by Al McNabney

DELTA ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE CENTER:

GOOD NEWS!

Mong right along. Yep! Pleased to tell you the Center is moving rapidly toward reality. A planning meeting brought together educators, planners, and interested people. A draft plan for a 25,000 square foot structure was presented. It was agreed preparations will be started to develop a Memorandum of Understanding to be signed by decision-makers to set the project in motion. The modest funding, seeded by the MDAS donation for the project, now also includes monies from toxic spill fines and a substantial donation from Tosco Refinery. A major planning meeting will take place late in February. One authority predicted the project will move quickly. The total estimated funds for the project will be several million dollars. There appears to be agreement that, because of the enthusiasm about the quality of the project, there is confidence funding goals will eventually be achieved.

BIODIVERSITY

It was reported last June when Secretary of Interior Babbitt and Chair of the House Committee on the Interior Miller spoke at the John Muir House. Since that June meeting, biodiversity and allied issues have received the attention worthy of the problem. The Biodiversity Group has drafted a proposal to "Develop a Regional Repository of Resource Information." Included in the Biodiversity Group are decision-makers from Contra Costa and Alameda Counties, California Department of Fish and Game, East Bay Regional Park District, and East Bay Municipal Utility District with support from the Contra Costa Water District. Formal proposals are being formulated. When the proposals are complete, they will be presented to federal authorities. Long-term conditions dictate that the biodiversity of the two counties be examined. This important project now appears to be moving toward a successful conclusion.

WATER: WE NEED MORE

Water problems may or may not be with us again in the future due to a lack of the wet stuff. Recent heavy rains give "some" hope Mom Nature will be smiling on the state and we will not again suffer a disastrous lack of water, i. e., drought. Whether California has a drought in 1994 may NOT be the question to be answered. A recent meeting of the Committee for Water Policy Consensus heard water managers from almost every Bay Area district assert they do not have and cannot foresee how they can obtain a sufficient water supply to meet future demands. The *Contra Costa Times* carried an item on January 5, "East County water supply could come up empty." Dennis Cuff wrote, "Water officials are uneasy about the adequacy of long-term water supplies for fast-growing East County after completing the first forecast of the area's water for the next half century." Don Freitas, a member of the Contra Costa Water District Board of Directors, commented, "I think this is a wake-up call that we can no longer fall back on the old belief there will be plentiful supplies around." At the same time, we

see proposals to develop projects of 11,000 or more dwellings in areas now almost totally uninhabited. Many authorities now predict that water will be THE cause of most disputes, problems, and concerns of people, states, and nations in the years to come. Water is a finite resource and if we continue to attempt to turn deserts into oases, society will pay the cost.

OLD GROWTH FORESTS

Decision time is almost upon us. Will the old growth forests be further put to the logger's ax? Or will more thoughtful consideration be given to the implications of further hewing of these important areas? These remaining forests are not really negotiable. Past, less-than-thoughtful uses have reduced the area to about 10% of what used to be there. If we were in the initial stages of logging, negotiation or compromise would be possible, but when only 10% of these important natural assets remain, it is time to "JUST SAY NO."

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

PUTAH CREEK, January 8.

A light warm rain off and on did not deter the twenty-three birders. Highlights were an American Dipper, Canyon and Rock Wrens, Wood Ducks, Hooded Mergansers, Barrow's Goldeneye, and ten species of sparrows, including 40 Chipping Sparrows, a White-throated Sparrow, and a Harris' Sparrow. Total species: 83.

Florence Bennett

LAKE MERRITT, January 12.

Five members and guests spent a pleasant morning around Lake Merritt. The weather was perfect. Barrow's Goldeneye were unusually abundant, but land birds were almost entirely absent. 21 species total.

Elizabeth Dickey

GRIZZLY ISLAND, January 22.

This was a gray day with occasional drizzle, but when the early fog lifted, twenty birders enjoyed a good day. Starting with a Merlin and a Barn Owl, then an immature Rough-legged Hawk, and continuing with excellent views of a Sora, a total of 68 species was seen. At the end of the day, many of the group explored the newly-opened Rush Ranch Preserve.

Elizabeth Dickey

SUNOL REGIONAL PARK, January 27.

It was a beautiful day but only four birders came. One of the highlights came before the trip officially started: a flock of about 40 turkeys, including several males displaying, along Geary Road. Three immature Golden Eagles were seen at one time circling above the canyon. Both Cooper's and Sharp-shinned Hawks were seen. A total of 39 species.

Elizabeth Dickey

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

Wednesday, March 2, **Hayward Regional Shoreline**. Carpool 7:45 a.m. at El Nido at St. Stephens, off SR-24. Meet at 8:15 a.m. in parking lot at end of Winton Ave. From I-880, turn west on Winton Ave. and follow to parking lot at end. Leader: Barbara Vaughn, 376-8732 Category 2

Saturday, March 12, **Tomales Bay State Park**. Carpool 7:00 a.m., Acalanes Ave., off Pleasant Hill Rd., just north of SR 24. Meet at 8:30 a.m. in the parking lot at Heart's Desire Beach at Tomales SP (\$5 entrance fee). Cross San Rafael Bridge. From US 101, take San Rafael exit, go 2 blocks, turn left onto Sir Frances Drake Blvd. Follow Sir Francis Drake Blvd. through Inverness. Just over the ridge, turn right onto Pierce Point Rd. The park entrance is on the right. Leader: Maury Stern, 254-5980 Category 2

Thursday, March 17, **San Mateo Coast**. Carpool 7:00 a.m., El Cerro Blvd., just west of I-680. Meet at 8:30 a.m. in beach parking lot off SR 1 opposite Pescadero Road. Cross the 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. Leader: Jean Richmond, 837-2843 Category 2

Sunday, March 20, **Lafayette Reservoir**. Meet at 8:30 a.m. in the parking lot at the top of the dam (\$4.00 fee). A **Weekend Birding Break**. Leader: Denise Wight, 370-7342 Category 2

Saturday, March 26, **Black Diamond Mines Regional Park**. Carpool 7:30 a.m. at Acalanes Ave., off Pleasant Hill Rd., north of Hwy. 24. Meet at 8:15 a.m. in the parking lot at park. Go east on Ygnacio Valley and Kirker Pass Roads to Hwy. 4. Go south on Hwy. 4 to the Somersville Rd. exit and turn right. Follow the road to the parking lot at the end. Woodland, chaparral, and some grassland birds. Leader: Pat MacEachron, 934-3041 Category 3

Wednesday, March 30, **Briones Park**. Meet at 9:00 a.m. in the parking lot at the north entrance. Take Briones Road off of Alhambra Valley Road. Wildflowers, spring birds. Poison oak along shaded trails. Leader: John Davis, 228-9516 Category 2

OBSERVATIONS

by Steve Glover

Please send observations to Steve Glover, 333 Goshen Ct., San Ramon, CA 94583, or call 829-7207. Please include your telephone number with your observations.

Tundra Swan: 10 on 1/22 at Marsh Creek Reservoir. (SG)
Wood Duck: a pair still present on 1/2 at Oak Hill Park in Danville. (JR, RR)

Tufted Duck: 1 male on 1/19 (JR, GF), 1/21 (FB, MJC), and 1/28 (HH) at Lake Merritt; 1 on 1/25 at Stow Lake, Golden Gate Park (MJC, FB, BG, HH).

Oldsquaw: 1 on 1/10 and 1/21 at Lake Merritt (FB, MJC, BG); 1 on 1/19 at the Emeryville Marina (GF, JR); 5 at one time on 2/8 at the Pt. Reyes Fish Docks (JR).

Barrow's Goldeneye: 2 females on 1/22 at Clifton Court Forebay near Byron. (SG)

Hooded Merganser: 2 females through 2/2 (H&RH, FB, SG) and a male on 2/2 (HH, FB) at 7 Hills School, Walnut Creek.

Bald Eagle: 1 immature on 1/22 at S. Flynn and Patterson Pass Roads in the Altamont Pass area. (GF, JR)

Black Rail: 1 on 1/10 at Palo Alto Baylands. (FB, MJC)

Mountain Plover: 175 on 1/11 south of Knights Landing in Yolo Co. (FB, MJC, BG); over 70 on 1/30 along Bartlett Road, southeast Solano Co. (JR, RR).

Common Black-headed Gull: 1 on 1/29 at Sunnyvale Sewer Ponds. (SG) Also on RBA.

Glaucous Gull: 1 on 2/1 at mouth of Walker Creek, Tomales Bay. (JR, GF)

Short-eared Owl: 1 on 2/8 along S. Beach Rd., Pt. Reyes. (JR, GF)

Allen's Hummingbird: 1 on 1/22 in his Pinole yard. (AW)

Empidonax flycatcher: 1 on 2/5 (AE) and 2/6 (KH) at Del Valle Regional Park. This is likely a Hammond's Flycatcher; a Hammond's has wintered twice in the East Bay in recent years.

House Wren: 1 on 2/6 at Del Valle RP. (KH)

Mountain Bluebird: 7 on 1/22 along Kelso Road, Alameda Co. (GF, JR); 6 on 1/17 and 14 on 1/30 along Dougherty Rd., east of San Ramon (SG).

Tennessee Warbler: 1 on 2/1 at Dickmann's Store at Bodega Harbor. (GF, JR, MJC, FB, BG, HH)

Palm Warbler: 1 on 1/25 at Lake Merced. (MJC, FB, BG, HH, JR)

Northern Waterthrush: 1 on 2/1 at Dickmann's Store. (JR) Also on RBA.

Field Sparrow: still reported on 2/9 on RBA at Hidden Lakes Park, Martinez.

Harris' Sparrow: 1 on 1/11 (FB, MJC, BG) and 1/18 (HH, JR) along Holmes Lane, Putah Creek; 1 on 1/28 still in his Danville yard (DJ).

Red Crossbill: 5 on 1/25 in Strybing Arboretum, Golden Gate Park. (JR)

Observers: Florence Bennett, Mary Jane Culver, Art Edwards, George Finger, Betty Gallagher, Steve Glover, Hugh and Rosita Harvey, Kevin Hintsa, David Jesus, Jean and Rich Richmond, Anthony Wong.

NEW MEMBERS

We warmly welcome these new MDAS members and hope to meet them at meetings and field trips: Cynthia Alcantara, Daphne Babunakis, Thomas Bishop, Diane Blaylock, L. Boyer, Margaret Coffey, Mike Croghan, Larry Davis, Elizabeth Frei, Dr. A. N. Glazer, Mrs. H. W. Graves, Anne E. Gray, Virginia Harrington, Rev. and Mrs. Ross Hidy, Dathi-Chuck Hooker, John Howland, R. A. Hunsinger, William Hunt, Mark Janlois, Carl Johnson, Ron Kasuba, Peter Kaufman, Norm Kingshill, Edward F. Lewis, Harry P. Locklin, Dale Mackley, Michael Marchiano, Eugene May, Virginia McCaslin, Jean Merrigan, Katherine Moore, Mrs. Mas Narasaki, Shirley Nootbaar, Tami Paine, Joe Palmer, Maurine Randall, Jean Rodkey, Jan Romine, C. B. Schwarz, Al Sharief, Thomas Sinton, M. Stephens, Nita Torres Tomasell, Kay Underwood, Sid Wolfe, Tracy Wonnell, and Laurence Wyner.

SCIENTIFIC SYMPOSIUM

Golden Gate Audubon Society and the College of Alameda are hosting a Scientific Symposium on the closure of the Alameda Naval Air Station. The incredibly rich wildlife resources of the Alameda Naval Air Station has been one of the Bay Area's best kept secrets. The Naval Air Station's open spaces provide habitat for the only successful California Least Tern colony north of Santa Barbara. Closure of the Alameda Naval Air Station means that decisions must be reached as to the extent of open space that is to be preserved for wildlife species. Speakers will include the pre-eminent scientists studying the Least Terns, Barbara Massey and Dr. Carolee Caffrey, as well as nine other scientists who will address other wildlife species found at the Naval Air Station. The Symposium will be held Saturday, March 12, at the College of Alameda, 555 Atlantic Avenue, Alameda, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Attendance is free and open to the public.

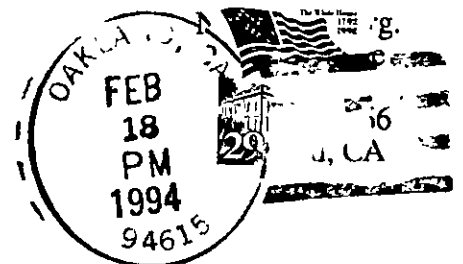
The Quail is published monthly except for the combined July/August issue. Audubon membership includes subscriptions to the Quail and Audubon magazine. To join (\$35/year individual, \$38 family; introductory rates available), write your check to National Audubon Society but send it, with letter or subscription card, to the Membership Chairperson, Mike Williams, 1172 Larch Avenue, Moraga, CA 94556. The Chapter benefits financially from membership applications it processes. Full membership is encouraged, but subscription to the Quail is available separate from membership at \$10/year. The check should be made out to MDAS and mailed to the MDAS Treasurer, Pam Keiser, 505 Wild Flower Place, Danville, CA 94526. First class mailing to member or nonmember is an additional \$3.50/year payable to MDAS & sent to the Treasurer.

ADDRESS CHANGES AND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION: Consult Mike Williams, (510) 376-1631.

*Barbara Burek, Editor, 157 Mt. Kennedy Dr., Martinez, CA 94553 (510) 229-0394
Exchange bulletins for MDAS to Mt. Diablo Audubon Society, P. O. Box 53, Walnut Creek, CA 94597-0053, please.*

Mt. Diablo Audubon Society
P.O. Box 53
Walnut Creek, CA 94597-0053

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RICH & JEAN RICHMOND
125 VIA SERENA
ALAMO CA 94507



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BULLETIN OF THE MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 53

WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA 94597-0053

(510) AUD-UBON

President: Jim Lomax, 825-1513

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Education: Sheree Doucette, 682-6278

Secretary: Beverly Hawley, 947-0479



April 1994

Vol. 40 No. 8

Next Deadline: April 14

April Program:

The California Desert: Treasure or Wasteland?

The California Desert covers one quarter of our entire state, 25,000,000 acres. What is this vast region like? Why are Audubon and the Sierra Club, as members of the California Desert Protection League, working hard to establish three new national parks in our desert and protect 71 other areas as designated wilderness? Join us at our **April 7** general meeting when Vicky Hoover will give a slide presentation to show what's so special about the desert and how you can help to ensure its preservation.

Vicky Hoover is a Sierra Club wilderness activist and chair of the northern division of the California Desert Protection League. Vicky has been leading outings to the California desert since Senator Alan Cranston introduced the California Desert Protection Act in 1986 and has specialized in guiding people in the East Mojave National Scenic Area, our future Mojave National Park. She has also taken two trips to Washington, D. C., to lobby for desert protection. Vicky will show slides taken on her desert outings and will explain what each of us can do to help the desert campaign in its final stages this spring.

April Birding Information will be given by Shirley Ellis who will talk about how different members of our chapter have become interested in birding.

General meetings of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society are held on the first Thursday of every month from September through June. Our meeting place is the Pleasant Hill Senior Center, 233 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill. The meeting times are as follows:

6:30 Doors open
7:00 Birding Information
7:30 Business Meeting
8:00 Social Time
8:30 Program

The next MDAS board meeting will be on April 14 at the home of Barbara Vaughn, 59 Donna Maria Way, Orinda, 376-8732. The board meetings are open to all interested members.

Birdathon!
April 30!
See page 5.

Weekend Birding Break. Our April birding break, a short, local field trip, will be Sunday, April 10, to Briones Regional Park. Spring is here and you can celebrate not being in any of those parts of the country where winter is still holding sway. See page 3 for details.

CONSERVATION NOTES

by Al McNabney

AUDUBON'S LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR: A COMMENT
A read of the morning paper or a listen to tv news oft reminds us we have a state legislature. Individuals, elected by "we, the people," gather in hallowed halls to do the state's business. Some argue we're better off when our elected representatives are out of session, for then they can do no harm. I do not share that view.

When the nation was formed, people's governmental needs and problems were simple, at least as compared to modern times. Today state legislative challenges are VERY complex. The solutions are seldom simple. This is particularly true if "THE PEOPLE" have a say in the solutions. Environmental issues requiring legislation are likewise very complex, with solutions often difficult to find.

Lobbyists are, in today's vernacular, almost considered BAD people, supporting BAD things. Legislators are VERY busy people. They and their staffs are confronted daily with highly complex issues that demand action. Audubon's interests in bird life, conservation, and allied matters bring people together who have special expertise, knowledge, and priorities. Few legislators have all the special knowledge we deem essential when considering, for example, old growth forest legislation. Legislators are often briefed on such a matter by one or more highly skilled individuals representing a company that seeks to eliminate, reduce or abate existing laws or regulations.

Audubon's Sacramento-based Legislative Director presents an environmentally sound view to the legislators. The California Audubon chapters, through an agreed-on system, provide data, direction, and, when necessary, assistance to the Legislative Director. Account is taken of the needs of people, birds and wildlife, and any presentation of fact to the legislature is done carefully.

The Endangered Species Act, the Clean Air Act, and many other basic protections have been and are being seriously challenged. The legislators often hear from those wishing to weaken such legislation. Without an accurate presentation of the importance of these laws to us humans, the environment, and wildlife, the laws might well be weakened or repealed.

Many experts speak for "we, the people" on different matters. Few speak for birds and wildlife. We all know these creatures cannot represent themselves. Who does that in the California legislative circles? Audubon's Legislative Director from his Legislative Affairs Office.

John McCaull, a young, married, and totally environmentally attuned college graduate, now fills the position of Audubon Legislative Director. His work day when the legislature is in session is far, far more than the usual eight hours. He is well known to legislators. John, as he is known by everyone, also

provides a monthly report to California Audubon Chapters. The report is comprehensive, factual, and analytical.

The general opinion seems to be (with which I fully agree) that John's presence, ability, persistence, and effectiveness were very important to outcome of environmentally sensitive legislation in 1993. It's now 1994. As John has commented recently: "We ... do not have the official bill numbers for the many bad pieces of legislation that we will face in 1994. The rumor mill is certainly swirling, but we have seen or heard proposals on forestry, endangered species, CEQA, protections for non-game birds, and mining which will certainly deserve extensive scrutiny"

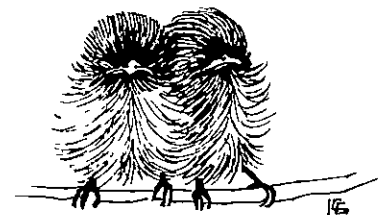
California Audubon's Sacramento-based Legislative Affairs Office provides for VERY important environmental activity. John McCaull carries out his work in a manner that lives up to Audubon's traditions.

INTERNATIONAL CORNER

by Jill Hedgecock

DESERT BIRDS NEED YOUR HELP

The Desert Protection Act (SB 21), supported by Senator Dianne Feinstein, will expand both Death Valley and Joshua Tree National Monuments and designate national park status for these areas. It will also create the East Mojave National Park. Both Inyo California Towhee and Least Bell's Vireo are found in this unique habitat. After eight long years, the Desert Protection Act is expected to pass the Senate. However, as it stands, there is now a fatal flaw in it. An amendment to the bill (the Lanfair deletion) calls for the exclusion of 260,000 acres in the center of the proposed East Mojave National Park. This is believed to be a tactical measure to reduce severely the final size of the park. There are only about thirty liveable dwellings and twelve year-round residents within the Lanfair Valley. Most of the year-round residents do not oppose the bill. Furthermore, most of the land in the deletion is already federally-owned. Included in the Lanfair deletion are Native American petroglyphs, interesting geological formations, and Camp Rock Spring, an important water source for wildlife. Please write Senator Feinstein now at 1700 Montgomery St., Suite 305, San Francisco, CA 94111 or call (202) 224-3841 and urge her to restore the national park status to the Lanfair area. The bill will be voted on in March or early April.



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 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, April 2, **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. Grasshopper Sparrow is one possibility.
Leader: Bob Richmond, 475-5412 Category 3

Thursday, April 7, **Ironhouse Sanitary**. Carpool 7:30 a.m. at southwest corner of Sun Valley parking lot. Meet at 8:15 a.m. in Oakley near railroad tracks, opposite Third Street. Take Hwy. 4 to Oakley. Meeting point is three miles into Oakley on Main Street.
Leader: Shirley Ellis, 939-9091 Category 1

Sunday, April 10, **Briones Regional Park**. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the western entrance parking lot, off Bear Creek Rd. A **Weekend Birding Break**. New birders especially welcome.
Leader: Barbara Vaughn, 376-8732 Category 1

Wednesday, April 13, **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 and 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. Both land and water birds, spring migrants.
Leader: Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486 Category 2

Saturday, April 16, **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., turn right onto Marsh Creek Rd. Turn right again onto Regency Dr. about 1/2 mile past the center of Clayton. Carry lunch and liquids.
Leader: Maury Stern, 284-5980 Category 3

Thursday, April 21, **Ida Clayton Road**. Carpool 7:00 a.m. at the southwest corner of Sun Valley parking lot. This area is north of Calistoga in the Napa County mountains. This is a car birding trip with no meeting place in Napa County. The carpooling is needed due to limited parking on some roads.
Leader: Jean Richmond, 837-2843 Category 1

Wednesday, April 27, **Del Puerto Canyon**. Carpool at 7:45 a.m. at El Cerro Blvd., just west of I-680. Meet west of I-5 at 9:00 a.m. at the Patterson Exit of I-5 (59 mi. from El Cerro). Costa's Hummingbird, Yellow-breasted Chat.
Leader: Florence Bennett, 689-3106 Category 1

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

LOS BANOS AND PANOCHE VALLEY, February 5-6.
Saturday began with White-faced Ibis flying through the fog. With clearing came views of ducks, stilts, hawks, three male Blue-winged Teal, Merlin, two Bald Eagles, Virginia Rail, and thousands of Snow Geese along Santa Fe Grade Road. In the afternoon, several hundred Sandhill Cranes at San Luis NWR, and more geese, mostly Snows, plus many White-fronted and Canada at Merced NWR. Ten birders saw a total of 82 species this day. Sunday, clouds and cold wind kept the birds down. Eight birders in six cars saw a total of 39 species, 14 of which had not been seen the previous day. Highlights were a Golden Eagle, a Burrowing Owl at the mouth of Shotgun Pass, two Roadrunners, and a dark-phase Ferruginous Hawk well seen when perched and compared with a light-phase bird nearby.
Elizabeth Dickey

THORNTON, February 9.
Nineteen members and guests travelled to the Thornton area of the Delta under fair skies with 50-60° weather. We had an auspicious beginning at Glascock Park with 2 Swainson's hawks and a Prairie Falcon. Sandhill Cranes were numerous through the area but Tundra Swan numbers were in the dozens rather than the hundreds of a few weeks earlier. We saw nineteen Cattle Egrets in a field. During lunch at the new Cosumnes River Preserve Interpretive Center, we were entertained by three Red-shouldered Hawks. 75 species were seen overall.
Maury Stern

BODEGA BAY, February 19.
Birding in the rain, Birding in the rain. Oh, what a glorious feeling, Birding in the rain? Thanks to the good spirit of seven wet and cold birders, a total of 60 species was tallied. Of course, Bodega Bay is beautiful in any weather, and the fact that car birding and easy access is available helped a great deal. We need the rain!
Shirley Ellis

HIDDEN LAKES PARK, February 20.
Nine birders got together at this 16 acre suburban park for our first "weekend break" field trip. We counted 45 species in 3 hours, sampling some of the more common birds to be found in Contra Costa. Sadly, we missed the Field Sparrow, but got good views of Western Bluebirds, compared Audubon's and Myrtle forms of Yellow-rumped Warbler, and watched at close range as a pair of Red-shouldered Hawks repeatedly displayed their affection for each other. Spring was in the air.
Denise Wight

OBSERVATIONS

by Steve Glover

Please send observations to Steve Glover, 3986 Stoneridge, #2, Pleasanton, CA 94566, or call 846-7382. Please include your telephone number with your observations.

Cattle Egret: 8 on 2/28 along Thornton Rd., San Joaquin Co. (GF, MP)

Wood Duck: pair still present 3/5 at Oak Hill Park, Danville. (PK)

Redhead: 1 male on 2/15 at Arrowhead Marsh. (JR)

Tufted Duck: 2 on 2/22 at Sandpiper Pt., Vallejo. (JR) Also on RBA.

Harlequin Duck: a pair on 2/8 (BG, FB, MJC) and 2 males and 1 female on 2/22 (GF, KH, MP) at the Fish Docks, Pt. Reyes.

