

SANTA CLARA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY
Chapter 0515 of the National Audubon Society
2253 Park Boulevard, Palo Alto, CA 94306
Telephone: (415) 329-1811

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TIME VALUE



The Avocet

MR ALAN M HISNIE
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REDWOOD CITY, CA 94061

2020

Volume 29, Number 9

November 1982

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Please call Manette Wittgenstein, 354-9420, and Dolores Norton, 941-1666, or if no answer, call the leader *if you can give a ride* or if you want a ride.

- Oct. 29 **Slides and Lecture**, Ian Strange, naturalist from the Falkland Islands, Friday, 7:30 p.m. Lucy Evans Baylands Interpretive Center, Palo Alto. Sponsored by City of Palo Alto.
- Oct. 30,31 **First Annual Nuts to You**, Saturday and Sunday, 9:30 a.m. - 4 p.m., picking and hulling walnuts to benefit Mono Lake. Wear work clothes and comfortable shoes. Bring gloves, brown bag lunch and cup. Coffee and tea provided. Swimming at end of day. 25600 Fernhill Drive, Los Altos Hills.
- Nov. 3 **Special South County General Meeting**, Wednesday, 7:30 p.m. at the Saratoga Community Library Meeting Room on the south-west corner of Fruitvale and Saratoga Avenue. "Wildlife and Habitats of Australia" presented by Doug Cheeseman. The Cheeseman's Australian safari this summer will be led by Australian naturalists and birders. The slides for this program are on loan from two of the leaders from Australia. The talk will emphasize nesting birds, the diversity of avian adaptations there, and even marine birds. The itinerary to Australia includes a pelagic trip led by Alan Rogers from the famous Sydney harbor to the Continental Shelf 18 miles out. Off Australia, tubenoses are a specialty, including prions, pretrels, giant petrel, storm-petrels, shearwaters, and albatrosses. The slide program will also include marine species from the Great Barrier Reef.

Field trip coordinator for November - Phil Hand 415/851-2623.

- Nov. 6 **Mount Madonna Owling**, Saturday, 6:30 p.m. Outing will last approximately 4 hours. Bring warm clothing. Call for details. Leader: David Moore (408) 293-7124.
- Nov. 7 **Pelagic Trip** (Shearwater Journeys), Sunday, 7:00 a.m., Santa Cruz Yacht Harbor, return 3:00 p.m. To observe and photograph Marbled Murrelet and Harbor Porpoise. \$30 per person. Reserve with check payable to Shearwater Journeys, 362 Lee St., Santa Cruz 95060, 408/425-8111. Enclose stamped, self-addressed envelope for confirmation. Leader: Alan Baldrige.
- Nov. 9 **Bird Discussion Group**, Tuesday, 9:30 a.m. at home of Eve Case, 20537 Verde Vista Lane, Saratoga, CA. Plover and its wintering ground - Hawaii.
- Nov. 10 **Moss Landing. South County field trip**, Wednesday, 9:00 a.m. Meet at Jetty Road. Leader: Esther Ollis 408/353-2271.
- Nov. 13 **Mid Peninsula Regional Open Space 10th Anniversary Celebration Dinner**, Saturday, 6:30 p.m. Call 415/965-4717 for reservations and information.
- Nov. 14 **Pelagic Trip** (Shearwater Journeys), Sunday, 7:45 a.m., Monterey Bay, Fisherman's Wharf, return 3:00 p.m. \$24 per person. Reserve with check payable to Shearwater Journeys, 362 Lee St., Santa Cruz 95070, 408/425-8111.
- Nov. 14 **Coyote Hills Regional Park**, Sunday, half day, 8:30 a.m. Meet in parking lot to the right of entrance. Primarily for beginners, but all are welcome. Three miles of easy walking. Lunch optional at the picnic area. About 50 species possible, including American Bittern, rails, Marsh and Rock Wrens. Call if raining in A.M. Leader: Phil Hand (415) 851-2623.

