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The Avocet



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SCVAS BIRDATHON 1989

Mark your calendars now for THE event of the spring - the SCVAS BIRDATHON! On the weekend of April 29-30, migration will be in full swing, and we are going to take advantage of the great weather, and wonderful birding.

In a birdathon, counters (birders) recruit sponsors who agree to pledge a specific amount for each bird species the counter identifies in one 24 hour period. This year, birders may count during any 24 hour period on the weekend of April 29-30. Last year, SCVAS successfully raised \$5000; this year's birdathon funds will go towards supporting the National Audubon Society Mono Lake Legal Fund, ongoing SCVAS educational projects and also to a brand new SCVAS Wetlands Defense Legal Fund. While we do our best through administrative channels to stop projects that threaten sensitive wetlands around the bay, sometimes the need exists to take our arguments to court. To date, SCVAS has had only limited opportunity to press our case, due to lack of funds for legal battles. But as the number of development projects escalates, the need for legal action has climbed too. We hope to raise enough money through the Birdathon to become a significant contributor to wetlands protection cases.

Your support for these important projects is needed in several ways. Choose your own route, gather your own sponsors, and be a counter. Team Leader Orientation will be held the evening of Wed. Feb. 22- call Grant Hoyt at (415)96-7892 for details. Or, pledge your support to one of SCVAS's teams of expert birders - more details and sponsor forms will be included in the March AVOCET. We hope to have a few celebrities joining us, and look forward especially to YOUR support!

1988 SAN JOSE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

This year's bird count was another great one. 129 counters tallied 85,000 birds of 161 species. The species count is our fourth highest. Thanks to Bill Bousman's analysis of past CBC statistics, we can say that this year counters saw 133 out of the 136 regularly occur-

ring species, 18 of the 31 less common species, and 10 very rare species including three "firsts".

For the second year in a row, a single Blue-winged Teal was recorded in Alviso. An exciting first for the San Jose count was an Oldsquaw seen in Alviso near Newby Island. The species is quite rare in California in the winter and was probably the same individual seen the week before on a SCVAS field trip. Alum Rock recorded a first for our count, a female Barrow's Goldeneye, and, very rare in winter, an Osprey. The previous Osprey CBC sighting was ten years ago. Peregrines are regularly sighted in the south bay, but not always on the CBC. This year's CBC bird was only the sixth sighting on CBC day! Again in the Alum Rock section, a Phainopepla turned up; the species was last recorded in 1984. Milpitas recorded a single Palm Warbler, a species that is possibly regular in California in the winter. Palms were previously recorded in 1979 and 1980. A male Wilson's Warbler seen in Alviso was an exciting first for the count. Section G had a Western Tanager - the first since 1982 and 83. This species is very rare in California in winter. And last but not least, a Hooded Oriole was reported in Alviso. The only other record for that species was in 1983.

...1988 CBC Cont. Page 2.

FEBRUARY GENERAL MEETING HUMMINGBIRDS & THEIR FLOWERS

A special slide show will begin the February General Meeting program at the Palo Alto Cultural Center: EDWARD ROOKS, a superb wildlife artist, will give a 15 minute presentation on the Birds and Wildlife of Trinidad, as illustrated through slides of his paintings. LUIS BAPTISTA, Chairman and Curator of Ornithology and Mammology for the California Academy of Sciences will then present a program on Hummingbirds and Their Flowers. Having studied hummingbirds in Brazil and other areas of the Neotropics, Luis will emphasize the co-evolution and adaptations of both hummingbirds and flowers for their success and survival. Luis is a very entertaining speaker and will certainly mesmerize us with his rendition of hummingbird voices.

