

SANTA CLARA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY
Chapter C14 of the National Audubon Society
2253 Park Boulevard, Palo Alto, CA 94306
Telephone: (415) 329-1811

Non-Profit Org.
US Postage Paid
San Jose, CA
Permit No. 5869



1137g
Mr Alan M Eisner
3538 Farm Hill Blvd #4
Redwood City, CA 94061

Volume 32, Number 9

November 1985

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

On all field trips, CARPOOL and share expenses. Bring binoculars, field guides, lunch (optional on half-days) and liquids. For carpooling arrangements call Dolores Norton (415)941-1666 or Gail Cheeseman (408)741-5330.

- Nov. 3 **Birdwalk for Beginners.** Ed Levin County Park. Sunday, 8:30 am, half day. Meet in schoolyard, N side of Calaveras Rd., near the park. From Hwy 17 take Calaveras Blvd E through Milpitas to the park, or from Hwy 680 take Calaveras Blvd E. Possible Golden Eagles. Leader, rain or shine: Vicki Silvas-Young (408)293-7124.
- Nov. 6 **Bay Area Bird Photographers.** Wednesday, 7:30 pm. Baylands Interpretive Center. Program not yet certain. Co-sponsored by the City of Palo Alto.
- Nov. 12 **Bird Discussion Group.** Tuesday, 9:30 am at the home of Eve Case, 20537 Verde Vista Lane, Saratoga. Topic: Guillemots.
- Nov. 13 **Field Trip South.** Wednesday, 9 am. Kelley Park, Senter Rd. off of Keyes St. in San Jose. Meet at Lenninger Center next to Happy Hollow. Leader: Emilie Curtis (408)779-2637.
- Nov. 20 **General Meeting.** Wednesday. Refreshments at 7:30 pm, program at 8. Palo Alto Cultural Center, Newell at Embarcadero. 'The Value of Seasonal Wetlands'. Biologist Tom Harvey tells what's happening to the baylands and the uplands. Are existing regulations to protect wetlands being enforced? This program should answer many questions about local wetlands. There will be slides.
- Nov. 20 **Coyote Hills Regional Park.** Wednesday, 8:30 am, half day. NEW DIRECTIONS: From either direction on Rte. 84, take the Thornton Ave. exit, just east of the new Toll Plaza. Go N on Thornton (Paseo Padre on new maps) about one mile to Commerce Drive, turn left into the park and meet at the lot near the entrance. Coming up Rte. 17 the Rte. 84-Dumbarton Bridge exit is finished and well marked. Leader: Phil Hand (415)851-2623.
- Nov. 24 **Pigeon Point/Pescadero Marsh.** Sunday, 9 am, all day. Meet just N of Pigeon Point Lighthouse on Lighthouse Road. Take Hwy. 84 thru San Gregorio to Hwy. 1, go S about 7 mi., turn right onto Pigeon Point Road. Bring liquids, lunch, & warm clothes. Rain or shine. Leader: Bill Bousman (415)322-5282.
- Nov. 30 **Searsville Lake and Jasper Ridge.** Saturday, 8:30 am, half day. Meet at Stanford Univ. Jasper Ridge Preserve Main gate (not Whiskey Hill gate). From Hwy 280 go W on Sand Hill Rd. about 2 miles to gate on left. Gate will be unlocked from 8:15-8:40 am. Ring-necked Ducks, possible Wood Ducks and Red-shouldered Hawks. Suggested contribution of \$2 to the Preserve. Limit 40 people. Leaders, rain or shine: Jean and Bill Clark and Carol Zabel. For reservations call the Clarks (415)326-7565.
- Dec. 10 **Bird Discussion Group.** Tuesday, 9:30 am at the home of Jean and Pat Dubois, 17150 Buena Vista Ave., Los Gatos. Subject: Feeder Birding.
- Dec. 11 **Field Trip South,** Predatory Bird Center, UC Santa Cruz. Wednesday. Limited to 10 people. May observe Peregrine, Bat-Orange-breasted and Aplomado Falcons, Harris's Hawk, and Elf Owl. Please call Gail Cheeseman for details and reservations. (408)741-5330 or 867-1371.

CBC DINNER COORDINATOR NEEDED

Do you like to organize events? If so, SCVAS needs you for a one-time volunteer job. We need someone to help decide on the menu for the CBC Dinner, and help Lynn to buy food, find cooks, and distribute supplies before the dinner. At the dinner, the coordinator makes sure that details are taken care of. It is an easy and fun way to help make sure the Dinner is a success. If you can help, please call Lynn (415)329-1811.

BIRD ILLUSTRATIONS

The Field Notes illustrations in this issue and the Summer Tanagers in last month's *Avocet* were drawn by Gary McCurdy, an artist who has recently moved to this area. Gary is currently working on illustrations for a forthcoming book on Bay Area birding by Peter Allen, to be published by Heyday Books. We hope to print more of his work in the future.

INTERIOR TO CONDORS: DROP DEAD

Joseph Gorrell, deputy assistant secretary of the Interior, says that Interior is wondering whether it's worthwhile spending millions of dollars to buy a refuge for California Condors, since they may be doomed anyway.

Congress has already set aside \$9 million to buy the 13,820 acre Hudson Ranch, but Interior has been delaying the acquisition for many months, halting efforts to re-establish captive birds in the wild.

Gorrell says that some in Interior want to go ahead, but others don't--a split "between the bankers and the biologists". Budget officials in the Reagan Administration have also questioned the need for the acquisition.