- Nov. 17 **Field Trip North**, Wednesday, 9:00 a.m., Palo Alto Baylands. From 101 take Embarcadero East exit. Meet in the parking lot by the Duck Pond. For information call Dolores Norton 415/941-1666 or leader Barbara Houghton 415/327-2186.
- Nov. 17 **General Meeting**, Wednesday, 7:30 p.m. at the Lucy Evans Baylands Interpretive Center, Palo Alto. Dave DeSante presents "Relationship of weather on juvenile production at PRBO". Dave, who is in charge of the landbird banding station at PRBO, taught ornithology at Stanford and Reed College before his present position at PRBO. He is well known for his work on warblers, especially studying vagrant behavior on the West Coast. He has also offered many excellent short courses for birders in this area. Another attraction for this evening will be the presence of the excellent wildflower artist Manabu Saito whose paintings of endangered wildflowers are forthcoming soon in *AUDUBON* magazine. Saito's paintings were featured in an 8-page feature on cacti in the July 1973 *AUDUBON* magazine and he has illustrated "The Golden Guide to Cacti." His most recent endeavor, a 327 page book "Wildflowers of North America Guidebook" with 1600 flowers painted by him will be released later this year. He will give a short talk about wildflower painting at 7:45 p.m., so please arrive by 7:30 p.m. for this special guest.
- Nov. 21 **Ed Levin County Park**, Sunday, half day, 8:30 p.m. Meet at the duck pond on Calaveras Road. From Hwy 17 take Calaveras Blvd. east in Milpitas to the park. Three miles of easy walking. Lunch optional. Hope for golden eagles. Call if raining on trip morning. Leader: Vicki Silvas-Young 408/293-7124.
- Nov. 28 **Searsville Lake and Jasper Ridge**, Sunday, half day, 8:30 a.m. Meet at the Stanford University Biological Preserve - Jasper Ridge gate on Sandhill Road. From I-280 go west on Sandhill 1.8 miles to Main Gate. Gate will be unlocked from 8:20 to 8:40 a.m. - please be prompt. Three miles of easy to moderate walking. Lunch optional. 70 species including Ring-necked and Wood Ducks, Pygmy Nuthatch, and Red-shouldered Hawk. **LIMIT OF 30 PEOPLE.** Call for reservation and if raining on trip morning. Leaders: Bill & Jean Clark, authors of Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve Bird List, 415/326-7565, and Carol Zabel 415/948-5671.

Field trip coordinator for December - Mary Lou Burgin 408/253-7115.

- Dec. 4 **Lake San Antonio, Monterey County**, Saturday, 10:00 a.m. Meet at the Jolon Store, Jolon. Carpool rendezvous at Bank of the West, Pruneyard Towers, Campbell Avenue side at 7:00 a.m. Primarily a walking trip. \$3.00 fee per car for day use of campground. Join us to explore a new SCVAS trip area of golden and bald eagles, woodpeckers and passerines. Call if raining trip morning. Leader: Kevin Monahan 408/559-8713.
- Dec. 4 **Pelagic Trip.** See Nov. 14 for details. Leaders: Alan Baldrige and Ted Chandik.
- Dec. 5 **Lake Merritt**, Sunday, half day, 9:00 a.m. Meet at Rotary Science Center. North on Hwy 17 to Oak St. (Oakland), east on Oak, becomes Lakeside Drive, becomes Harrison; right on Grand Ave.; right on Bellevue to meeting place. Call leader for carpooling. Trip for both experienced and novice birders. Bring lunch and liquids. Barrow's Goldeneye and Hooded Merganser and high numbers of waterfowl at close range. Optional afternoon trip to Jewel Lake, Tilden Park. Call if raining trip morning. Leader: Allen Royer 408/251-6133.
- Dec. 8 **Field Trip South**, Wednesday, 9:00 a.m. Chesbro Reservoir. Limited Parking. Please carpool, if possible. For details call Manette or Gail. Leaders: Manette Wigenstein 408/354-9420 and Gail Cheeseman 408/867-1371.
- Dec. 11 **Charleston Slough**, Saturday, half day, 9:00 a.m. Meet at east end of San Antonio Road off Hwy 101. Bring lunch and liquids. We will be looking for wintering shore birds and ducks. Three miles of easy walking. Trip cancelled if raining. Leaders: Mary Lou Burgin 408/253-7115 and Rae Schmuck 408/356-4362.
- Dec. 19 **San Jose Christmas Bird Count** - see article.
- Dec. 26 **Grant Ranch County Park**, Sunday. Leaders: Russ and Marilyn Fowler. More in December *AVOCET*.

TRAVEL

Ecology and Natural History of Australia and New Zealand.

The Cheesemans have decided on a 33-day Australian safari, plus a 5-day extension to Mt. Cook and Milford South in New Zealand. This includes 13 days in tropical Queensland. Dates: Aug. 4 - Sept. 5, 1983 for Australia with New Zealand extension to Sept. 10. Land costs: \$3300; extension \$500. (Airfare approximately \$2030, extension \$320). Doug and Gail Cheeseman 408/867-1371 or 408/996-4567 (work).

Monterey Bay. Cheeseman's Ecology Safaris, day trips (7:45 a.m. - 3 p.m.). Search for grey whales, dolphins, porpoises, birds, etc. Dec. 31, Jan. 2, Jan. 15, Jan. 22. Cost: \$27. Call 408/867-1371 or 408/996-4567.