SAN JOSE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT RESULTS 12-18-88

Pied-billed Grebe 115; Horned Grebe 1637; Eared Grebe 3355; Western Grebe 143; Western (Clark's) Grebe 5; American White Pelican 243; Double-crested Cormorant 21; American Bittern 10; Great Blue Heron 43; Great Egret 100; Snowy Egret 143; Green-backed Heron 9; Black-crowned Night Heron 484; Canada Goose 911; Wood Duck 1; Green-winged Teal 105; Mallard 779; Northern Pintail 130; Blue-winged Teal 1; Cinnamon Teal 23; Northern Shoveler 2133; Gadwall 360; American Wigeon 352; Canvasback 1426; Ring-necked Duck 74; Greater Scaup 1; Lesser Scaup 8; Scaup Species 753; Oldsquaw 1; Surf Scoter 370; Common Goldeneye 65; Barrow's Goldeneye 1; Bufflehead 303; Common Merganser 215; Red-breasted Merganser 52; Ruddy Duck 1635; Duck Species 258; Turkey Vulture 88; Osprey 1; Black-shouldered Kite 22; Bald Eagle (a) 2; Northern Harrier 61; Sharp-shinned Hawk 18; Cooper's Hawk 7; Accipiter Species 6; Red-shouldered Hawk 22; Red-tailed Hawk 173; Ferruginous Hawk 3; Buteo Species 8; Golden Eagle (a) 13; Golden Eagle (i) 7; Golden Eagle (u) 1; American Kestrel 119; Merlin 3; Peregrine Falcon 2; Prairie Falcon 3; Falcon Species 2; Ring-necked Pheasant 26; California Quail 287; Virginia Rail 11; Common Moorhen 32; American Coot 4109; Black-bellied Plover 59; Semipalmated Plover 3; Killdeer 730; Black-necked Stilt 824; American Avocet 348; Greater Yellowlegs 41; Lesser Yellowlegs 1; Yellowlegs Species 2; Willet 224; Spotted Sandpiper 2; Long-billed Curlew 218; Marbled Godwit 15; Sanderling 69; Western Sandpiper 1633; Least Sandpiper 520; Dunlin 955; Short-billed Dowitcher 64; Long-billed Dowitcher 82; Dowitcher Species 348; Common Snipe 35; Sandpiper Species 130; Peep Species 57; Bonaparte's Gull 788; Mew Gull 2189; Ring-billed Gull 2972; California Gull 4094; Herring Gull 2171; Thayer's Gull 28; Western Gull 2154; Glaucous-winged Gull 50; Gull Species 7528; Forster's Tern 2; Rock Dove 2033; Mourning Dove 1057; Western Screech Owl 2; Great Horned Owl 10; Northern Pygmy Owl 1; Burrowing Owl 15; White-throated Swift 13; Anna's Hummingbird 568; Belted Kingfisher 44; Acorn Woodpecker 87; Red-breasted Sapsucker 20; Nuttall's Woodpecker 93; Downy Woodpecker 21; Hairy Woodpecker 2; Northern Flicker 360; Woodpecker Species 3; Black Phoebe 14; Say's Phoebe 23; Horned Lark 100; Steller's Jay 325; Scrub Jay 620; Yellow-billed Magpie 337; American Crow 110; Common Raven 4; Chestnut-backed Chickadee 344; Plain Titmouse 124; Bushtit 1201; White-breasted Nuthatch 53; Brown Creeper 20; Rock Wren 9; Bewick's Wren 73; Winter Wren 1; Marsh Wren 108; American Dipper 3; Golden-crowned Kinglet 4; Ruby-crowned Kinglet 430; Western Bluebird 127; Hermit Thrush 125; American Robin 765; Varied Thrush 25; Wrentit 41; Northern Mockingbird 190; California Thrasher 6; Water Pipit 336; Cedar Waxwing 429; Phainopepla 1; Loggerhead Shrike 92; European Starling 4127; Hutton's Vireo 27; Orange-crowned Warbler 3; Yellow-rumped Warbler 759; Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler 14; Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler 256; Townsend's Warbler 26; Palm Warbler 1; Common Yellowthroat 74; Wilson's Warbler 1; Western Tanager 1; Rufous-sided Towhee 94; Brown Towhee 499; Rufous-crowned Sparrow 19; Lark Sparrow 113; Savannah Sparrow 232; Fox Sparrow 4; Song Sparrow 446; Lincoln's Sparrow 40; Golden-crowned Sparrow 1396; White-crowned Sparrow 2300; Dark-eyed Junco 1271; Red-winged Blackbird 1268; Tricolored Blackbird 211; Western Meadowlark 737; Brewer's Blackbird 4636; Blackbird Species 2065; Brown-headed Cowbird 104; Hooded Oriole 1; Purple Finch 20; House Finch 2573; Red Crossbill 1; Pine Siskin 6; Lesser Goldfinch 624; American Goldfinch 388; House Sparrow 126; Sparrow Species 363.

GRAND TOTALS: 85,200 birds of 161 species.

1988 SAN JOSE CBC Continued

The Christmas Count depends on people as well as birds. Section leaders work especially hard scouting their areas, recruiting counters, and handling paperwork. We appreciate their time and diligence. They have made our job as compilers as pleasure. In the following list of counters, their names are underlined.

Ernest Abeles, Louise Accurso, Jean Alexander, Wanda Alexander, Pauli Baggs, Ginny Becchine, Bonnie Bedford-White, William Bousman, Susie Brain, Berry Brown, Peggy Brown, Phillis Browning, Juliette Bryson, Sam Campbell, Richard Carlson, John Cartelli, Chris Cassatta, Mildred Cho, Derek Currall, Rigdon Currie, Tom Dahlen, Maryann Danielson, Jim Danzenbaker, Penelope Delevoryas, Sandra Doran, Jean Dubois, Richard Elliott, Mike Feighner, Marc Fenner, Nancy Fitzsimmons, Bob Fitzsimmons, Peter Folen, Susie Formenti, Shirley Gordon, Darrell Gray, Patrick Gulick, Kay Gurley, Ed Gustafson, Phil Hand, John Harshman, Lloyd Hartshorn, Thomas Harvey, Jo Haskell, Rich Healy, Gloria Heller, Howard Higley, Chuck Hignite, Linda Hignite,

Jim Holman, Grant Hoyt, Karen Hoyt, Lee Hung, June Hymas, Angie Jaggars, Deborah Jamison, David Johnston, Monica Johnston, James Jones, Leona Jones, William Kirshner, Toni Koenen, Edwin Laak, Jonathan Lawton, Jim Liskovec, Sue Liskovec, Gerry Livingston, Linda Lloyd, Mike Mammoser, Patricia Mann, David McDonald, Jiu McIntyre, John Mewaldt, L. Richard Mewaldt, Greg Meyer, Mark Miller, Steve Miller, Brenda Monroe, Eileen Murphy, Mary Nishimoto, Paul Noble, Phil Noble, Chris Otahal, Rick Palmer, Kathy Parker, Larry Parmeter, Janet Pasternak, Steven Patt, Pamela Price, Carolyn Rees, Mary-Lyle Rempel, Bob Roadcap, Edward Rooks, Allen Royer, Nancy Ryan, Kandice Scott, Roberta Seals, David Seals, Milton Seibert, Rob Shields, Bonnie Jo Spacek, Jack Spinler, Theresa Spinler, Jean-Marie Spoelman, C. Stanger, Don Starks, Shelley Stewart, Dick Stovel, Lennie Stovel, David Suddjian, Phyllis Swanson, Lisa Swagerty, Lynn Teneffoss, Bernie Tershy, Alan Thomas, Gene Troetschler, Ruth Troetschler, Jeff Tye, Matt Van De Rijn, Jerry Vitenson, Jack Wallace, Sally Walters, Alan Walther, Milt West, Judy Wiley, Anne Wilson, Christine Wolfe, Clair Wolfe, Peg Woodin, Jean and Lou Young.