The Hudson Ranch is key to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife plan to save the condors. Though other land has been set aside for the condors, it is mountainous or wooded, suitable for nesting or roosting, while the Hudson Ranch is open country, good for foraging. All the remaining wild condors are known to forage there. This makes it ideal for providing them with uncontaminated food sources, for releasing captive birds, and for observing and radio-tagging them.

The land belongs to a Seattle-based developer, Richard Hadley, who is willing to sell the land. He rejected Interior's offer of \$5.3 million, however, since he paid around \$6.7 million to buy it. He has recently suggested that he turn part of the land over to Interior and be allowed to develop the rest, a plan Interior is considering. Linda Blum, of the Condor Research Center, points out that the resulting influx of people would seriously threaten the condor.

If you think it's worth bothering to try to save the California Condor, write or telephone Donald Hodel, Secretary, Department of the Interior, Washington D.C. 20240 (202/343-7351).

-S. J. McCarthy



BIRDS FOR REAL - A BOOK REVIEW

Birds For Real is hot off the press. This self-published book is by Rich Stallcup, a longtime Bay Area birder who's the kind of guy you call on for help when you want to update your field guide. Unfortunately, when Golden Press called on Rich for their 1983 revision of the classic A Guide to Field Identification of Birds of North America, a large number of corrections and additions were somehow not incorporated. Birds For Real includes these changes and additions. It also has some illustrations by Keith Hansen and Tim Manolis (and a remarkable swan by Rich himself).

Last year Rich Stallcup gave several series of classes in which the Golden guide was gone over page by page to add comments and corrections. Birds for Real includes this material. One birder who attended the classes comments, "I learned a lot from it, but it's even nicer to have a book to look back over." (Cheaper, too.)

Although this book is geared towards the Golden guide, with comments like, "Rose-throated Becard-- On page 205 the female's tail is too dull. In life the tail is bright orange contrasting the flat browns of the rest of the plumage.", it's also full of information that's a valuable addition to any guide. "Bank Swallow . . . note that the wings of Bank are opaque (while those of Rough-winged are translucent) and that from above there is a gray rump/brown back contrast (uniform brown in Rough-winged)." The tone is informal--it's fun to read.

Birds For Real can be purchased at General Meetings or from Lynn at the office. (See story on SCVAS gifts.) It's also available from Rich Stallcup by sending \$7 per book plus 6% sales tax to Birds For Real, Box 36, Inverness, CA 94937.

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION HOTLINE

You can increase the effectiveness of your Environmental Action Committee by reporting changes in the environment that you happen to see while on your birding walks. All you have to do is call one of the numbers below, reporting what you saw, when and where. You don't have to join anything, you don't have to attend any meetings, and you don't have to give your name if you don't want to.

Examples of what you might look for in UPLANDS AND BUILT-UP AREAS: New signs posted, surveyors' stakes, heavy equipment in or near stream beds, trees being felled, water levels changing inexplicably, buildings being razed, filling and grading operations, changes in drainage pipes, and bridge or culvert work.

In the BAYLANDS: ANY new activity observed ANYWHERE, such as signs, fill operations of any kind, new construction or dredging equipment on the dikes or in the sloughs or seasonal wetlands, new gauges or strange installations, and sudden or unusual changes in water levels.

Of course, any unusual change in wildlife populations anywhere should be reported. Your contributions can be invaluable in early detection of a wide variety of illegal activities . . . there is nothing quite as effective as a watchful public. The regulatory agencies such as the Bay Conservation and Development Committee and the Corps of Engineers gratefully acknowledge that they depend a great deal on us.

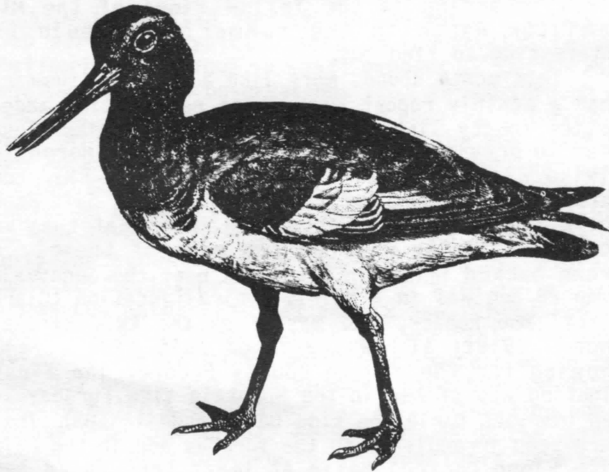
Lynn Tennefoss (415)329-1811
Barbara Hambelton (408)446-3645

SAN JOSE CHRISTMAS COUNT DEC. 15

SCVAS is again sponsoring the San Jose Christmas Bird Count (CBC), to be held on Sunday, December 15. If you are new to Christmas Counts or are a new birder, please don't let that stop you. We need people of all abilities. Save December 15 for an exciting day of birding followed by a tasty dinner. For more information, callco-compilers Sue and Jim Liskovec (415)969-5542.

SECTION LEADER NAMES AND PHONE NUMBERS 1985 San Jose CBC

| | | |
|------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| A(Alviso) | Jean Dubois | (408)395-4264 |
| B(Fremont Hills) | Sue & Jim Liskovec* | (415)969-5542 |
| C(Calaveras) | Kep Stone | (408)263-3395 |
| D(Alum Rock) | Dave Johnston | (408)867-7278 |
| E(Evergreen) | Linda & Ron Hagelin | (408)867-3046 |
| F(South) | Dave Nauer | (408)259-1283 |
| G(Southwest) | Anne Wilson | (415)941-0966 |
| H(Agnew) | Rick Stovel & Lisa Swagerty | (415)856-6105 |
| I(Milpitas) | Sue & Jim Liskovec* | (415)969-5542 |
| J(Berryessa) | Betty Groce | (415)326-5540 |



OYSTER FARMING IN THE BAY?