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CORRECTION

Technology strikes again. Mike Rigney has promised to discipline his errant home computer for spouting out the wrong telephone numbers for the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory which appeared in last month's *Avocet*. The correct numbers are 408/946-6548 for the facility in Alviso, and 408/867-4791 to reach Mike at home where he will be glad to talk to anyone about membership and plans for the observatory's future.
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COLOR MARKED SANDERLINGS AND BLACK-BELLIED PLOVERS

Over the last eight years the Bodega Marine Laboratory has color-banded some 800 Sanderlings. This fall the Sanderling Project will start a companion program color-banding Sanderlings and Black-bellied Plovers in Peru, Chile, and Ecuador. This work is sponsored by The World Wildlife Fund-US and coordinated by the Wader Study Group to map shorebird migrations between North and South America.

The Sanderling Project needs your help in a network of observers searching for color-marked Sanderlings. Within California, we want to determine how far away from Bodega Bay the marked birds travel, and also whether any of the South American marked birds migrate northward along the Pacific Coast.

If you want to participate as a regional coordinator or as a local observer, please contact The Sanderling Project, Bodega Marine Laboratory, PO Box 247, Bodega Bay, CA 94923, (707) 875-2211.

If you see a color-marked Sanderling or Black-bellied Plover north or south of Bodega Bay, please send your observations to The Sanderling Project. Each bird has several color bands, one or two on each leg. South American marked birds carry a small leg flag in addition. To find out where your bird is from send in the color combination, noting which colors are where, top and bottom, right or left legs. Even if you cannot read the bands precisely, inform the Project of where and when you saw a marked bird, and how many other birds it was with.

During the last winter the Project received many valuable observations of color-marked Sanderlings. Following is a compilation of several of the most exciting:

1. Observer: Alice Hoch. Crab Cove, east San Francisco Bay, CA. 13 August 1981. Uncertain color-combination.
2. Observers: Pat Frost and Glenn Lowe. Mouth of San Antonio Creek, Santa Barbara Co., CA. 13 November 1981. Uncertain color-combination.
3. Observer: James H. Stone. Pajara Dunes, CA. 26 and 27 November 1981. Uncertain color-combination.
4. Observer: Brian J. Walton. Big Sur Lighthouse, Monterey Co., CA. 13 December, 1981. Uncertain color-combination. Walton saw a Peregrine Falcon capture and eat this Sanderling.
5. Observer: Dr. Terry Meyer. San Elijo State Beach, San Diego Co., CA. First discovered 7 March 1982 and observed as late as 9 April 1982. Bird No. 536, banded as a juvenile on 4 September 1980 at Bodega Bay. No. 536 was seen in Bodega Bay as late as 23 February 1982. It has returned to Bodega Bay this field season, as of 12 August 1982.
6. Observer: Joseph G. Buchanan. Grays Harbor, Washington. 24 April 1982. Bird No. 597, banded as a juvenile at Bodega Bay on 19 November 1980. No. 597 was seen at Bodega Bay last year until 22 February 1982, and first observed in this fall on 26 July 1982. No. 597 seems to make a habit of wandering. After returning to Bodega Bay in July it remained until late August. It was then seen on Point Reyes Peninsula on 26 August.



Xmas Count - Dec. 19

SCVAS is again sponsoring the Christmas Bird Count (CBC) to be held on Sunday, December 19. The December *AVOCET* will list section leaders and a map of the count area. If you are new to Christmas counts, or a new birder - please don't let that stop you - we need people of all abilities. Last year we had an all time high of 119 observers including two feeder watchers. For the day 155 species were tallied, including both those regularly occurring and the rare and unusual. Save Sunday, December 19, for an exciting day of birding followed by a tasty dinner. For more information call Jim Liskovec 415/969-5542.

The chapter office has compiled the following schedule for Christmas Bird Counts in the area:

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| Dec. 18 | Point Reyes Bird Observatory
Mt. Diablo |
| Dec. 19 | Napa - Solano, Oakland, Santa Clara Valley,
Santa Rosa, Redwood Regional Ornithological Society |
| Dec. 25 or 26 | Arroyo-Cheap Thrills |
| Dec. 28 | Los Banos |
| Jan. 1 | Southern Marin, Moss Landing |
| Jan. 2 | Madrone |

Call Lynn at the chapter office, 415/329-8111, for more information.

NEW TOASTMASTERS CLUB

Do you need to learn how to improve your public speaking abilities? Do you need to know more about running effective meetings? Do you want some creative ideas about using visual aids in presenting your ideas? Do you want to find out more about interjecting humor into your speeches and meetings? Would you like to try out speeches for immediate feedback from fellow friendly environmentalists? If so, the recently formed PAWS AND CLAWS of Palo Alto Toastmasters International meets every Monday night 7:30 to 9 p.m. at the Peninsula Conservation Center meeting room. Visitors are most welcome. For more information phone Carol Meaney 415/861-5185 or Mary E. Hallesy 415/327-4822.

Mary E. Hallesy

NEW DIRECTOR AT THE RICHARDSON BAY WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

National Audubon Society has appointed Beth Huning director of its Western Education Center at Richardson Bay Wildlife Sanctuary. Beth comes from southern California and brings a professional education background to the Center. She recently developed an environmental program for use in the Capistrano Union School District, which has been highly acclaimed. In addition, she is a naturalist with experience in the Yosemite National Park System.