Special thanks to the dinner committee headed by Judy McEuen, for the delicious lasagna dinner served to more than 80 hungry counters. Thanks to all the counters, party leaders, section leaders. Bill Bousman and his rare bird committee members did their usual fine effort of handling all the reports. Especially this year, thanks to Alan and Karen Thomas, Karen Hoyt, and Mark and Judy McEuen for helping with the post-count number crunching. And, of course, our hearty thanks to Lynn Teneffoss who attends to the details and picks up loose ends so that everything runs smoothly for the CBC and all that SCVAS undertakes.

For the 1989 CBC, mark Sunday, December 17. Till then, good birding, and have a great year.

- Jim and Sue Liskovec, CBC Compilers

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

On all field trips CARPOOL and share expenses. Bring binoculars, field guides, warm clothing, lunch (optional on half-day trips) and liquids. If you can provide or need transportation, call Gail Cheeseman (408) 741-5330.

FEBRUARY

Field Trip Coordinator: Jim Liskovec (415) 969-5542.

Feb 1 Bay Area Bird Photographers. WEDNESDAY, 7:30 pm. Baylands Nature Interpretive Center. **Frans Lanting**, a nationally known nature photographer will speak and show slides of his work.

Feb 4 Livermore/Altamont Hawks. SATURDAY, 9 am. Full Day. Meet at Jct. of Greenville Rd. and Patterson Rd. just south of Hwy I-580 at base of Altamont Pass. Bring lunch and full tank of fuel. Spotting scopes helpful. If possible read "Livermore-Byron Hot Springs" in *Birding at the Bottom of the Bay* (p. 93). Ferruginous, rough-legged hawks, Golden eagle, falcons. Leader: Don Schmoltdt (415) 236-5612 (eve.).

Feb 5 Kayaking Elkhorn Slough. SUNDAY, 8:30 am. Half day. Join Greg Myers on a unique look at Elkhorn Slough. Using kayaks you will be able to glide within feet of the wintering waterbirds. No experience necessary. Safe and gentle. Bring clothes and footwear that are waterproof. Trip limited to 15. Fee \$45 (10% donation to SCVAS). Call leader Greg Myers for reservations (408) 336-3513.

Feb 8 Alviso Environmental Ed. Center. WEDNESDAY, 9:30 am. Half day. Walk with volunteer naturalist Lee Lovelady on trails behind the Ed. Center and along the sloughs. From 237 (Mtn. View-

Alviso Hwy), take Taylor Street. Turn right at Grand Blvd., straight to Refuge gate. Meet at Ed. Center. Heavy rain cancels. Gail Cheeseman (408) 867-1371.

Feb 11 Fall River Mills SATURDAY, 7:30 am. Full Day. Combined trip with Wintu (Redding) Audubon. Meet at Sears store in Redding (at intersection of I-5 and Hwy 44). Take the Hilltop exit N to Mall. Redding is about 6 hr N of Bay Area. Suggest participants stay in Redding Friday night. Accommodations in Redding or Fall River/MacArthur Burney. Latecomers meet at Chevron station in Fall River Mills 9-9:30 am. Bring warm clothing, lunch for Saturday, water holder and CBs for caravan. Highlights: woodpeckers and sapsuckers, mountain finches, longspurs and Northern shrike possible. Rain or snow cancels. Leaders: Bob Yutzy & Bill Von. Local contacts: Jim & Sue Liskovec (415) 969-5542.

Feb 12 Birdwalk for Beginners at Charleston Slough. SUNDAY, 9 am. Half day. Meet at the end of San Antonio Rd. in Mountain View, east off of Hwy 101. Easy walking of 2 miles. Basics of field I.D. emphasizing waterfowl and shorebirds. Leader: Paul Noble (415) 948-3876.

Feb 14 Bird Discussion Group. TUESDAY, 9:30 am at the home of Eve Case, 20537 Verde Vista Ln, Saratoga (408) 867-4748. Topic: Song sparrow.

Feb 15 General Meeting WEDNESDAY, 7:30 pm refreshments, 7:45 pm bird id. workshop, 8 pm program. Palo Alto Cultural Center, corner of Embarcadero and Newell. Luis Baptista on hummingbirds, see article.

Feb 18 Birdwalk for Beginners at Coyote Hills Park. SUNDAY, 9 am. Meet at

park entrance. Take Hwy 84 east over bay to Thornton Exit. Go left on freeway overpass, Paseo Padre Parkway, then left on Patterson Ranch Rd. to park. Entrance fee possible. Highlights: ducks and wintering birds. Leader: Bill Kirsher (415) 854-3936.

Feb 19 Trip for the Gullible. SUNDAY, 8:30 am. Palo Alto/Mountain View. Meet at Palo Alto Duck Pond. Take Embarcadero east off Hwy 101 to end. Go left, to Duck Pond on left. Here's your chance to learn how to distinguish gulls with noted gull expert Don Starks. Leader: Don Starks (408) 371-9720.