Ideal Basic Industries, a Denver cement company, has proposed to revive oyster farming in the San Francisco Bay, a practice discontinued 50 years ago. The Bay once produced oysters abundantly.

(The native oysters were overfished. European oysters were introduced, but Bay pollution was too much for them. Japanese oysters, somewhat more pollution-tolerant, will probably be used in new attempts. The Bay is also somewhat cleaner than it was 50 years ago, although heavy metal pollution may be a new problem.)

The targeted areas for renewed oyster farming are the shallow Bay waters between Fremont and San Lorenzo. An alternative use proposed is to dredge for oyster shells, a practice that concerns SCVAS, Save the Bay, and the National Wildlife Refuge.

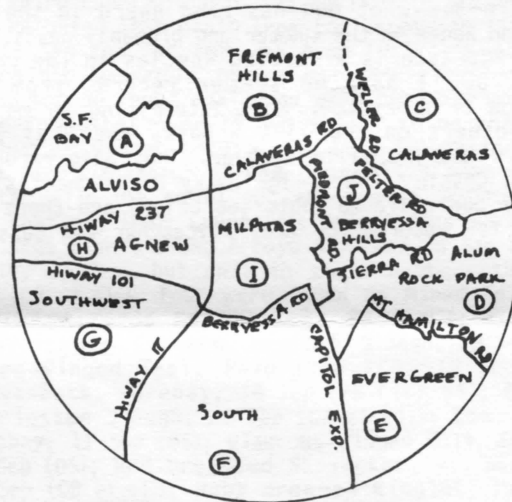
In the 1860's, this section of the Bay was improperly sold to the predecessor of Ideal Basic Industries. Only tidelands could be sold; however, the State sold submerged lands as well. Negotiations between the company and the State Lands Commission over the fate of these 21,000 acres are underway.

The current proposal is for Ideal to retain ownership of 4600 acres along Alviso and the East Bay, returning 16,400 acres to the State. Their preferred use of the 4600 acres is oyster farming, for which they are requesting a research and development lease for 5 years. If aquaculture fails, then Ideal proposes to dredge for oyster shells for cement, as they once did. Both uses require a permit.

The proposed dredging activity would disturb Bay mud, which could disrupt water quality and might release mud contaminants such as heavy metals into the Bay water. These disruptions could adversely affect the California Clapper Rail and the Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse, endangered species found in East Bay wetlands.

Staff from SCVAS, the Wildlife Refuge, and Save the Bay have voiced their concerns about dredging and are monitoring the final settlement. In the meantime, you can call Lynn Tennefoss at (415)329-1811 for more information or updates. No immediate action is needed.

--Martha Esserlieu



HOLIDAY GIFTS FROM SCVAS

Please, think of SCVAS when you plan your gift giving this year. You help us to continue our field trips, general meetings, work to save the South Bay's wetlands, and other activities by giving gift memberships in National Audubon Society, and you give a pleasing present at the same time!

And remember, first-time subscriptions are now available through SCVAS for \$20. This is a 33% saving over the usual price of \$30, and includes a year of both Audubon Magazine and the Avocet. To send a gift, just return the form on the back of the Avocet, with a \$20 check, to the SCVAS office. We will send a card acknowledging your gift to the new member.

In addition, we have a new shipment of National Geographic Society's Field Guide to Birds of North America (\$13 + .63 to send), some of the last copies of Birding at the Bottom of the Bay (\$6.55 + \$1 to send--yes, we are almost sold out), Sequoia Audubon Society's SF Peninsula Birdwatching (\$9.10 + \$1 to send), Birds of the Sierra Coloring Book by Rob and Keith Hansen (\$5 + \$1 to send); the all new Birds for Real by Rich Stallcup (\$6.50 + \$1 to send), critiquing Golden Guide's Birds of North America and, of course, the perfect stocking stuffer, the SCVAS Patch (\$2 + SASE).

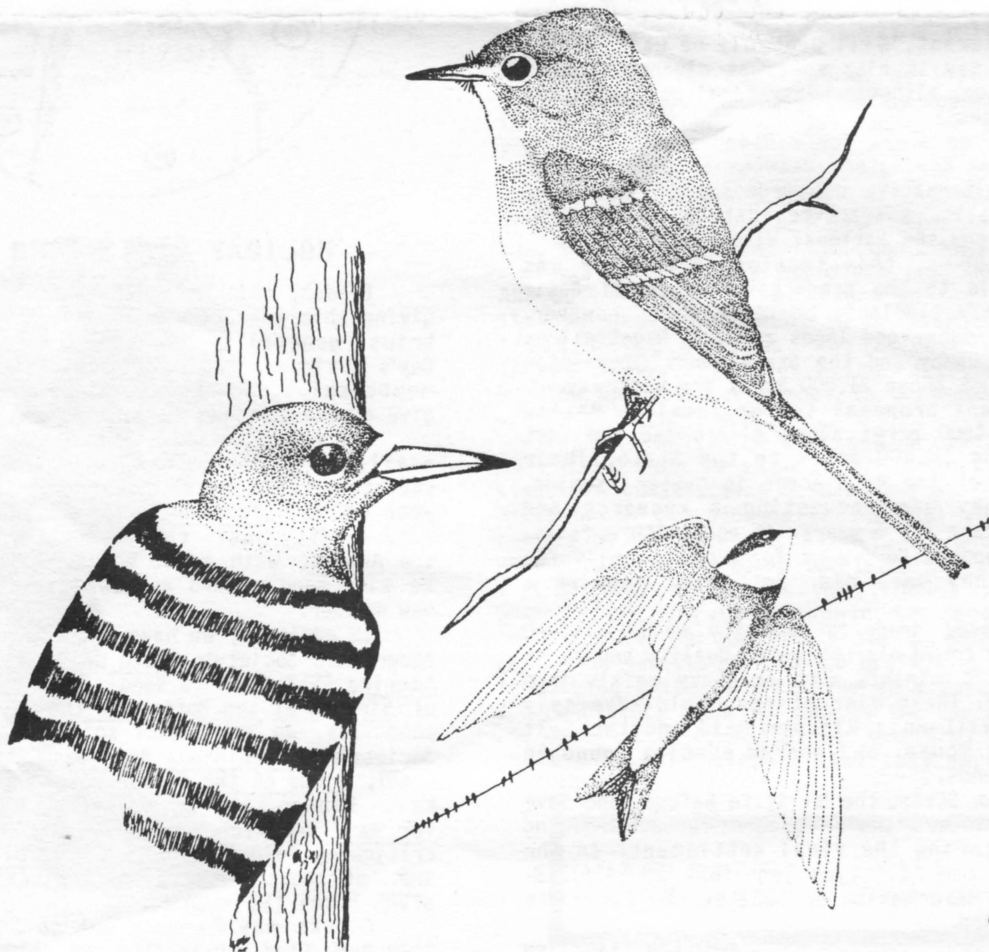
Checks may be made out to SCVAS and sent to 2253 Park Blvd., Palo Alto, CA 94306.