NEW CHAPTER

Welcome to a brand new Audubon Chapter - Madrone, headquartered in Ukiah. They are called the Peregrin, and their newsletter is the Falcon Flyer. President is Bob Keiffer, Box 311, Ukiah, CA 98482.

Chapter to publish site guide

Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society will publish its own birding site guide authored by its members, early this coming spring.

Betty Wyatt and Audrey Stove are organizing this project, designing the booklet to point out and share some habitats with new birders and those who come to the Valley from other areas. Betty, who is SCVAS Vice President, told fellow board members that she hopes members will share their favorite local areas and stresses that visitors will be asked to respect the fragility of the natural environment. Anyone who can help with specific areas is asked to contact Betty Wyatt, 5524 Big Oak Drive, San Jose, CA 95129, 408/255-6091; or Audrey Stove, 408/249-2108.

The site guide is planned in three sections. Part I will discuss specific areas within the county. Each description will give directions to reach it; describe the habitat; list

birds to be expected and the season they can be found. They will be described by a SCVAS birder familiar with the specific area who will be credited with authorship of the paragraphs. Site maps will be included with some description.

Part II will list some of the speciality birds of our area that visitors come to see. Best locations, with no guarantees, of course, will be given. Part III will reproduce the county check list with some revisions.

Following are lists of sites and birds to be covered. Betty and Audrey are looking for members willing to write paragraphs on specific sites listed, as well as other good birding areas they may have omitted. They would also like to know what birds of the area, with exceptions of rarities — Smews, for example — your birding visitors want to see.

SITES TO BE DESCRIBED (Part I)

1. Baylands — including Charleston Slough, the dumps, duck pond, and Baylands
2. Mountain View Shoreline & Sunnyvale Baylands Parks now being developed
3. Alviso and the San Francisco Wildlife Refuge South Bay and San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory
4. Alum Rock Park
5. Berryessa Canyon
6. Ed Levin Park to Calaveras Dam and Sunol Regional Park
7. Grant Ranch, Mt. Hamilton (including Smith Creek), Lick Observatory, to San Antonio Valley and Mines Road. Also include upper Del Puerto Rd.
8. Overfelt Park
9. Kelley Park
10. Coyote Park chain from Hellyer Park upstream to Tennant "Marsh" and the Metcalf Percolation ponds.
11. Lake Cunningham
12. The Villages (by permission) and upper San Felipe Rd.
13. Anderson Dam/Coyote Dam in south County including Gilroy Hot Springs Rd.
14. Santa Teresa Park
15. Henry Coe State Park
16. Gill Mustang Ranch County Park, now developing
17. Pacheco Pass including San Felipe Lake with heron roosts and duck ponds.
18. Mt. Madonna County Park, including Sprig Lake and the ridge areas.
19. Chesboro Dam, Uvas Dam and Uvas County Park areas.
20. Calero Reservoir
21. Almaden Quicksilver Park and Guadalupe Reservoir
22. SCWW ponds off Almaden Expressway and Coleman
23. Los Gatos Creek (Oak Meadow, Vasona Park to percolation ponds in Campbell)
24. Loma Prieta
25. Villa Montalvo Arboretum
26. Stevens Creek Park
27. McClellan Park, Cupertino
28. Wildwood Park, Saratoga
29. Sanborn/Skyline/Castle Rock Park areas
30. San Antonio Open Space (including Deer Creek farm)
31. Montebello Ridge — Los Trancos Open Space
32. Duveneck Ranch

33. Stanford Campus
34. Jasper Ridge (by reservation only)
35. Portola Valley ponds
36. Skylonda Ponds (actually San Mateo County) and Sam MacDonald Park.



9. Alameda Creek gravel pits
10. Foster City lagoons and Bay crescent there.

Farther afield but musts to real birders:

1. Paicines - Panoche Valley in late winter
2. Point Reyes/Bolinas Lagoon (PRBO Hdqtrs. & Audubon Ranch)
3. Bodega Bay
4. Los Banos Wildlife Refuge
5. Byron and the Clifton Forebay in Contra Costa
6. Elkhorn Slough and jetty road at Moss Landing
7. Monterey, Pacific Grove and mouth of Carmel River
8. Mt. Diablo
9. Lake Merritt

Just out of the County but valuable to check. Will list but no details given.

1. Pescadero Marsh
2. Big Basin Redwoods
3. Ano Nuevo
4. Santa Cruz campus of U. C. and Predatory Research Center (by appointment)
5. Santa Cruz (Natural Bridges - Harlequin Ducks, butterflies; Neary's Lagoon; the Pier; Branciforte)
6. Dumbarton Bridge (both ends) mud flats and ponds and the radio tower if still accessible
7. San Francisco Bay Wildlife headquarters at east end Dumbarton Bridge
8. Coyote Hills Regional Park

Maine Audubon camp - a treat

Audubon Camp in Maine is situated on Hog Island in Muscongus Bay off Damariscotta (Mainland) . . . an area rich in lobster beds, herring, clams, periwinkles, dog whelks and assorted delicacies.