Feb 22 Foster City. WEDNESDAY, 9 am. Half day. Bird-watching in Foster City baylands. Lunch optional. Rain cancels. Take Hwy 101 N. to Hillsdale Blvd. E. Follow Hillsdale 1 mile to Shell Blvd. Turn rt. and go 1/3 mile. Park near recreation center. Leader: Rose Green (415) 493-8378.

Feb 26 Moss Landing Wildlife Area and Jetty Rd. SUNDAY, 9 am. Meet at Jetty Rd. just off Hwy 1 in Moss Landing. Bring lunch. Rain cancels. Highlights: Wintering shorebirds and waterfowl. Leader: Gail Cheeseman (408) 867-1317.

MARCH

Mar 1 Bay Area Bird Photographers. WEDNESDAY, 7:30 pm. at the Baylands Nature Center. **Dick Kuenne**, who traveled solo to Kenya to photograph wildlife, will show his work.

Mar 4 Princeton/Half Moon Bay. SATURDAY, 9 am. Meet at Harbormaster's office near boat launch in Princeton. Take Hwy 92 W. to coast. N to Princeton. Full Day. Bring lunch and drinks. Major storm cancels—call leader 7-

...Field Trips Cont. P. 8

FIELD NOTES by BILL BOUSMAN

The Christmas Bird Count (CBC) season always provides an incredible amount of information on our wintering birds. In the rush to the deadline I miss quite a few interesting records and sometimes fail to credit the correct observers. I apologize ahead of time for my errors that follow.

LOONS TO GEESE

Loonacy is the word for this winter on the west side of the Santa Clara Valley. The Palo Alto CBC had record numbers of loons, but the San Jose count had none—a completely different pattern from storm-driven birds as we saw in December 1983. **Red-throated Loons** have been at Shoreline Lake since late November with many observers (m.ob.) reporting from one to nine birds through the end of the month. Six were there on Palo Alto count day, 19 Dec (Andy Kratter - AK, Mike Rogers - MRo, David Suddjian - DLSu) and a high of nine were found on 25 Dec (DLSu). Lexington Res. had birds as well 16 to 20 Dec with ten counted on the latter date (DLSu). Four to five birds were found on the Los Gatos Creek ponds 16 to 25 Dec and two more were on Vasona Res. 16 Dec (DLSu). One to four **Pacific Loons** were on Shoreline Lake during December (m.ob) with a high of four on 17 Dec (Bill Bousman - WBG) and two picked up on count day (AK, MRo, DLSu). Even less expected was a single bird on Felt Lake on 19 Dec (Al Eisner - AME, et al.). Filling out this loony triumvirate were one to five **Common Loons** on Shoreline Lake in December (m.ob) with four on count day (AK, MRo, DLSu) and five there on 25 Dec (DLSu). Single birds were also found on Felt Lake 19 Dec (AME et al.), Lexington Res. 20 Dec (DLSu) and Los Gatos Creek ponds 25 Dec (DLSu). A lingering adult **Brown Pelican** was found at Shoreline Lake 3 to 11 Dec (Mike Mammoser - MJM, MRo, AME), but didn't stay for the count. This species is rare after October in the south bay. Our only record in the last decade, a **Brandt's Cormorant** showed up

at Shoreline Lake 9 Dec (Paul Noble - PLN) and stayed at least through 21 Dec (DLSu, WGB, MRo, AK, MJM). It was found on count day for one of the few records for the Palo Alto circle. Twelve **Tundra Swans** over the Coyote Creek Riparian Station (CCRS) were a rare sight on 10 Dec (PLN), but they couldn't be found in either count circle a week later. Two flying **Greater White-fronted Geese** over Shoreline Lake for the Palo Alto CBC 19 Dec (DLSu) were a rare find. Birds at the Menlo Park Civic Center 8 Dec (Claire Wolfe) and Vasona Res. 16 Dec (DLSu) did not appear to be domesticated, but their locations were strange, nonetheless. A recently dead **Snow Goose** along Coyote Creek in Henry Coe SP 11 Dec (James Yurchenco - JY, Amy Lauterbach - AL) was in an area where they've not been found before.

DUCKS TO MERGANSERS

A male **Blue-winged Teal** found on the San Jose CBC 18 Dec (fide Jim & Sue Liskovec - J&SLi) was a rare find—they've been found in the count circle only three times before in the last 15 years. A number of **Eurasian Wigeon** have been in the vicinity of the Palo Alto Flood Control Basin (FCB) and Charleston Slough this fall. On count day three different males were found (AK, MRo) in the vicinity. **Redhead** have been found in smaller numbers than past years. Two pairs on Shoreline Lake on 29 Dec are typical (Phyllis Browning - PMB, Winkie Lennihan - WLe). More surprising was a bird(s) on Isabel Res. 20 Dec (Grant Hoyt - GHt fide Don Schmoltd - DSc) on the Mt. Hamilton CBC. An imm. **Oldsquaw** found in the SF Bay NWR off of Fremont Blvd. in Alameda County 14 Dec (Gail Cheeseman) was found again 18 Dec (Derek Currall - DCu, Rigdon Currie - RC). This is an exceedingly rare bird in the south bay and was surely the highlight of the San Jose count. **White-winged Scoter** were missed on both counts, which is not surprising. A single female was found at Shoreline Lake on 25 Dec (DLSu). The **Barrow's Goldeneyes** that showed up at Shoreline Lake in