FIELD NOTES - Bill Bousman

In a recent issue of Western Birds (Vol. 16, No. 1) Johnson and Cicero discuss changes in the breeding birds of the San Benito Mountains over the last half century. They suggest that a slight climatic shift towards cooler and wetter conditions in the last fifty years has added boreal species to the avifauna with the loss of some dryland species. There are both similarities and differences between the Mt. Hamilton/Henry Coe portion of the Diablo Range and the San Benito Mountain area 80 miles to the south. Both are relatively high altitude portions of the range, although at 4000 feet the Mt. Hamilton area is 1000 feet lower than the San Benito. Both include extensive stands of Coulter pines and pines more typical of the Sierra - Yellow Pine or Jeffrey Pine. Incense Cedar is a major component of the San Benito area which does not occur near Mt. Hamilton. It appears that the understory is less dense in the southern portion of the range. Might some of the new boreal colonizing species show up in the Mt. Hamilton Range? Some birds on Johnson and Cicero's list are presently breeding residents - Solitary and Hutton's vireos, Yellow-rumped Warbler, and Western Tanager. The Northern Saw-whet Owl has been heard in the Mt. Hamilton Range in the summer and probably nests. The Pygmy Nuthatch is a nesting species in the coast range, but I have no summer records from Mt. Hamilton or Henry Coe. Most interesting to me are three others on the list - Dusky and Gray Flycatchers and Nashville Warbler. They also record a singing Cassin's Finch. The Dusky Flycatcher is not part of our avifauna (but see below) and there are only a few records for Gray Flycatcher and Cassin's

Finch. The Nashville Warbler is a regular, but rare migrant, -- no summer records. Are any of these birds occurring in the Yellow Pines of the Mt. Hamilton Range in the summer? It would be interesting to find out.

This month sounds more like a year-end summary than a monthly report with three new species added to the county list and several real rarities (less than 10 previous records). A **Little Blue Heron** in Alviso 22 Sep was very late (Paul Noble-PN). Ten **Cattle Egrets** were seen on Mountain View's Salt Pond No. 2 on 4 Oct (Lisa Posternak). Now that they've nested at Alviso will we see more of these? A **Green-backed Heron** in a channel near the Sunnyvale Dump 28 Sep was in a fairly typical location (Clark Blake, Bob Roback, and myself on the PRBO Bird-athon - CB et. al.) **White-faced Ibis** made a fall showing for the fourth county record. The first sighting was of two in the Mountain View Forebay 14 Sep (Maryann Danielson fide David Suddjian-DS). They were seen irregularly in the forebay and in the Palo Alto Flood Control Basin at least through 24 Sep (Jan Steck, Allan Royer, and Phyllis Browning-PB fide DS,CB) with a high count of three birds. The last sign of the **Wood Ducks** that nested along San Francisco Creek was an imm. male on 31 Aug (Betty Groce-BG). A female in the Palo Alto Duck Pond 10 Sep was in the San Antonio Valley on 27 and 28 Sep (CB et.al.). **Blue-winged Teal** were found in the Palo Alto FCB 19 Sep as the males came out of eclipse plumage. Four were found then with numbers up to 8 on 26 Sep (DS). They were also seen on 28 Sep (CB et.al.). **Golden Eagles** have been seen near the bay with an adult at the Palo Alto Dump 1 Sep (DS) and