My good friend and avid Auduboner, Mary Koehane and I shared one of six rooms on the second floor of the Queen Mary, a gray shingle 2-story house, the first floor of which is the Camp's Marine Biology Lab, and part of the boat dock. At the dock, two nifty Audubon vessels, Puffin I and Puffin II always stood ready to take us to the mainland for trips to either the ocean, marshlands, lakes, ponds, or to different islands for enrichment of our experiential background.

The Captain of these vessels, a knowledgeable and experienced retired Coast Guard Captain, taught us how to read buoy channel markings. He in one craft, and his 1st Mate in the other, would take us to our island excursions to within a few hundred feet of the island, then row us by dinghy, eight at a time, and help us to scramble over the rocks. The transfer system was terrific . . . 100% safety record.

The day we went to observe Egg Rock but not invade it, was the highlight of the trip for me. Steve Kress, our Camp Director, is the Chief of the Puffin Rehabilitation Project on Egg Rock. For umpty ump years I have recited A. A. Milne's poem "There once was a puffin, the shape of a

muffin, who lived on an island in the bright blue sea. . ." and I remember reading in Audubon Magazine the plight of the puffins being driven to extinction, almost, off Egg Rock, off the Coast of Maine, over 100 years ago. And there I was, within a few hundred feet of the place, standing up in the gently rocking boat with my binoculars hugging my eyeballs, observing the successful painted wooden decoys of a pair of Arctic Terns on the other end of the rock, which had attracted several families of their own kind.

We could watch pairs of REAL puffins jumping off the rock and saw the terns out fishing and keeping a feisty eye out for the greater black-backed gull, which is the chief predator of puffin chicks. An ingenious arrangement! A little life drama took place while we were watching the rock, and we were all helpless to aid a hapless herring gull chick who was out swimming with a herring gull family nearby, when a black-backed gull pounced on it to drown it and carried it off.

Florence Hunter

(This article will be continued in the next issue.)

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

In spite of rain showers and sprinklers that nearly cut off the trail, the 15 birders who met at Vasona Lake on September 15th had a pleasant morning. We were happy to have some beginners as well as the more experienced members along. It was a little too early for migrating birds, but we were rewarded with an unlimited view of a female pied billed grebe and her downy chick. The chick was being taught how to dive and loudly insisting that mother provide a little food along with the lessons! We also saw the green-backed heron, great blue heron, a lonely double crested cormorant in a eucalyptus tree, belted kingfisher, caspian tern, and the vaux swift. Some of the birders stayed for a pleasant lunch on the pier and a walk up the Viola Anderson nature trail. We all agreed: You can't count on the weather, but you can count on nice company on a bird walk!

Linda Hagelin

The check out trip at Sunol Park had been on an overcast, muggy day and was disappointing; but September 26, the day of the field trip, dawned bright and clear after a rain storm on the 25th. There is no better set of conditions for birding. About 35 birders saw over 30 species of birds including numerous red-tailed hawks and golden eagles, a western tanager, a spotted sandpiper, a dipper, a great blue heron, and rufous-crowned sparrows. The most unusual sighting by one member of the group was an osprey flying up the creek towards Calaveras Reservoir. The most exciting show was put on by the raptors. The resident red-tails had a full time job driving off migrant birds of their own species as well as harassing an eagle. The eagle was incredibly quick at flipping on its back and thrusting at the red-tail with its talons, but it never connected. I have seen this duel between the two species many times and I never have seen an eagle score. I wonder if they ever do.

Frank Farran

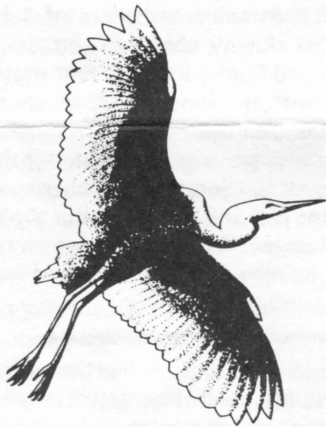
Alan Rogers, Australian naturalist, joined Ted Chandik and other SCVAS birders on a Debi Shearwater pelagic trip Sunday, October 3. Rogers helped identify a Short-tailed Shearwater. Other sightings included five shearwater species, many jaegers, especially Pomarine, four species of cetaceans, and many other pelagics.