November have been thereof and on through December (m.ob). On 19 Dec a male and two females were found there for one of the few Palo Alto Count records (AK, MRo, DLSu). More surprising was a female found on 18 Dec on a small pond off Penetencia Creek near Cherry Flat Res. (DLSu). This is the first recent record for the San Jose CBC and rivals the Oldsquaw for top honors. We rarely find this bird more than once every other winter or so. The **Hooded Mergansers** at the Skyllonda Pond stayed around for the Palo Alto CBC 19 Dec (Gloria Heller). A male was found on Felt Lake the same day (AME et al.) as was a male and two females at Lexington Res. 24 Dec (DLSu). This is another species not found in the county every winter. Ninety-six **Common Mergansers** on Cherry Flat Res. 18 Dec (DLSu) are typical of what we expect on the San Jose CBC. Two were the only ones found on the Palo Alto CBC (John Glover et al.). Although **Red-breasted Mergansers** are nearly always found in Alviso for the San Jose CBC, they are decidedly uncommon in the Palo Alto circle, so a male in the salt ponds north of Moffett 19 Dec (WGB, Lois Lovejoy) was a good find.

OSPREY TO FALCONS

We have recent records of **Osprey** in every month but July—still, a female near Cherry Flat Res. 18 Dec (DLSu) is a rare find. Most of our recent winter records have been of birds hanging around fish ponds. Two ad. **Bald Eagles** were at Calaveras Res. 18 Dec (Jean-Marie Spoelman, Maryann Danielson) and another adult was found 20 Dec on the Isabel Res. (Clarke Blake - CB fide DSc). Birds have been found on these two large reservoirs in almost every recent winter.

Three **Ferruginous Hawks** were found on the San Jose CBC 18 Dec with an adult and an imm. found near the San Jose Airport (GHt, Mark & Steve Miller) and another in Alviso (Richard

Carlson). Two adults were found on the Mt. Hamilton CBC on 20 Dec with one in the San Antonio Valley (Bob Richmond - BRi) and another on the Isabel Ranch (CB fide DSc). Note that the **Rough-legged Hawk** is significantly rarer than the Ferruginous Hawk in the Santa Clara Valley. This is an invasion year along the coast, but despite this only 2 were seen in December: one over the Palo Alto estuary 8 Dec (DCu) and another over midtown Palo Alto 25 Dec (DLSu). None were found on our local CBCs. **Merlin** have been abundant this winter. Four or so were found on the San Jose CBC 18 Dec and four more the next day on the Palo Alto CBC (Ted Chandik - TAC, MRo, MJM, GHt, Ed Gustafson - EG, DLSu). Additional birds have been found in the San Antonio Valley 20 Dec (BRi) for the Mt. Hamilton count; near the Los Gatos Creek ponds 25 Dec (DLSu), Sunnyvale eating a starling on 25 Dec (Greg Beatty); and Ranch Lake Res. 2 Jan (MJM). **Peregrine Falcons** also appear to be doing well with one at Shoreline Lake 10 Dec (JY, AL), one there 19 Dec (AK, MRo) and another at the Baylands on the 19th as well (TAC). A **Prairie Falcon** was noted at CCRS 10 Dec (PLN). It has apparently been feeding over the sludge ponds most of the fall (Blair Wolf). Another bird was seen east of Cherry Flat Res. 18 Dec (DLSu).

CRANES TO HUMMINGBIRDS

Shoreline Lake has been like a magnet this winter—one of the most extraordinary birds was a **Sandhill Crane** flying overhead at dawn on 12 Dec (JY, AL) bugling and all. This is only the second county record. There was a typical scattering of Lesser Yellowlegs reported on the two counts. One was seen in the salt ponds along the Fremont side of the bay 18 Dec (RC, DCu); two were in flight over Shoreline Lake 19 Dec (PLN); and six were found in the ponds north of Ravenswood Point the same day (GHt, EG). One of the major surprises on the Palo Alto CBC was a 2nd winter **Heermann's Gull** located at the Palo Alto Duck Pond 19 Dec (TAC, PLN). This is

only the fourth county record for this coastal gull. The other Palo Alto CBC surprise was the **Common Murre** that flew into Shoreline Lake while the observers were patiently sorting out the loons (AK, MRo). This is our only winter record for this species. These birds are both new for the Palo Alto CBC. A Greater Roadrunner was in San Antonio Valley 20 Dec (BRi); this bird is rare anywhere in the Diablo Range. The San Jose, Palo Alto and Mt. Hamilton CBCs performed a hat trick of sorts with single **Northern Pygmy Owls** on each count (fide J&SLi, PLN, Phil Gordon et al.). **Short-eared Owls** have been scarce again this winter with single birds at the Palo Alto FCB 11 Dec (MRo) and the Baylands 21 Dec (PLN, MJM). It was missed on the Palo Alto count this year—only the third time in the last 16 years. Six **Northern Saw-whet Owls** were recorded from Monte Bello OSP on 19 Dec (PLN). A female or immature **Selasphorus spp. hummingbird** in Los Altos Hills 19 Dec (DLSu) was an unusual find. Early returning males are sometimes seen as early as mid-January.