Osprey: 1 on 3/9 over S. Gate Rd., Mt. Diablo State Park. (KH)

Bald Eagle: 1 adult on 2/14 at Colusa NWR (GF, MP); 3 adults on 2/15 along Santa Fe Grade Rd. and 1 adult along I-5 north of Hwy. 140 (FB, MJC, BG); 1 immature on 2/18 over Panoche Rd., (JR); 2 adults on 3/1 at Lake Hennessey (JR).

Swainson's Hawk: 2 on 2/9 along Glascock Rd., San Joaquin Co. (GF, KH) Only place in northern California where they are known to winter.

Mountain Plover: 175 on 2/14 at intersection of Hwys. 102 and 16, Yolo Co. (GF, MP)

Pacific Golden-Plover: 12 at Spaletta Plateau, Pt. Reyes. (GF, MP, KH) Also on RBA.

Greater Roadrunner: 2 on 2/3 (GF, MP) and 3 on 2/18 (JR) along Little Panoche Rd.

Northern Pygmy-Owl: 1 on 2/27 along Geary Rd., near Sunol Regional Park. (SG)

Hammond's Flycatcher: 1 still present on 2/16 at Del Valle Regional Park. (SG, KH)

Bank Swallow: 1 on 3/9 at Hayward Regional Shoreline. (BR)

Mountain Bluebird: 2 on 2/16 at intersection of Bruns and Kelso Rds. near Byron, Alameda Co. (SG, KH)

Sage Thrasher: 1 on 2/3 (GF, MP) and 1 singing on 2/18 (JR) along Little Panoche Rd.

Phainopepla: 1 in his Concord yard for the past month. (MR)

Field Sparrow: seen on 2/25 at Hidden Lakes Park (KH); also reported on RBA through 3/9.

Vesper Sparrow: 2 on 2/18 along Little Panoche Rd. (JR)

White-throated Sparrow: 1 on 2/24 and 2/25 in her Concord yard. (MJC)

Observers: Florence Bennett, Mary Jane Culver, George Finger, Betty Gallagher, Steve Glover, Kevin Hints, Pam Keiser, Marjorie Plant, Bob Richmond, Jean Richmond, and Mike Robertson.

Note: For the daily updates of the Northern California Rare Bird Alert, call 524-5592.

CLASSES, ETC.

SPRING BIRDING CLASS

Norah Bain's field classes for both beginning and intermediate birders will meet on the following Tuesdays: April 19 and 26, and May 3 and 10. Classes will meet from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., except for the May 10 class. For that day, reservations have been made for visits to Audubon Canyon Ranch and Point Reyes Bird Observatory. Register now by mail, by sending the \$29 fee for Orinda residents or the \$31 fee for non-residents to Orinda Community Center, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563. For more registration information, call the Orinda Community Center at 254-2445; for general class information, call Norah at 254-4516.

AUDUBON ECOLOGY CAMPS AND WORKSHOPS

National Audubon Society is offering an impressive selection of national and international camps and workshops for 1994. Field studies range from geology and marine life to birds, mammals, plants, insects, weather, astronomy, population, and renewable energy. Workshop and Camp sessions for adults 18 years or older run from six to eleven days. Accommodations are in camp lodges or in comfortable motels. Instructors are selected for their unique knowledge of their field. A detailed program will be sent to you on request. Write Audubon Ecology Camps and Workshops, National Audubon Society, 613 Riversville Road, Greenwich, CT 06831, or call (203) 869-2017, for more information.

GOLDEN GATE RAPTOR RECRUITMENT

If you want to learn to identify the hawks, falcons, and eagles of California and you want to be part of a local long-term wildlife conservation project, then the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory wants you! Attend their only 1994 Recruitment Meetings to see if you want to get involved. Meetings are on Saturday, April 23, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., and on Thursday, April 28, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Both meetings will be held at GGNRA Headquarters, Building 201, Upper Fort Mason, San Francisco. Enter at Franklin and Bay. For more information, call the GGRO at (415) 331-0730.

TRICOLORED BLACKBIRD CENSUS

3436 Mountain Plovers were counted in California on Saturday, January 29, on the first, single date, statewide Mountain Plover census. The success of this plover census has encouraged the California Department of Fish and Game's Tricolored Blackbird Working Group to ask the Audubon Society's Western Regional Office to help coordinate the first, single date, statewide census of Tricolored Blackbirds. The census will be held on Saturday, April 23. Your participation will make an important scientific contribution by helping to determine the overall numbers of Tricolored Blackbirds, the size and location of nesting colonies, and their foraging areas. For further information, call Bob Barnes, Birds in the Balance Program Coordinator, at Audubon's Western Regional Office in Sacramento, (916) 481-5332.

1994 MDAS BIRDATHON

*by Barbara Burek
and Denise Wight*

Every year for the past few years, we have tried to make the Birdathon of that year "the best Birdathon yet." This year we are going to try something new: making this Birdathon the most fun yet. Five of our better birders have agreed to lead teams into the field on Saturday, April 30, in pursuit of honor, glory, and birds. Members are invited to join a team or form a team of their own. A separate category will allow members who prefer less active pursuits to participate in the Big Sit: a competition for the backyard feeder watcher. Awards will be given to the teams compiling the biggest list, finding the most unusual birds, and raising the most money for the Birdathon. Members who participate by supporting a winning team will also be honored.

Handicapping the chapter teams:

"The Road Runners" led by Jimm Edgar and Maury Stern. Led by two former Birdathon leaders, this team must be considered a strong starter out of the gate.

"Glover's Plover Lovers" led by Steve Glover. The MDAS Observations editor is not only going for the gold but also for a new personal Contra Costa County Birdathon record. Only for the strong of heart, not to mention legs and eyes.

"The Early Worms" led by Jim Lomax. (The early worm gets the birds, says he.) Our MDAS President promises not to stop to photograph every bird on his Contra Costa Birdathon trip.

"The Wight-crowned Spare-'O's" led by Denise Wight. The discoverer of the Hidden Lakes Field Sparrow, a major northern California find, Denise won't say if she has any other rarities staked out for the Birdathon. Sign up to go with her and see.

We were recently asked by a long-time MDAS member why it is important to support the Birdathon. Funds to support our chapter activities come from two sources: the share of member dues returned to the chapter by National Audubon (currently \$5.50 a year for each renewing member), and money raised by the chapter. The Birdathon is the only major fund-raising each year by MDAS. Our funds are used for local conservation work by Al McNabney and others, for support of our Audubon legislative analyst in Sacramento (see Conservation Notes), for our monthly meetings (rent, speaker fees, etc.), for the chapter insurance, for the Christmas Count, and for publishing and mailing the *Quail*. For our current financial year which began July 1, 1993, through February 28, 1994, we have received \$4690.00 from National. Our total *Quail* expenses for the same period were \$4817.14. Even if the chapter had no other expenses than the *Quail*, the dues share from National is not sufficient to pay for the *Quail*. MDAS has been running in the red for the past two years because of this situation. We

have been investigating ways to reduce *Quail* costs but so far have found no acceptable solution. Therefore, the answer to our long-time member is support of the Birdathon will allow our chapter to continue our chapter activities and conservation work.

To support the Birdathon and MDAS, fill out the following form and return it to Barbara Burek at 157 Mt. Kennedy Dr., Martinez, CA 94553.

_____ I want to bird with the group _____.

_____ I want to form my own group.

_____ I want to participate in the Big Sit.

_____ I will be unable to participate but want to pledge.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Pledge amount: _____

NEWS FROM WILD BIRDS

720 Contra Costa Blvd.
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523
798-0303

Have you been enjoying all those American Goldfinches? There have been many reports of flocks of from 25 to over 100. They are monopolizing our thistle feeders in the same way last year's Pine Siskins did. They are molting into their breeding plumage and will be with us until May, except at some higher elevations where they are year-round residents.

It's time to put out oriole feeders. We are starting to receive sighting reports. These spectacular nectar-feeding birds nest here and will be with us through August. Please keep us posted on your sightings. Last year 1400 orioles were seen.

Backyard Birdscaping? A birdscape plan is an evaluation of your yard's attraction for birds and recommendations for enhancing your habitat to attract more birds, enticing a wider variety of birds, or both. This plan will be prepared by Ed Hase, a MDAS member, who delights in discovering the potential of your habitat. Also, you can have your backyard certified as a Wildlife Habitat. Please call for more information.

Happy birding!
Mike Williams

Field Trip Reports, con't.

BERKELEY SHORELINE, February 24.

The actual numbers of birds on the Bay seemed low this year, but we found a Barrow's Goldeneye and three pairs of Redheads at Aquatic Park. Pelagic and Double-crested Cormorants sat side by side on a breakwater for eye-level comparisons. Also we saw Black Turnstones and a distant Red-breasted Merganser. Eight birders checked off 50 species.

Denise Wight

NEW MEMBERS

It is with very great pleasure that we greet these new MDAS members and hope to meet them soon: Ruby Aldinger, Mrs. Thomas Andersen, Wyndom Anderson, Martha Armstrong, Beverly Arntzen, Linda Beattie, Davi Boyle, E. Bradshaw,

Ruth Brandt, Tom Brown, Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Butkowski, Laurie Cardillo, Ronald Carter, Willis Casey, Jr., Marjorie Chin, Patricia Christian, Chris Cordoba, Dorothy Cotton, R. J. Dannels, John Dovik, Lynda Draper, Katherine Eshleman, R. Fox, D. Furseth, Lisa Gaffagan, Raoul Gaynard, Dorothy Gillard, D. Gorder, Mary Greathouse, Andrew Haley, Ann E. Hallstone, Hank and Carol Hanig, B. W. Hanson, Robert and Hilma Heaton, Stanley Heyse, Muriel M. Hilliard, Jennifer Hoelper, Roger Jennings, Drema Kasper, Mr. and Mrs. Sydney Kauf, Marie Kendall, Lhotka, Thomas Lois, Chris Martinez, Elsa Morell, Clark Morrison, Grisell Navas, Richard Newman, Cheryl Olson, Myrna Owens, Robert Paulson, Steve Peterson, J. Pfeiffer, John Qualtrough, John Roberto, Sheryl Shreves, Charles D. Smith, Dorothy Smith, Sandra Smith, Herbert Spielman, Jacqueline Spight, Ronald Sprueill, Marie C. Starr, Donald Stillman, Frances Stradling, Ruth Taylor, Carl L. Weare, Fontaine Weitzel, Claudia Whitnah, Anthony Wickham, Mrs. John Wild, Evelyn Willson, Mr. and Mrs. Roger Wood, and Jackie Woodall.

The Quail is published monthly except for the combined July/August issue. Audubon membership includes subscriptions to the Quail and Audubon magazine. To join (\$35/year individual, \$38 family; introductory rates available), write your check to National Audubon Society but send it, with letter or subscription card, to the Membership Chairperson, Mike Williams, 1172 Larch Avenue, Moraga, CA 94556. The Chapter benefits financially from membership applications it processes. Full membership is encouraged, but subscription to the Quail is available separate from membership at \$10/year. The check should be made out to MDAS and mailed to the MDAS Treasurer, Pam Keiser, 505 Wild Flower Place, Danville, CA 94526. First class mailing to member or nonmember is an additional \$3.50/year payable to MDAS & sent to the Treasurer.

ADDRESS CHANGES AND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION: Consult Mike Williams, (510) 376-1631.

*Barbara Burek, Editor, 157 Mt Kennedy Dr., Martinez, CA 94553 (510) 229-0394
Exchange bulletins for MDAS to Mt. Diablo Audubon Society, P. O. Box 53, Walnut Creek, CA 94597-0053, please.*

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The QUAIL

BULLETIN OF THE MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 53

WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA 94597-0053

(510) AUD-UBON

President: Jim Lomax, 825-1513

VP Conservation: Al McNabney, 945-1785

Treasurer: Pam Keiser, 838-8840

Sales Manager: Barbara Vaughn, 376-8732

Programs: Denise Wight, 370-7342

Field Trips: Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486

Membership: Mike Williams, 376-1631

Publicity: Jill Hedgecock, 256-8270

Hospitality: Gloria Lotten, 866-1619

Education: Sheree Doucette, 682-6278

Secretary: Beverly Hawley, 947-0479

May 1994

Vol. 40 No. 9

Next Deadline: May 12

May Program:

The Birds of California Hotspots

For our May 5 general meeting, Mike Danzenbaker will give a slide presentation on some of his favorite birding hot spots in California, including Tule Lake, Yosemite, and South Monterey County. Mike is a South Bay resident who has travelled all over the world photographing birds. His bird photographs have graced the cover of the recent American Birding Association magazine *Birding* and can be seen throughout the book *Ocean Birds of the Near Shore Pacific* by Rich Stallcup. Don't miss this show which will dazzle you with Mike's beautiful pictures of birds.

May Birding Information will re-cap the results and experiences of the four chapter teams participating in this year's Birdathon.

At our May meeting we will also announce the 1994 recipient of MDAS's Al McNabney Environmental Distinction Award and vote on the elected officials for next year's board. Current candidates include:

President: Jim Lomax

Vice-President, Conservation: Al McNabney

Treasurer: Pam Keiser

We still need a candidate for Secretary. Please call any MDAS officer if you are interested. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor.

General meetings of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society are held on the first Thursday of every month from September through June. Our meeting place is the Pleasant Hill Senior Center, 233 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill. The meeting times are as follows:

6:30 Doors open
7:00 Birding Information
7:30 Business Meeting
8:00 Social Time
8:30 Program

The next MDAS board meeting will be on Thursday, May 12, hosted by Mike Williams at the Wild Birds Unlimited store, 720 Contra Costa Blvd., Pleasant Hill, 798-0303. The board meetings are open to all interested members.

Weekend Birding Break. Our May birding break, a short, local field trip to tide you over from Mother's Day until the Memorial Day weekend, will be Sunday, May 15, to Tilden Regional Park. See page 3 for details.

CONSERVATION NOTES

by Al McNabney

WE COULD LOSE IT ALL

This year the Congress will be debating reauthorization of the Clean Water Act and the Endangered Species Act, to name just two VITAL issues. You ask, "How is it possible that we could lose it all?" Believe it or not, many individuals and groups would like nothing better than to KILL essentially ALL governmental regulation. This is particularly true when it comes to environmental regulations. The cry today is that governmental regulations are stifling business, ergo such laws and regulations MUST be bad. I'll make the point this way. Travel to almost any area along the U. S.-Mexican border, and observe the ways in which people live. Observe the condition of the streams and rivers. I'll assure you such are NOT the ways in which most Americans live and work. So you ask, "Why do such conditions exist?" One easy, quick response is because environmental laws either don't exist there or are not enforced. The Clinton Administration came to office with lots of environmental support. At the same time, entities seeking to "do in" the environmental protections have learned how to lobby. However, at the same time, according to Audubon's Washington officers, our elected representatives have NOT been hearing from us. Have you written or called your Senator or Congressman lately? If not, DO SO TODAY. We must have legislation that will protect not "do in" wetlands. YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE. Whether you do so or not is up to you.

BIRDS IN THE BALANCE

Audubon's program to ensure migratory birds will have a place to migrate to and from is worthy of full support. Thousands of avian species migrate from northern locales to Central and South America. If the area to which some birds have migrated for hundreds of years is deforested, the future of some avian species will be in great question.

DESERT PROTECTION: WE'RE HALFWAY THERE

Audubon people who attended the April meeting heard and saw slides depicting the desert areas in Southern California that will be included in the DESERT PROTECTION ACT, IF such is enacted into law. Senators Feinstein and Boxer fought the good fight on the senate floor and WON. The bill now goes to the House of Representatives. George Miller will be handling the bill in the House. There are several issues to be considered:

1. Existing parks are being loved to death, too many people, not enough space.
2. Population growth in California will place more and more pressure on existing park areas.
3. Wildlands are fast disappearing due to human pressures. Passage of the Desert Protection Act will ensure some wild, beautiful areas of California will be maintained in a pristine state.

DID YOU KNOW??

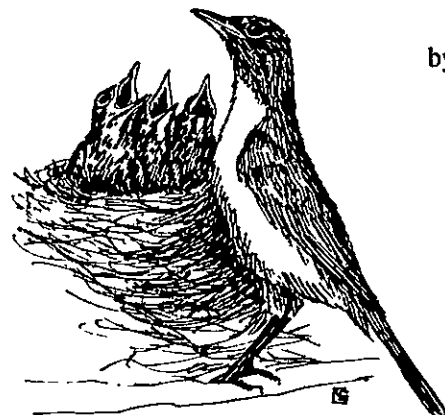
Last year's landmark legislation (the Central Valley Project Improvement Act) changing years-old practices of allocation of water without regard for fish/birdlife/wetlands and/or cost was passed by the Congress. It "is the most significant Federal legislation ever enacted to protect and restore natural resource values in the state," said one individual. The Act culminated eighteen years of effort on the part of Congressman George Miller. Senator Bill Bradley, co-author, spent time and effort in achieving enactment of the legislation. For the first time in California history, 800,000 acre-feet of water was allocated for environmental purposes. So now what? Westlands, one of the largest water districts in the San Joaquin Valley, filed suit in federal court seeking to block implementation of the law. The Westlands' motion for a preliminary injunction was heard in Fresno on April 7. By the time YOU read this, there will have been a decision. IF the Court issues the injunction, all reallocation of Central Valley Project water based on the CVPIA would be blocked until an Environmental Impact Statement is completed, probably several years from now. California's water supply is finite. Those who have profited through use of highly subsidized water are now unwilling to accede to the will of the people. That will very likely mean further losses of fish, birds, and wetlands. So one might ask the question, "How do we the people, the fish, wildlife, birds and critters win?" Stay tuned.

REGION'S (TRANSIT) NEEDS EXCEED ITS BANK ACCOUNT

"As of the 1990 U. S. Census, 6 million people called the Bay Area home. By the year 2010, another 1.5 million people - a 25 percent increase - will be crowding onto the region's already jammed roadways and public transit systems." . . . "Some \$74 billion in transportation funding is projected to flow to the nine Bay Area counties between now and the year 2014." (Metropolitan Transportation Commission, March, 1994)

Despite the vast sums mentioned above, only \$4 billion is left in discretionary funds. All of which means we propose to spend more money than we have to construct roads and transit systems for people not even here yet. All this doesn't have to occur in a vacuum. YOU, as a citizen and voter, can make a difference. Do you want to? It's your call.

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 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

Thursday, May 5, **Briones Park - West**. Meet at 8:00 a.m. in parking lot on the right hand side of the west entrance road, off Bear Creek Rd. Wildflowers, spring birds, Lazuli Buntings usually abundant; poison oak along shaded trails.
Leader: Denise Wight, 370-7342 Category 2

Saturday, May 7, **Mines Road**. Call for reservations and carpool instructions. Because of limited turn-out space along Mines Road, we must limit to 6 cars, with at least 4 people per car. Can be hot; bring lunch and liquids. Roadrunner, Wild Turkey, Costa's Hummingbird, Phainopepla, Lawrence's Goldfinch, and Lewis' Woodpecker all possible.
Leader: Hugh Harvey, 932-4715 Category 1

Wednesday, May 11, **Mt. Diablo**. Meet at 8:00 a.m. on Northgate Rd. at Trail's End Lane. Carpooling is important for birding before the junction. \$5.00 entrance fee. Sage and maybe Black-chinned Sparrows. Those interested can visit the new Summit Museum in the afternoon. Please call Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486, for more information. Category 2

Saturday, May 14, **Mitchell Canyon**. Meet 9:00 a.m. in Mitchell Canyon parking lot. There is a \$5.00 parking fee. From I-680 in Walnut Creek, take Ygnacio Valley Rd. to Clayton Rd. Turn right on Clayton and right on Mitchell Canyon Rd. to the end. Morning emphasis on wild flowers; bird in afternoon for gnatcatchers, summer sparrows, etc. Hot!
Co-leaders: Betty Gallagher, 682-2458
Mary Jane Culver, 682-0509 Category 3

Sunday, May 15, **Tilden Regional Park**. Meet at 8:00 a.m. in the parking lot at the entrance to the Nature Center, at the north end of the park. A **Weekend Birding Break**. New birders especially welcome.
Leader: Denise Wight, 370-7342 Category 1

Thursday, May 19, **Gates Canyon**. Carpool 7:30 a.m. southwest corner of Sun Valley parking lot. Meet 8:15 a.m. at the intersection of Cherry Glen and Pleasants Valley Rds., approximately 1 mile north from I-80. Park on Cherry Glen. This is a **new trip** into an area said to have Mountain Quail.
Leader: Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486 Category 2

Saturday, May 21, **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, left onto Cypress Rd. Possible Blue Grosbeak, Burrowing Owl, Black-chinned Hummingbird, and Yellow-breasted Chat. Hot.
Leader: Steve Glover, 846-7382 Category 2

Wednesday, May 25, **Caswell State Park**. Carpool 6:30 a.m., El Cerro Blvd., just west of I-680. Meet 8:00 a.m. at Caswell State Park. Take I-680 south, I-580 East, and I-205 east. Turn east on SR 20 to US 99. Go south on US 99 to Austin Rd. and follow to park entrance. \$5.00 fee. Swainson's Hawks, riparian species. Mosquitos, poison oak; may be hot.
Leader: Maury Stern, 284-5980 Category 2

Future trips: It's not too early to make reservations for Yuba Pass, June 18-19. Motels include Herrington's Sierra Pines, (916) 862-1151; Sierra Chalet, (916) 862-1110, and Shannon's Cabins, (916) 862-1287. More information in the June *Quail*. The Lassen trip has been cancelled due to lack of a leader.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

HAYWARD REGIONAL SHORELINE, March 2.
A pleasant, cool morning was enjoyed by six MDAS members. Nothing spectacular was seen in Hayward, but there was a good variety of ducks. At lunchtime we headed north to Arrowhead Marsh, where a Ferruginous Hawk was circling as we entered the park. 53 species were observed.

Barbara Vaughn

TOMALES BAY STATE PARK, March 12.
Thirteen MDAS members spent a beautiful 70° day enjoying the beaches, forests, canyons, and ridges of Tomales Bay State Park. 64 species were seen or heard. Highlight birds were a breeding-plumaged Common Loon, five Brant, three types of scoters, an Osprey, Pygmy Nuthatch, Golden-crowned Kinglets, and singing Hutton's Vireos, Purple Finches, and Ruby-crowned Kinglets. The usual pair of Spotted Owls was not seen, although a valiant attempt was made.

Maury Stern

SAN MATEO COAST, March 17.
Birding started late for twelve birders as it took an hour to cross the San Mateo bridge. The day was sunny, cool, and breezy on the coast, but warm with gentle wind inland. Coastal birding was disappointing with few waterbirds or ducks, only nineteen shorebirds of four species, many gulls, no alcids, and two large flocks of Brant flying north. Among many landbirds inland were three Wild Turkeys along Coverdale Rd., many swallows, a nest-building pair of creepers, singing Winter Wrens, and a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher seen by a few at Año Nuevo. A total of 76 species was tallied.

Jean Richmond

*Field Trip Reports. cont'd.***LAFAYETTE RESERVOIR, March 20.**

Over 20 birders showed up on this fine spring morning. We enjoyed seeing and hearing many common species. We were "flashed" by the lovely pink gorget of the male Anna's Hummingbird, we compared Clark's and Western Grebes, and we saw a Yellow-rumped Warbler of the Myrtle subspecies in beautiful breeding plumage. Fifty-six species were seen.

Denise Wight

BLACK DIAMOND MINES REGIONAL PARK, March 26.

Ten birdwatchers spent a lovely day, hiking to the Ridge Trail and enjoying beautiful views of surrounding hills and valleys. We saw many early wildflowers as well as birds. A number of Western Bluebirds were investigating/checking out nesting sites at the parking lot and a pair of Nuttall's Woodpeckers were loudly staking out their territory there as well. High-lights were Rock Wrens, orioles, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers and a Lawrence's Goldfinch.

Pat MacEachron

BRIONES PARK, March 30.

Our wildflower walk drew 15 interested members. Fifty-four plant species were seen, including 38 blooming wildflowers. As leader, I was assisted by Bess Smyth and Betty Smith who are also members of MDAS.

John Davis

OBSERVATIONS

by Steve Glover

Please send observations to Steve Glover, 3986 Stoneridge, #2, Pleasanton, CA 94566, or call 846-7382. Please include your telephone number with your observations.

Least Bittern: 1 found 4/9 by Bob Elliot along Waterfront Rd. across from the Martinez Auto Dismantlers. Seen 4/11 (BE) and 4/12 (BR). This is the first record for our county.