BIRD SPECIALTIES (Part II)

1. Cattle egrets - Alviso, Lake Cunningham area, San Felipe Lake in south county
2. Blue Wing teal - Baylands and Alviso
3. Harlequin Ducks - Ano Nuevo and Natural Bridges in Santa Cruz
4. Hooded Mergansers - Skylonda Pond and Foster City lagoons
5. Barrows Goldeneye - Foster City, Los Gatos Creek
6. White Tailed Kite - Baylands, Alviso/Milpitas area, Levin Park, Coyote Hills Regional Park
7. Bald Eagle - Calaveras Dam
8. Mt. Quail - Loma Prieta & Castle Rock
9. Chukar - New Idria Rd. Panoche Valley
10. Rails - Baylands and other Salicornia marshes in South Bay.
11. Least Terns - Charleston Slough and Alviso
12. Thayer's Gull - Baylands and Dixon Dump
13. Glaucous Gull - Alviso and Palo Alto dumps
14. Roadrunner - Chesboro Dam area and east foothills
15. Owls
16. Pileated Woodpecker
17. Acorn Woodpecker
18. Nuttall's Woodpeckers
19. Scrub Jay
20. Stellar's Jays
21. Yellow Billed Magpie - Grant Ranch, Anderson Dam parks, Pacheco Pass
22. Wrentit
23. Dipper - Alum Rock Park, Anderson Dam
24. Winter wrens - along streams in Sam MacDonald's Heritage Grove, Mt. Madonna Park Road
25. California Thrasher - Deer Creek Farm road, Alum Rock or McClellan Park
26. Red Breasted Sapsucker - Alum Rock Park, Stevens Creek Park, McClellan Park
27. Varied Thrush - Sanborn Park
28. Phainopepla - Mines road, Panoche Valley, Grant Ranch
30. Lawrence's Goldfinches - Los Trancos Open Space

FIELD NOTES

The excitement in winter seems to be in the marshes or along the ocean. With our summer residents gone the grasslands and forest on both sides of the Valley are left to our year-round resident species and a few winter visitors. Most of the wintering birds come to our feeders as well, so except for birds like the Varied Thrush we don't have to go far afield to see the winter passerines. At the end of October we start to wonder what rails and sparrows have come to the Palo Alto Baylands to enjoy their marshland winter. High tides are 3 November (6.4'), 14 November (6.1'), 2 December (6.9'), 12 December (6.3') and 30 December (7.2'). I've indicated the height at the Golden Gate Bridge in parentheses. It's actually a good bit higher at Palo Alto. A rule of thumb is that a 6.8' tide is good for rails, while anything over 7.0' is exceptional. Sparrow-watching is good at the lower tides as well. Most tide tables give the time of high tide at the Golden Gate. High tide at the Baylands is an hour and twenty minutes later. The most activity occurs on the rising tide, so get there an hour or two before. A walk around the lagoon and out the levee between the airport and the slough is a good place for sparrows, Sora, and Virginia Rail. The rising tide disturbs all of these birds and the normally secretive Lincoln's Sparrow will perch in the open. Sharp-tailed, Swamp and the eastern race of the Fox



"THE CONDOR QUESTION"

The proceedings of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society's conference concerning the fate of the California Condor, held on January 24, 1981, are now available from the SCVAS office. A donation of \$5 is asked to cover printing and mailing costs.

CHECKLIST

Golden Gate Audubon Society has just published the Bird Checklist for Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. It is available from the Golden Gate Audubon Society, 2718 Telegraph Avenue, No. 206, Berkeley, CA 94705. 415/843-2222. The cost is 25 cents each, or five and more for 20 cents each.

Bill Bousman

Sparrow were all seen along this levee last year. Be careful not to flush rails just to get a better look. The smaller rails are very vulnerable to predation. Last winter Black Rails were eaten by Great Egret and Great Blue Heron. *American Birds* commented that "perhaps observer effect on the vulnerability of the prey species is a consideration here."

Locally, the most exciting event was the presence of **White-faced Ibis** in Charleston Slough and the Palo Alto Flood Control Basin for the third county record. A flock of four were found by Mark Fenner on 10 September in the slough and have been seen subsequently in both places with a flock of 15 seen on 27 September. Three male **Blue-winged Teal** were in Charleston Slough 15 September. **Lesser Yellowlegs** have been found in typical numbers with two at Charleston Slough on 15 September and two to five counted at Moffett Field 14 - 28 September. Two **Sanderling** at Charleston Slough 15 September following last winter's observation indicates that this is a regular wintering location for this scarce (on the Bay) shorebird. It appears that this is an exceptional flight year for **Pectoral Sandpiper**. They have been found in the freshwater marsh and mudflats at Moffett Field from 14-29 September with a flock of 25 on 28 September. Dick Stovel found a juvenile jaeger on Charleston Slough 27 September. By size and behavior it was probably a **Parasitic Jaeger**. The last **Least Terns** at Charleston Slough were seen 15 September. A migrant female **Western Tanager** was calling in Los Altos 10 September (Jim & Sue Liskovec).