© 1985 Gary McCurdy

FIELD NOTES - Bill Bousman

an immature at Moffett Field on 20 Sep (Bob Cate). At least one **Peregrine Falcon** has been in the area with sightings on 27 Aug (DS) and 28 Sep (CB et.al.). Three **Wild Turkeys** in San Antonio Valley 27 Sep were in a typical location (CB et.al.). **Lesser Yellowlegs** continue in small numbers at the Forebay and the FCB with observations from 29 Aug through 27 Sep (DS, Al Eisner-AE). Numbers have ranged from 1 to 3 or 4 with high counts of 7 in the FCB and 2 in the Forebay on 18 Sep (DS). A single bird was seen on Los Gatos Creek at Vasona 11 Sep (Gary McCurdy-GMcC). An unusual sighting was a **Solitary Sandpiper** at the Forebay 12 Sep through 17 Sep (DS). This is only the second county record I know of. Migrant **Spotted Sandpipers** have shown up with individuals along Los Gatos Creek 11 and 19 Sep (GMcC) and at the Palo Alto Yacht Harbor 27 Sep (PB). The last juvenile **Semipalmated Sandpipers** were seen in the Forebay on 25 Aug (Ted Chandik fide DS) and 3 Sep (DS). A **Baird's Sandpiper** was at the settling ponds across from the Forebay 12 Sep for one of the latest records we have (DS). **Pectoral Sandpipers** have been regularly at the Forebay from 28 Aug at least through 22 Sep (DS, PB, BG, AE). Mostly single birds were seen, but three were recorded on 22 Sep (DS). A bird at Grant Lake on 27 and 28 Sep (CB et.al) was in a less typical location. A first year **Heermann's Gull** at the exit gate of the Palo Alto FCB 18 Sep (DS) is only the second county record I have. As it's a common bird in the fall along the coast it may go unreported in the South Bay by people unaware of its scarcity inland (I call this the Red-breasted Merganser Effect). The "comic" terns (Common, Arctic, and Forster's) look alike, but can be separated with close study and experience. Forster's Tern is a common nesting species whose numbers drop off in the fall. Common and Arctic terns are spring and fall migrants along the coast, but are occasionally found inland. David Suddjian has been carefully studying terns in the outer portions of the bay margin this fall and his records suggest that **Common Tern** is a regular migrant. This month he found an imm. in Charleston Slough on 3 Sep, an adult there on 12 Sep, and another adult on Mountain View's Salt Pond No. 1 on 26 Sep. The major surprise, however, was an adult **Arctic Tern** he reported from the Palo Alto FCB on 24 Sep. This species is largely pelagic and very rare anywhere away from the coast. This appears to be the first county record. The last records for **Least Terns** were of two at Charleston Slough on 3 Sep, and one there on 17 Sep (both DS). A **N. Pygmy-Owl** was heard calling on Mines Rd. south of the Alameda Co. line on 28 Sep (CB et.al.) for one of the few recent records away from the Monte Bello OSP. Two **Vaux's Swifts** in Los Gatos 2 and 3 Sep (GMcC) were probably migrants, although they have nested in that area in past years. A female hummingbird in a Los Altos yard 12 to 25 Sep appeared smaller than a typical Anna's. The voice, reminiscent of a **Selasphorus** species, suggests a possible **Black-chinned Hummingbird** (Louise Blakey). Several **Lewis' Woodpeckers** in San Antonio Valley 27 and 28 Sep (CB et.al.) are normal for that area and suggest their colonies are still resisting the starlings. Another addition to the county checklist was a female **Williamson's Sapsucker** found working a trapline in a large Digger Pine along Mines Road south of the Alameda Co. line on 27 Sep (Clark Blake, WGB). This species sometimes wanders to the coast ranges in fall and winter and has been recorded in Alameda Co. in past years. There are at least two records for San Mateo Co. The third new addition to the checklist is a report from David Suddjian of a **Dusky Flycatcher** in the Matadero riparian area on 19 Sep. He made a detailed study of this bird and is confident of his identification despite the considerable debate ongoing in the

literature on identification of the fall empidonax species. Although 65 Willow, 2 Gray, and 570 Western flycatchers were banded on the Wool Ranch transect in the early 1970's, no Dusky Flycatchers were ever found. There are no records for San Mateo Co. Another unusual flycatcher from the same area was a **Western Kingbird** on 18 Sep. This species has been found here in late fall in past years. On 28 Sep, in a flock of 200-300 swallows of five species at the Alviso Marina, five **Bank Swallows** were observed (CB et.al.). This swallow was last recorded in the county in 1968. Are these large gatherings of migrating swallows (mostly immatures) typical for this location? A **House Wren** in the Matadero riparian 3 Sep appears to have been a normal migrant (DS), however, one in San Antonio Valley 28 Sep (CB et.al.) was quite late. Four **Am. Dippers** were seen along Los Gatos Creek above Vasona on 19 and 27 Sep (GMcC). A male **Phainopepla** was found 28 Sep in San Antonio Valley where they are rare (CB et.al.). A migrant **Black-throated Gray Warbler** was found 28 Sep along Smiths Creek (CB et.al.), locale and timing typical for fall migration. Atypical was a female **Am. Redstart** along Matadero Creek on 26 Sep (DS), the third county record. The adult male **Summer Tanager** reported last month from Los Gatos was last seen on 11 Sep and the imm. male on 10 Sep (GMcC). Two **Lincoln's Sparrows** in the Matadero riparian 3 Sep could not be found again and were probably migrants. Five found there on 19 Sep appear to be the first influx of winter birds (DS). Late (?) instances of last year's invasion of **Red Crossbills** were five at Monte Bello OSP on 31 Aug and one at Skyline Ranch OSP that day (DS). **Lawrence's Goldfinches** were found in large flocks along Arroyo Bayo and in San Antonio Valley 27 Sep, but only in small numbers the next day (CB et.al.). Four were found on Mines Rd. south of the Alameda Co. line on 28 Sep (AE). Early arrivals: **Am. Bittern**, Mayfield Slough, 18 Sep (DS); **Green-winged Teal**, Palo Alto FCB, 19 Sep (DS); **Canvasback**, Forebay, 14 Sep (PB fide DS); **Dunlin**, Charleston Slough, 28 Sep (CB et.al.); **Com. Snipe**, Forebay, 11 Sep (DS); **Glaucous-winged Gull**, Forebay, 26 Sep (DS); **Red-breasted Sapsucker**, Mt. Hamilton, 27 Sep (CB et.al.); **Ruby-crowned Kinglet**, Matadero riparian, 17 Sep (DS); **Hermit Thrush**, Matadero riparian, 19 Sep (DS); **Varied Thrush**, Mines Rd., 28 Sep (AE); **Fox Sparrow**, Matadero riparian, 24 Sep (DS); and **Golden-crowned** and **White-crowned Sparrows**, Matadero riparian, 17 Sep (DS).