Ross' Goose: 1 on 3/19 near Pt. Reyes Station. (FB, EL)

Wood Duck: 1 pair on 3/15 along Mines Rd. (FB, EL)

Harlequin Duck: 1 male on 3/19 at the Pt. Reyes Fish Docks. (FB, EL)

Oldsquaw: 1 female found 3/28 and 3/29 by Hugh and Norah Bain at Crespi Pond, Monterey, seen later by Don Roberson who says it represents the first county record on fresh water.

Osprey: 1 on 4/13 at Sunol Regional Park. (SG, BR)

Blue Grouse: 3 on 3/31 along Kingridge Rd., Mendicino Co. (GF, MP)

Wild Turkey: on 3/15, 30 at Del Valle Regional Park and 7 at Livermore Veteran's Hospital. (FB, MJC, BG, EL)

Mountain Quail: 2 on 3/31 along Kingridge Rd. (GF, MP); a pair on 3/22 along Mix Canyon Rd., Solano Co. (FB, MJC, BG); 3 seen and several heard on 4/5 along Gates Canyon Rd., Solano Co. (JR).

Greater Roadrunner: 1 on 3/22 at Mile 5.6, Mines Rd. (GF, MP)

Rufous Hummingbird: 1 male on 4/5 along Del Puerto Canyon Rd. (FB, MJC); 2 on 4/5 (KH, SG) and 1 on 4/8 (SG) at Sunol RP.

Lewis' Woodpecker: 1 on 3/28 (GF, MP) and 3 on 4/12 (JR, FB, MJC, HH) at Mt. Burdell, Novato.

Hammond's Flycatcher: 1 on 4/5 and at least 6 on 4/8 at Sunol RP. (SG)

Vermilion Flycatcher: 1 male on 3/17 at Drake's Beach, Pt. Reyes. (MP, GF)

Tropical Kingbird: 1 on 3/29 at Lake Merced, SF. (MJC, FB, BG) Also on RBA.

Canyon Wren: 1 on 4/12 on north side of the Fire Interpretive Trail, at the summit of Mt. Diablo, Mt. Diablo State Park. (KH, RL) Possibly a migrant.

Field Sparrow: seen again on 4/12 at Hidden Lakes Park. (DW) Also on RBA. First report since 3/9.

Grasshopper Sparrow: 3 on 4/12 at Mt. Burdell. (JR) *FCB, MJC, HH*

Swamp Sparrow: 2 on 3/22 at Olema Marsh. (JR)

White-throated Sparrow: 2 from 3/14 to 4/6 in her Concord yard. (MJC)

Chestnut-collared Longspur: 4 males on 4/2 along Sierra Rd., Santa Clara Co. (FB, MJC) Also on RBA.

Lawrence's Goldfinch: 3 on 4/7 in her Alamo yard (JR); 6 on 4/8 (GB, EH, GF) and 3 on 4/9 (JR) along Whitecliff Way, Walnut Creek; 3 on 4/5 in White Canyon, MDSP (MP); 2 on 4/5 at Sunol RP (KH, SG); 1 on 4/7 at the Morgan Territory Regional Park (SG, RL).

Observers: Hugh and Norah Bain, Florence Bennett, Ginny Bergeson, Mary Jane Culver, Bob Elliot, George Finger, Betty Gallagher, Steve Glover, Hugh Harvey, Ed Hase, Kevin Hints, Eugenia Larson, Ron Lindeman, Marjorie Plant, Bob Richmond, Jean Richmond, and Don Roberson.

Note: For the daily updates of the Northern California Rare Bird Alert, call 524-5592.

INTERNATIONAL CORNER

by Jill Hedgecock

PARTNERS IN FLIGHT

At the recent Western Regional Audubon Conference, numerous international sessions were held, often focusing on Partners in Flight (PIF). Partners in Flight is a cooperative initiative launched in 1990 involving both public and non-governmental agencies throughout North and Latin America. Its purpose is to address neotropical migratory songbirds. Evidence is mounting to suggest that many migrants evolved from resident tropical species. The evolution of these birds has resulted in adaption to a narrow range of habitats. Thus, these species are alarmingly vulnerable to the weakest link in their chain of habitats. Clearly, one of our most important challenges is to recognize the global scale of habitat requirements and to coordinate among multidisciplinary experts across international boundaries.

NEWS FROM WILD BIRDS

720 Contra Costa Blvd.
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523
798-0303

SPRING SEED SALE

(April 20 thru May 15, 1994)

These prices are **15% OFF** our regular prices.

CUSTOM SEED BLENDS

| | <u>25 lb.</u> | <u>50 lb.</u> |
|---|---------------|---------------|
| WOODLAND MIX | \$13.58 | \$24.23 |
| 10% oil sunflower 90% white and red millet | | |
| DELUXE BLEND | 14.43 | 25.48 |
| 50% sunflower (oil & striped) 5% safflower 45% white millet | | |
| SPECIAL BLEND | 14.88 | 26.33 |
| 65% sunflower (oil and chips) 5% safflower 30% white millet | | |

INDIVIDUAL SEEDS

| | <u>25 lb.</u> | <u>50 lb.</u> |
|---|---------------|---------------|
| OIL SUNFLOWER | \$12.33 | \$21.23 |
| STRIPED SUNFLOWER | 18.28 | 33.98 |
| SUNFLOWER CHIPS | 25.48 | 48.43 |
| SAFFLOWER | 15.26 | 28.01 |
| CRACKED CORN | 6.76 | 11.01 |
| THISTLE | | |
| 5lbs. \$8.08; 10 lbs. \$15.26, 25 lbs. \$36.51; 50 lbs. \$67.96 | | |

BIRDSCAPING

A birdscape plan is an evaluation of your yard's attraction for birds and recommendations designing and orienting your yard to create habitat which will attract more birds, entice a wider variety of birds, or both. Contact WBU to learn how you can encourage birds by having:

- Different types of seed and feeders.
- Other food such as peanuts, suet, and fruit.
- Water sources such as baths, misters, and drippers.
- Plantings attractive to birds.

This new service is offered by WBU. We will come to your house, analyze your habitat, and give you a written report full of recommendations.

WORKSHOPS, SEMINARS, ETC.

GOLDEN TROUT WORKSHOP

Three one-week Golden Trout Workshops will be held in the Sierra from July 31 through August 20, 1994. The Workshops are sponsored by members of the Eastern Sierra, Pasadena, San Bernardino Valley, San Fernando Valley, and Santa Barbara chapters of National Audubon Society. A field natural history program, consisting of naturalist-led hikes, will be offered. The camp is located in the Golden Trout Wilderness in the southern portion of the High Sierra at an altitude of 10,000 feet. For more details, write or call Cindi McKernan, 1230 Friar Lane, Redlands, CA 92373, (909) 793-7897. Reservations should be made as soon as possible.

SIERRA FIELD RECORDING WORKSHOP

The tenth annual sound recording workshop, co-sponsored by the Oakland Museum and the Nature Sounds Society, will take place at the Sierra Nevada Field Campus of San Francisco State University near Yuba Pass from June 17 through June 19, 1994. Expert recordists and creative artists will speak on a range of scientific, artistic, and technological issues related to nature sound recording and use. For additional information or to register, call the California Library of Natural Sounds at the Oakland Museum, (510) 238-7482.

SONGBIRD FIELD DAY

Free field training sessions for nature enthusiasts will be offered Saturday, May 7, at Point Reyes Bird Observatory's Palomarin Field Station in Bolinas. The event is sponsored in recognition of International Migratory Bird Day, an observance of the plight of migratory songbirds. Participants in PRBO's Field Day will learn how to set up and establish monitoring sites in their areas and how to collect data using standardized techniques that can be used in regional and national monitoring programs. This is an opportunity for individuals to help with a state-wide effort to protect our songbirds. For more information, please write to PRBO Field Days, 4990 Shoreline Highway, Stinson Beach, CA 94970, or call the Field Station at (415) 868-0655.

SEQUOIA AND KINGS CANYON FIELD SEMINARS

The Sequoia Natural History Association announces its annual spring/summer natural history seminar program in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. The excursions, field trips, and workshops explore in depth a variety of topics that help the park visitor better appreciate and understand the wonderland of the Sierra Nevada. Of particular interest is the "Birds of the Sierra" seminar by long-time National Park Service Naturalist Jim Warner, from June 24 through June 26. The seminar will include both a slide presentation and field hikes. In all, twenty different seminar courses are being offered, with costs ranging from \$12 to \$125 depending on the length of the course. For additional information or a free seminar brochure, write to the Sequoia Natural History Association, Ash Mountain Box 10, Three Rivers, CA 93271, or call (209) 565-3759.

NEW MEMBERS

We extend a warm welcome to these new MDAS members and hope to meet them at our activities: Earl Alexander, Steven Bauer, Robert Conner, Corliss Ann Beisheim, Billie Bittle, Mr. and Mrs. S. P. Blanding, Tracey Bowen, Jennifer Brodie, Ellsworth Brown, Vergil Chaddock, Eileen Coleman, John Cooper, Thomas Cox, Tom Cromelin, Dan Danner, Michelle Davis, F. L. Delisle, Jerome Dix, Tom P. Dyerly, Mr. and Mrs. Sam Earnhardt, Ruth Enrico, Mrs. John Feack, Douglas Fogary, Elizabeth Frazier, Bonnie Funk, D. Furseth, John S. Gravell, Scott Groulx, Carol Haglund, Leigh Haugeberg, Robert and Hilma Heaton, Robert Hickerson, Donald Holst, Nancy Howe, J. Hubbard, Deb Hufnagel, Val Hulbert, Gregory Jackson, Letty Johnson, Mrs. Laneve Jordan, Doris Kuhnle, Curtis Laney, Anna Lavrischeff, Mr. and Mrs. Ray Long, Frank B. Maita, Iris Middaugh, Helen Mitchell, Larry Mona, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Mosel, Brian Murphy, Paul Muther, Steven Noser, Mrs. Merle Osgood, Michael Overfield, Vickie Plaisance, Robert Mark Pocta, Pamela Polk, Joyce Pollack,

Kathleen Pond, Kim Pope, Mr. and Mrs. L. Potash, Elizabeth Rhoads, B. L. Roberts, Gloria Shaw, Anne Sheldon, Amy Shiratsuki, D. Simmons, Mr. and Mrs. Spieler, Don Spotts, John Stover, Frances Ann Stradling, Nanette Sullivan, Mike Tschida, Kathleen Vaughn, J. Voerge, Bethe Vosper, Stevan Wendelin, Kathy Williams, Eileen Wright, Joyce Zimmerman.

DONATIONS TO MDAS

Our society has from time to time received generous bequests, gifts, and donations given in memory of friends or relatives or as spontaneous contributions to the society's activities. These donations are welcomed as a significant support of our goals of wildlife appreciation and conservation.

This month MDAS would like to express its appreciation for a gift from Gen Sattler given in memory of Dorothy Gunnell, a former MDAS member, of Washington, Pennsylvania. Her generosity is very much valued.

The Quail is published monthly except for the combined July/August issue. Audubon membership includes subscriptions to the Quail and Audubon magazine. To join (\$35/year individual, \$38 family; introductory rates available), write your check to National Audubon Society but send it, with letter or subscription card, to the Membership Chairperson, Mike Williams, 1172 Larch Avenue, Moraga, CA 94556. The Chapter benefits financially from membership applications it processes. Full membership is encouraged, but subscription to the Quail is available separate from membership at \$10/year. The check should be made out to MDAS and mailed to the MDAS Treasurer, Pam Keiser, 505 Wild Flower Place, Danville, CA 94526. First class mailing to member or nonmember is an additional \$3.50/year payable to MDAS & sent to the Treasurer.

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*Barbara Burek, Editor, 157 Mt. Kennedy Dr., Martinez, CA 94553 (510) 229-0394
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BULLETIN OF THE MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY

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Secretary: Beverly Hawley, 947-0479



June 1994

Vol. 40 No. 10

Next Deadline: June 9

June Program:

The End of the Year Potluck

The next meeting of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society will be on Thursday, **June 2**, at 6:30 p.m. at the Pleasant Hill Senior Center, 233 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill. This meeting will be our regular 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. Our President, Jim Lomax, will not be here this year for the potluck, so members who have felt bashful about showing their pictures after Jim's are urged to bring slides or pictures, old bird nests, or unusual feeders or bird houses to share with the group. Members are asked to limit the number of slides to ten. Anything that relates to natural history that you think would be interesting can be shown at the meeting. Members are encouraged to participate and make this a varied and entertaining evening.

The four MDAS elected officers for the 1994-1995 term were chosen at the May meeting. Jim Lomax will again serve as President, with Al McNabney as Vice-President, Conservation, Sheree Doucette as Secretary, and Pam Keiser as Treasurer. We offer them our congratulations.

The next MDAS board meeting will be on Thursday, **June 16**, at the home of Beverly Hawley, 1509 Skycrest Dr., #4, Walnut Creek, 947-0479. The board meetings are open to all interested members.

Weekend Birding Breaks have been halted for the summer, due to the lack of nearby summer birds. Look for the resumption of these short, local field trips in September.

Birdathon Results - page 5

Environmentalist of the Year Award - page 5

CONSERVATION NOTES

by Al McNabney

CAL/PAW (PROP. 180)

Folks, the job's just half done. Many people throughout the state worked very hard collecting the thousands of signatures necessary to get CAL/PAW on the June ballot. Prop. 180 is now on the ballot and what occurs next will determine whether the preparatory efforts were worthwhile or fruitless. Passage of the measure Prop. 180 will be of great value in obtaining lands essential for parks, open space, and habitat. THE NEED IS GREAT!!!! All we have to do is look at Yosemite, a park being loved to death by we, the people. Projected MILLIONS of additional California residents will HAVE to HAVE MORE parks and open space, to say nothing of the acute need to save habitat for our wild populations.

DELTA ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE CENTER

Friday, May 13, was an auspicious day for wetlands, Contra Costa County, the metropolis of Oakley, AND the nation. Creation of the Delta Environment Science Center (DESC) was officially announced at a major ceremony at the Ironhouse Sanitary District facility in Oakley. About 100 people were on hand (plus a gaggle of geese, a flock of ducks, and some goslings). Dwight Meadows, Member, Board of Directors of the Ironhouse Sanitary District, one of the movers and shakers that is making the Center possible, made the announcement. The crowd then moved to the area where a 25,000 square foot building is to be constructed.

Supervisor Tom Torlakson, Chair of the Working Committee on the project, introduced the many dignitaries present to help get the project going. A high point occurred when Torlakson called on Al McNabney to present, on behalf of Mt. Diablo Audubon Society, a check for \$1000, the FIRST donation the project received. Jean Richmond, our very well-known birder and the author of the book *Birding in Northern California*, was recognized for the part she played in the creation of the funds given to the project by MDAS. Also Don Manning from the Tosco/Avon Refinery presented donations totaling \$15,000, and Supervisor Torlakson announced the County had provided \$35,000 from the Keller Canyon Mitigation funds. The group then signed the Memorandum of Understanding.

The Mission Statement, prepared by the informal working group that has so far created a road map for the Center, reads as follows:

"The proposed Delta Environment Science Center (DESC) will provide a diverse array of innovative experiential science education programs of the highest quality with emphasis on Delta Hydrology, Wildlife Habitat, Wetlands Management, and special studies. Wherever possible, appropriate environmental sciences career training will be encouraged and developed. The center shall become a critical bridge between and among classroom studies at all educational levels, effective outdoor learning experiences, and special research projects.

"Student and public involvement will be the core of a dynamic learning environment where creative approaches to teaching and learning will be developed in concert with training for environmental science careers. The Center shall serve as a local, regional, state, and national training center for teachers in aquatic and other environmental sciences."

The Science Center itself will be a "WORLD CLASS" center for ecological studies. It will weave together teacher training, programs, research, career development and public participation for all age levels. The Center will provide the environment for innovative science education that will prepare students and the public for more involved roles as resource managers and public stewards.

DESC facilities will be located near the freshwater marsh that comprises the "Big Break" lagoon on Ironhouse property. The complex will include a visitor center, laboratories, classrooms, exhibits, aquaria, and all equipment necessary to facilitate indoor and outdoor science exploration and study. FOLKS, the Delta Environment Science Center is a reality, even if only a budding reality. Watch the Center grow!

Bye, bye for now. See you next September. Have a relaxing summer. Watch a few birds, climb a few mountains, and be back in the fall when MDAS renews its activities.

INTERNATIONAL CORNER

by Jill Hedgecock

TREES, FURNITURE, AND RAINFORESTS

The United States is the second largest importer of mahogany. Over 45,000 cubic meters of tropical hardwood were imported in 1992, a quantity equivalent to 24 football fields stacked one yard in height. For every mahogany tree cut in a rainforest, at least 20 other trees are damaged. Some of "our" backyard birds could also be adversely affected, as many species winter in the tropics. The United States is considering listing mahogany, *Swietenia macrophylla*, in Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), which regulates the trade of endangered species. Please write to your congressman in support of this listing!

PARTIAL VICTORY IN HAWAII

True Geothermal Energy Company has abandoned its attempt to develop geothermal power in the last expanse of lowland tropical rainforest in the U. S. (Wao Kele O Puna on the Big Island of Hawaii). Unfortunately, True is currently trying to sell its holding to another geothermal developer.

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

Thursday, June 2, **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 end of road. Carry liquids, the area can be hot. Grasshopper Sparrows are possible.

Leader: Denise Wight, 370-7342 Category 2

Saturday, June 4, **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. Turn right on Sir Francis Drake. 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. Spring vagrants. Be prepared for variable weather.

Leader: Maury Stern, 284-5980 Category 2

Wednesday, June 8, **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. Yellow-breasted Chats, Pileated Woodpeckers.

Leader: Barbara Vuaghn, 376-8732 Category 2

Saturday and Sunday, June 18-19, **Yuba Pass**. Saturday at Yuba Pass for mountain birds. Sunday, Sierra Valley for basin birds. Motels in Sierra City: Herrington's Sierra Pines, (916) 862-1151; Sierra Chalet, (916) 862-1110; Shannon's Cabins, (916) 862-1287. Campgrounds at Chapman Creek, Yuba Pass.

Leader: Barb Burek, 229-0394 Category 2

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

GARIN AND DRY CREEK REGIONAL PARKS, April 2. Seven birders recorded 64 species on a mostly clear day with light wind. We found two oriole nests and also nests being built by Bushtits and Brown Creepers. Warbling Vireos seemed to be everywhere but only a few were seen. The trip

provided a good study of bird songs as many other birds were singing, too, most of them out of view.

Bob Richmond

IRONHOUSE SANITARY PLANT, April 7.

Fifteen birders enjoyed a clear warm morning at this relatively new birding site at the edge of the Delta. This day was in the transition period with many winter birds still here and the first summer birds having arrived. Many American Pipits were seen, possibly a migration wave. Lincoln, White-crowned, and Golden-Crowned Sparrows were still here. Caspian Terns had arrived. In the large flock of Bonaparte's Gulls, all plumage stages from immature winter plumage to full breeding adult plumage were seen. A total of 66 species were seen or heard.

Elizabeth Dickey

BRIONES REGIONAL PARK, April 10.

Twenty-seven eager birders joined the leader at 8:30 a.m. on this sunny, mild Sunday morning for a Weekend Birding Break. Many who were fairly new at the sport made even the singing grosbeak an event to the group. 36 species were seen or heard.

Barbara Vaughn

LAKE LAGUNITAS, April 13.

Only seven birders enjoyed a clear spring day in Marin. After an excellent look at a Pileated Woodpecker near the beginning of the trail around Lagunitas Lake, someone said we might as well go home, what could top this? However, we continued and had excellent views of Black-throated Gray Warbler and Warbling Vireo and of breeding-plumage Common Loon and an Osprey on Bon Tempe Lake. 15 of the 53 species observed were heard only.

Elizabeth Dickey

DONNER CANYON, April 16.

Twenty-one members and guests spent a cool, overcast day at Donner Canyon, Heathington Loop, Meridian Ridge and Back Canyon. 59 species of birds and many spring wildflowers were seen. The most unusual bird of the day was an early-in-the-season Olive-sided Flycatcher. Highlights included Ash-throated and Hammond's Flycatchers, House Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Nashville Warbler, and Rufous-crowned Sparrow.

Maury Stern

IDA CLAYTON ROAD, April 21.

Under beautiful blue skies, the day began cool but was warmer by afternoon; the wind was mostly light. Nine birders studied bird songs as many birds were heard but not seen. We saw Hutton's, Warbling, and Solitary Vireos, Nashville, Black-throated Gray, and Wilson's Warblers, and two Western Tanagers on Ida Clayton Road, a pair of Wood Ducks on Detert Reservoir, and an Osprey in a huge nest at Lake Hennessey. Among species heard only were Mountain Quail, Brown Creeper, and Black-chinned and Sage Sparrows. A total of 66 species was seen and/or heard. Wildflowers made a poor showing on this trip.

Jean Richmond

Field Trip Reports continued on page 4.

Field Trip Reports, cont'd.

DEL PUERTO CANYON ROAD, April 27.

The morning was great for the twenty birders with good looks at a roadrunner, singing Canyon Wrens, Phainopepla, Rufous-crowned Sparrows, and Tricolored Blackbirds. The unexpected downpour of rain and hail after lunch brought a halt to birding. Two vehicles waited until the rain turned to showers. We saw a Yellow-breasted Chat, two Lawrence's Goldfinches, Wood Ducks, and Ring-necked Ducks. We also watched a Bobcat for 2 or 3 minutes. Total species: 63.

Florence Bennett

OBSERVATIONS

by Steve Glover

Please send observations to Steve Glover,
3986 Stoneridge, #2, Pleasanton, CA 94566, or call 846-7382.
Please include your telephone number with your observations.

Eared Grebe: 1 in breeding plumage on 4/25 at Clifton Court Forebay. (SG)

Pelagic Cormorant: 1 on 4/20 at Pt. Richmond. (SG)

American Bittern: 1 on 4/30 at the end of Jersey Island Rd. (SG); 1 on 4/30 (SG) and 5/10 (FB, MJC, BG, HH) at the end of Bethel Island Rd.

Great Blue Heron: at least 20 or more occupied nests on 4/25 on Eucalyptus Island near Clifton Court Forebay. (SG)

Cinnamon Teal: 1 female with 8 young on 4/30 at the end of Jersey Island Rd. (SG)

Ring-necked Duck: 1 male on 4/25 and 4/30 at Marsh Creek Reservoir. (SG)

Red-shouldered Hawk: 2 on 4/27 and 4/28 at Upper San Leandro Reservoir. (TL)

Swainson's Hawk: 1 on 4/25 at Eucalyptus Island (SG); 1 on 4/30 near Clifton Court Forebay (JL); 5 on 5/10 along Mt. House Road, Alameda Co. (SG).

Merlin: 1 late bird on 4/30 at Piper Slough. (SG)

Peregrine Falcon: 1 seen on 4/22 behind his mother's house in San Ramon. (SG)

Virginia Rail: 1 seen and heard on 4/27 at Sunol Regional Park. (SG)

Pacific Golden-Plover: 7 on 4/26 at the Spaletta Plateau, Pt. Reyes. (HH, FB, MJC, BG)

Solitary Sandpiper: 1 on 4/26 at Spaletta Ranch. (FB, MJC, BG, HH)

Spotted Sandpiper: 2 on 4/28 and 4/29 at Heather Farms in Walnut Creek. (H&RH, FB, MJC, B&BoG)

Whimbrel: 14 on 4/30 on Jersey and Bethel Islands. (SG)

Little Gull: 1 adult on 4/18 flying past Hayward Landing, Hayward Regional Shoreline. (BR) Second Alameda County and East Bay records.

Northern Pygmy-Owl: 1 seen on 4/15 (SG, RL) and heard on 4/19 (SG) at Sunol RP.

Black Swift: 2 on 5/4 at Stone Valley Road at I-680 (JR); 1 on 5/9 at Mt. Olympus, MDSP (BR).

Vaux's Swift: 5 on 4/22 at Sunol RP. (SG)

Costa's Hummingbird: 1 on 4/12 (GF, MP) and on 5/3 (FB) at Del Puerto Canyon.

Calliope Hummingbird: 1 male on 4/30 along Black Point Trail, Mt. Diablo State Park (H&RH, MP); 1 male found dead on 4/30 at Bishop Ranch Business Park, San Ramon (SF).

Willow Flycatcher: 1 on 4/30 at Piper Slough (SG); 1 on 5/10 near same spot (MJC, BG, HH).

Hammond's Flycatcher: last report was 6 on 4/30 in Mitchell Canyon. (MP, JM)

Dusky Flycatcher: 1 on 4/28 in Mitchell Canyon. (GF, MP)

Gray Flycatcher: 1 on 4/19 in White Canyon, MDSP. (GF)

Yellow-billed Magpie: 1 on 4/22 near Knightsen. (GF)

Canyon Wren: female (?) on 4/19 and 4/22 on nest at Little Yosemite, Sunol RP, but birds and nest gone on 5/9. (SG)

Winter Wren: 5-6 singing males on 4/30 along Tres Sendas Trail, Redwood Regional Park. (SG) Only Contra Costa County nest record was here two years ago.