SAPSUCKERS TO WARBLERS

The Jasper Ridge BR **Red-naped Sapsucker** did not return this winter, but another male was found on Los Trancos Rd. 19 Dec (AME, Alberta Jasberg, Tovar). A hybrid male **Red-naped X Red-breasted Sapsucker** was found at the Arastradero Preserve on 6 and 19 Dec (PLN). A **Red-breasted Nuthatch** in Los Altos 19 Dec (DLSu) was our only lowland report of the period. A male **Phainopepla** northwest of Cherry Flat Res. 18 Dec (DLSu) was the only one reported west of where they breed in the Diablo Range. Numbers on the Mt. Hamilton CBC appeared normal (fide DSc). A **Nashville Warbler** along San Francisquito Creek was found both 17 and 19 Dec (WGB, PLN). Another was found along Robleda in Los Altos Hills 19 Dec (DLSu). The Palo Alto CBC came through with two **Black-throated Gray War-**

blers as well with a male off San Antonio in Los Altos 16 and 19 Dec (PLN) and a second bird along Adobe Creek 19 Dec (DLSu) a mile to the northwest. It has been an exceptional year for **Palm Warblers** with two more birds found locally. An imm. was found along the flood control channel near Great America 30 Nov (Bruce Barrett) and another was found on the San Jose CBC (PLN). A male **Wilson's Warbler** was banded at CCRS 2 Dec (Dick Mewaldt - LRM) and apparently was found again on 18 Dec for the first record for the San Jose CBC (Ruth Troetschler et al.).

TANAGERS TO GROSBEAKS

Male and female **Western Tanagers** were found independently in Los Altos Hills 19 Dec (DLSu) for the Palo Alto CBC. A male was found among the flowering eucalyptus along San Francisquito Creek 29 Dec as well (PMB, WLe). The **Sharp-tailed Sparrow** wintering at the Palo Alto Baylands was missed on the count, but was found two days later on 21 Dec (MJM). For the third winter in a row a **Swamp Sparrow** has been found along the Matadero riparian area, again on the Palo Alto CBC day (DLSu)—what luck! **White-throated Sparrow** are doing well again this winter with two to three feeder birds (PMB, GHt, WGB). An individual was banded at CCRS on 3 Dec and recaptured 7 Dec (LRM). Nonfeeder birds were found 19 Dec in Los Altos Hills along Adobe Creek (DLSu) and San Francisquito Creek (PMB, Tom Olson, Shirley Gordon). **Orioles** came through in small numbers with a 1st year male **Hooded Oriole** on the San Jose CBC (fide J&SLi) and a female **Northern Oriole** on the Palo Alto CBC (Phil Hand et al.). To round out this list and the year a single **Evening Grosbeak** was seen over Los Altos 19 Dec (DLSu).

The 1989 Santa Clara County Breeding Bird Atlas year is underway. Atlas workshops will be held the last weekend in February and the first weekend in March. To participate, or if you see an "uncommon to rare" please call or drop me a note: Bill Bousman, 321 Arlington Way, Menlo Park 94025 (415) 325-5282.

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION NEWS

GRASSROOTS

"WE THE PEOPLE—IN DEFENSE OF ENVIRONMENTALISM"

Welcome to the first GRASSROOTS column—a new series on conservation, environmental action, and grassroots activism. As residents of the San Francisco Bay area and surrounding coastlands we are blessed with a natural beauty surpassed in few locales. From rugged coasts rising above the cold rich waters of the Arctic currents, through redwood forests, to meandering sloughs and glasslike saltponds we find our "centers"—places of power, relaxation, rejuvenation, or solace. But, while marveling at the grandeur of the vista, how often do we overlook a hidden constituency, the population of native plants, animals, and wildlands from which these vistas are molded? This constituency neither votes nor protests and so is ignored, all too often a forgotten casualty along the path of urban progress. Do we forget that we are its voice, that it survives only through our struggles in the environmentalist's battle against poorly conceived or illegal development and selfish human abuse?

We the people—birders, naturalists, and environmentalists—must raise our voices in defense of the defenseless constituency and must hold high and proud the standard of environmentalism. We the people must once again be the conscience of our nation and the voices of its hidden constituency. Many have been lost from the constituency, their fault to have crossed the path of progress poorly planned. Some cling precariously to a foothold called endangered or threatened. And others face an uncertain future, Passenger Pigeons with an infinite future that may yet end as only a memory. If not our voice, then whose? If not our conscience and action, then how? Wetland developers, uneducated politicians, and abusive private citizens—our foes in the environmental battle—are, like us,

driven, dedicated to a goal, and confident of their authority and mandate. Unlike us, though, they are usually powerful, connected, wealthy, and do not represent the hidden constituency. Our defense to their power and money and our offense in the environmental battle is our spirit of volunteer activism—based not on profit, greed, nor destructive pleasure, but rather a love for the land and a reward founded in the satisfaction of service to it and its inhabitants. Federal and state environmental laws, such as the Clean Water Act and the Endangered Species Act, are our authority, mandate, and guidance, and our volunteer activist spirit breathes life and power into their statutes. Our cause is just, our foundation is rooted in the legislative underpinnings of our nation, and our "Holy Grail" is a rich and thriving habitat where once there could have stood another empty building owned by the mythical company "Space Available—Inquire Within". We are not, therefore, seeking to abolish all construction, but rather seeking "Construction, Intelligently Planned", construction and progress serving the needs of all constituencies, especially those whose loss is so frequently ignored and impossible to replace.

Future issues of this column will enlist your voice and deeds for the cause of environmentalism. Whether you join for ten minutes by responding to the "Ten-minute Activist" column, work through SCVAS' Environmental Action Committee, or simply are alert to new "fronts" in the environmental battle, your efforts will be appreciated, your voice will be heard, and your reward will be at your feet.