If you see an "uncommon to rare" please write or call: Bill Bousman, 321 Arlington Way, Menlo Park, CA 94025 (415/322-5282).

LEXINGTON FIRE AFTEREFFECTS

We have a report from Patsy Pitts-Price, via Juana Pitts, that bird life in the area hit by the Lexington fire appears to have been greatly affected. The Summit Road area where Pitts-Price lives was badly hit by the fire, and almost all of the understory is gone. At a feeder where one Rufous-sided Towhee was the norm, they are now seeing six. There have been as many as 30 Steller's Jays at one time -- they've had to move the feeder further from the house. Patsy Pitts-Price mentioned this in a letter to her mother-in-law, Jean Price of Massachusetts, who sent \$300 to buy seed to feed the birds there.

We don't have any other information on what's happening to birds in the fire area. In the spring we may find out how the nesting populations of Black-chinned and Sage Sparrow have been affected. Have any readers living in this area noticed unusual bird behavior or unusual concentrations of birds? We'd be interested in hearing about it.

UNUSUAL FIELD TRIPS

The Mt. Shasta chapter of Audubon schedules field trips to national forests--both recently logged areas and proposed timber harvest areas. This allows members a first-hand look at what's happening on local public lands. Participants may bring cameras for dramatic before and after pictures.

SAN FRANCISCO BAY BIRD OBSERVATORY

If your interest in birds extends beyond birdwatching, you should know about the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory. Based in Alviso, SFBBO is dedicated to understanding the wildlife of the San Francisco Bay, and its research activities are largely carried out by volunteers. Though mainly South Bay-oriented, SFBBO carries out research in nine Bay Area counties.

This is your chance to advance scientific knowledge of the Bay wildlife and also to wade through the marshes counting Clapper Rail nests, or to band baby birds in nesting colonies, or to net and band birds at the Coyote Creek Riparian Station, or to teach classes, prepare reports, lead birdwalks, or help develop the observatory's native plant garden.

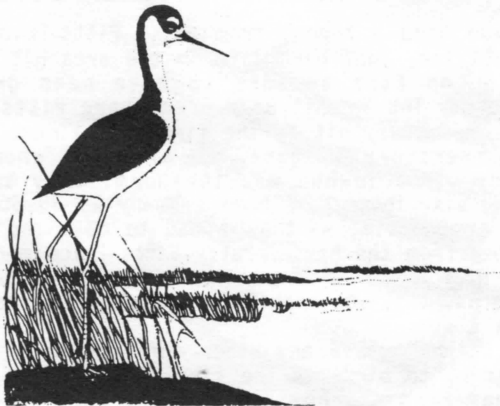
Among research projects ongoing at the observatory are a study of avian botulism, yearly censusing of heron, egret, gull and tern nests, and special projects looking at Clapper Rails, Saltmarsh Yellowthroats and the ecology of salt ponds.

As well as research, the observatory does a lot of educational work with schools and scouts, teaching kids about the wildlife of the San Francisco Bay.

With a small staff and budget, SFBBO is largely dependent on members for support. (Regular dues are \$15/year.) At the same time it's a tremendous opportunity for volunteers. Volunteers receive special training when necessary, have access to many areas one doesn't ordinarily get to visit, and get a much more informed and intimate look at Bay wildlife that is usually available.

SFBBO holds monthly general meetings on the first Thursday of the month, 7:30 pm, at the SF Bay National Wildlife Refuge Environmental Education Center in Alviso. (If you'd like to join, it's possible to do so at one of these meetings.) Call between 1-5 pm weekdays at (408)946-6548 for more information.

(One of a series of profiles of conservation organizations.)



SUCCESS STORY (SORT OF)

Once in a while, one person can make a big difference in preserving wetlands. In September, the quick actions of two people in Newark stopped illegal diskings of wetlands on a proposed development site.

On September 10, a Newark neighbor of the project spotted a tractor beginning to disk Mayhews Landing, a large tract of land that is to be developed into a golf course and residential housing. Because she cared about the land, she contacted Margaret Lewis, an active conservationist in Newark who also cares very much about the property and its importance to wildlife.

The developer, Edward De Silva, had a permit to disk the upland portions of the property, but not the wetlands; however, the tractor operator also disked part of the wetlands. The tract contains a significant population of the endangered Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse and numerous other animals and birds. Margaret immediately began contacting local agencies and newspapers, Rep. Don Edwards in Washington, D.C., the Colonel of the San Francisco office of the Corps of Engineers (the Corps has jurisdictional authority over wetlands), and numerous other agencies and organizations.

As a result of Margaret's rapid and outraged response, the wetland destruction was halted quickly, and the Corps of Engineers issued a Cease and Desist order to the developer. The Corps' action was much more rapid than it has been in similar situations in the past, and SCVAS appreciates this response at Mayhews Landing.