American Dipper: 1 on 4/15, 4/19, and 4/22 carrying food to nest at Little Yosemite, and 1 seen on 5/9 feeding an almost full-grown, begging youngster out of the nest. (SG)

Townsend's Solitaire: 1 on 4/26 at Pt. Reyes Fish Docks. (FB, MJC, BG, HH)

American Pipit: 2 stragglers on 4/25 at Clifton Court Forebay. (SG)

Phainopepla: 1 male on 4/30 near the end of Mitchell Canyon Road. (TL)

Nashville Warbler: 5 on 4/15, 23 on 4/22, and 3 on 4/27 at Sunol RP. (SG)

Hermit Warbler: 5-6 on 5/9 (GF, MP) and 3 on 5/10 (SG, FB, BG, MJC, HH), all at Piper Slough.

Yellow-breasted Chat: 1 on 4/30 (SG), 3 on 5/9 (GF, MP), and 4 singing on 5/10 (SG, FB, HH, BG, MJC), all at Piper Slough.

Black-chinned Sparrow: 1 on 4/19 in White Canyon (GF, MP); 1 on 5/8 along the Fire Interpretive Trail (KH) and 2 on 5/9 at the summit of Mt. Diablo (BR). First records for the summit?

Grasshopper Sparrow: 3 on 5/4 east of Flag Hill, Sunol RP. (SG)

Tricolored Blackbird: large nesting colony of 200-300 birds thru 5/13 along Calaveras Road near the Quarry Ponds. (SG)

Orchard Oriole: 1 immature male on 5/8 in her Alamo yard. (JR)

Observers: Florence Bennett, Mary Jane Culver, Sharon Fernandez, George Finger, Betty and Bob Gallagher, Steve Glover, Hugh and Rosita Harvey, Kevin Hintsa, Tom Lee, Ron Lindeman, Jim Lomax, Joe Morlan, Marjorie Plant, Bob Richmond and Jean Richmond.

Note: For the daily updates of the Northern California Rare Bird Alert, call 524-5592.

NEW MEMBERS

We are happy to welcome these new MDAS members and hope to meet them soon at our activities: Mrs. Benedict L. Adams, Leone and Richard Boyle, Leroy Calhoun, Mr. and Mrs. Ken Castleton, Mrs. Ture Dahlstrom, Mrs. J. Dantes, Carol Depuydt, Donna Dewitt, Jan Dickerson, Bill Egan, Frank Forrest, J. Gepty, Wayne Grant, Barbara Harmon, George and Diane Hefner, Anna Hennessy, D. Hooper, Bruce Hoyt, Rod Keener, Benson H. Levine, Rex Liniger, Dave and Cathy Lueders, Charles Matuk, Stephen McKenzie, Dean McWilliams, Robbye Mohn, James Moore, Chris and Naomi Morgan, Victor Neufeld, Edward Pancoast, Michele Peters, Mark Racioppo, R. E. Rank, Dorothy Robbins, Liz Siino, Jas Tarantino, D. Underwood, John Viera, Penny Walker, L. J. West, and Mrs. B. V. Wisyanski.

DONATIONS TO MDAS

Our society has from time to time received generous bequests, gifts, and donations given in memory of friends or relatives or as spontaneous contributions to the society's activities. These donations are welcomed as a significant support of our goals of wildlife appreciation and conservation.

This month MDAS would like to express its appreciation for thank you's from the Napa-Solano Audubon Chapter for a talk given by Denise Wight and from the Concord Garden Club for a talk given by Mike Williams. Their generosity is very much valued.

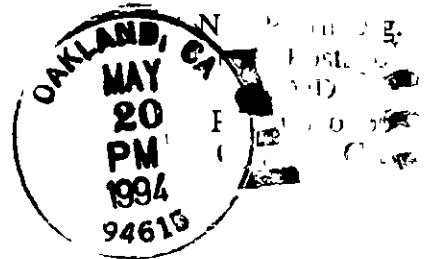
The Quail is published monthly except for the combined July/August issue. Audubon membership includes subscriptions to the Quail and Audubon magazine. To join (\$35/year individual, \$38 family; introductory rates available), write your check to National Audubon Society but send it, with letter or subscription card, to the Membership Chairperson, Mike Williams, 1172 Larch Avenue, Moraga, CA 94556. The Chapter benefits financially from membership applications it processes. Full membership is encouraged, but subscription to the Quail is available separate from membership at \$10/year. The check should be made out to MDAS and mailed to the MDAS Treasurer, Pam Keiser, 505 Wild Flower Place, Danville, CA 94526. First class mailing to member or nonmember is an additional \$3.50/year payable to MDAS & sent to the Treasurer.

ADDRESS CHANGES AND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION: Consult Mike Williams, (510) 376-1631.

*Barbara Burek, Editor, 157 Mt. Kennedy Dr., Martinez, CA 94553 (510) 229-0394
Exchange bulletins for MDAS to Mt. Diablo Audubon Society, P. O. Box 53, Walnut Creek, CA 94597-0053, please.*

Mt. Diablo Audubon Society
P.O. Box 53
Walnut Creek, CA 94597-0053

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9502 MF AUD

JEAN RICHMOND
125 VIA SERENA
ALAMO CA 94507

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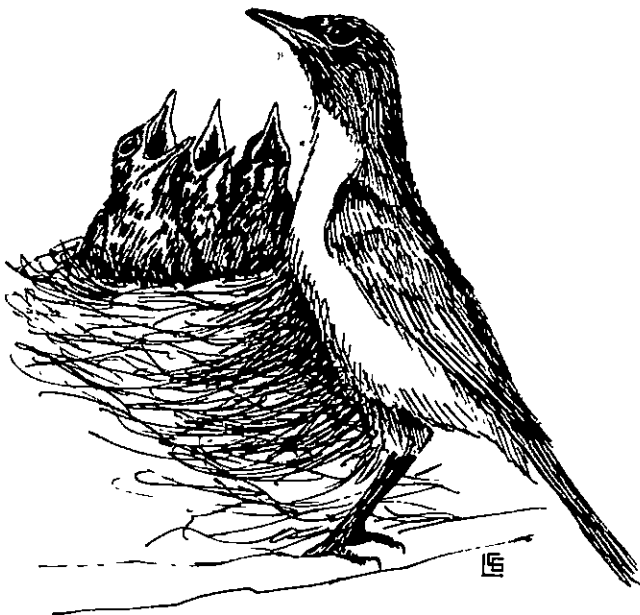
ENVIRONMENTALIST OF THE YEAR

The MDAS Environmental Distinction Award for 1994 was presented at our May meeting to Dwight Meadows, Director, Ironhouse Sanitary District. The Award read:

"WHEREAS the Board of Directors for MDAS has adjudged that Dwight Meadows has served the cause of environmental protection and enhancement with great effort and sacrifice; and has, as a director of Ironhouse Sanitary District for 18 years, played a pivotal role in moving the District to becoming very environmentally aware; has brought together representatives from the Ironhouse Board, Los Medanos College, the Contra Costa Board of Supervisors, East Bay Regional Park District, Cal State Hayward, Mt. Diablo Audubon Society, and local schools to develop an outline for his idea for a regional educational and community center to provide hands-on experience with the Delta ecologies for students and the public; and has played a key leadership role in establishing a coordinating council, preparing the initial plan, and developing a funding strategy for the Delta Environment Center, which will become a world-class center for environmental education and wetland observation and study; therefore be it

"RESOLVED that the Board of Directors has approved and granted this Al McNabney Environmental Distinction Award on the 14th day of April 1994."

We congratulate Dwight Meadows for his achievements in bringing the Delta Environment Science Center from a dream to a developing reality.



Original sketch by Carol Lutz

1994 BIRDATHON RESULTS

by *Barbara Burek
and Denise Wight*

The forecast rain did not develop and the four intrepid chapter teams sallied out on Saturday, April 30, in pursuit of the wily birds. "Glover's Plover Lovers," Steve Glover's team, started early - 2:30 a.m. - tracking down owls. Strong winds later in the day kept the birds down, but Steve turned in the best Contra Costa County list of 142 species (10 heard only), just shy of his all-time best county Birdathon record. Jim Lomax and his eight "Early Worms," Sheree Doucette, Karin Grillo, Barbara Holway, Mary Lou Martin, Katie McGovern, Wayne Snelling, Rebecca Walton, and Sariah Walton, didn't start so early (9:00 a.m., in fact) but saw 87 species. (Did they have more fun, though?) Denise Wight and her "Wight-crowned Spare-O's" took a page from Steve's book and started their trek at 5:00 a.m. at Del Puerto Canyon. Denise, Elizabeth Dickey, Mia Ferree, and Pamela Ferree ended the day over 400 miles and 14 hours later at the coast with the best All Bay Area total - 149 species (7 heard only). "The Road Runners," Jimm Edgar and Maury Stern, also birded All Bay Area and had a respectable total of 119 species. "The Road Runners" also deserve special mention for raising the most money - over \$500. Two independent teams also participated in the Birdathon. Pamela Keiser and Diane Riles birded the Mt. Diablo area and saw 44 species, the best (and only) Contra Costa County independent team total. "The Four Right Terns," Florence Bennett, Mary Jane Culver, Betty Gallagher, and Hugh Harvey, took advantage of a good day of birding on Tuesday, April 26, to turn in a total of 100 Bay Area species. All participants, chapter team or independent, proclaimed the day great fun and a success. (Jim Lomax did say he hopes to break the 100-species level next year, though.) A potluck was held Sunday evening at the home of Barb Burek and Dan Van Zile to celebrate the conclusion of the Birdathon. The dinner was also proclaimed a success.

In addition to participants in the field, a number of members and others took part in the Birdathon through their contributions. We would like to thank the following for their support: Barrett Anderson, Hugh and Norah Bain, Britta Cascio, Bettie Dakotah, Helen Deman, Shirley Ellis, Van Gilbert, Janet Goodman, Hugh and Rosita Harvey, Jill Hedgecock, Don King, Deborah Kurshen, Paul Kujawa, Ethel Lazaroff, Kathleen Lonac, Diane Marten, Helen and Al McNabney, Ruth Newell, Daisy Ray, Sandra Rogers, Donna Sanderson, Dick and Connie Silk, Elsie and Donald Snodgrass, Kate Tate, Pat Thunen, Marian Tranes, Betty Williams, and Mike Williams and Wild Birds Unlimited.

On behalf of the chapter, we want to thank all who participated and contributed to make this our most fun and, yes, our best Birdathon in years.



The QUAIL

BULLETIN OF THE MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 53

WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA 94597-0053

(510) AUD-UBON

President: Jim Lomax, 825-1513

VP Conservation: Al McNabney, 945-1785

Treasurer: Pam Keiser, 838-8840

Sales Manager: Barbara Vaughn, 376-8732

Programs: Denise Wight, 370-7342

Field Trips: Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486

Membership: Mike Williams, 376-1631

Publicity: Jill Hedgecock, 256-8270

Hospitality: Gloria Lotten, 866-1619

Education: Sheree Doucette, 682-6278

Secretary: Beverly Hawley, 947-0479

July/August 1994

Vol. 40 No. 11

Next Deadline: August 11

Upcoming Events:

Again this year, there will be no general meeting of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society in July or August. The first fall general meeting will be in September. Information about the meeting time, place, birding information, and program will be in the September issue of the *Quail*.

The next board meeting will be at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 14, at the home of Pam Keiser, 505 Wild Flower Place, Danville, 838-8840. The August meeting will be at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, August 11, at the home of Jim Lomax, 3636 Lolita Dr., Concord, 825-1513. The board meetings are open to all interested members.

The yearly Field Trip planning meeting will be at the home of Elizabeth Dickey, 113 Hillcrest Drive in Orinda, the week of August 7. Call Elizabeth at 254-0486 on or after August 7 for exact meeting time and date. If you have requests, suggestions, or special birds you are interested in or would be willing to lead a field trip, please call Elizabeth before the meeting. Anyone interested in helping plan next year's field trips is welcome to attend.

Weekend Birding Breaks have been halted for the summer, due to the lack of nearby summer birds. Look for the resumption of these short, local field trips in September.

The Lindsay Museum is seeking furniture, antiques, silver, clothing, books, small appliances, household items and even cars for its August Pack Rat Sale. Clean out your attic for a good cause. The Lindsay Museum will pick up items in Contra Costa County, or you can deliver your merchandise from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays through August 3 to the Del Valle School, 1963 Tice Valley Boulevard, Walnut Creek. The sale will be August 6, 7, and 8 at the school. For information, call 938-7353.

Have a good summer!

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, July 30, **San Mateo Coast**. Carpool 7:15 a.m. at El Nido at St. Stephens, off SR 24. Meet at 8:30 a.m. in parking lot off SR 1 opposite Pescadero Road. Cross the 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. Early shorebirds, Black Swift, Bank Swallow, Marbled Murrelet.

Leader: Barbara Vaughn, 376-8732

Category 2

Saturday, August 20, **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 right to Bodega Bay. The Tides is on left, opposite a Union station. Early shorebirds, rails, waterbirds, migrants.

Leader: Shirley Ellis, 939-9091

Category 1

Saturday, August 27, **San Francisco Bay Refuge - Coyote Hills**. Carpool 7:30 a.m. at El Cerro Blvd., west of I-680 Meet 8:00 a.m. in the parking lot at the refuge visitor's center off Thornton Rd. Take I-680 south to Fremont. Exit at Washington Ave. and continue to end. Go right at Fremont Blvd., and turn left onto Stevenson to I-880. Go north on the freeway to Thornton Ave. and go west (left) to refuge entrance. For more information, call Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486.

Category 1

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

BRIONES PARK - WEST, May 5.

Briones is a wonderful spot to see Lazuli Buntings, and we saw both male and female before we left the parking lot. Eight of us enjoyed 45 species including Hermit and Black-throated Gray Warblers, Swainson's Thrush and Northern Orioles. Nesting birds included a Warbling Vireo and House Wren.

Denise Wight

MINES ROAD, May 7.

Inclement weather caused cancellation of this trip. However, after a discussion at the meeting place, three members and the leader left for a drive in the rain anyway. The skies cleared and

the trip yielded 77 species seen or heard. Highlights were Wild Turkey, a roadrunner perched in a tree, Lewis' Woodpecker, Phainopepla, and a Yellow-breasted Chat.

Hugh Harvey

MT. DIABLO, May 11.

Nine birders spent an extremely fruitful morning birding the western slopes of Mt. Diablo. Highlights included a late Ruby-crowned Kinglet, two Hermit Warblers, one MacGillivray's Warbler, five male Western Tanagers in a Gray Pine, several Sage Sparrows watched through scopes and best of all, a family of Lawrence's Goldfinch being fed by their mother. 55 species.

Steve Glover

MITCHELL CANYON, May 14.

Twenty-one members and guests enjoyed a leisurely hike along Mitchell and White Canyons on a warm sunny day. Highlights of the trip were early blooming Red Mimulus along the creek and good views of the active nests of Solitary Vireo and Anna's Hummingbird. It was a real pleasure to have Rich Kelson, of Marine World Butterfly House, join us. Many of us gained a great deal of information on identifying the local butterflies.

Mary Jane Culver

Betty Gallagher

TILDEN REGIONAL PARK, May 15.

After night of steady rain, four of us met on a sunny Sunday morning. We saw 10+ Western Tanagers in a Douglas Fir and flying overhead. A female Black-headed Grosbeak sang from her nest. In one large willow we saw five species of warblers, and beyond Jewel Lake we saw a Lazuli Bunting male in the hemlock. Forty-four species total were encountered.

Denise Wight

GATES CANYON, May 19.

No report received.

EAST CONTRA COSTA COUNTY, May 21.

Eight birders spent a beautiful day exploring what's still left of East County. Among the many highlights were an American Bittern, Cinnamon Teal with young, Red-shouldered Hawk, several Great Horned Owls including a downy youngster, Downy Woodpecker babies, a singing Willow Flycatcher, a Hermit Warbler, five singing chats, and several Blue Grosbeaks. Part of the group made a side trip to see the nesting magpie in Knightsen. 71 species.

Steve Glover

CASWELL STATE PARK, May 25.

Six members spent a beautiful spring day at Caswell State Park and Durham Ferry Recreation Area under blue skies and mid-80 degree temperatures (much cooler in the shade). Highlights of the 63 bird species seen were a Wood Duck pair, six different Swainson's Hawks in three different plumages, two Spotted Sandpipers, two Whimbrels, six swallow species including Bank Swallow, and several Western Tanagers.

Maury Stern

OBSERVATIONS

by Steve Glover

Please send observations to Steve Glover,
3986 Stoneridge, #2, Pleasanton, CA 94566, or call 846-7382.
Please include your telephone number with your observations.

Pelagic Cormorant: 1 on 6/8 near Pt. Molate, Richmond. (SG)

Great Egret: 1 on 6/3 building a nest at Hayward Regional Shoreline. (SG, BR) Only other known nest site in county is at Lake Merritt.

Snowy Egret: at least 4 or more pairs on 6/3 building nests at Hayward RS. (BR, SG) Only other known nest site in county is at Lake Merritt.

Common Shelduck: 1 on 6/8 at Brooks Island, Richmond. (SG) Obviously an escapee.

Wood Duck: 4 males together on 6/6 at Sunol Regional Park. (SG)

Northern Pintail: on 6/8, 1 female with 8 young at Shell Marsh and 1 female with at least 3 young along Waterfront Road. (SG) Second and third nest records for the county.

Oldsquaw: 1 on 6/8 near Brooks Island. (SG) If this bird stays, it will be the third summer record for the county.

White-winged Scoter: a pair on 6/8 at Brooks Island. (SG)

Osprey: 1 on 5/13 at Sunol RP. (SG)

Swainson's Hawk: 5 on 5/20 along Mountain House Road, Alameda County. (FB, MJC)

Gyrfalcon: 1 on 5/20 along Mountain House Rd. (FB, MJC) Likely same escapee here all winter.

Mountain Quail: 8 on 5/26 along Gates Canyon Road. (FB, MJC, BG)

Wilson's Phalarope: 1 on 6/3 at Hayward RS. (SG, BR)

Bonaparte's Gull: 1 on 6/8 at Shell Marsh. (SG)

Common Tern: 2 on 6/3 at Hayward RS. (BR, seen later by SG) Rare in spring.

Arctic Tern: 1 adult on 6/3 at Hayward RS. (BR, later by SG) Probably third county and East Bay record for spring.

Black Skimmer: 2 on 6/3 at Hayward RS. (BR, later by SG)

Northern Pygmy-Owl: 1 on 5/13 at mile 1.4 along Welch Creek Road. (SG)

Great Gray Owl: 1 on 5/17 at Tomales Bay State Park. (FB, MJC, BG, HH)

Calliope Hummingbird: 1 male on 5/17 in Mitchell Canyon. (KH)

Belted Kingfisher: 1 carrying fish on 5/17 at Piper Slough. (SG, RL)

Lewis' Woodpecker: 1 on 5/17 at Piper Slough. (SG, RL) Probably first county record east of the hills.

Willow Flycatcher: 1 singing on 5/21 at Piper Slough. (SG, MDAS field trip group)

Hammond's Flycatcher: 4 on 5/17 in Mitchell Canyon. (KH)

Yellow-billed Magpie: 1 pair and 3 young in a eucalyptus tree along Delta Rd., Knightsen. (SG, RL) An adult was first seen here 4/22 (GF). First county nest record.

Canyon Wren: 1 on 5/13 at Indian Joe Rocks, Sunol RP. (SG)

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: 1 on 5/17 at Piper Slough. (SG, RL) Late.

Hermit Warbler: on 5/17, 1 at end of Orwood Road and 1 at Piper Slough. (SG, RL)

American Redstart: 1 on 5/21 at Piper Slough. (On RBA)

Indigo Bunting: 1 immature male on 5/16 at mile 15.4 along Mines Rd. (SG) On RBA on 5/15.

Black-chinned Sparrow: noted throughout the month from South Gate Rd., Muir Picnic Area, and the north and south sides of the summit, MDSP. (KH, FB, MJC)

Lawrence's Goldfinch: 1 female and at least 5 young being fed off of the nest at Junction Campground, MDSP. (SG, FB, MDAS field trip group) 5/27

Observers: Florence Bennett, Mary Jane Culver, George Finger, Betty Gallagher, Steve Glover, Hugh Harvey, Kevin Hints, Ron Lindeman, and Bob Richmond.

Note: For the daily updates of the Northern California Rare Bird Alert, call 524-5592.

NEWS FROM WILD BIRDS

720 Contra Costa Blvd.
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523
798-0303

SUMMERTIME BIRDFEEDING

Over 700 orioles have been reported this season; 80-90% are the Bullock's subspecies of the Northern Oriole and the rest are Hooded Orioles. These birds nest in our area and will be with us until September. These nectar-feeding birds readily come to oriole feeders and remember from one year to the next where they have been fed.

Many Black-headed Grosbeaks are being sighted at feeders eating black oil sunflower seeds. They also nest in our area.

The erratic Pine Siskin! In the winter of 1992-3 we saw huge numbers and last winter very few. They are now being reported in Martinez, Pinole, Concord, Orinda, and Moraga. The Pine Siskin is normally a winter bird for us. Of course, so is the junco and we are hearing a few reports of it also.

American Goldfinches are still being seen at thistle seed feeders in some parts of Contra Costa County. Each year is different and that's what makes backyard birdfeeding fun.

YARD SALE!

During July, we will be having a Yard Sale with up to 50% OFF on selected feeders, books, clothing, and much more. Come visit and check out the bargains!

NEW MEMBERS

We warmly greet these new MDAS members and hope to meet them in person in the fall: Mrs. Benedict Adams, Leone and Richard Boyle, Leroy Calhoun, Kenneth Castleton, Mrs. Ture Dahlstrom, Mrs. J. Dantes, Carol Depuydt, Donna Dewitt, Jan Dickerson, Frank Forrest, J. Gepty, Wayne Grant, Barbara Harmon, George and Diane Hefner, Anna Hennessy, D. Hooper, Bruce Hoyt, Rod Keener, Benson Levine, Rex Liniger, Dave and Cathy Lueders, Charles Matuk, Stephen McKenzie, Dean McWilliams, Robbye Mohn, James Moore, Chris and Naomi Morgan, Victor Neufeld, Edward Pancoast, Michele Peters, Mark Racioppo, R. E. Rank, Dorothy Robbins, Liz Siino, Jas Tarantino, D. Underwood, John Viera, Penny Walker, L. J. West, and Mrs. B. V. Wisyanski.

THE LAST WORD

Funny how time disappears when you're having fun. Another year has vanished down the rabbit hole. I want to thank again the regular contributors to the *Quail*, Denise Wight, Al McNabney, Elizabeth Dickey, and Steve Glover, as well as all those who sent in Field Trip Reports and special interest items. Thank you to Carol Lutz for her drawings and to Betty Gallagher and her crew for assembling and mailing the *Quail*. This year I would also like to say a special thank you to all of you who returned Member Survey Questionnaires last fall. The feedback was very useful to me as editor and has led to some innovations and changes for the chapter as well, with more to come in the future. Please feel free to offer other ideas and suggestions to me as editor or to the board as a whole. It will not always be possible to adopt every suggestion, but we appreciate your input. Now it's off to Venezuela for me for a summer birding trip. See you next fall!

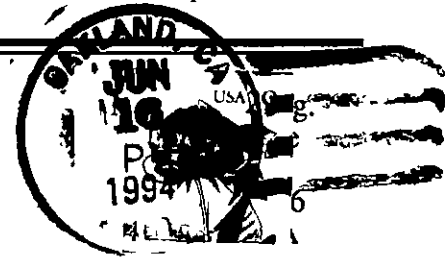
The Quail is published monthly except for the combined July/August issue. Audubon membership includes subscriptions to the *Quail* and Audubon magazine. To join (\$35/year individual, \$38 family; introductory rates available), write your check to National Audubon Society but send it, with letter or subscription card, to the Membership Chairperson, Mike Williams, 1172 Larch Avenue, Moraga, CA 94556. The Chapter benefits financially from membership applications it processes. Full membership is encouraged, but subscription to the *Quail* is available separate from membership at \$10/year. The check should be made out to MDAS and mailed to the MDAS Treasurer, Pam Keiser, 505 Wild Flower Place, Danville, CA 94526. First class mailing to member or nonmember is an additional \$3.50/year payable to MDAS & sent to the Treasurer.