If you see an "uncommon to rare", share it. Drop me a note or call: Bill Bousman, 321 Arlington Way, Menlo Park, CA 94025, 415/322-5282.



Sanderling

This Holiday Season

SUPPORT THE STORE
THAT SUPPORTS CONSERVATION

Christmas cards •
Beautiful assortment of tree ornaments •
Animal puppets • Toys & jewelry
Wrapping paper • Animal baskets
Calendars • T-shirts • Pottery
Books • Bird feeders • Wreaths
Backpacking supplies

Holiday Hours: M-F 9-5; Saturdays 10-4
Starting November 6



Peninsula
Conservation
Center Store

2253 Park Blvd.
Palo Alto 94306
415/328-5313

Falklands' Ian Strange - October 29

Ian Strange, referred to as 'Birdman of the Falklands' by ornithologists, has been invited to speak at the Lucy Evans Baylands Interpretive Center on Friday, October 29 at 7:30 p.m., by the Arts and Sciences Division of the City of Palo Alto.

He will show slides of Falklands wildlife as well as answer questions concerning the Argentina-Britain confrontation. The Stranges were living in Stanley when Argentinean forces invaded.

Strange is a world-noted naturalist, artist and author. After living in the Falkland Islands for five years, he returned to England to put together enough resources to purchase an island called New, which is the western-most island in the archipelago. Although run as a wildlife reserve, New Island retains its small sheep farm and encourages limited numbers of wildlife tourists and scientists to visit and work on the island, showing that conservation in the Falklands can be a viable operation. Ian's wildlife preservation efforts are endorsed by the National Wildlife Federation and, in addition, he has set up the New Island Trust for direct contributions.

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Gloria Heller



GIFT BARGAINS AT TIBURON

Audubon's Western Education Center at the Richardson Bay Wildlife Sanctuary, will have a holiday gift sale Nov. 3 - Dec. 23. A large inventory of the NAS gift catalog items will be available at discounts of 30-80 percent. Other special prices include all NAS Field Guides \$6.95 (regular \$12.50), 50 Encyclopedia of NA Birds \$39.95 (regular \$60), all Bushnell binoculars 30 percent off list price.

AUDUBON CANYON RANCH NEEDS FUNDS TO REPAIR WINTER STORM DAMAGE

Dear Friends,

1982 has been an unusual, but very productive year. We started with the January storm which literally changed the contours of Volunteer, Garden and Picher Canyons. Besides changing the stream courses in all three canyons, it washed out our gravity water lines in Picher and Volunteer. Although the damage was excessive, no structural damage was incurred and all our education programs were on schedule and most successful. The funding for this emergency came on a non-matching basis from the San Francisco Foundation. A lot of work still needs to be done.

Our building programs funded on a matching fund basis are all subscribed. We are most grateful for your support. The residence has been repaired, a new women's toilet area installed and the new garage and shed completed. At the same time, the new all weather road at Cypress Grove was finished. The renovation of the bookstore and exhibit hall will start in September. Please come and see your progress . . .

Our needs for 1982-83 continue to be our normal over-head which serves and educates our many school children and visitors. We are proud that our promotion costs to raise support money only amount to 1.2%.

Our goals for this coming year include finishing our storm damage repair, installing a hard coat surface on the parking area, a new spillway on Livermore Marsh at Cypress Grove, and a continual refinement of our educational program at Stinson Beach, Tomales Bay and our Sonoma Preserve. Your continued support of our work is needed and appreciated. Donations are tax deductible.

Sincerely,
Thomas S. Price

AUDUBON CANYON RANCH

Box 2113

San Francisco, CA 94126

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____
to support your efforts in 1982 - 1983.

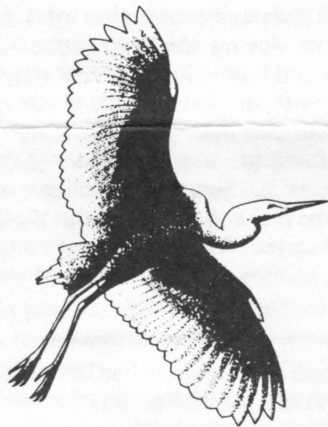
Name _____

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FIELD NOTES

The excitement in winter seems to be in the marshes or along the ocean. With our summer residents gone the grasslands and forest on both sides of the Valley are left to our year-round resident species and a few winter visitors. Most of the wintering birds come to our feeders as well, so except for birds like the Varied Thrush we don't have to go far afield to see the winter passerines. At the end of October we start to wonder what rails and sparrows have come to the Palo Alto Baylands to enjoy their marshland winter. High tides are 3 November (6.4'), 14 November (6.1'), 2 December (6.9'), 12 December (6.3') and 30 December (7.2'). I've indicated the height at the Golden Gate Bridge in parentheses. It's actually a good bit higher at Palo Alto. A rule of thumb is that a 6.8' tide is good for rails, while anything over 7.0' is exceptional. Sparrow-watching is good at the lower tides as well. Most tide tables give the time of high tide at the Golden Gate. High tide at the Baylands is an hour and twenty minutes later. The most activity occurs on the rising tide, so get there an hour or two before. A walk around the lagoon and out the levee between the airport and the slough is a good place for sparrows, Sora, and Virginia Rail. The rising tide disturbs all of these birds and the normally secretive Lincoln's Sparrow will perch in the open. Sharp-tailed, Swamp and the eastern race of the Fox