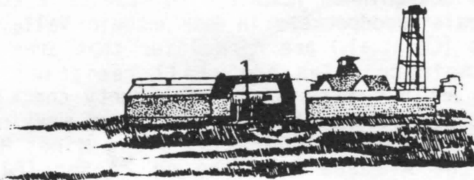
The success of these two people who care about saving undeveloped land is encouraging. If Margaret had not acted quickly and fiercely to protect the site, the damage probably would have been much worse. Unfortunately, as always happens, the diskings killed numerous small animals, but only a portion of the wetlands was filled.

Removal of the fill from the wetlands may allow the wetlands to recover fully. Letters and phone calls to the Corps might encourage the Corps to require the developer to remove the fill. Please write or call: Colonel Andrew M. Perkins, Jr., District Engineer, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 221 Main Street, San Francisco, CA 94105. Phone (415)974-0358. Please call Lynn Tennefoss at (415)329-1811 if you have questions.

-Martha Esserlieu

THANKS, VOLUNTEERS

Thanks to Sept. volunteers - Harry Beerbohm, Marion Lockwood, and Tibby Simons. NEEDED - COOKIE BAKERS FOR GENERAL MEETINGS! Please call the office if you are willing to contribute a plate of cookies to a General Meeting, (415)329-1811.



ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION COMMITTEE

The Environmental Action Committee (aka: Conservation Committee) has been re-established and is actively involved with preservation and conservation issues.

Currently we are working on preservation and restoration of the South Bay Wetlands. Our plans include:

Expansion of the San Francisco Wildlife Refuge
Prevention of further dredging of the Palo Alto harbor.

Production of a video project describing the degradation of our wetlands.

Establishment of a team of Environmental Watchers.

Continued letter writing campaign on key environmental issues.

Development of an educational slide presentation covering specific wetland issues.

If any of these projects are of interest to you, please contact Barbara Hambelton at (408)446-3645 or Lynn Tennefoss at (415)329-1811.

DONATION TO THE LIBRARY

Bird Seeker's Guide by John Gooders, from Rose Linn.

NON-AUDUBON TRIPS, AND EVENTS

The following are not sponsored by Audubon, but are listed for your information.

The Fremont Adult School offers a one-day workshop on waterbirds, Nov. 16, from 9 am to 3 pm, to be taught by Alice Hoch. The class will visit spots in Alameda County, and costs \$12. Call the school at (415)791-5841 for more details.

The Mono Lake Committee is planning a cruise to the Galapagos Islands, Ecuador and Peru, and the headwaters of the Amazon June 18 - July 5, 1986. Part of the trip fee will be a tax-deductible contribution to the Mono Lake effort. Fees for the trip aren't final yet. For more complete information, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope (legal size) to Adventure for MLC, c/o M. Bennett, 2719 Marin Ave., Berkeley, CA 94708.

The Humane Societies of Santa Clara Valley and the U.S. are sponsoring a Safari to East Africa January 16-31. Cost is \$3150 total from San Francisco. This photographic tour will visit Kilimanjaro, the Serengeti and the Samburu Reserve, among others. Write to the Humane Society of Santa Clara Valley, 2530 Lafayette Street, Santa Clara, CA 95050 for a detailed brochure.

Gail and Doug Cheeseman (Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris) in Saratoga have 2 spaces on their Tanzania, Seychelles, & Kenya safari from June 27 - July 26 (\$4400, plus airfare), and 4 spaces on their Galapagos & Peru Natural History trip, led by Paul Donahue, Ted Chandik, and Dave Johnston from July 27 to Aug. 18 (\$2600, plus airfare). The dates for their 3 Monterey Bay marine mammal and bird watching trips are Dec. 29, Jan. 11, and Jan. 18, \$30. Phone (408)741-5330 or 867-1371.

The Garden Club of Palo Alto will present its traditional Holiday Affaire "Suddenly it's Christmas" at the Lucie Stern Community Center, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto, on Saturday, December 7, from 10-3 pm. The bi-annual event will offer for sale handmade toys, miniature live trees, wreaths, ivy baskets, flowering bulbs, a kitchen cupboard, and much more. Admission is free. All proceeds will go toward the development of a community garden center on the former Elizabeth Gamble property in Palo Alto.

IVORY-BILLED PROBABLY EXTINCT

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is making its final call for the Ivory-billed Woodpecker. It has received no encouraging response. The bird was last spotted more than 30 years ago. The last intensive search for it was in 1968 in the Big Thicket of southeast Texas. In Florida, one authenticated Ivory-billed feather was found in the 1960's, but nothing more.

The bird is, or was, the largest and most spectacular woodpecker in North America. It averages 20 inches long. It is mostly black, with a large white triangle on the lower half of its back and a white stripe down each side of the neck from the cheeks to the back. Males have a red crest, females a black crest. It is often confused with the relatively common pileated woodpecker, which is also large.

The Fish and Wildlife Service had set August 8 as the official deadline for information about the woodpecker, since they must make a decision soon about declaring the bird extinct. There is some pressure on the Service not to make the decision, as it's difficult to admit that anything is extinct.

Once the Ivory-billed Woodpecker was found throughout the south-central and southeastern U.S. The main obstacle in its struggle to survive was loss of habitat. As virgin forests were swallowed up, the Ivory-billed began to disappear. One of the last dwelling places of the bird is believed to have been South Florida's Fakahatchee Strand, in Collier County's Big Cypress Swamp, before it was logged out in the 1940's and 50's.

Nationwide, the last promising report came from South Louisiana in the mid-1970's. A man came up with photos of a pair of Ivory-billed Woodpeckers in a tree. They may have been authentic, but the birds were never found. Alexander Sprunt IV of Plantation Key, Florida, research director for the National Audubon Society, thinks the birds are all gone, except for a different subspecies in eastern Cuba.

