



## The Avocet

TIME VALUE

ALAN EISNER  
3538 FARM HILL BLVD APT 4  
REDWOOD CITY CA 94061

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### FIELD NOTES

By the end of April our resident birds have returned and are nesting. However, species nesting in northerly areas are still passing through. Dick Mewaldt has kindly given me summaries of the banding transecs made on the Wool Ranch in the early 1970's and these show the peak migration period for the rarer species such as willow flycatcher and MacGillivrey's warbler to be the first two weeks in May. Now is a good time to head for Grant Park and watch for rare migrants.

A Green Heron was at Vasona Res. Feb. to mid-March (Margaret Estep), and another was seen along Coyote Creek 21 Mar. (Terry Hart). Two pairs of Wood Ducks were at Chesbro Res. 14 Mar. where they nest, but the 57 counted on Montebello Ridge 27 Mar. were undoubtedly a late winter concentration. Four Redheads were on Charleston Slough 17 Mar., the last of the winter's flock. An Osprey was seen along Los Gatos Creek n. of the percolation ponds, 28 Mar. (Kevin H.C. Monahan). Rough-legged Hawks were seen on two SCVAS trips with one seen on the Half Moon Bay trip, and 2 on the Clifton Court Forebay trip. The latter trip had 5 Ferruginous Hawks as well (fide Dave Houle). A first year Glaucous Gull was seen at the Mountain View dump by Dave Houle (DH) 7 Mar. An early Caspian Tern arrival was 23 Mar. at Coyote Hills Rd. (DH). Two Short-eared Owls were along Charleston Slough 17 Mar., they have been scarcer this winter. DH estimated 50-100 birds/hour of Selasphorus hummingbirds migrating on Montebello Ridge, 5 Apr. Two males identified were Rufous Hummingbirds. A Rough-winged Swallow along Coyote Creek 22 Mar. (DH) was an early arrival. Winter Wrens were singing in Blackhawk Canyon, Mt. Madonna CP 14 Mar. Two Canyon Wrens were also singing in Alum Rock Park 23 Mar. (DH). Blue-grey Gnatcatchers had returned to Stevens Creek CP 4 Apr. (DH). Five Golden-crowned Kinglets were at Mt. Madonna CP on 14 Mar. A Solitary Vireo had returned to Stevens Creek CP as of 3 Apr. (DH). This is one of the better places to find this species, also the gnatcatchers. Black-throated Grey Warblers returned to Montebello Ridge 5 Apr. (DH) where they apparently nest in the golden cup oaks. A Wilson's Warbler at Alum Rock Park 23 Mar. was early (DH), as was a Western Tanager at Stevens Creek CP 3 Apr. (DH). A female Black-headed Grosbeck at the Liscovec's in Los Altos since 17 Mar. is very early. Lawrence's Goldfinches were reported from the SCVAS Half Moon Bay trip, and one was on Montebello Ridge 5 Apr. (DH).

If you see an "uncommon to rare" please drop me a note or call: Bill Bousman, 321 Arlington Way, Menlo Park, CA 94025 (322-5282)

### FIELD NOTES FROM JAPAN

The last five Japanese crested ibises in the wild were netted this winter and brought to an enclosure where an attempt will be made to breed them. The story has striking parallels to the captive breeding program for the California condor.



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NOTE: On all field trips, CARPPOOL, share expenses, and get to know other birders. To arrange rides call Dolores Norton (941-1666, Los Altos) or Manette Wittgenstein (354-9420, Saratoga).