"THE CONDOR QUESTION"

The proceedings of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society's conference concerning the fate of the California Condor, held on January 24, 1981, are now available from the SCVAS office. A donation of \$5 is asked to cover printing and mailing costs.

CHECKLIST

Golden Gate Audubon Society has just published the Bird Checklist for Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. It is available from the Golden Gate Audubon Society, 2718 Telegraph Avenue, No. 206, Berkeley, CA 94705. 415/843-2222. The cost is 25 cents each, or five and more for 20 cents each.

Bill Bousman

Sparrow were all seen along this levee last year. Be careful not to flush rails just to get a better look. The smaller rails are very vulnerable to predation. Last winter Black Rails were eaten by Great Egret and Great Blue Heron. *American Birds* commented that "perhaps observer effect on the vulnerability of the prey species is a consideration here."

Locally, the most exciting event was the presence of **White-faced Ibis** in Charleston Slough and the Palo Alto Flood Control Basin for the third county record. A flock of four were found by Mark Fenner on 10 September in the slough and have been seen subsequently in both places with a flock of 15 seen on 27 September. Three male **Blue-winged Teal** were in Charleston Slough 15 September. **Lesser Yellowlegs** have been found in typical numbers with two at Charleston Slough on 15 September and two to five counted at Moffett Field 14 - 28 September. Two **Sanderling** at Charleston Slough 15 September following last winter's observation indicates that this is a regular wintering location for this scarce (on the Bay) shorebird. It appears that this is an exceptional flight year for **Pectoral Sandpiper**. They have been found in the freshwater marsh and mudflats at Moffett Field from 14-29 September with a flock of 25 on 28 September. Dick Stovel found a juvenile jaeger on Charleston Slough 27 September. By size and behavior it was probably a **Parasitic Jaeger**. The last **Least Terns** at Charleston Slough were seen 15 September. A migrant female **Western Tanager** was calling in Los Altos 10 September (Jim & Sue Liskovec).

If you see an "uncommon to rare", share it. Drop me a note or call: Bill Bousman, 321 Arlington Way, Menlo Park, CA 94025, 415/322-5282.



Sanderling

This Holiday Season

SUPPORT THE STORE
THAT SUPPORTS CONSERVATION

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Beautiful assortment of tree ornaments •
Animal puppets • Toys & jewelry
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Holiday Hours: M-F 9-5; Saturdays 10-4
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415/328-5313

Falklands' Ian Strange - October 29

Ian Strange, referred to as 'Birdman of the Falklands' by ornithologists, has been invited to speak at the Lucy Evans Baylands Interpretive Center on Friday, October 29 at 7:30 p.m., by the Arts and Sciences Division of the City of Palo Alto.

He will show slides of Falklands wildlife as well as answer questions concerning the Argentina-Britain confrontation. The Stranges were living in Stanley when Argentinean forces invaded.

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AUDUBON CANYON RANCH

Box 2113

San Francisco, CA 94126

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____
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Name _____

Address _____

(Signature) _____

SANTA CLARA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY, Inc.

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General membership meetings are held the third Wednesday of each month, at 7:30 p.m., at the Lucy Evans Baylands Interpretive Center, Palo Alto. Meetings are open to the public. Monthly Board of Directors meetings are held at 7:15 p.m., the first Tuesday of each month. Meetings are open to members; please call the office for directions.

THE AVOCET deadline is the tenth of the month for the following month.

DONATIONS

Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society welcomes gifts in general, or gifts in honor or memory of relatives and friends. Such donations will be used as specified, or, if unspecified, will be used to support environmental education and projects. All gifts and donations are tax deductible.



Yes, I want to join the National Audubon Society

Enroll me as a member of National Audubon Society, and Chapter 0515, Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society. Start my subscription to AUDUBON and THE AVOCET. Send me my membership card which entitles me to all the benefits and privileges of National Audubon Society.

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Make checks payable to NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY. Send to SCVAS office, 2253 Park Boulevard, Palo Alto, CA 94306, to avoid delay in receiving THE AVOCET. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon Society, 950 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10022. Membership in the National Audubon Society includes AUDUBON magazine, the national publication, and THE AVOCET.

THE AVOCET SUBSCRIPTIONS ALONE are \$5.00/year. Send subscriptions to SCVAS office. THE AVOCET is published monthly except July and August. Send address changes to the office promptly.