ADDRESS CHANGES AND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION: Consult Mike Williams, (510) 376-1631

Barbara Burek, Editor, 157 Mt Kennedy Dr., Martinez, CA 94553 (510) 229-0394

Exchange bulletins for MDAS to Mt. Diablo Audubon Society, P. O. Box 53, Walnut Creek, CA 94597-0053, please.

Mt. Diablo Audubon Society
P.O. Box 53
Walnut Creek, CA 94597-0053



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M F AUC

JEAN RICHMOND
125 VIA SERENA
ALAMO CA 94507

TIME VALUE MAIL



The QUAIL

BULLETIN OF THE MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 53

WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA 94597-0053

(510) AUD-UBON

President: Jim Lomax, 825-1513

VP Conservation: Al McNabney, 945-1785

Treasurer: Pam Keiser, 838-8840

Sales Manager: Barbara Vaughn, 376-8732

Programs: Denise Wight, 370-7342

Field Trips: Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486

Membership: Mike Williams, 376-1631

Publicity: Jill Hedgecock, 256-8270

Hospitality: Gloria Lotten, 866-1619

Education: Beverly Hawley, 947-0479

Secretary: Sheree Lomax, 825-1513

September 1994

Vol. 41 No. 1

Next Deadline: September 8

September Program:

Birds in the Balance

Welcome back! We start our season on **September 1** with a consideration of the serious decline of the birds that migrate between North America and the tropics. Robert Barnes will give a slide presentation on National Audubon Society's Birds in the Balance program. He will discuss how people were alerted to this decline by breeding bird surveys, what sort of problems are thought to be causing the loss of our songbirds, and what is being done about it. Our chapter coordinator, Jill Hedgecock, will also talk about some ways MDAS plans to get involved. Please join us for some great information and bird photography.

Robert Barnes is coordinator of Birds in the Balance for the Western Region of National Audubon. He has also been past president of California Wilderness Coalition, past chairman of the Kern-Kings Tulare Committee of the Nature Conservancy, and past president of Tulare County Audubon Society.

September bird information will be given by our MDAS International Conservation Chair and Birds in the Balance Coordinator, Jill Hedgecock. She will present the results of a national survey on the most common backyard feeder birds. She will also briefly introduce the Birds in the Balance program.

General meetings of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society are held on the first Thursday of every month from September through June. Our meeting place is the Pleasant Hill Senior Center, 233 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill. The meeting times are as follows:

6:30 Doors open
7:00 Birding Information
7:30 Business Meeting
8:00 Social Time
8:30 Program

The next board meeting will be Thursday, September 8, at 7:30 p.m., at the home of Jim Lomax, 3636 Lolita Dr., Concord, 825-1513. The board meetings are open to all interested members.

Weekend Birding Breaks return. Our short, local field trips will start on Sunday, September 18 with a trip to Lafayette Reservoir. Members new to our area and beginning birders are encouraged to join us for these weekend get-aways. Trip leader for our first Birding Break will be Denise Wight, 370-7342. Meet at 8:30 a.m. in the parking lot at the top of the dam (\$4.00 fee).

CONSERVATION NOTES

by Al McNabney

WELCOME

The summer vacation is now history. There's a hint of fall in the air. We're glad to see you back, ready for another batch of MDAS meetings. Hope the vacation was enjoyable and the suntan you worked so hard to achieve is at least still visible. If'n you went on some birding trips to far away lands, hope you saw the species you sought. While you were enjoying your summer, I'm not certain much of anything worthwhile has taken place in the environmental protection area.

CLEAN WATER

Not much hope there. Opponents have organized themselves so that it is quite likely there will be NO Clean Water Act out of the Congress this year. News articles indicate tremendous pressures are being exerted to WEAKEN the existing law. So far the pressures appear to be winning. You think that's bad? Well, in some ways it's good. For if there's NO new clean water act, we at least won't lose any more ground in protecting of our nation's remaining wetlands.

Overheard, a migratory duck to 'nother duck, "I guess we'll still be able to find a place to 'light in California for another year."

CALIFORNIA DESERT PROTECTION ACT

Amazing bit of performance. Do you remember, long ago, Senator Alan Cranston introduced legislation to make much of the Mojave Desert a national park? This year, Senator Dianne Feinstein got behind the bill and it literally "whizzed" through the U. S. Senate. In the House, Congressman George Miller was in charge of the bill. In the end, the California Desert Protection Act passed, but not before we were treated to the spectacle of a handful of legislators whose objective appeared to be to "kill" the bill. These legislators presented amendment after amendment, trying to impose conditions on the use of the (supposedly to be) protected desert, taking hours and even days of time. Unfortunately, some of the "strange" amendments passed. What the full effects of these amendments may be is not yet known. Despite it all, these fragile desert areas will now receive at least some protection.

The massive opposition was far out of proportion when some consideration is given to the benefits that will result from the new park area. As one individual put it, "This Congress is probably the worst, environmentally, that we've seen in this century." If "I" were a member of Congress, I'd much rather be remembered as a Teddy Roosevelt (who really established our U. S. Park system) than a James Watt (who tried to do it all in).

DELTA ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE CENTER

One area where planning work has continued and where results are beginning to show up involves the Delta Environment Science Center. There is broad agreement on the scope of the Center and the educational component is fully supported by the administrations and staffs of Los Medanos College and Cal State Hayward as well as high schools in the area. Useful planning meetings have produced a number of key individuals who have specific expertise and interests in wetlands and wetland habitat. There is even talk about a "Yacht" that may be used in activities involving the Science Center. The ship is to be used for educational purposes, i.e., to bring students to river and estuarian areas not usually available for study.

WHY THE ANTI-ENVIRONMENT ATMOSPHERE?

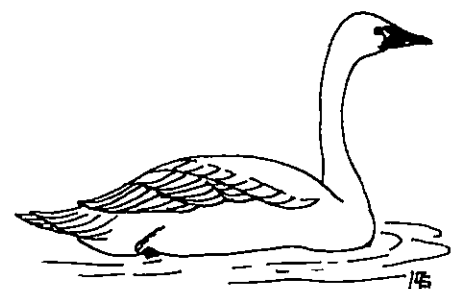
(COMMENT)

Suddenly, or seemingly so, an atmosphere of almost hostility to environmental causes, needs, and efforts seems to have "infected" the decision-makers at just about all levels of the government. Those of us who attempt to "do battle" about the environmental issues are well used to finding decision-makers that are openly opposed to any and all environmental issues. We've also found individuals (Congressman Don Edwards, for one) who would stand up to the anti-environmental people and groups. Don has announced he will be retiring at the end of this term of office. What a loss! His determined efforts have had major, positive impacts on the creation and completion of the well-known, important "Refuge" at the bottom of the Bay.

To answer my own question, at least to some extent, this year the opponents of much of the environmental effort are better financed, better organized, and more vocal. They have also adopted as their own idea mass mailings to decision-makers, using automated phone calls and canned telegrams.

With much of the environmental "stuff," adverse action may not be a simple thing with no consequences. If legislation is passed allowing destruction of one fine, functioning wetland, it may take many years, if ever, for the required replacement manufactured wetland to become effective. In the meantime, the beneficial uses of the destroyed wetland are lost at once. Migratory birds that make use of such areas cannot put off their annual migrations until a "created" wetland becomes available. The water-cleansing action of the wetland is also lost immediately. Whether the created wetland will EVER bring back such natural actions is relatively unknown. I hope that in coming weeks ALL of you will give more attention to what's taking place, environmentally.

Original
sketches
by Carol Lutz



ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT, FY 93-94

BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD:

| | |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| Operating Account: | \$2,584.00 |
| Conservation & Education Fund: | 13,626.00 |

INCOME:

| | |
|--|------------|
| National Audubon Society dues share | \$7,864.00 |
| Subscriptions to the <i>Quail</i> | 682.00 |
| Sales, <i>Birding Northern California</i> (To Conservation & Education Fund) | 4,097.00 |
| Other sales | 131.00 |
| Donations to MDAS | 589.00 |
| Fundraising | 2,647.00 |
| Bird-a-Thon donations | 1,599.00 |
| Wild Birds reserve | 600.00 |
| Advertising | 200.00 |
| Interest earned (net of bank charges) | 310.00 |

TOTAL INCOME: 18,720.00

INCOME + BALANCE FORWARD:

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| Operating Account: | \$16,944.00 |
| Conservation & Education Fund: | 17,985.00 |

DISBURSEMENTS:

| | |
|---|------------|
| Production and distribution of the <i>Quail</i> | \$7,054.00 |
| Rent, general meeting | 798.00 |
| Administration | 140.00 |
| Audubon lobbyist | 650.00 |
| Conservation | 275.00 |
| Membership | 16.00 |
| Program presentation | 900.00 |
| Education | 5.00 |
| Birding Information | 22.00 |
| Fund-raising expenses | 1,327.00 |
| Equipment | 659.00 |
| Christmas Bird Count | 383.00 |
| Sales expenses | 165.00 |
| Telephone (AUD-UBON) | 464.00 |
| Insurance | 514.00 |
| Bay Area Audubon Council | 50.00 |

CONTRIBUTIONS:

| | |
|---|------------|
| Planning and Conservation League, Richardson Bay Audubon Center, Lindsay Museum, Delta Environmental Science Center, Napa-Solano Breeding Bird Atlas, Advocates for Bird Conservation | \$3,000.00 |
|---|------------|

TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS: 16,422.00

BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD:

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| Operating Account: | \$ 3,709.00 |
| Conservation & Education Fund: | 14,798.00 |

1994-95 FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE

IMPORTANT: This is a tentative schedule. Weather or availability of leaders may require changes. READ THE *QUAIL* or call the Audubon tape at 283-8266. Weekday trips are often switched between Wednesday and Thursday to take advantage of tides or other opportunities. Two-day weekend trips may be done either day alone. The trips marked with a star (*) are new trips.

Thank you to everyone who helped put together this interesting schedule of trips for the coming year. Also thank you to those who will be leaders.

Elizabeth Dickey, Field Trip Chairman

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------|-------|-------------|---|-------------|-------|-------|-------------------------------|
| Sept. | 7 | Wed. | Hayward Regional Shoreline | Mar. | 1 | Wed. | Hayward Regional Shoreline |
| | 17 | Sat. | Moss Landing - Elkhorn Slough | | 11 | Sat. | Tornales Bay |
| | 22 | Thur. | Ironhouse Sanitary Plant | | 16 | Thur. | San Mateo Coast |
| | 25 | Sun. | Point Diablo (Hawk Hill) | | 25 | Sat. | Black Diamond Mines Reg. Park |
| | 29 | Thur. | Bolinas Lagoon | | 30 | Thur. | Briones wildflower walk |
| Oct. | 1 | Sat. | Outer Point Reyes | Apr. | 1 | Sat. | Garin Regional Park |
| | 12 | Wed. | Bodega Bay | | 6 | Thur. | Ironhouse Sanitary Plant |
| | 22 | Sat. | Abbott's Lagoon | | 12 | Wed. | Lagunitas |
| | 27 | Thur. | San Mateo Coast | | 20 | Thur. | Ida Clayton Road, Napa Co. |
| | | | | | 26 | Wed. | Del Puerto Canyon |
| | | | | | 29 | Sat. | BIRDATHON |
| Nov. | 3 | Thur. | Mt. View Sanitary | May | 6 | Sat. | Mines Road |
| | 5 | Sat. | Limantour | | 10 | Wed. | Mt. Diablo State Park |
| | 9 | Wed. | Charleston Slough | | 13 | Sat. | Mitchell Canyon - Wildflowers |
| | 16 | Wed. | Alameda South Shore | | 18 | Thur. | Napa River * |
| | 19 | Sat. | Alviso | | 24 | Wed. | Caswell State Park |
| Dec. | 3-4 | S-S | Sacramento refuges | | 27 | Sat. | East Contra Costa County |
| | 8 | Thur. | Altamont | June | 1 | Thur. | Partrick Road, Napa Co. * |
| | 14 | Wed. | Niles Canyon | | 3 | Sat. | Outer Point Reyes |
| | 17 | Sat. | CHRISTMAS COUNT | | 7 | Wed. | Annadel State Park |
| | 31 | Sat. | Palo Alto Baylands | | 17-18 | S-S | Yuba Pass - Sierra Valley |
| Jan. | 7 | Sat. | Putah Creek - Lake Solano | July | 8-9 | S-S | Lassen National Park |
| | 12 | Thur. | Lake Merritt | | 19 | Wed. | Berkeley botanical gardens * |
| | 21 | Sat. | Sunol Regional Park | | 29 | Sat. | San Mateo Coast |
| | 25 | Wed. | Grizzly Island Wildlife Refuge | Aug. | 12 | Sat. | Bodega Bay |
| Feb. | 4 | Sat. | Bodega Bay | | 26 | Sat. | Coyote Hills Regional Park |
| | 9 | Thur. | Thornton | | | | |
| | 15 | Wed. | Berkeley Shoreline | | | | |
| | 18-19 | S-S | Honey Lake - Sage Grouse | | | | |
| | 25-26 | S-S | Honey Lake - Sage Grouse (alternate) | | | | |

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

Wednesday, September 7, **Hayward Regional Shoreline**. Carpool 7:15 a.m. at El Cerro Blvd., west of I-680. Please call the trip leader for information on the meeting place and time. Water and shore birds.

Leader: Barbara Vaughn, 376-8732 Category 2

Saturday, September 17, **Moss Landing - Salinas River**. Carpool 6:45 a.m. El Cerro Blvd., west of I-680. Meet 8:30 a.m. in Moss Landing at the big turnout opposite Dolan Rd., just south of the PG&E plant on SR 1. Water, shore birds, possibly vagrants. Call Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486, for more information. Category 3

Thursday, September 22, **Ironhouse Sanitary**. Carpool 7:00 a.m. at southwest corner of Sun Valley parking lot. Meet at 7:45 a.m. in Oakley near railroad tracks, opposite Third Street. Take Hwy. 4 to Oakley. Meeting point is three miles into Oakley on Main Street. Possibilities include shorebirds, Yellow-headed Blackbird, river otter, and beaver.

Leader: Shirley Ellis, 939-9091 Category 2

Sunday, September 25, **Point Diablo**. Carpool 8:00 a.m., Acalanes Ave., off Pleasant Hill Rd., just north of SR24. Meet 9:15 a.m. in upper lagoon parking area. Take the San Rafael Bridge and US 101 south to SECOND Sausalito exit. 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 parking lot at the upper lagoon. If clear weather, carry lunch to stay on Hawk Hill until mid-afternoon for migrating hawks and possibly swifts.

Leader: Jim Lomax, 825-1513 Category 2

Thursday, September 29, **Bolinas Lagoon and Sewer Ponds**. Carpool 7:15 a.m. at southwest corner of Sun Valley parking lot. Meet 8:45 a.m. in front of Audubon Canyon Ranch. Go west through Vallejo and continue west on SR 37 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 SR 1; left again on SR 1 to Audubon Canyon Ranch.

Leader: Denise Wight, 370-7342 Category 2

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

LAS TRAMPAS REGIONAL PARK, June 3.

Only three made this annual visit to one of the most reliable places to see Grasshopper Sparrows. We were not disappointed. We saw two and heard four or five. As the morning sun got higher, it seemed the birds became fewer. 38 birds were totaled.
Denise Wight

OUTER POINT REYES, June 5.

Seventeen members and guests spent a lovely day at Pt. Reyes from Drake's Beach to the Lighthouse with stops at the dairy ranches and the Fish Docks. The only fog was at the Lighthouse. Unfortunately, the birds did not match the weather with 49 species seen. We did see two adult and two downy young Great Horned Owls at Drake's Monument and one more adult and two young at the Fish Dock trees. Other highlights were Pacific Loons, American Black Oystercatchers, Common Murres in the thousands at the Lighthouse, Pigeon Guillemots, many male Allen's Hummingbirds, many singing Swainson's Thrushes, and a breeding-plumaged male Palm Warbler (with rusty head) at the Fish Dock trees.

Maury Stern

ANNADEL STATE PARK, June 9.

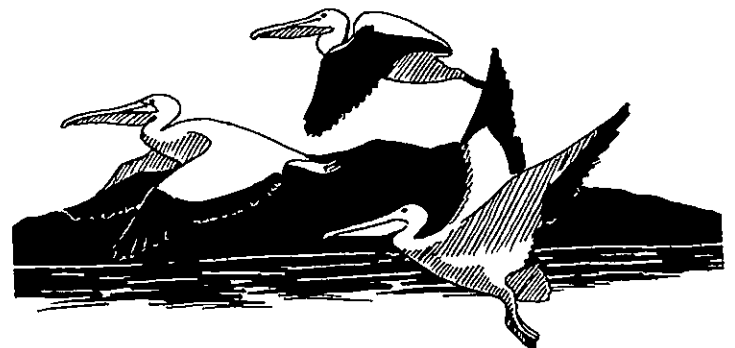
On a warm but not uncomfortable morning six members searched for the target birds of the park, the Yellow-breasted Chat and Pileated Woodpecker. Sadly, the chat seems to have left, but we got four separate views of the big woodpecker, all in and around the parking lot. 34 species were seen or heard.

Barbara Vaughn

YUBA PASS, June 18-19.

The Year of the Evening Grosbeaks. The thirty-one enthusiastic birders enjoyed a beautiful weekend and great birding. We found many of the area's specialties, including Common Poorwill, Black-backed and White-headed Woodpeckers, Williamson's Sapsucker, several flycatcher species, Green-tailed Towhee, Brewer's and Vesper Sparrows, and Yellow-headed Blackbirds. What made this weekend special and unusual, however, were flocks of White Pelicans flying over the Pass Saturday, the two Pileated Woodpecker chicks almost ready to come out of their nest, and the unusually large numbers of Evening Grosbeaks. 104 species were seen by the group, with 6 more heard only and 6 seen by individuals on their own.

Barb Burek and Dan Van Zile



OBSERVATIONS

by Steve Glover

Please send observations to Steve Glover,
3986 Stoneridge, #2, Pleasanton, CA 94566, or call 846-7382.
Please include your telephone number with your observations.

- Western Grebe: 1 on 6/8 and 6/11 at Shell Marsh. (SG)
American Bittern: 1 still-downy juvenile on 6/11 near the end of Bethel Island Rd. (SG)
Brant: 1 on 7/11 and 7/24 in Baumberg Salt Ponds, just south of San Mateo Bridge. (BR)
Canada Goose: approximately 400 on 8/1 and 8/2 in a field near I-580 at El Charro Rd. (SG)
Wood Duck: pair on 8/10 at Marsh Creek Reservoir. (SG)
Northern Pintail: 1 female with 2 young on 6/11 at Shell Marsh. (SG)
Blue-winged Teal: 1 male on 7/15 at Hayward Regional Shoreline. (SG, BR)
American Wigeon: 1 female on 7/6 at Shell Marsh. (SG)
 Very rare in summer.
Northern Goshawk: 1 on 6/9 at Medora Lake, Yuba Pass. (GF, MP)
Peregrine Falcon: 1 on 7/5 at Hayward RS. (FB, MJC)
Prairie Falcon: 1 on 7/30 at Hayward RS (BR), early for here; 1 on 8/2 near I-580 at El Charro Rd. (SG).
Snowy Plover: 23 on 7/26 at Hayward RS. (BR)
Wandering Tattler: 2 on 8/11 at Pt. Molate, Richmond. (SG)
Spotted Sandpiper: flock of 8 on 8/11 at Pt. Molate. (SG)
Black Turnstone: 1 on 6/19 at Hayward RS. (BR) This is an unusual date, may have returned early without ever breeding.
Semipalmated Sandpiper: 1 adult on 7/31 at Hayward RS. (BR)
Wilson's Phalarope: 1 on 7/15 at Hayward RS. (BR, SG)
Red Phalarope: 1 on 6/20 at Baumberg Salt Ponds. (BR)
Herring Gull: 1 adult on 7/31 at Hayward RS. (BR) Early.
Arcic Tern: last seen on 8/4 after 63 days at Hayward RS. (BR)
Black Skimmer: first nesting recorded north of Orange County at Hayward RS, with the following observations: 2 adults first seen 6/3, 1 chick on 6/30, 2 chicks on 7/2, 3 chicks on 7/4, 4 chicks on 7/7, 3 adults and 3 chicks on 7/23, 2 chicks on 7/31, one of the chicks fledged on 8/2 and was not seen again, 2 adults and 1 chick from 8/7 to 8/12. (BR)
Pigeon Guillemot: 1 on 8/11 at Pt. Isabel, Richmond. (SG)
 Probably the third county record.
Northern Pygmy-Owl: 1 on 7/29 at 1.4 Welch Creek Rd. near Sunol Regional Park (BR, SG); 1 on 8/5 near MacGuire Peaks, Sunol RP (BR); 2 adults and 1 juvenile on 8/7 near mile 14 along Mines Rd. (BR).
Great Gray Owl: a pair with 2 juveniles on 6/14 at Yosemite. (FB, MJC, BG, EL)
Black-chinned Hummingbird: 1 male on 7/15 along Coyote Creek near Milpitas. (SG)
Costa's Hummingbird: 1 immature male on 7/8 (DW) and again on 7/25 (FB, MJC) at the U. C. Botanical Gardens.

Winter Wren: 2 begging juveniles on 7/8 in Contra Costa Co. part of Redwood Regional Park; 2 adults feeding 2 juveniles on 7/8 in Alameda Co. part of Redwood RP, first Alameda County nesting record. (SG)

Wilson's Warbler: 1 on 6/25 at the Fire Interpretive Trail, Mt. Diablo State Park. (KH) This is a very early date; did it breed nearby?

Scarlet Tanager: 1 adult male on 7/15 (BR, SG, KH, JR, GF) and 7/19 (EL, FB, MJC) along Coyote Creek near Milpitas. Also on RBA.

Lark Bunting: 1 female on 6/19 along Rte. A-23 in Plumas Co. (SG, RL)

Hooded Oriole: 1 pair on 7/25 at the U. C. Botanical Gardens. (FB, MJC)

Observers: Florence Bennett, Mary Jane Culver, George Finger, Betty Gallagher, Steve Glover, Kevin Hintsa, Eugenia Larson, Ron Lindeman, Marjorie Plant, Bob Richmond, Jean Richmond, and Denise Wight.

After many years of dedicated service, Joe Morlan has stepped down from running the Northern California Rare Bird Alert. Those of us who have over the years enjoyed the best Rare Bird Alert in the country owe Joe a huge thank-you for all his work. Callers who dial (510) 524-5592 are now connected to Bird Box, a voice-mail system that allows them to listen to messages on sightings left by previous callers. (The number of loon species seen in California is 5.)

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. The newspaper covers different areas of environmental education.

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 Beverly Hawley, 1509 Skycrest Dr., #4, Walnut Creek, CA 94595.

SPONSOR: Name: _____
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 New _____ Renewal _____

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

INTERNATIONAL CORNER

by Jill Hedgecock

BIRDS IN THE BALANCE

Partners in Flight (PIF) is a cooperative initiative launched in 1990 involving public and non-governmental agencies throughout North and Latin America. Birds in the Balance (BIB) is Audubon's program associated with PIF. Its purpose is to address neotropical migratory songbirds. Many of you may be surprised that you have already contributed to the BIB program (e. g., Christmas counts, putting up nestboxes, etc.). At the September meeting, I will discuss other ways you can participate in the Birds in the Balance program.

DESERT HABITAT CLOSER TO BEING PROTECTED

The Desert Protection Act (298-128), supported by Sen. Dianne Feinstein, will expand Death Valley and Joshua Tree National Monuments and designate national park status for these areas. The Act has passed the House of Representatives! Both California "Inyo" Towhee and Bell's Vireo are found in this unique habitat. Unfortunately, under amendments passed by the House, the Mojave "National Park" was downgraded to a hunting preserve and the Lanfair deletion remains. A House-Senate conference committee will begin deliberations soon and there may still be a chance to alter these changes in the final bill.

1994 NATIONAL CONVENTION

The 1994 National Audubon Society Convention will consist of three components: the '94 Biennial National Convention, the Mobile Learning Lab, and the Population Conference - "The Road from Cairo." Participants can attend one, two, or all three components. The Biennial Convention will meet from November 11 through 13 at the Sheraton Harbor Place Hotel and Harborside Convention Center, Edwards Drive, Fort Myers, Florida. Events will include workshops, birding field trips, activist training sessions, and the Great Egret Annual Dinner with 1994 Audubon Medal recipient, Jimmy Carter. The Mobile Learning Lab will meet November 15 to 18 at Flamingo Lodge on Florida Bay, Everglades National Park. Study and explore the unique Everglades system with limited registration for group tours into the heart of the Everglades. The Population Conference will meet November 18 to 20 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, 400 SE Second Avenue, Miami, to follow-up the U.N. International Conference on Population and Development. Events will include reports from Cairo and a discussion of U.S. national policies by Tim Wirth and Al Gore. Registrations will be limited. For further registration information, please write the Audubon Convention Office, 4150 Darley Avenue, Suite 5, Boulder, CO 80303, call (303) 499-3622, or fax (303) 499-0286.