-Kevin Monahan

CALIFORNIA BEGINS NEW "SAVE OUR WILD LANDS" PROGRAM

The California Department of Fish and Game has announced a brand-new program, proposed by

the Governor and mandated by the Legislature, aimed at non-game species and habitat protection.

As of January, a \$7.50 native species stamp is being sold to support non-game programs throughout the state. This year's stamp is a portrait of a peregrine falcon. In addition, nine state wildlife areas/ecological reserves have been identified, where interpretive facilities and staff will assist bird-watchers, photographers, hikers and other outdoor recreationists not involved in hunting or fishing, through tours, interpretive lectures, nature trails, displays and photographic blinds. For a \$2 day fee, or \$10 annual pass, visitors will have access to the wildlife sites.

The nine fee areas are: Grizzly Island Wildlife Area in Solano Cty; Grey Lodge Wildlife Area north of Sacramento; Elkhorn Slough Reserve near Moss Landing; Los Banos Wildlife Area in Merced Cty; Lake Earl Wildlife Area on the Del Norte County coast; Ash Creek Wildlife Area in Lassen Cty; San Jacinto Wildlife Area in Riverside Cty; Upper Newport Bay Ecological Reserve in Orange Cty; and the Wister Unit of the Imperial Wildlife Area in Imperial Cty.

The California Wildlands Program is truly revolutionary for the DFG. For the first time, participating outdoor recreationists will be contributing directly to support of the Dept.'s non-game wildlife and habitat protection strategy - which to date has been a weak link in the DFG's state-wide program. A successful CWP could make a huge difference in the DFG's prioritizing of non-game programs, as well as in their ability to get new protective programs in place.

The California Wildlands Program has the potential to generate \$5 million in wildlife support funds in its first 18 months, and SCVAS wants you to help that happen. Beginning at the February General Meeting, we will be

...Calif. Wild Lands Cont P. 7

ANNUAL SPRING WILD BIRD SEED SALE

It's time for our spring bird seed sale. Once again, SCVAS is offering **QUALITY SEED** at a **REASONABLE PRICE**.

New Palo Alto pickup location will be at the new Peninsula Conservation Center, 2448 Watson Court, Palo Alto. We will again have pickup locations at Youth Science Institute in Vasona Park, Los Gatos, and at REI, Cupertino.

YSI will again receive a portion of the proceeds from all seed picked up at the YSI Center.

Volunteers are needed to help unload bird seed, and distribute it to buyers. All volunteers assisting for 2 hours will receive a 15% discount on seed ordered. Please call SCVAS if you can assist, (415) 329-1811.

PRBO FALL CENSUS

In 2 days, 175 observers covered the entire shoreline of San Francisco and San Pablo Bays. The results clearly rank the Bay Area as one of 3 estuarine systems supporting the greatest shorebird populations along the Pacific Flyway; next to Copper River Delta, Alaska and Gray's Harbor, Washington. The Spring 1989 Census will be held on Sat. April 22, and Sun. April 23. Mark your calendars and prepare to help out! For more info, call PRBO at (415) 868-1221.

CALIF. WILD LANDS Cont. selling stamps, at \$7.50 each, passes for \$10, and for \$22, a package that includes a stamp, pass and annual subscription to DFG's highly regarded, full-color, bimonthly magazine, **OUTDOOR CALIFORNIA**. SCVAS will receive \$.50 for each stamp sold, so you may help your chapter at the same time that you help wildlife resources! For more information, call SCVAS office. (415) 329-1811.

The custom-blended **PREMIUM MIX** contains red millet, white proso millet, and black oil sunflower seeds, with no inexpensive "fillers". Specially blended to attract songbirds, this seed is not available in supermarket

The classic **WESTERN WILD BIRD MIX**, a blend of red millet, white proso millet, sudan grass screenings, and red milo is priced to compete with supermarket seed, but without waste "filler".

BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER SEED, high in oil content and nutritive value, this seed appeals to many species.

STRIPED MEDIUM SUNFLOWER SEED, a slightly less nutritive, but larger, seed. Also attracts many species, and is good for added variety.

THISTLE SEED, a small seed,

rich in oil, that appeals to smaller birds.

THIS IS A PRE-PAID SALE.

Your order, including a check payable to SCVAS, must be received by **MONDAY, March 14**. All orders must be picked up from **EITHER** the Peninsula Conservation Center, on **Tues. April 4** between 4 - 6 pm, **OR** from Youth Science Institute, Vasona Park, Los Gatos, on **Wednesday, April 5** between 4 - 6 pm, **OR** from REI, Cupertino, on **Tues. April 11** between 5 - 7 pm.

UNCLAIMED SEED MUST BE RESOLD AT THE CLOSE OF EACH SALE UNLESS ALTERNATE ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE IN ADVANCE. NO EXCEPTIONS MADE!!!