-Sketches
-From an article in the San Diego Union

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

Holiday Hours: M-F 9-5; Saturdays 10-4
Starting November 16



PENINSULA
CONSERVATION
CENTER STORE

2253 Park Blvd.
Palo Alto 94306
(415)328-5313

| | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------|---------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Staff | Lynn Tennefoss (days) | 415/329-1811 | DIRECTORS (1984-87) | | | | |
| President | Kevin Monahan | 408/559-8713 | Deborah Manley | 408/749-8126 | Publicity | Deborah Manley | 408/749-8126 |
| 1st Vice Pres | Judy McEuen | 408/251-3086 | Mark McEuen | 408/251-3086 | Library | Myra Hodgson | 415/326-3641 |
| 2nd Vice Pres | Dave Johnston | 408/258-4322 | Greg Meszaros | 408/985-7157 | Field Trips | Vicki Silvas-Young | 408/293-7124 |
| Treasurer | Dave Nauer | 408/259-1283 | DIRECTORS (1985-88) | | | Dolores Norton | 415/941-1666 |
| Rec. Sec'y | Courtenay Dawson-Roberts | 415/327-5746 | Karen Ingels | 415/323-7284 | Membership | Linda Hagelin | 408/867-3046 |
| Past President | Sue Liskovec | 415/969-5542 | Phil LaRiviere | 415/493-5540 | Aud. Adventures | Elaine Gould | 408/448-0622 |
| | | | Don Price | 415/327-1254 | Hospitality | Barbara Hamblton | 408/446-3645 |
| DIRECTORS (1983-86) | | | CHAIRPERSONS | | Conservation | | |
| Richard Jeffers | 415/325-9675 | | Editor | Susan McCarthy | Christmas | Jim & Sue Liskovec | 415/969-5542 |
| Barbara Hamblton | 408/446-3645 | | Assistant Editor | Virginia Bennett | Bird Count | Donna Zetterquist | 408/429-9716 |
| Roy Lowe | 408/251-2323 | | Programs | Doug & Gail Cheeseman | Grants | Pete LaTourrette | 415/961-2741 |
| | | | | | Photo Club | | |

General meetings are open to the public. Board of Directors meetings are open to all members. Call the office for times and directions.

Avocet deadline is the first Monday of the month. Send contributions to the editor, Susan McCarthy, 475 S 12th, San Jose, CA 95112.

POSSIBLE EXPANSION OF THE SF BAY WILDLIFE REFUGE

In an effort to protect the decreasing wetlands of the San Francisco Bay, expansion of the S. F. Bay National Wildlife Refuge has been proposed. Expansion of the Refuge would provide comprehensive and long-term protection for the wetlands included which they currently lack. Continued pressure for development is jeopardizing wetlands along both edges of the Bay, particularly the San Mateo Baylands and Bair Island and in Newark and Fremont.

A committee has formed and met twice to plan strategies to expand the Wildlife Refuge. They have prepared maps of Bay wetlands and have placed priorities for acquisition on specific parcels. A computerized data base of like-minded individuals and organizations provides a focus for local support; federal support is being sought through Congressional legislation. The committee will meet with Rep. Don Edwards in November to seek his support for the refuge expansion.

If this effort to preserve wetlands succeeds, it will assure continued protection for more of the excellent wildlife habitat that residents of the Bay Area are so fortunate to enjoy. It will also prevent development of marginal lands along the Bay. If you are interested in helping or in more information, please call Rick Epstein at (415)965-1931 or Florence LaRiviere at (415)493-5540. Help is needed with fundraising, publicity, education, political action, technical support, interorganizational support, and the executive committee.

--Martha Esserlieu

HUMMINGBIRD FEEDING INFORMATION

Fall is here and winter near. There are important things to remember if you have been or will be feeding hummingbirds. Do not take your feeder down! Many Annas are resident hummers that stay here all year and many depend upon access to a feeder, especially in fall and winter, for survival.

Keep your feeder scrupulously clean and syrup fresh. Do not let feeder become and remain empty. Hang feeder in shade and put out only slightly more syrup than will be taken in 4 or 5 days when weather is warm. In cold weather a week may be safe. Do not add red food coloring. If feeder needs more red - few do - add color to it, not the syrup.

Do not add a protein additive to your syrup. Insects are the hummingbirds' natural protein source; they have no problem catching them, and insects are present here all year. (15 deg. temperature caused a brief exception in 1972.) Protein added to the sugar syrup which a hummer may desperately need at regular intervals will at the same time disrupt its natural protein feeding pattern, which is different, and which the bird adjusts daily for its own well-being. Remember, too - these proteins cannot be depended upon to keep safely for more than a day.

Syrup proportions: 1/4 cup sugar to 1 cup water. Sugar proportion may be increased in winter to no more than 1/3 cup. Avitron vitamins obtained from pet stores or Abdec from a drugstore may be added when filling feeder. Add 1 drop to each 1/4 cup of syrup.

-Louise Blakey

(A new edition, partially revised and updated, of Our Hummingbirds by Louise Blakey is available in the P.C.C. gift shop. Price \$4.00)

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.

MEMBERSHIP

To join the Audubon Society send a check, payable to NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY, to SCVAS office, 2253 Park Boulevard, Palo Alto, CA 94306. Membership includes AUDUBON magazine, the national publication, and the AVOCET. AVOCET subscriptions alone are \$6/year. It is published monthly except July and August. Send address changes to the office promptly.

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
 Gift from _____

CHECK CATEGORY

- () Individual/\$30
- () Family/\$38
- () Senior Citizen/\$21
- () Senior Citizen Family/\$23
- () Student/\$18
- () AVOCET only/\$6
- () Introductory Membership/\$20