CLASSES AND EXCURSIONS

FALL BIRDING CLASSES

Norah Bain will offer "Introduction to Birding" for absolutely beginning birders meeting in the Orinda Community Center on Tuesday, October 18, and at a local outdoor area on Tuesday, October 25, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The cost for Orinda resident is \$22, for all others \$24. "Bay Area Bird Walks," for both beginning and intermediate birders, will meet Tuesdays, November 1, 8, 15, and 22, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The cost for Orinda residents is \$44, for all others \$46. For more class information, call Norah at (510) 254-4516. Register by mail only after August 15 at the Orinda Community Center, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563.

FALL FIELD ORNITHOLOGY CLASSES

Evening bird classes taught by Joe Morlan will start September 7, 8, and 13. All classes meet from 7:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. in Room 222, Marina Middle School, 3500 Fillmore at Bay Street in San Francisco. Tuesday classes are an introduction to birds and birding. Wednesday classes are a continuing in-depth study of the identification and status of North American water birds. Thursday classes study land birds. Fees are \$70 for each seven week course. Pre-registration is recommended. For information, call San Francisco City College Continuing Education Office at (415) 267-6545 or (415) 561-1840.

BAY SHORE STUDIES

Volunteers are needed to lead field trips for children to the edge of the Bay. To become a volunteer, sign up for the series of 14 interesting Bay Shore Studies classes in marine biology at Richardson Bay Audubon Center. The first session is Friday, September 16, from 9:00 to noon. Call Meryl Sundove at (415) 388-2524 for more information.

URBAN GROWTH WORKSHOP

Greenbelt Alliance, the Association of Bay Area Governments, Sierra Club, PCL, and others are co-sponsoring "Green Edges for Healthy Cities," a one-day conference on urban growth boundaries. The conference will take place from 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 1, at Oakland's Laney College. The key features include local case studies and working groups on how to make urban growth boundaries work for your own community. For information, contact Greenbelt Alliance at (415) 543-4291 or (408) 983-0539.

DOCENTS NEEDED

Oakland Museum's fall docent training program for tour guides in the Hall of California Ecology will begin September 13. Training will be offered Tuesdays from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. The classes will include lectures, films, field trips, gallery walks with museum curators, and special training in gallery tour techniques. No previous science experience is necessary. For information, call the Docent Center at (510) 238-3514 or write The Docent Council, The Oakland Museum, 1000 Oak Street, Oakland, CA 94607.

NEW MEMBERS

We are pleased to welcome these new MDAS members and hope to meet them at our activities: Harriet Abraham, Dale Adams, Danny Aho, Diana Altree, Duane Anderson, Elizabeth Anello, Paul Atchison, Harry Aunes, John and Jan Barrella, R. Beatty, Mrs. F. Bonthron, Samuel T. Boon, K. Bornholtz, Walter Bromma, Helen Burns, Paris Butisbauch, Juanita Campbell, Carlo Cattarin, M. A. Champion, William Chilson, Gary Coartney, Katherine Cook, Barbara Cressy, Jack Cutter, D. and D. Daigan, Mary Diehl, Constance Diernisse, Maxine Edwards, Karen Enstrom, James Erickson, Sheila Fahy, Penny Finklea, Sumie Freeman, Delmar Fuhrman, R. L. Fulton, Sherrie Fultz, Gardner, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Guzze, Christine Hagelin, Helen Hendricks, Helen Hubbard, Barbara Hurlbutt, Miriam Hvidt, Mitchell Jericoff, Robert Katz, Sylvia Kealy, Edna Keppy, Melanie Kett, Anil Kochhar, Mrs. Hedwige Komarowski, Roberta Krueger, Jane La Faille, Henry Larez, Janet Larson, Mohammad Latif, Nancy Lennon, Judy Lucas, Martin Lycan, Barbara Maher, W. Marcos, Diane Martin, Betty Mason, Stephanie McCloskey, James McGeehon, Norman McPhee, Sherry Metz, Victoria Micu, Stephanie Moon, Brett Moore,

Lee Munro, Goldie Nellis, Paul Olson, Mr. and Mrs. Silvan Peterhans, Jeannie Peterson, Veronica Pisani, Lisa Pyzel, Sandy Reed, Ellen Reintjes, Robert W. Rohde, Diane Ryles, Adventur Salvo, Bob Schafer, William Schafer, Bob Scuitto, Carter Settle, Muri Shank, Steve Sherk, Mel Smith, Lawrence Solomon, Tommy Tam, Debbie Tellier, Mrs. J. Thomas, Dennis Uthe, Lorraine Vollert, Mr. and Mrs. Vrmeer, John and Betty Wakeman, Carole Walker, Mrs. Robert Wall, Kim Walsh, C. Wheat, Ynez Whilton, and Eddie Yates.

MISSING QUAIL

In Volume 1, Number 4, (February, 1955) of *The Quail*, a new letterhead designed and drawn by Harry C. Adamson was introduced to MDAS. In the acknowledgment and thank you for his work, that editor wrote, "His design and drawing of our very likelike Quail will give pleasure to every member with each new issue for years to come." Indeed it has. We are now trying to locate the original artwork of the MDAS Quail which has been lost in the intervening years. Any member with information is asked to call Barbara Burek at 229-0394.

The Quail is published monthly except for the combined July/August issue. Audubon membership includes subscriptions to the Quail and Audubon magazine. To join (\$35/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 Chairman, Mike Williams, at 1172 Larch Avenue, Moraga, CA 94556. 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 \$10/year. The check should be made out to MDAS and mailed to the MDAS Treasurer, Pam Keiser, 505 Wild Flower Place, Danville, CA 94526. First class mailing of the Quail to member or nonmember is an additional \$3.50/year payable to MDAS & sent to the Treasurer.

ADDRESS CHANGES AND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION: Consult Mike Williams, (510) 376-1631.

Barbara Burek, Editor, 157 Mt. Kennedy Dr., Martinez, CA 94553 (510) 229-0394
Exchange bulletins for MDAS to Mt. Diablo Audubon Society, P. O. Box 53, Walnut Creek, CA 94597-0053, please.

Mt. Diablo Audubon Society
P.O. Box 53
Walnut Creek, CA 94597-0053

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Education: Beverly Hawley, 947-0479
Secretary: Sheree Lomax, 825-1513

October 1994

Vol. 41 No. 2

Next Deadline: October 13

October Program:

The Birds of the Northern Mid-West

Our **October 6** General Meeting program will be presented by our MDAS President Jim Lomax on the birds of the Northern Mid-West. Jim and his new wife Sheree traveled last May from southern Illinois to northern Minnesota photographing many of that area's indigenous birds. He will show us slides of such specialties among others as Golden-winged, Cerulean, Kentucky, Worm-eating, Connecticut, Blackburnian, and Kirtland's warblers, Henslow's, White-throated, Grasshopper, Swamp, and Clay-colored sparrows, Saw-whet Owl, Chimney Swift, Eastern Phoebe, Orchard Oriole, Veery, and Yellow-throated, Red-eyed, and Warbling vireos. Jim will also show you where he found each bird. Join us for another fascinating bird tour given by our favorite photographer and guide!

Have you ever wondered who the Anna of Anna's Hummingbird fame was? Or maybe puzzled over what the Flammulated in Flammulated Owl means? Or asked who is the ever-recurring Swainson of hawk, thrush, and warbler fame? Denise Wight will fill us in on these and other avian name tidbits for October bird information.

The next board meeting will be Thursday, October 13, 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.

General meetings of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society are held on the first Thursday of every month from September through June. Our meeting place is the Pleasant Hill Senior Center, 233 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill. The meeting times are as follows:

6:30 Doors open
7:00 Birding Information
7:30 Business Meeting
8:00 Social Time
8:30 Program

Weekend Birding Breaks. Our short, local field trips continue on Sunday, October 30, with a visit to the Martinez Regional Shoreline. Members new to our area and beginning birders are encouraged to join us for these weekend get-aways. The trip leader for our October Birding Break will be Barbara Vaughn, 376-8732. Meet at the parking lot at 8:30 a.m. Take the Marina Vista exit from I-680 west to downtown Martinez. Go north on Ferry Street past the Amtrack station, cross the tracks, and bear right on N. Court Street into the park and the parking lot.

CONSERVATION NOTES

by Al McNabney

DELTA ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE CENTER

Progress! Arrangements were made for Bob Barnes, Audubon's dynamic duo (even when he's alone) to visit the wetlands around Ironhouse Sanitary District. The purpose: to review the entire area. Bob brought with him two "experts" and they met with some of the Sanitary District's top staff. After tramping about the entire area, the group agreed on developing an attractive, tree-lined roadway which would lead to the actual DESC Center. As Bob reported to the large crowd at the MDAS September 1 general meeting, "There is a great deal of enthusiasm and interest in creating truly attractive, environmentally sound approaches that will enhance the area AND the science center."

Monthly planning meetings bring together educators such as Stan Chin, President, Los Medanos Community College, and Mark Nickerson, Director, Cal State Hayward (Contra Costa campus), with members of the Board of Directors of the East Bay Regional Park District and educators from local area schools. Tom Torlakson, the eastern Contra Costa County Supervisor, chairs the meetings. Agreement was reached on the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that will be put out for bids to do an in-depth study of all facets of the Science Center.

Ironhouse Sanitary District's Board of Directors has completed the Environmental Impact Report that will be required so the center can go forward. At the first public comment meeting September 6, there were NO adverse comments (other than a misspelled word, called to the attention of the Board by a local farmer). In fact, every individual who appeared and spoke on the matter praised the District for its far-sighted approaches and for the quality of the EIR. Among those who appeared was L. Johnson, Assistant to Congressman George Miller.

BIODIVERSITY: THE FUTURE AND NOW

Every expert I know of argues that a MAJOR problem facing the world today is the loss of species. The species are being exterminated NOT by nature and by natural causes but because of activities of humans. Stephen Meyer recently commented on the Endangered Species Act (which also is itself a VERY endangered law), "The Endangered Species Act — the poor, beleaguered Endangered Species Act — is facing congressional reauthorization later this year, and its future does not look particularly bright." You've no doubt at least heard of the Asian farmer who achieved some degree of notoriety when a prominent AM talk show host took on the ESA because said farmer plowed an area which was a habitat for the Kangaroo Rat. Notwithstanding the farmer had been warned about the endangered critter and notwithstanding the entire issue would have been avoided had the farmer taken a few steps to mitigate the loss of habitat.

So What's Your Stake in the ESA?

Most knowledgeable environmental people agree that the web of nature is such that each species depends to a great degree on other species. Thus, if we extirpate the Kangaroo Rat, the loss to most humans is nothing to fret about. However, loss of the little-ol'-rat could be devastating to hawks, eagles, and predators of one kind or 'nother, for there goes not only their breakfast, but lunch, dinner, and possibly ALL meals. We ALL know what happens if we don't eat for a while. First we get hungry, then desperate, and, if the situation lasts long enough, we shed the mortal coil and head for greener pastures. So it goes with all animals, plants, bugs, and bees.

What we need in the world is more reasoned approaches and more thoughtful consideration as to "where we are headed" and what we will be leaving for future generations. You can do something. I urge you to let your Senators (state and federal), state assembly representative, and congressional representative KNOW that the Endangered Species Act is IMPORTANT. It should NOT be watered down. There are some processes that might be developed to ensure that environmental issues are considered "early on." If considered before other elements of a development project are all in place, the issues will be known and can be dealt with in a reasonable manner. YES!!!! The Endangered Species Act is not only important, it is vital to a sustainable future.

WHAT'S HAPPENED TO THE SUPPORT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS?

Clearly, the support among many current decision-makers for environmental reason is waning or has virtually disappeared. This is a time when the environmental protection needs are very high. Wetlands. Everyone agrees wetlands have been used for other purposes. Bay Area wetlands now represent about 10% of what used to be here. The San Joaquin Valley wetlands are down to about 5% and yet pressures to use more and more of these environmentally important areas appear to be on the increase. (THE GOOD NEWS IS there are "some" in the business community who DO recognize wetland values and THEY are doing something - they are helping to create and/or maintain wetlands.) Ancient forests. Despite months of public discussion, decision-makers are still going to permit more logging with all of the resulting adverse environmental impacts. Clean Water. Despite very substantial evidence that our drinking water may be in some trouble from introduction of various toxics, pollutants, etc., forces throughout the U. S. are pressuring decision-makers to water down the Clean Water Act (no pun intended). These are just a few of the issues which have to be addressed. I conclude by commenting: our world is no longer simple. Solutions to problems are no longer easy to find. Many issues are NOT just black and white and unless reasonable people find reasonable ways to solve problems, our world (and we) will continue to be in trouble. It is likely that environmental issues will continue to plague us. The ways in which we meet such challenges will determine our environmental future as well as what kind of a world we are going to leave for future generations.

FIELD TRIPS

Trips are open to members and nonmembers alike. Carpool time is departure time. Carpool expense: 10 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, October 1, **Outer Point Reyes**. Carpool 6:30 a.m., Acalanes Ave., off Pleasant Hill Rd., just north of SR 24. 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 SR 1, turn right 0.25 mile, then 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. Coast birds, migrants, possible eastern vagrants. For information, call Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486.

Category 2

Wednesday, October 12, **Bodega Bay**. Carpool 7:30 a.m., southwest corner of Sun Valley parking lot. Meet 9:30 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 right to Bodega Bay. The Tides is on left, opposite a Union station. Shorebirds, rails, waterbirds, migrants.

Leader: Shirley Ellis, 939-9091

Category 1

Saturday, October 22, **Abbott's Lagoon**. Carpool 7:00 a.m., Acalanes Ave., off Pleasant Hill Rd., just north of SR 24. Meet 8:30 a.m. at Bear Valley Visitor's Center, Point Reyes. See driving directions for Outer Point Reyes. Turn left off Bear Valley into the Visitor's Center. Waterfowl, shorebirds, and possibly hawks or eagles. Carry lunch, liquids.

Leader: Maury Stern, 284-5980

Category 3

Thursday, October 27, **San Mateo Coast**. Carpool 7:15 a.m. at El Cerro Blvd., west of I-680. Meet at 9:00 a.m. in parking lot off SR 1 opposite Pescadero Road. Cross the 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 the parking lot. Ocean and shorebirds, possible migrants.

Leader: Denise Wight, 370-7342

Category 2

Saturday, October 29, **Pelagic Trip to Cordell Banks**, sponsored by Napa-Solano Audubon. Trip will leave Bodega Harbor at 7:00 a.m., return ~4:00 p.m. Cost per person is \$40; make check to Napa-Solano Audubon Society and send with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Robin Leong, 336 Benson Ave., Vallejo, CA 94590. Leaders Roger Marlowe and Keith Hanson. The boat is the new Sea Angler.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

SAN MATEO COAST, July 30.

Three MDAS members joined the leader on a cool and drizzly morning. No rarities were sighted but many shorebirds still displayed good breeding plumage. 48 species were seen.

Barbara Vaughn

BODEGA BAY, August 20.

Ten birders enjoyed a clear, sunny day at beautiful Bodega Bay, with the sighting of 67 species. One of the most interesting moments was the opportunity to watch a Northern Phalarope feeding alone in a pond with abundant insects. The bird was having a great time in a solo feeding frenzy. Only two species of ducks were seen, a very few Northern Pintails and even fewer Mallards. Two jet skiers made a substantial contribution to noise pollution at this usually peaceful location.

Shirley Ellis

COYOTE HILLS REGIONAL PARK, August 27.

Weather was warm and calm, with a faint hint of fall. Migrating shorebirds and 50 White Pelicans overhead made a great day for three people at San Francisco Bay Refuge and Coyote Hills. The highlights included 8 Lesser Yellowlegs and a Pectoral Sandpiper. Lunch was enlivened by watching a Great Horned Owl in a nearby eucalyptus tree. A total of 64 species seen or heard.

Elizabeth Dickey

SAVE THE IRON HORSE REGIONAL TRAIL! *by Linda Denari*

STAND-UP! (Save the Trail AND Unite for Better Planning!) urges all members of Mt. Diablo Audubon Society to support the opposition to the county's plan to develop a 4-6 lane road along the Southern Pacific (SP) right of way from the Pleasant Hill BART Station to Monument Boulevard in Concord. This 1 1/2 mile section of pavement would destroy the continuity of the Iron Horse Regional Trail which stretches along the SP right of way from San Ramon to Suisun Bay. The SP right of way offers a rare opportunity to preserve open space in an established area — an area that is in desperate need of open space and greenbelt development. As such, this parcel of open space is a priceless asset and must be preserved. Support efforts to stop the Southern Pacific Arterial — write letters in opposition to:

Clerk of Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors
651 Pine Street
Martinez, CA 94553

OBSERVATIONS

by Steve Glover

Please send observations to Steve Glover,
3986 Stoneridge, #2, Pleasanton, CA 94566, or call 846-7382.
Please include your telephone number with your observations.

Ashy Storm-Petrel: 1 on 9/5 and 9/6 at Hayward Regional Shoreline. (BR)

Pelagic Cormorant: 4 on 8/21 at Point Pinole Regional Shoreline (SG); 19 on 9/4 around Richmond (BR, SG).

Cattle Egret: 200+ on 8/10 along Rd. 27 near Davis. (GF, MP)

Wood Duck: a pair on 8/10 and 2-3 females on 8/20 at Marsh Creek Reservoir. (SG)

Ring-necked Duck: 2 males on 8/29 at Marsh Creek Res. (SG)

Surf Scoter: 1 albino duck on 8/16, 8/21, and 9/4 near Brooks Island, Richmond. (SG)

Common Merganser: 6 immature females on 8/24 (SG, KH, JL) and 8/26 (BR) at Clifton Court Forebay.

Osprey: 1 on 8/19 along N. Gate Road, Mt. Diablo State Park. (KH)

Swainson's Hawk: 1 on 8/23 and 8 on 8/25 near Hwy. 580 and Collier Canyon Rd., Livermore, and 16 on 8/29 along Mountain House Rd. near Byron. (SG)

Peregrine Falcon: 1 on 8/12 and 8/15 at Shell Marsh. (SG)

Pacific Golden-Plover: 1 adult on 8/20 and 1 juvenile on 8/21 at Hayward RS. (BR)

Black Oystercatcher: 1 on 8/21 at the old Albany dump (SG); 2 on 9/4 on the breakwater at Brickyard Cove, Richmond (BR, SG).

Lesser Yellowlegs: 9 on 8/15 at Shell Marsh. (SG)

Solitary Sandpiper: 1 on 8/16 at Pt. Isabel RS (SG), third county record; 1 on 8/23 at the Rush Creek Marshes, Novato (GF, MP).

Wandering Tattler: 2 on 8/11 at Pt. Molate, Richmond, and 4 on 8/21 at the old Albany dump. (SG)

Spotted Sandpiper: group of 8 on 8/11 at Pt. Molate and a group of 9 on 8/21 at Pt. Pinole RS. (SG)

Semipalmated Sandpiper: 1 juvenile on 8/20 and on 8/30 at Hayward RS. (BR)

Baird's Sandpiper: 4 on 8/23 at Abbott's Lagoon, Pt. Reyes. (GF, MP, FB, MJC, HH)

Red-necked Phalarope: 4 on 8/12 and 8/15 at Shell Marsh. (SG)

Red Phalarope: 2 on 8/23 at Abbott's Lagoon. (FB, MJC, HH, GF, MP)

Common Tern: 1 on 8/26 at Clifton Court Forebay. (BR)

Least Tern: 1 on 8/26 at Clifton Court Forebay. (BR)

Black Tern: 7 on 8/26 (BR), 7 on 8/31 (KH), and 8 on 9/1 (GF), all at Clifton Court Forebay. Third county record.

Pigeon Guillemot: 1 on 8/11 at Pt. Isabel R. S. (SG) Third county record.

Marbled Murrelet: 1 on 8/21 near Brooks Island. (SG) Second county record.

Ancient Murrelet: 1 on 8/24 at Clifton Court Forebay. (SG, KH, JL) Second county record.

Belted Kingfisher: 1 on 8/25 in Pine Canyon, MDSP. (KH)

Willow Flycatcher: 1 on 8/21 at Pt. Pinole R. S. (SG); 1 on 8/20 along Orwood Rd. near Knightsen (SG); 1 with no tail on 8/24 at Clifton Court Forebay (SG); ~22 on 8/29 (SG) and 13 on 8/30 (GF, MP) at Piper Slough; 4 on 8/30 in Pine Canyon (KH).

Purple Martin: 11 on 8/23 at Pt. Reyes Headquarters. (JR)

Hermit Warbler: 1 on 8/19 near campground junction, MDSP. (KH)

Black-and-white Warbler: 1 on 9/6 at Sunol Regional Park. (SG)

American Redstart: 1 adult male on 8/16 at Drake's Beach, Pt. Reyes. (MJC, FB, BG, EL)

MacGillivray's Warbler: 3 on 8/29 at Piper Slough. (SG)

Wilson's Warbler: 4 on 8/5 in Pine Canyon, including a group of 3. (KH) Early, did they breed here?

Yellow-breasted Chat: 2 on 8/10 (SG) and 1 on 8/30 (GF, MP) at Piper Slough.

Blue Grosbeak: 3 females and immatures on 8/30 at Piper Slough. (GF, MP)

Grasshopper Sparrow: 7 on 8/19 near Johnny Walker Springs, MDSP. (KH)

Bobolink: 1 on 8/30 at Road Forks Pool, Pt. Reyes. (FB, MJC, HH)

Observers: Florence Bennett, Mary Jane Culver, George Finger, Betty Gallagher, Steve Glover, Hugh Harvey, Kevin Hintsa, Eugenia Larson, Jim Lomax, Marjorie Plant, Bob Richmond, and Jean Richmond.

OOPS!

The fee for sponsoring a class for Audubon Adventures is **\$35** this year, not \$30 as indicated in the September *Quail*. The good news is that there is still time to participate in this worthy program of bi-monthly newspapers for students in third through sixth grades. The newspapers are accompanied by a teacher's guide and cover different areas of environmental education. Send your check payable to National Audubon Society to Beverly Hawley, 1509 Skycrest Dr., #4, Walnut Creek, CA 94595.

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

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

INTERNATIONAL CORNER

by *Jill Hedgecock*

BINOCULARS NEEDED!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

As our first Birds in the Balance Project, in conjunction with World Rainforest Week, October 15-23, a binocular collection for researchers in the tropical rainforests will be held. If you have an extra pair of binoculars around the house, consider making them a tax-deductible donation to MDAS. I will make a collection of used binoculars at the October general meeting or you may contact me directly at (510) 256-8270.

FESTIVAL, SALE, AND EXHIBIT

1994 FESTIVAL OF THE CRANES

The 1994 Festival of the Cranes at Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge near Socorro, New Mexico, will be held on November 17, 18, 19, and 20. Keynote speakers will include Peter Dunne, Jim Bones, Steve West, and Chandler Robbins. Scheduled events will include workshops, exhibits, programs, tours of the refuge and area, a silent auction, an arts and crafts fair, and a nature photography contest and exhibit. For more information or to register, write the Socorro County Chamber of Commerce, P. O. Box 743-B, Socorro, NM 87801 or call (505) 835-0424. Pre-registration closes November 4.

NATIVE PLANT SALE

The 28th Annual Sale of California Native Plants will take place on Saturday and Sunday, October 1 and 2, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., and will continue every Tuesday from 9:00 a.m. to noon, through January, 1995, at the Merritt College Landscape Horticultural Department, 12500 Campus Drive, Oakland. The sale is sponsored by the East Bay Chapter of the California Native Plant Society. For sale will be thousands of native plants, including trees, shrubs, vines, ferns, perennials, groundcovers, grasses, bulbs, and seeds, as well as botanical art, posters, and books on native plants and gardening using native plants. Experts from CNPS will be on hand to give friendly advice and to answer questions about gardening with native plants in the Bay Area. All the sale proceeds go toward conservation, field studies, scholarships, education, and other projects designed to protect and educate the public about native plants. For more information, call (510) 559-9269 or (510) 376-4095.

FOR THE BIRDS

Gallery Concord, 2151 Salvio Street, Suite V, Concord, presents an art exhibition for and about birds from Tuesdays to Sundays, from noon to 5:00 p.m., starting September 16 through November 11. Family studio days will be Saturdays, October 8, 15, and 22, 10:30 a.m. to noon, and will include live birds from the Lindsay Museum and related art projects. All events are free and open to the public. For information, call (510) 671-3400.