- May 2-3---Field Trip, Sat. and Sun., Pinnacles National Monument. Meet at 9 AM Sat. at Pinnacles Campground, 2 miles east of Monument. Take 101 south to Hwy.25, 25 south through Hollister 30 miles to Hwy.146 (Pinnacles Hwy.). Campground is on the left on 146. Motels in Hollister. Camping on the first-come, first-served bases. Looking for such birds as Poorwills, Prairie Falcons, Phainopeplas, and Black-chinned Hummingbirds. Leaders: Rich Carlson (494-3160) and David Houle.
- May 2---Field Trip, Sat., 8:30 AM, Castle Rock State Park. Many mountain species breed in the area, including Mountain Quail, Black-throated Grey Warblers, Audubon's Warblers and Black-chinned Sparrows. Meet at Castle Rock parking lot 2 1/2 miles so. of Hwy.9, and 3 mi. no. of Black Rd. on Skyline Blvd. (hwy.35). Leader: Phil Hand (851-2623).
- May 5---SCVAS Board Meeting, 7:30 PM, home of Elaine Gould, 6209 Flowering Plum Rd., San Jose (267-8154)
- May 9---Field Trip, Sat., 8:30 AM, Mines Rd. and Del Puerto Canyon. A great area for Lewis' Woodpecker, Phainopepla, Lawrence's Goldfinch, and Lazuli Bunting. Chance for Roadrunner and Costa's Hummingbird. Take Hwy.680 No. to 580, 580 east to Livermore Ave., so. on Livermore through town. 2 mi. from the flagpole in the center of Livermore, Livermore Ave. becomes Tesla Rd. In another 1/2 mi. it intersects Mines Rd. Meet at Mines Rd. and Tesla. Due to limited pulloff space, carpooling is essential. Call leaders to arrange rides. All day trip. Limited facilities on rte. Bring lunch, liquids, gas. You may wish to camp at Caswell St. Pk. for May 10 trip there. Leaders: Ted Chandik (493-5330) and Don Schmoltdt (251-6133).
- May 9---Boat Trip, Sat., 7:45 AM-3 PM, Monterey Bay Pelagic Excursion. \$21 per person. Trips leave from Sam's Fishing on Fisherman's Wharf in Monterey. Many birds in breeding plumage. Reserve with check payable to Debi Millichap, 362 Lee St., Santa Cruz, CA 95060. Send stamped, self-addressed envelope for confirmation. For more information call Debi (425-8111)
- May 10---Field Trip, Sun., 8 AM, Caswell Memorial State Park. This park on the Stanislaus River offers a slice of the riparian habitat that once dominated the Central Valley. Migrant warblers and vireos, nesting residents, Swainson's Hawk a possibility. Meet at the display shelter at end of road past picnic area. Park is south of Manteca, west of Ripon; get map or call leader for directions. Driving time 1 1/2 hrs. from Palo Alto. Those taking the Mines Rd./Del Puerto Canyon trip may wish to camp here. Camping is first-come, first-served. Leader: Pete LaTourrette (961-2741, after May 6).
- May 12---Bird Discussion Group, Tues., 9:30 AM, at home of Eve Case, 20537 Verde Vista Lane, Saratoga. Topic: Towhees.
- May 13---Field Trip South, Wed., 9 AM, Castle Rock State Park. A leisurely walk to look for nesting birds and wildflowers. Meet in parking lot at Castle Rock located on Skyline Blvd. about 2 miles south of Saratoga Gap on right. Leader: Juliette Wheeler (867-9597)
- May 17---Bus Trip, Sun. 7 AM, Audubon Canyon Ranch and Point Reyes Bird Observatory. We have chartered a bus to take us to Bolinas to visit two of the most fascinating institutions going. At Point Reyes Bird Observatory, former SCVASer Bob Yutzy and other staff members will give a presentation on bird banding; at Audubon Canyon Ranch we can watch herons and egrets at their nests. Lots of other birds in between. We plan to work in small groups to accommodate families, beginners, and more experienced birders. It should be a fantastic day! \$10 for adults, \$5 for children 14 and under. To reserve places, send check made out to Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society to David Houle, 836 Colorado Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94303. Instructions to the meeting places in San Jose and Palo Alto will be sent on receipt of reservations. Leaders: David Houle (856-1069), Allen Royer (251-6133), Marilyn and Russel Fowler (356-7758).