Bird Seed Sale Order Form- Spring 1989

PLEASE CHOOSE AND MARK ONE PICKUP LOCATION :

OR PCC, PALO ALTO, TUES, APRIL 4
OR YSI, LOS GATOS, WED, APRIL 5
OR REI, CUPERTINO, TUES, APRIL 11

bags Cost

Premium Seed	20 lb @ \$ 8/bag	_____
	50 lb @ \$17/bag	_____
Western Wild	20 lb @ \$ 7/bag	_____
	50 lb @ \$15/bag	_____
Black Oil Sun.	20 lb @ \$13/bag	_____
	50 lb @ \$30/bag	_____
Striped Sunfl.	20 lb @ \$15/bag	_____
	50 lb @ \$30/bag	_____
Striped Sunfl.	20 lb @ \$15/bag	_____
	50 lb @ \$34/bag	_____
Thistle	20 lb @ \$10/bag	_____
	50 lb @ \$35/bag	_____
	Subtotal	_____
	+ 7%Tax	_____
	Total	_____

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ ZIP _____
PHONE (____) _____

**PLEASE RETURN THIS ORDER WITH A CHECK TO THE
SCVAS OFFICE BY MONDAY, MARCH 14
SCVAS, 415 Cambridge Ave, #21, Palo Alto, CA, 94306.**

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General meetings are open to the public. Board of Directors meetings are open to all members. Call office for times/directions. *Avocet* deadline is first Monday of month. Send contributions to office.

FIELD TRIPS Cont.

7:30 am. on trip date to confirm if in doubt. Highlights: Possible Rock sandpiper, other wintering waterbirds. Leader: Rod Norden (408) 255-3033.

Mar 5 Calero County Park. SUNDAY, 9 am. Half day. Meet at the parking area 1/2 mile S. of Bailey Rd. on McKean Rd.. Take Hwy 101 S. from San Jose to Bernal Rd. exit. Get on Monterey Rd. S. to Bailey. W. on Bailey 2 miles to McKean. Moderate hiking for 5 miles. Rain cancels. Leader: Paul L. Noble (415) 948-3876.

Mar 11 Moss Landing/Elk-horn Slough. SATURDAY, 8 am. Full Day. Meet at Jetty Rd. just off Hwy 1 in Moss Landing. Bring lunch. Heavy rain cancels. Leader: Bruce LaBar (408) 476-7583.

Mar 12 Birdwalk for Beginners at Charleston Slough. SUNDAY, 9 am. Half day. Meet at end of San Antonio Rd. in Mountain View, east off Hwy 101. Easy walking for 2 miles. Leader: Lynn Tennefoss (415) 329-1811.

Mar 12 Golden Gate Park. SUNDAY, 8:30 am. Half day. Meet at Middle Lake in Golden Gate Park. Bring lunch. Trip will explore Chain of Lakes in Golden Gate Park, Cliff House and Lake Merced. Rain cancels. Leader: Alan Hopkins (415) 664-0483.

BANDERS NEEDED

We are lucky that our chapter's boundaries encompass one of the most active bio-monitoring bird-banding stations in North America. Located near Alviso in north San Jose is the Coyote Creek Riparian Station (CCRS). Licensed by the U.F. Fish and Wildlife Service, CCRS is run almost entirely by volunteers and is supported primarily by individual memberships. Birdbanding may be viewed as a window into the lives of birds, it offers a fascinating look at a wild creature. CCRS is eager to teach interested individuals how to band - your assistance is greatly needed. If you are ready to expand the boundaries of your birding world, to include this unique activity, please call CCRS at (408) 262-9204, and set up a time to visit the station for a training session.
 - Allen Royer, CCRS Brd Member

NON-AUDUBON EVENTS

- Nature Sounds Society recording field trip at Point Reyes National Seashore Feb. 10-12. Call Bill Gilbert, (415) 222-7860.
- Tenth Annual Bald Eagle Conference will be Feb 17-19 in Klamath Falls, Oregon, at Oregon Institute of Technology. Call Charlotte Opp, (503) 882-8488 or SCVAS
- Two spaces remain on Cheesemans' Malaysia trip, July 7-30, and Indonesia trip, July 28-Aug 24. For info on these and other trips, call

(408) 741-5330 or 867-1371. The Cheesemans are also agents for Australian Wildlife Tour's 18 trips scheduled this year. Proceeds for bookings are donated to SCVAS.
 • Alice Hoch will lead Tuesday Morning Birding Field Trips Feb 28-April 11, and a field trip to the Delta, Feb. 11. Call (415) 791-5841.

THANKS TO LEVONA

With great regret and many thanks, the SCVAS Board of Directors has accepted the resignation of AVOCET editor Levona Sterngold. Since May of 1986, Levona has juggled increasing numbers of contributions, and guided the successful growth of the newsletter, with great cheerfulness and efficiency. Her skill and good nature will be missed, and we wish her well in the new projects that she takes on!

... NEW EDITOR SOUGHT

Thus, we are on the look-out for a new editor. This volunteer position involves 10-20 hours/month, and includes editing and layout on a Macintosh using desktop publishing software. Previous experience is helpful, but not mandatory. The editor works with the Newsletter Committee, to jointly make decisions about design and content; familiarity with chapter activities is helpful. If you are interested, please call SCVAS office at (415) 329-1811.

DONATIONS - Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society welcomes gifts in general, or gifts in honor or memory of relatives and friends.
MEMBERSHIP - To join the Audubon Society or subscribe to Audubon Activis (\$9)t, send checks, payable to NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY, to SCVAS office, 415 Cambridge Ave., Suite 21, Palo Alto, CA 94306. Dues are :\$20 Intro.Membership; \$30 Individual; \$38 Family, includes AUDUBON magazine, the national publication, and The Avocet. *Avocet* subscriptions alone are \$6/year. Make checks payable to SCVAS. *AVOCET* published monthly except July and August. **SEND ALL ADDRESS CHANGES TO THE OFFICE.**