NEWS FROM WILD BIRDS

720 Contra Costa Blvd.
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523
798-0303

FALL SEED SALE 15% OFF (or more)

All 25 lb. and 50 lb. bags
(9/19/94-10/31/94)

FREE BIRDSEED BANKING: you can buy your entire season's supply during the seed sale and pick it up as you need it. You benefit from the lowest prices available and you only have to take home what you can easily store.

SUET

Suet is animal fat to which different ingredients are added such as seed, fruit, and peanuts to attract different varieties of birds. Offering suet in your backyard is a great way to attract a wide variety of birds from chickadees to woodpeckers to nuthatches and many others.

SUET SALE

\$0.30 off all suet cakes and \$0.60 off all suet tubs
(Sale ends 10/31/94)

IT'S TIME TO VISIT HAWK HILL...

With a new field guide:

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| Peterson's Western Birds | Save \$2.00 |
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And a new pair of binoculars. Check out our latest Celestron - WBU Compacts:

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| 8 x 24 | BAK-4 prisms |
| weight - 11.5 ounces | close focus - 8 feet |

ANNIVERSARY

September 24, 1994

Join us in celebrating our third successful year. We want to thank you for making this another exciting year. Special events on this day are:

- The endangered Spotted Owl and other Lindsay Museum birds
- A free gift for each customer
- Many in-store specials

NEW MEMBERS

We warmly greet these new MDAS members we hope to meet in person soon at our meetings and trips: Rosemarie Bateman, Lois Bowles, Carol Brown, J. R. Brown, Elizabeth Burstein, Lito and Darlene Calimlim, Barbara Chernock, W. P. Damato, Katherine Dano, Eva Denes, Carolyn Gogan, Donald Helmholz, Leah Hoos, Terri Iglesias, Rebeca Kemal, Robert Knutson, Julie Kowalsky, Patricia Kraws, Bob and Ellen Kuykendall, Donald Martinez, Diane McCrary, Sharon McDonald, Eartha Newsong, Lynda Oliver, Craig A. Penrose, Bern Qualheim, Gayle Reece, Ron Reece, Robert Reed, Dolores M. Reidhaar, Sandra and Leslie Rogers, John F. Rosa, Joel Scott, Janet Swedberg, Pauline Thomas, Julie Vonbehren, Barbara Wall, James Walraven, and Diane Wong.

1995 ENTERTAINMENT BOOK

The 1995 Entertainment Book is here! Save 50% on travel, restaurants, theater, retail, service, hotels and motels, and MUCH, MUCH more.

The 1995 Entertainment Book can be used IMMEDIATELY and is available at Wild Birds Unlimited, 720 Contra Costa Blvd., Pleasant Hill, or at the monthly general meetings. Call Barbara Vaughn at 376-8732 for more details.

The Quail is published monthly except for the combined July/August issue. Audubon membership includes subscriptions to the Quail and Audubon magazine. To join (\$35/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 Chairman, Mike Williams, at 1172 Larch Avenue, Moraga, CA 94556. 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 \$10/year. The check should be made out to MDAS and mailed to the MDAS Treasurer, Pam Keiser, 505 Wild Flower Place, Danville, CA 94526. First class mailing of the Quail to member or nonmember is an additional \$3.50/year payable to MDAS & sent to the Treasurer.

ADDRESS CHANGES AND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION: Consult Mike Williams, (510) 376-1631.

*Barbara Burek, Editor, 157 Mt. Kennedy Dr., Martinez, CA 94553 (510) 229-0394
Exchange bulletins for MDAS to Mt. Diablo Audubon Society, P. O. Box 53, Walnut Creek, CA 94597-0053, please.*

Mt. Diablo Audubon Society
P.O. Box 53
Walnut Creek, CA 94597-0053

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The QUAIL

BULLETIN OF THE MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 53

WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA 94597-0053

(510) AUD-UBON

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Education: Beverly Hawley, 947-0479

Secretary: Sheree Lomax, 825-1513

November 1994

Vol. 41 No. 3

Next Deadline: November 10

November Program:

The Ecology of the Sutter Buttes

For our **November 3** General Meeting, Don Schmoltdt will give a presentation on the Sutter Buttes. The peaks are a product of volcanic activity, conspicuously isolated in the middle of the northern Sacramento Valley. Many of us have seen them while on field trips to the Sacramento Valley refuges. The Buttes are 10 miles wide and rise to a height of about 1500 feet and contain a unique combination of fauna and flora, some from the Coast Range, some from the Sierra Foothills.

Don Schmoltdt works as a wildlife biologist with the environmental consultant firm of LSA Associates in Point Richmond. He was the coordinator for the Sutter Buttes Naturalist Program and has also led a number of natural history expeditions. Don is also an avid birder.

For the November Bird Information, Norah Bain will present our chapter's bird skin collection and discuss its educational uses.

Birds in the Balance Meeting: The first Birds in the Balance meeting, a follow-up to our September program, will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 9, at the home of Jim Lomax, 3636 Lolita Drive, Concord. Bob Barnes of Western Regional Audubon will attend this kickoff meeting.

General meetings of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society are held on the first Thursday of every month from September through June. Our meeting place is the Pleasant Hill Senior Center, 233 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill. The meeting times are as follows:

6:30 Doors open
7:00 Birding Information
7:30 Business Meeting
8:00 Social Time
8:30 Program

The next board meeting will be Thursday, November 10, at 7:30 p.m., at the home of Jill Hedgecock, 536 Coralie Dr., Walnut Creek, 256-8270. The board meetings are open to all interested members.

Weekend Birding Breaks. Our short, local field trip this month will be a visit to Heather Farms on Sunday, November 13. Members new to our area and beginning birders are encouraged to join us for these weekend get-aways. The November trip leader will be Shirley Ellis, 938-3703. From I-680, take the Ygnacio Valley exit east to San Carlos Dr. Meet at 8:30 a.m. in the parking lot.

CONSERVATION NOTES

by Al McNabney

SO, IT'S ELECTION TIME AGAIN - YOU MUST DO YOUR PART

(COMMENT) Environmental issues took pretty much of a back seat during the just-concluded session of Congress. You will hear some folks say, "That's not all bad." On the other hand, major issues, environmental and otherwise, must be faced. With some environmental issues, any delay may mean extinction for plants, animals, and birds. Which brings us to the oft stated comment, "Extinction is forever."

A recently published book, *Life on the Edge, A Resource Guide to California's Endangered Plants and Wildlife, Volume 1: Wildlife*, may well be THE definitive book on endangered species. The paperback *Volume 1* can be obtained from Hey-Day Books, P.O. Box 9145, Berkeley, CA 94709, at a cost of \$39.00. While reviewing this book, I saw a Pat Robertson-sponsored tv program entitled (I believe) "Endangered animals, how they are endangering private property rights." Few to none of the birds, bugs, or bees are able to attend a religious service and, as these creatures are unable to speak to decision-makers for themselves, they are in trouble. That means either those interests are given NO attention or others have to "try" to make a case for protection of environmental matters.

Liz Raesbeck, National Audubon Society Vice-President for Legislative Affairs, wrote to me about national environmental issues recently. Liz indicated the decision-makers are NOT hearing from us but they are hearing from those who want to "do in" the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act, and much other legislation that protects people, wildlife, and our environment.

We now oft hear the cry, "The Government's too big, let's get it off our backs." So one should then ask for some specifics as to WHAT laws and regulations should be abrogated. Who would the proponents of "doing away with government's role" suggest should look out for the interest of "we, the people"? The Clean Water Act has cleaned up rivers, streams, and, to some extent, the oceans. The Clean Air Act is causing the gradual cleaning up of our air. Interestingly enough, both of those laws are being fought tooth and nail by some of the very forces that create the problems.

Let's take a quick look at the California Desert Protection Act. The initial legislation was filed years ago by former California Senator Alan Cranston. This legislative session the bill was herded through a maze of quicksand and barbed wire by Senator Feinstein and Congressman Miller, with many amendments proposed which were really an attempt (in my opinion) to KILL the bill. The bill passed in BOTH the House and Senate by majorities. Then one individual senator tried to kill the California Desert Protection Act and had not 60 Senators voted to halt the filibuster, the law would NOT have passed.

Let's also take a good look at our existing park system. You will see that, assuming our California population continues to increase, our existing parks will NOT be able to handle the crowds who want to use them. One of two things will then happen: 1. Usage of the parks will be subject to rationing, or 2. Use will not be controlled and the environmental values of the parks will be degraded.

Sorry to go on for so long. These issues are to my mind VERY important. These issues MUST be resolved and many of us do NOT believe they will be resolved favorably without much more consideration and attention by "US." Elections are coming. Think environmentally, live that way, and maybe the pressures we're putting on our world will be eased just a bit.

MONO LAKE: A BIG WIN!!!!!!!

By now most of us know the State's Water Quality Control Board has ruled the L.A. Metropolitan Water Control District cannot continue to take water from Mono Lake. As a result, over the next 15 to 20 years, the lake level will rise some 15 to 20 feet, and Mono Lake will have been "somewhat" returned to levels that will protect the scenic beauties, the wildlife, and the environment in the area. HOW did that happen? Good question. Audubon early took on the challenge of "saving" Mono Lake. Now, some 14 to 15 years later and a million dollars spent by those who wanted to SAVE the lake, the lake is safe. The Mono Lake Committee, a small group of dedicated people, with strong support from Audubon members and chapters and others, fought the legal battles, the propaganda wars (with little to no propaganda from "OUR" side) and the battle HAS BEEN WON!!! Remember the old story of David and Goliath? That's to be likened to the Mono Lake battle. There are many more environmental issues that are as important and where justice should be on OUR side.

REMEMBER DOUGHERTY VALLEY?

Well, it's back, but in a "somewhat" diminished form with a new but equally disgusting face and with terrible implications for traffic jams and huge, adverse impacts on wildlife. The public hearings have been largely ignored by the public. So decision-makers are forging ahead with (seemingly) little to NO consideration for true resolution of issues.

DELTA ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE CENTER

This MAJOR project is moving forward. The committee overseeing the project meets monthly. Educators are busy looking at ways to implement the educational aspects of the program. A Request for Proposal is now in the hands of the various consultants who seek to be involved. Audubon people have been involved in the entire process. NAS Representative Bob Barnes recently headed a "team" which spent an entire day with Ironhouse Sanitation District people developing environmentally sensitive ways to protect the project's wetland and wildlife values.

FIELD TRIPS

Trips are open to members and nonmembers alike. Carpool time is departure time. Carpool expense: 10 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

NOTE: Information on the November Weekend Birding Break is given on page 1.

Thursday, November 3, **Mt. View Sanitary Plant.** Meet at 9:00 a.m. at parking lot at the plant. Take Pacheco Blvd. exit from I-680, turn right onto Arthur Rd. 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. Trails may be muddy. Close-up looks at dabbling ducks; possible bitterns and heron.

Leader: Shirley Ellis, 938-3703

Category 1

Saturday, November 5, **Limantour.** Carpool at 7:00 a.m. at Acalanes Avenue, off Pleasant Hill Rd. just north of SR 24. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Bear Valley Visitor's Center, Pt. 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 SR 1, turn right 0.25 mile, left onto Bear Valley and left again into the 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 9, **Charleston Slough.** Carpool 7:00 a.m. El Cerro Blvd., just west of I-680. Meet at 8:15 a.m. at end of Terminal Rd., Mountain View. Take Dumbarton Bridge and go south on US 101 to San Antonio Rd. exit. Go north and east on San Antonio and turn right onto Terminal. Water, salt marsh birds. Trails may be muddy.

Leader: Steve Glover, 846-7382

Category 2

Wednesday, November 16, **Alameda South Shore.** Carpool 7:30 a.m., on El Nido near St. Stephens Drive. Take either St. Stephens or Acalanes exits from SR 24. Meet at 8:15 a.m. at Broadway and Shoreline Ave. in Alameda. Take SR 24 to I-880, and go south to Government Island exit. Continue on Kennedy St. to the bridge approach. Alameda side of bridge is Park St. Continue on Park; left on Shoreline. Park at end of Broadway or on Bayview. Close-up views of shorebirds; Clapper Rails possible.

Leader: Barbara Vaughn, 376-8732

Category 1

Saturday, November 20, **Alviso.** Carpool 7:30 a.m. El Cerro Blvd., west of I-680. Meet 8:30 a.m. in parking lot of Alviso Marina. From southbound I-680, turn west at Calaveras exit (SR 237). Turn right on N. 1st St., right on Gold St., left on Elizabeth, and right toward the Alviso Marina. Warning: roads are torn up in this area. Shore and water birds.

Leader: Elizabeth Dickey, 284-0486

Category 2

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

HAYWARD REGIONAL SHORELINE, September 7.

No report received.

MOSS LANDING / ELKHORN SLOUGH, September 17.

Little Curlew on the sand at Carmel Beach! LIFE BIRD for everybody! In the morning some of the group joined the celebration of Estuary Day at Elkhorn Slough reserve. The rest went to Moonglow Dairy and Moss Landing beach. An Osprey and two jaegers chasing terns were the outstanding birds. Weather was great. 12 birders saw a total of 69 species.

Elizabeth Dickey

IRONHOUSE SANITARY PLANT, September 22.

With the help of Mike Moran, East Bay Parks Naturalist Aide, fifteen birders saw or heard a total of 57 species at this site with an exciting plan for the future! We saw the new office and the location of the proposed science center. Do you recall that MDAS was the first to contribute \$1000 seed money for this? Feel proud. A variety of ducks, shorebirds, warblers, and others were among the sightings. Perhaps the most unusual birds seen were several Ring-necked Pheasants.

Shirley Ellis

POINT DIABLO, September 25.

Six observers met in Pleasant Hill and went over to the Marin Headlands where we birded Rodeo Lagoon in foggy weather. Later in mid-morning the sun came out and we went to Hawk Hill. 49 species of birds, including Vaux's Swift, Osprey, and many accipters and hawks, with over a dozen Broad-winged Hawks, were observed.

Jim Lomax

BOLINAS LAGOON, September 29.

Bolinas Lagoon is a wonderful place to study birds in the fall. Eight birders counted 91 species including Pectoral Sandpiper and Willow Flycatcher. At 5 Brooks Pond, two male and one female Wood Duck flew in for our viewing enjoyment. Even though rarities remained rare to us, it was pleasant, sunny, and just a great day to bird the coast.

Denise Wight

OBSERVATIONS

by Steve Glover

Please send observations to Steve Glover,
3986 Stoneridge, #2, Pleasanton, CA 94566, or call 846-7382.
Please include your telephone number with your observations.

Greater Shearwater: 1 on 10/1 on Monterey Bay. (DW)
Only the second record for California.

Brandt's Cormorant: 1 on 9/12 and 9/14 at Hayward Regional
Shoreline. (BR) Rare in the Bay.

Ashy Storm-Petrel: 1 plus 1 unidentified storm-petrel on 10/8
at Hayward RS. (BR)

Brown Pelican: 1 immature on 9/28 and 10/12 at Clifton
Court Forebay. (SG) Second inland record for Contra Costa
County.

White-faced Ibis: 2 on 9/27 at Crespi Pond, Pacific Grove.
(JR, RR)

Ring-necked Duck: at least 33 on 9/28 at the Marsh Creek
Reservoir. (SG)

Oldsquaw: 1 on 9/11 near Brooks Island, Richmond. (SG)
This bird was present all summer.

Swainson's Hawk: 1 on 9/8 at Hayward RS (BR); 1 on 9/14
at Bethel Island with 31 ravens. (SG)

Prairie Falcon: 1 on 10/13 near Clifton Court Forebay. (SG)

Virginia Rail: 1 on 9/20 at Pine Pond, Mt. Diablo State Park.
(KH) Second park record.

Sora: 2 on 9/20 at Pine Pond. (KH)

Little Curlew: 1 on 9/9 (FB, MJC, HH, EL, GF, JR) and
9/27 (JR, RR) at the Carmel River mouth. Also on RBA.
Fifth record for North America.

Bar-tailed Godwit: 1 on 9/12 (FB, MJC) and 9/13 (JR) at Palo
Alto Baylands.

Pomarine Jaeger: 1 adult on 10/11 at Hayward RS. (BR)

Parasitic Jaeger: 1 juvenile on 10/8 at Hayward RS. (BR)

Common Murre: 1 on 10/8 at Hayward RS. (BR)

Thick-billed Murre: 1 on 10/5 on Monterey Bay. (SG)

Rhinoceros Auklet: 1 on 9/11 at Hayward RS. (BR) Second
Alameda County record.

White-winged Dove: 1 on 9/27 at Hall Ranch, Pt. Reyes.
(FB, MJC, EL)

Vaux's Swift: 2 on 9/14 along Kelso Rd., East Alameda
County. (SG)

Northern "Yellow-shafted" Flicker: 1 "pure" bird on 10/1 and
10/3 at Hayward RS. (BR)

Willow Flycatcher: 1 on 9/20 at Pine Pond. (KH)

Least Flycatcher: 1 on 9/19 at New Willows, Pt. Reyes (GF,
MP); 1 on 10/6 at El Granada, San Mateo Co. (GF).

Tropical Kingbird: 1 on 9/27 at Pt. Piños with a Western
Kingbird. (JR, RR)

Common Raven: a kettle of 31 on 9/14 circling and heading
north over Bethel Island. (SG)

Red-eyed Vireo: 1 on 9/16 at Hayward RS (BR); 1 on 9/27 at
the Carmel River (JR).

Chestnut-sided Warbler: 1 on 9/13 and 10/3 at Bodega Bay
(FB, EL, MJC, HH); 1 on 9/27 at Mendoza Ranch, Pt. Reyes
(MJC, EL, FB).

Magnolia Warbler: 1 on 9/20 at the Mendoza Ranch (JR); 1 on
9/26 at Hayward RS (BR), the first Alameda County record; 1
on 9/27 at the Pt. Reyes Lighthouse (EL, MJC, FB).

Black-throated Blue Warbler: 1 on 9/20 at the Mendoza Ranch
(JR, EL, FB, MJC, HH); 1 on 9/27 at Drake's Beach, Pt. Reyes
(EL, FB, MJC).

Blackburnian Warbler: 1 on 9/27 at the El Carmelo Cemetery,
Pacific Grove (JR, RR); 1 on 9/27 at Pt. Reyes Lighthouse
(FB, EL, MJC).

Prairie Warbler: 1 on 9/20 at Pt. Reyes Fish Docks (JR, JD); 1
on 9/26 at Bodega Bay (FB, HH, MJC).

Blackpoll Warbler: 1 on 9/27 in his Concord yard. (KH)

American Redstart: 1 on 9/17 at Hayward RS. (BR)

Prothonotary Warbler: 1 on 10/6 at El Granada. (GF, MP)

Northern Waterthrush: 1 on 9/26 at Bodega Bay. (FB, HH,
MJC)

Yellow-breasted Chat: 2 on 9/14 at Piper Slough. (SG)

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: 1 female on 9/26 and 1 immature
male on 9/27 at Hayward RS. (BR)

Clay-colored Sparrow: 1 juvenile on 9/30 (SG), 10/1 (JR,
RR), and 10/2 (GF) at Miller-Knox Regional Shoreline, first
county record; 1 on 10/7 at Coyote Hills (BR).

Brewer's Sparrow: 1 juvenile found on 10/6 (DW), seen 10/6
(MP), 10/7 (SG, NC), and 10/8 (GF, NC) at Hidden Lakes
Park, Martinez, one of possibly as few as four county records; 1
on 10/7 at Coyote Hills (BR).

Black-throated Sparrow: 1 on 9/20 near the Pt. Reyes Light-
house. (JR)

Lark Bunting: 1 on 9/19 (GF, MP) and 9/20 (FB, EL, HH,
MJC) at Mendoza Ranch.

Swamp Sparrow: 1 immature on 10/1 at Hayward RS. (BR)

Observers: Florence Bennett, Nathan Crawford, Mary Jane
Culver, Jane Dang, George Finger, Steve Glover, Hugh Harvey,
Kevin Hintsa, Eugenia Larson, Marjorie Plant, Bob Richmond,
Jean Richmond, Rich Richmond, and Denise Wight.

The Northern California Bird Box, (510) 524-5592, is a voice-
mail system that allow callers to listen to the most recent 18
messages on sightings of rare birds by local observers. The
system has been revamped so that callers no longer need to
know the number of loon species seen in California.

LAST CHANCE

School has started but it is not too late to sponsor a class with
Audubon Adventures. Audubon Adventures is a bi-monthly
newspaper for third through sixth graders, plus a teacher's guide,
covering different areas of environmental education. If you
would like to participate, please call Beverly Hawley now at
947-0479. The fee is \$35.00 per class.

INTERNATIONAL CORNER

by Jill Hedgecock

BINOCULARS NEEDED!!!!!!!

If you forgot those spare binoculars at the October General Meeting, a second collection will be made at the November General Meeting. The binoculars are a tax-deductible donation to Audubon. If you are not able to bring your binoculars to this meeting either, contact me directly at (510) 256-8270.

PRETTY POLLY BAHAMA STYLE

This spring the Prime Minister of the Bahamas announced the creation of a new national park on Abaco Island. This park will protect much of the remaining habitat of the endangered (a mere 800 individuals) Bahama Parrot. This fascinating species nests in limestone cavities in the ground, making it vulnerable to flooding, predators, and development by the citrus industry. The establishment of the park is a direct result of education campaigns and hard work by a variety of conservation groups to increase public awareness.

CALIFORNIA BIRDS

Their Status and Distribution
by Arnold Small

California Birds contains 586 species accounts and complete information on seasonal status, habitat, range and breeding status. The introductory chapters discuss the landform regions and climate of California as they relate to the ecology and the distribution of the state's birds. Individual species accounts are augmented with 336 full-color photographs of birds and their natural habitats. Hard cover: \$55.00. Available at Wild Birds Unlimited, 720 Contra Costa Blvd., Pleasant Hill, 798-0303.

WORLD OF AUDUBON SPECIAL

National Audubon Society and Turner Broadcasting present "The World of Audubon 10th Anniversary Special." Audubon Productions has made a film about the ten-year partnership with Turner Broadcasting which has created Audubon's most powerful and controversial films of the last decade. Join hosts Lauren Hutton and Richard Dean Anderson for an entertaining, intelligent documentary. The Anniversary Special premieres on the TBS SuperStation, Sunday, November 20, with encores Monday, November 21, Saturday, November 26, and Monday, November 28. Check local listings for times.

DONATIONS TO MDAS

Our society has from time to time received generous bequests, gifts, and donations given in memory of friends or relatives or as spontaneous contributions to the society's activities. These donations are welcomed as a significant support of our goals of wildlife appreciation and conservation.

This month MDAS would like to express its appreciation for a donation from Lawrence Emery of Alamo given in memory of Tom King. Tom King was a long-time Orinda resident, a lover of wildlife, and an artist who painted birds frequently. MDAS would also like to thank Bessie Smyth of Martinez for her gift to the society. The generosity of both these people is very much appreciated.

MDAS also gratefully acknowledges the receipt of a grant for \$500 recently received from Chevron USA for the purchase of a facsimile machine and supplies for our chapter. The Chevron Employee Involvement Fund is the sponsor of this grant. Our thanks for helping MDAS move into the age of automation!

BLUEBIRDS STOP SINGING THE BLUES

The National Audubon Society's Western Region Birds in the Balance Campaign announces the initiation of the California Bluebird Recovery Program. This new program is in response to a request from and follow-up with Don Yoder of Mt. Diablo Audubon Society. Don is on the National Board of Directors of the North American Bluebird Society.

"Many states," says Mr. Yoder, "have active bluebird programs. I have wanted to see an organization step forward to establish a network connecting people who want to promote the welfare of bluebirds in California. National Audubon's positive response is very much appreciated. Now, we can get started."

"To start, we want to hear from anyone who is doing anything with bluebirds in California: what are you doing? where? why? and how?" says Audubon's Bob Barnes. "Then we are going to have a newsletter that shares information on bluebirds. Some information will come from experts, but most will come from our readers. The program will then expand according to interest and resources."

To be a part of, or for more information on, the California Bluebird Recovery Program, write to Coordinator, California Bluebird Recovery Program, Birds in the Balance Campaign, National Audubon Society, 555 Audubon Place, Sacramento, CA 95825, phone (916) 481-5332, or fax (916) 481-6228.