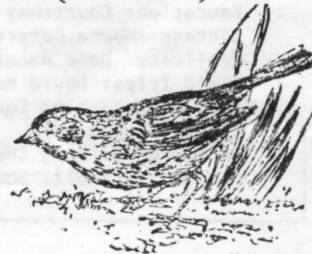


American Tree-sparrow

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- May 20---General Meeting, Wed., 7:30 PM, Palo Alto Baylands Interpretative Center. Local wild-flowers -- Where to find them and how to identify them. Right in our big back yard, provided by the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, are all the wild-flowers a person can assimilate in a long, long time. Charlotte MacDonald of MROSD will present a slide show of flowers on MROSD property -- flowers that all of us can see near to home. It's a double-feature show, with a general section plus a Dewitt Jones special feature of Windy Hill. For wild-flower lovers, hikers, and people who want to learn more about the subject, this is a don't-miss-it program. Bring a friend. PLUS annual election of directors.
- May 22---Bird Discussion Group, Fri., 9 AM, Stevens Creek. Meet at Eleanor Niemczura's, 1390 McKenzie Ave., Los Altos (968-9073)
- May 27---Field Trip North, Wed., 8:30 AM, the Page Mill Road area of Black Mountain. Meet in the parking lot of the Los Trancos Open Space Preserve, about 7 miles up (south) on Page Mill Road from its intersection with Rt.280. Those interested in carpooling, meet at 8:00 AM at the Commuters' Parking Lot on the southeast corner of the Page Mill Rd.-Arastradero Rd. intersection. Possible Black-throated Gray Warblers. Leader: Phil Hand (851-2623)
- May 30---Field Trip, Sat., 8 AM, rarer breeding birds of Santa Cruz Mountains. North to south trip along Santa Cruz Mtns. Mix of walking and driving. Meet in Los Trancos Open Space parking lot near top of Page Mill Rd., Palo Alto. We will end(?) near Loma Prieta. Hope to find Black-throated Grey and MacGillivray's Warblers, and Black-chinned and Chipping Sparrows. Carpooling very desirable, call leader: Bill Bousman (322-5282)
- May 30---Birdwalk for Beginners, Sat., 9 AM, Rancho San Antonio. Looking for nesting birds. From Hwy.280 in Cupertino take Foothill Blvd. so. to Cristo Rey. Turn right on Cristo Rey and follow it to last parking area. Leader: Pete LaTourrette (961-2741).
- May 31---Bird Count, Sun., Palo Alto Christmas-in-May Breeding Bird Count. Thanks to Christmas counts we know more about our wintering birds than we do about breeding birds. Now, using Christmas count procedures we will cover the Palo Alto count circle at the height of the breeding season. The circle includes many fine birding areas, including PA Baylands, Foothills Park, Searsville Lake, and Black Mountain. Call early to bird your favorite area. Everyone can participate, experts, beginners, and backyard birders. You need not commit yourself to going all day. Birding a few hours in the early morning is very productive. Afterwards, join us for dinner, swimming, and a countdown at a home in Palo Alto. For more information, to sign up call David Houle (856-1069).
- June 6---Owl Trip, Sat. Mt. Madonna County Park. We will call for Screech, Pygmy, and Great Horned Owls. Call leader for reservations. Trip will be limited -- call early. David Moore (293-7124).
- June 7---Field Trip, Sun., 8 AM, Saratoga Gap -- Toll Road Trail. Meet at Saratoga Gap, the intersection of Hwy.9 and Skyline Blvd. (Hwy.35), where there is parking on the southeast corner. From there we will hike down the Toll Road Trail and back up the Skyline-to-the-Sea Trail, about 8 miles. We can set up a car shuttle at the bottom (about 4 miles hike) for those who would rather not go the entire distance. Bring lunch, liquid, and something to put them in. Birds? You bet. Leader: Mike Newcomer (736-4176).
- June 14---Field Trip, Sun., Montebello Ridge. Leader: Mike Rigney (867-7459).
- June 13---Boat Trip, Sat., 7:45 AM-3 PM, Monterey Bay Pelagic Excursion. See May 9 trip for details.
- June 19-21---Field Trip, Fri-Sun., Robinson Flat, Sierra Nevada. Details in June AVOCET. Leaders: Ted Chandik (493-5330) and David Houle (856-1059)

Vesper Sparrow



SCVAS WILL ELECT THREE NEW DIRECTORS AT THE GENERAL MEETING ON MAY 20. COME AND EXERCISE YOUR PRIVILEGE TO VOTE. Candidates are:

MARY E. HALLESY: Advisor, Environmental Volunteers; Education advisor, new Coyote Point Museum; Chairman, LeConte Memorial Committee (Sierra Club); Education Chairman, Loma Prieta Chapter and Northern California Conservation Committee; 11 years with Hidden Villa Environmental Project; past member, Peninsula Conservation Board; co-author, "Manure to Meadow to Milkshake"; teacher.

CANDACE LINDSAY BEACH: Curator, Youth Science Institute museum; candidate for M.S., San Jose State; previously park ranger at Sequoia N.P.; Field trip leader for SCVAS and Golden Gate A.S.

COURTENAY R. DAWSON: Manager, Naturalist Bookstore, Menlo Park; Docent, Nature Explorations Program; Work with various conservation groups included endangered species programs for Peninsula Conservation Center, education programs at Humboldt State and San Jose State Environmental Information Center; Education Project at Hillen Villa.

JOE WISSEL: Member, SCVAS Board in 50's; long-time birder; Participant, Christmas bird counts and Fish & Game survey of South Bay; Psychologist, Human Factors Dept., Lockheed.

CONSERVATION ISSUES GETTING HOT! TO BE THOUGHT ABOUT, DISCUSSED, AND YOUR OPINIONS MADE KNOWN.....

**WATER DOES RUN UPHILL!** This was part of the message at the Bay Area Audubon Council meeting April 4 at Tiburon, which Florence LaRiviere and Phyllis Swanson attended. The subject: THE PERIPHERAL CANAL. The explanation: the pumps at Tracy are so strong that 5 million feet of water going south each year is degrading the Delta, confusing the fish and causing the water to run uphill. And the remedy proposed is a bigger canal. Theodore Wellman, President of the Marin Conservation League, gave eight good reasons to defeat the proposition when it comes up for vote. More later. Or call Mrs. LaRiviere (493-5540).

**OIL WELL DEVELOPMENT OFFSHORE CENTRAL CALIFORNIA.** This will probably be the subject of the next Bay Area Audubon Council Meeting - which SCVAS will host.

**GILL-MUSTAG** addition to Henry Coe State Park. The ranch straddles the Santa Clara and Stanislaus counties line.

**YOU ARE INVITED** to hear Wallace Stegner (free) speak on wilderness at the Palo Alto Cultural Center, 1313 Newell Road, Palo Alto, May 6 at 8 P.M. Sponsored by the Sierra Club.

**IF YOU HAD RATHER WORK**, and pay for the fun of it, Richard C. Taylor (Box 122, Portal, Ariz. 85632) is looking for assistance on his trogon study, late May and early June. Sessions run five days and cost \$100.

The MONO LAKE FUND reached \$4739.50 this month thanks to contributions from: Vera Kosanke, Will & Julie Heslin, Carol Hamilton, Peter & Jean Bradshaw, Thomas & Dorothy Taylor, Charles & Ruth Chapman, Jeremy Platt, and Erna Coker.

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SCVAS now counts over 3100 members!

SEND ALL MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS AND CHANGES OF ADDRESS TO:  
Kristi Wiley, 1200 Woodland Ave., Menlo Park, CA 94025