NEW MEMBERS

It is a pleasure to welcome these new MDAS members and we hope to meet them soon: Shakil Ahmed, Henry Alubowicz, Mrs. M. Austin, Jeri Baca, Mark Backlund, M. L. Bandler, D. Benzenhoefer-Tobin, Ruby Bergman, Rose Bonacum, Lloyd Brenneise, K. Burk, Robert Chapla, Raymond Conner, Mr. and Mrs. E. Crawford, Eileen Danielson, Louis Demattei, Marylee Ebnelhart, Mrs. P. Fitzgerald, Richard Ford, Jewel Foster, Mrs. Billie Gilmore, Mr. and Mrs. Chris Gleasman, Anna Godin, Mary T. Goodwin, Jeff D. Guyon, Marianne Hawkins, Ross Hayashida, Sally Hayward, the Hei family, Lynn Henze, Andrea Hushaw, Sarah Josephson, Michael Kamarck, John Knowles, Alice Knudsen, I. Kuehl, Barbara Lapp, George Lim, Don Loux, L. J. Marek, Jean MacKellar, R. Macomber, Jean MacRobbie, Narendra Malani, Sandra Malec, George and Arlene Matson, Vicki McFadin, Pamela McFarlin, Judy Morris, Robert B. Mullen, Jane Nelson, Jim Nordlie, Alex and Mildred Partansky, Barbara Pelletier, Steve Philbin, Mary Powell, Philip Prosser, Gary Rausina, Paul Reiter, Louis Repetto, Geoffrey Rowan, Lynda Rosenblatt, Gladys Ryan, Leanore Sanderson, Mr. and

James E. Scott, Richard H. Scott, J. Stafford, Suzanne Stanke, Alice Stauffer, Sondra Stein, Pat Underhill, Mr. and Mrs. D. Vandillen, Ken Wallace, Rita Wang, Mrs. W. F. Welcome, Joseph Wierzbicki, C. Willis, Mrs. Harry Wilson, Thelma Wheeler, George Wood, Rose Anne Wright, Robert Young, Victor Zeid, and Michael Zinns.

1995 ENTERTAINMENT BOOK

The 1995 Entertainment Book is here! Save 50% on travel, restaurants, theater, retail, service, hotels and motels, and MUCH, MUCH more.

The 1995 Entertainment Book can be used IMMEDIATELY and is available at Wild Birds Unlimited, 720 Contra Costa Blvd., Pleasant Hill, or at the monthly general meetings. Call Barbara Vaughn at 376-8732 for more details.

The Quail is published monthly except for the combined July/August issue. Audubon membership includes subscriptions to the Quail and Audubon magazine. To join (\$35/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 Chairman, Mike Williams, at 1172 Larch Avenue, Moraga, CA 94556. 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 \$10/year. The check should be made out to MDAS and mailed to the MDAS Treasurer, Pam Keiser, 505 Wild Flower Place, Danville, CA 94526. First class mailing of the Quail to member or nonmember is an additional \$3.50/year payable to MDAS & sent to the Treasurer.

ADDRESS CHANGES AND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION: Consult Mike Williams, (510) 376-1631.

*Barbara Burek, Editor, 157 Mt. Kennedy Dr., Martinez, CA 94553 (510) 229-0394
Exchange bulletins for MDAS to Mt. Diablo Audubon Society, P. O. Box 53, Walnut Creek, CA 94597-0053, please.*

Mt. Diablo Audubon Society
P.O. Box 53
Walnut Creek, CA 94597-0053

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The QUAIL

BULLETIN OF THE MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 53

WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA 94597-0053

(510) AUD-UBON

President: Jim Lomax, 825-1513

VP Conservation: Al McNabney, 945-1785

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Hospitality: Gloria Lotten, 866-1619

Education: Beverly Hawley, 947-0479

Secretary: Sheree Lomax, 825-1513

December 1994

Vol. 41 No. 4

Next Deadline: December 8

December Program:

Trinidad and Tobago

For our **December 1** General Meeting, Jimm Edgar will give a presentation on Trinidad and Tobago. These islands just seven miles off the coast of South America offer a multiplicity of habitats that result in an unusually diverse fauna and flora. Trinidad is roughly 50 miles by 30 miles in size yet has well over 400 species of birds, including honeycreepers, motmots, Scarlet Ibis, tropicbirds, and many, many more. The Asa Wright Nature Center, at 1200' in the 3000' northern coastal range of Trinidad, offers a wonderful base of operations. A special attraction is the nearby breeding colony of the nocturnal Oilbird in Dunston Cave.

Jimm Edgar is a longtime MDAS member and a past president. Jimm is also Associate Regional Director for Young Life in the San Francisco Bay Region. He is currently our Christmas Count chair and leads many field trips.

For the December Bird Information, Jimm will talk about the upcoming **1995 Christmas Bird Count**. Further information is also given on page 5.

The next board meeting will be Thursday, December 8, at 7:30 p.m., at the home of Pam Keiser, 505 Wild Flower Place, Danville, 838-8840. Board meetings are open to all interested members.

General meetings of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society are held on the first Thursday of every month from September through June. Our meeting place is the Pleasant Hill Senior Center, 233 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill. The meeting times are as follows:

6:30 Doors open
7:00 Birding Information
7:30 Business Meeting
8:00 Social Time
8:30 Program

Weekend Birding Breaks. Our short, local field trip this month will be a survey of the Contra Costa Canal starting at 8:30 a.m. on Sunday, December 11. Members new to our area and beginning birders are encouraged to join us for these weekend get-aways. Call trip leader Barbara Vaughn, 376-8732, for the meeting location.

Library Display. MDAS will have a display on "Colorful and Exotic Looking Birds Seen in Contra Costa County," arranged by Shirley Ellis, during the month of December at Contra Costa County Library on Oak Park Blvd. in Pleasant Hill.

Happy Holidays to All!

CONSERVATION NOTES

by Al McNabney

WHAT DO WE DO NOW?????????

By the time you read this, the 1994 election will be over. [Editor's Note: This column was written before the November 8 election.] That fact does NOT mean we have concluded the environmental battles (if that is the correct terminology). In fact, many environmental issues are and will become more and more pressing. Solutions will be more difficult to find. There will be more controversy as the population increases. Human impacts on our environment are a very important element of our world. There's no doubt money, directed at specific issues, can greatly influence legal outcomes. At the same time, the legal outcome may prove disastrous from an environmental viewpoint. Audubon members' interest in birds and wildlife produces informed, knowledgeable people. Birding (or if you happen to be in England, "twitching") is a wonderful hobby, interest, pastime, occupation (you pick the term). We should encourage more people to become involved. We should also encourage environmental education. We should encourage some degree of "reason" in finding solutions to environmental issues. At the same time, "reason" MUST give great priority to environmental NEEDS. Remember the oft quoted comment "Extinction is forever." Those of us who believe that our very complex mix of creatures, plants, air, water (you think of the rest) is tied together environmentally feel extinction of a single creature will eventually have an adverse impact on something else. Decision-makers, new or previously elected or appointed, MUST be contacted. The environmental message MUST be delivered and understood. The issue is NOT just pro-growth or anti-growth. The issue is not even whether the Dougherty Valley project will get water. The issue is how do we make realistic, effective use of finite, limited resources. The effort is one requiring support, thought, and, to some degree, action from every interested individual.

EBMUD: BIODIVERSITY WHAT'S NEEDED

Three years ago the Board of Directors of East Bay Municipal Utility District authorized a massive review of ALL existing and possible uses of the "watershed." The Eastbay Watershed Master Plan Committee, on which Audubon is represented, now has seen modern technology produce complicated maps on a movie screen. Hills, trees, particular types of ground cover were depicted in color. "Want to know if a particular species of bird exists anywhere in the watershed?" The answer is but a second away. A spot on this screen shows where a particular species of heron can be found. Bald and Golden Eagle sites can be spotted. The use of this type of information can be a major assist in dealing with environmental issues. A complete view of the biodiversity of the EBMUD Watershed is now but a computer key click away.

TAXES – OUCH, BUT READ ON

No, we're not urging any change in tax rates. The only reason we even mention the word involves saving California's Native Wildlife and Habitat. So what in heck are we talking about? We're talking about Bald Eagles, Fresno Kangaroo Rats, and California Condors, as well as the populations of Least Terns, Belding's Savannah Sparrows, and California and Light-footed Clapper Rails. We're talking about non-avian species including the Santa Cruz Long-toed Salamander, Black Toads, and Large-flowered Fiddlenecks and five state-listed plants, Stebbin's Morning Glory, Pine Hill Ceanothus, Pine Hill Flannelbush, El Dorado Bedstraw, and Layne's Butterweed. Some of these species are rebounding. The improvement in numbers is due at least in part to the donations given through Line 50 on the California income tax forms. When you complete your tax form, find Line 50. There's a little space. Fill it in. Specify whatever contribution you feel you can afford. The sum you give, whether small or large, will help save rare and endangered species in California.

"TAKING" AN ISSUE OF THE DAY

Newspaper columnists, political pundits, radio talk show hosts, and others who probably should know better talk about the U. S. Constitution, private property, etc. Issues have been raised in the just-concluded session of the Congress about "takings" and a recent Oregon case brought a U. S. Supreme Court decision. The city of Target, Oregon, made a decision which required, as a condition, that a developer deed 10% of the land involved to the city for construction of a drainage ditch, etc. Some argue that the court's decision provides a basis for enactment of laws which would force taxpayers to pay property owners for the enforcement of laws that prevent harm to the neighboring properties. NOT SO! So states at least one knowledgeable attorney who recently wrote, "The Supreme Court decision clearly rejects the main premise behind most 'takings' bills, i. e., businesses have a right to the absolute maximum profit from their property, even at the expense of their neighbors." While this should (probably) be the last word on the issue, I doubt it will be.

MONO LAKE

This environmental WIN is so important we just can't let it rest. Always remember, Mono Lake can't vote. The birds that nest and live there can't vote either. The L. A. Municipal Power District is big, well-financed, and determined. A few DETERMINED individuals believed it would be possible to "take on" the Mono Lake battle and WIN. Audubon people, convinced Mono Lake was important, joined with others. The result is now history. Mono Lake has been saved. 'Nuff said.

FIELD TRIPS

Trips are open to members and nonmembers alike. Carpool time is departure time. Carpool expense: 10 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

NOTE: Information on the December Weekend **Birding Break** is given on page 1.

Saturday and Sunday, December 3 - 4, **Sacramento Valley Refuges**. Saturday, Gray Lodge, 9:00 a.m. There is a \$5.00 entrance fee. Meet at the first parking lot beyond Headquarters. Sunday, Sacramento NWR, 10:00 a.m. Meet in the parking lot at visitor's center. To get to Gray Lodge, take I-80 to SR 113. At Tudor, take US 99 north to Pennington Rd. and follow Pennington Rd. to refuge entrance. There are several turns and the road eventually runs north. For the Sacramento Refuge, leave I-5 at the Norman exit and go north on frontage road.
Leaders. Steve Glover, 846-7382 Category 1

Wednesday, December 7, **Altamont**. Carpool 7:30 a.m. at El Cerro Blvd., Danville, west of I-680. A caravan trip, with mostly car birding. Migratory hawks, Mountain Bluebirds, and grassland species
Leader. Jim Lomax, 825-1513 Category 1

Thursday, December 15, **Niles Canyon Gravel Pits**. Carpool 8.00 a.m., El Cerro Blvd., Danville, west of I-680. Meet at 8:45 a.m. at Vallejo Mill Historical Park in Fremont. Take I-680 south through Dublin to SR 84; go west 7 miles to park entrance on left. Varied habitats; Green-backed Heron, Ring-necked Duck, Spotted Sandpiper, often many land birds.
Leader: Jimm Edgar, 658-2330 Category 2

Saturday, December 31, **Palo Alto Baylands**. Carpool 7:00 a.m. at El Cerro Blvd., just west of I-680. Meet at 8:30 a.m. in the parking lot near Nature Center at Baylands. Take the Dunbarton Bridge to US 101 south. 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 mud, cool breezes. There is a lot of waiting for the rails.
Leader: Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486 Category 1

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

OUTER POINT REYES, October 1.

Twelve birders spent a foggy day with somewhat slow birding. A life bird for many of us was a White-winged Dove at the Hall Ranch. We watched a Barn Owl at the Willows for some time. There was much discussion by several birding groups over what may have been a Common Tern at the Fish Docks. 57 species.
Pat MacEachern

BODEGA BAY, October 12

Fifteen birders enjoyed a midweek trip to Bodega Bay. The sky was sunny and clear - a beautiful day except for - oh, yes - the wind! The accomplishment of the day was standing upright on the bluff overlooking the ocean at Bodega Head. We spent more time in sheltered areas such as the path into Bodega Dunes Campground. Seen or heard - 64 species.
Shirley Ellis

ABBOTT'S LAGOON, October 22

Beautiful fall weather greeted the seven members who walked the Earthquake Trail at the Olema Visitor Center. A Peregrine Falcon was seen harassing a White-tailed Kite overhead, while Varied Thrushes and other birds were spotted closer to ground level. At Abbott's Lagoon, a Palm Warbler was seen shortly after we left the parking lot. Many ducks were seen on the first lagoon, including dozens of Ring-necked Ducks and a Blue-winged Teal. On the way back home, we made an unsuccessful attempt to spot an Oldsquaw off the end of Marina Bay Parkway in Richmond. Altogether 80 species were seen or heard.
Hugh Harvey

SAN MATEO COAST, October 27.

Foggy conditions along the Pescadero coast made searching for shorebirds challenging and seabirds fade in and out of view like ghostly apparitions. A pair of Peregrine Falcons was seen briefly at Año Nuevo. After lunch, the drive along Gazos Creek Road was sunny and hot but produced only a few more birds. Twelve birders counted 85 species.
Denise Wight

OCEANIC CREW GROUP

On Saturday, January 28, 1995, the San Francisco Bay Oceanic Crew Group will hold its fifth annual Audubon Sail. Audubon members are invited to spend the day sailing and birding. Boats sail in different parts of the Bay trying to identify as many bird species as possible and usually anchor in a cove for a pot-luck lunch. Space on the boats will be available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Reservations are to be made by mail only. Send your name, address, and telephone number by January 1 to Richard Bielat, Service Sail Coordinator, 115 Hobart Avenue, Apartment E, San Mateo, CA 94402-2846. Call the Group hotline with questions at (415) 349-3826 and leave a message.

OBSERVATIONS

by Steve Glover

Please send observations to Steve Glover,

3986 Stoneridge, #2, Pleasanton, CA 94566, or call 846-7382
Please include your telephone number with your observations.

Northern Fulmar: 1 on 11/1 flying past Drake's Beach, Pt Reyes (JR), 1 on 10/24 at the Pt Reyes Fish Docks (FB, BG, MJC).

Ashy Storm-Petrel: 1 Ashy and 1 probable Ashy on 10/8 and 1 Ashy on 10/18 at Hayward Regional Shoreline. (BR)

Brown Pelican: 125 on 10/14 on the breakwater seen from the end of Sandpiper Spit, Pt. Richmond. (SG)

Pelagic Cormorant: 1 on 10/28 at Hayward RS. (BR)

American Bittern: 2 on 10/24 flying over Piper Slough on Bethel Island. (GF, MP)

Snow Goose: 1 on 10/18, 10/21, and 10/26 at Miller-Knox Regional Shoreline, Pt. Richmond. (SG)

Redhead: 2 males, 1 female on 10/18 at Pt. Isabel Regional Shoreline, Richmond (SG); 8 on 10/19 at Hayward RS. (BR)

Harlequin Duck: a pair on 10/21 seen from Marina Bay Pkwy. near Brooks Island, Richmond. (SG); 1 male on 10/31 (FB, MJC) and 11/1 (JR) at the Fish Docks.

Oldsquaw: 1 bird on 10/21 (SG), 10/25 (FB, HH, MJC), and 10/26 (SG) at the end of Marina Bay Pkwy.

Black Scoter: 2 females on 10/14 at the end of Marina Bay Pkwy. (SG); 1 male on 10/16 at Hayward RS. (BR).

Surf Scoter: 1 female on 10/28 at Clifton Court Forebay. (SG) Rare inland

Osprey. 1 on 11/6 near intersection of I-580 and Santa Rita Rd., Pleasanton. (SG)

Merlin: 1 bird of the black race *suckleyi* on 10/30 at Hayward RS. (BR) Normally resident in the coastal forests of British Columbia and southeastern Alaska.

Peregrine Falcon: 1 on 10/21 and 10/26 at Pt. Isabel. (SG)

Black Oystercatcher. on 10/18, 1 flying into Alameda Co. from Brooks Island and 3 at the East Brothers Lighthouse, Richmond (SG), 1 on 10/26 at Pt. Isabel (SG).

Whimbrel: 1 on 10/28 with 6 Marbled Godwits at Clifton Court Forebay. (SG)

Pomarine Jaeger: 1 adult on 10/11 at Hayward RS. (BR)

Parasitic Jaeger: 1 juvenile bird on 10/8, 10/20, 10/22, 10/23, 10/25, and 10/28 at Hayward RS. (BR)

Common Murre: 1 on 10/8, 3 on 10/25, and 1 on 11/3 at Hayward RS. (SG) Rare in the Bay, particularly this far south.

Ancient Murrelet 1 on 10/18 at Hayward RS. (BR)

Burrowing Owl: 1 on 10/25 at Arrowhead Marsh. Martin Luther King, Jr., Regional Shoreline. (JR)

Vaux's Swift 2 on 10/19 over her Alamo home. (JR)

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: 1 on 10/28 at Ed Levin County Park near Milpitas (GF, KH)

Tropical Kingbird: 1 on 11/1 at San Francisco Aquatic Park. (HH)

Rock Wren. 1 on 10/26 at Pt. Molate (SG), 1 on 10/28 at Clifton Court Forebay (SG). Obvious migrants are rare in the East Bay.

Sedge Wren: a bird thought to be this species on 10/16 and 10/17 at Hayward RS. (BR) The sighting has been submitted to the California Bird Records Committee. If it is approved, it represents the fifth state record.

Magnolia Warbler: 1 on 10/10 at Bodega Bay (GF, MP); 1 on 10/11 at the Fish Docks (EL, FB, BG, HH).

Clay-colored Sparrow: 1 on 10/14 and 10/18 at Miller-Knox RS. (SG) This is a different bird than the one reported two weeks earlier, so it is the second county record.

Swamp Sparrow: 1 on 10/14 (SG), 10/15 (GF, JR, MP), and 10/26 (SG) at Miller-Knox RS. Fourth county record.

White-throated Sparrow: 1 "tan" bird in her Alamo yard from 10/16 to 10/26 (JR); 1 from 10/25 through at least 11/10 ("Observations" submissions deadline) in her Concord yard (MJC).

Lapland Longspur 1 on 10/11 at Pigeon Point, San Mateo Co. (JR); 1 on 10/23 near the MCI Station at Pt Reyes (GF).

Rusty Blackbird: 1 on 10/23 (GF) and 11/1 (JR) at the Spaletta Ranch, Pt. Reyes

Red Crossbill: 10 on 10/21 at Redwood Regional Park (SG) Just barely in Contra Costa County.

Observers: Florence Bennett, Mary Jane Culver, George Finger, Betty Gallagher, Steve Glover, Hugh Harvey, Kevin Hints, Eugenia Larson, Marjorie Plant, Bob Richmond, and Jean Richmond.

The Northern California Bird Box, (510) 524-5592, is a voice-mail system that allow callers to listen to the most recent 18 messages on sightings of rare birds by local observers. The system has been revamped so that callers no longer need to know the number of loon species seen in California.

DONATIONS TO MDAS

Our society has from time to time received generous bequests, gifts, and donations given in memory of friends or relatives or as spontaneous contributions to the society's activities. These donations are welcomed as a significant support of our goals of wildlife appreciation and conservation.

This month MDAS would like to express its appreciation for the following donations. Robert Barnes, our September General Meeting speaker, contributed his honorarium to our Birds in the Balance program. Jim Lomax, our October General Meeting speaker, has contributed his honorarium to our Endowment Fund. Seagram & Sons sent a corporate matching contribution on behalf of Theodore Plant. Mrs. F. Alan (Frances) Campbell of Walnut Creek gave a donation in memory of Thomas J. Cox of Walnut Creek, a recent MDAS member who passed away suddenly. Their generosity is very much appreciated.

NEWS FROM WILD BIRDS

720 Contra Costa Blvd., Pleasant Hill, CA 94523
798-0303

Put nature under your tree!

Special holiday gift ideas for Bird Lovers:

- Arnold Small's new book *California Birds*
- Field guides for your next birding vacation
- A wide variety of nature jewelry
- Many new and different T-shirts and sweatshirts with a nature theme. Be sure and see our new Bald Eagle sweatshirt designed by Cecil
- Nature music on cassettes and CDs
- Holiday ornaments for your trees
- Peanut and suet feeders for your chickadees and woodpeckers
- A new thistle feeder for your Pine Siskins and American Goldfinch
- New WBU-Celestron 8x24 compact binoculars with BAK 4 prisms

Binocular and Spotting Scope Seminar Saturday, December 10

Van Gilbert, certified optics expert, will give a 30 minute lecture on "How to Buy Birding Optics" on Saturday, December 10, at 9:30 a.m. The presentation will be held at Cafe Milano, next door to Wild Birds Unlimited. There will be many brands of binoculars and spotting scopes on display. Van will also be in the store all day to answer questions. Coffee and donuts will be served. As seating is limited, please RSVP to 798-0303.

Birdfeeding Tip: If it's almost winter, it must be time for Pine Siskins or American Goldfinch. Last winter we enjoyed large numbers of beautiful American Goldfinch. The winter before that we had huge numbers of Pine Siskins with a few American Goldfinch. So far this year we are seeing mixed flocks of 25+ of both of these birds.

Their favorite food is thistle seed, a small seed that comes from India and will not grow here. These birds will be with us through the spring. Put out a thistle feeder now and enjoy this winter phenomena

Happy birding!

95th CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

The 1994 MDAS Christmas Bird Count will be on Saturday, December 17. 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 78 field observers and 6 feeder watchers who tallied 156 species which included a Common Poorwill, never before seen on our count but long anticipated. 33,168 individual birds were counted during the day.

Nationally, there are about 1600 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 Alamo, Lafayette, and Walnut Creek, 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. The doors will be open at 5:30 p.m. and the dinner will start at 6:00 p.m. Please bring your own table service and a salad, main dish, or dessert for 8 to 10 people, plus any serving utensils needed.

Jimm Edgar is this year's compiler. To participate, please sign up at the December meeting, call Jimm at 658-2330, or return this form to Jimm at 4614 Jacobus Ave., Oakland, CA 94618. The cost is \$5.00 to cover the expense of publishing the annual Christmas Count issue of *American Birds*. Feeder watchers have no charge.

_____ I would prefer to bird with one of the field groups on Christmas Bird Count Day, December 19, 1992.

_____ I would prefer a hiking area.

_____ I would prefer a less strenuous area.

_____ I can monitor a feeder or garden.

Name: _____

Telephone: _____

Address: _____

NEW MEMBERS

Season's greetings to these new MDAS members whom we hope to meet in person very soon. Glenn Adkins, Sr, Robert Alward, Edward Ball, Sandra Bates, Nancy Biris, Kevin Black, C Brahney, Gretchen Catterall, Peter, Judi, Ian, and Acacia Clark, Mr. and Mrs. W. L. Desmond, Thomas Deuriarte, James Ellis, Joanne Gabel, Robert Glenfield, G. Griffin, Harold J Grove, M. J. Higuera, Helen Hubbard, Lorae Hudson, Ross Hunsinger, Rose Ishler, Stoney Jackson, Jeanette Jennings, Gerhard Konrad, Edith Lazarus, Richard Lisa, James Mahar, Lynn Mallery, Sherrill Mar, Emma Martino, John Mason, J. McCarthy, Michael Moreland, Marylou Mull, Kat Nab, Paul Newman, June Nye, Colleen Ozard, Peter Rdzinski, Rosalind Rose, James Rovere, Rachel Sakalay, Stephanie Sales, Mildred Salmon, Jim Swanson, Sue Symmons, Sandee Tharp, Mary Lou Till, Dee L Tilson, Laura Tow, Peter and Dolores White, Colette White, Patricia Wilson, Sharon Wing, and Kimm Wong.

HOLIDAY GIVING

Last chance for the easiest gift to give and the most fun gift to receive on your Christmas list!

THE 1995 ENTERTAINMENT BOOK

Enjoy the 50% on travel, restaurants, theater, retail, service, hotels and motels, and MUCH, MUCH more.

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Barbara Burek, Editor, 157 Mt Kennedy Dr, Martinez, CA 94553 (510) 229-0394
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Mt. Diablo Audubon Society
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Walnut Creek, CA 94597-0053



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