

Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society  
Chapter C14 of the National Audubon Society  
415 Cambridge Ave., Ste.  
Palo Alto, CA 94306

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# The Avocet



February 1990

Volume 39, Number 2

## 1989 CBC Report

This year's bird count was another great one. 128 counters tallied 93,439 birds of 163 species, two species more than last year. The species count is our fourth highest. This year we had our usual share of rare birds including two exciting "firsts."

*Tundra swans* returned to Calaveras Reservoir after a two-year absence. For the third year in a row *blue-winged teal* were reported, this time in the Agnew section. Five *merlin* were observed, equaling our previous high total for that species. *California gnatcatchers* (formerly blue-gray) were reported from Calaveras and Alum Rock.

A *sage thrasher*, a first for the count, was documented in the Fremont Hills section. Two separate rare bird reports were submitted to Bill Bousman's rare bird committee for this very unusual species. The committee discussed the bird with the observers, and later attempted to refind the bird. The effort was not successful, but the bird was accepted. The species winters sparsely in the San Joaquin valley; there are no previous winter records for this area.

A *warbling vireo*, another first, was found also in Fremont Hills section. This bird warranted the same scrutiny as the thrasher. The vireo was not refound but the record was substantiated. This summer breeder has not been recorded here in the winter. For the second year in a row a *Wilson's warbler* was recorded, this time in Overfelt Gardens. The *chipping sparrows* in Calaveras were the first recorded since 1972, and two *swamp sparrows* in Agnew were last recorded in 1969. And to complete the list, *white-throated sparrows* at the Carmelite Monastery and along Coyote Creek were the first since 1981.

If you are interested in a complete list of all the birds seen this year, please call us at (415)969-5542 and we will send you a copy.

The Christmas Count depends on people as well as birds. Section leaders work especially hard scouting their areas, recruiting

## SCVAS Birdathon 1990

*The 1990 SCVAS Birdathon is coming!!* This event has become our Number One chapter fundraiser, so mark the weekend of April 28-29 on your calendar and start making preparations now. We've set our sights on \$10,000 this year, with proceeds to be split three ways: 1) National Audubon's Old Growth Forest campaign; 2) Coyote Creek Riparian Station, the active bird banding and habitat management/restoration research group in Alviso; 3) the upcoming Burrowing Owl Census, co-sponsored by SCVAS and SAVE BOTH; and 4) SCVAS Education Activities. We need your help to succeed! You don't have to be an active birder to participate; there are many ways to get involved and help the chapter support these worthy causes. Special workshops will be held in February to teach you how to put the "fun" into fund-raising! Call Lynn at the office (415) 329-1811 or Grant Hoyt (415) 969-7892 if you can help.

## Quiet Places

Last spring Paul Matzner, naturalist with the Oakland Museum and an active member of the Nature Sounds Society, presented a program for SCVAS on recording nature sounds. Now he is compiling a file on "Quiet Places" and will give a program about it on Feb. 1 for the Mt. Diablo Audubon Chapter in Walnut Creek. "Quiet Places" is a broad topic and he would like our help in documenting qualifying areas both in

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# Chapter News

## 1989 CBC Report

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counters, and handling paperwork. We appreciate their time and diligence. They have made our job as compilers a pleasure. In the following list of counters, their names are underlined.

Jae Abel, Ernest Abeles, Cecille Alanzado, Darrell Anderson, Bonnie Bedford-White, Bill Bousman, Geri Brown, Phillis Browning, Jeff Caldwell, Sam Campbell, Richard Carlson, Chris Cassatta, Gail Cheeseman, Mildred Cho, Jill Clay, Charles Coston, Joan Coston, Derek Currall, Maryann Danielson, Jim Danzenbaker, June DeBuhr, Penny Delevoryas, Kim Dreyfuss, Jean Dubois, Dick Elliott, Betty English, Jack English, Mike Feighner, Aaron Fink, Nancy Fitzsimmons, Peter Folen, Susie Formenti, Marilyn Fowler, Russ Fowler, Howard Friedman, Norma Funai, Harriet Gerson, Shirley Gordon, Kay Gurley, Lloyd Hartshorn, Thomas Harvey, Bill Haskell, Jo Haskell, Rich Healy, Neil Heather, Rick Herder, Howard Higley, Jan Hintermeister, Jim Holman, Merry Lee Hooks, Grant Hoyt, Karen Hoyt, Lee Hung, June Hymas, Dorothy Johnson, Dave Johnston, Monica Johnston, Dan Keller, Bill Kirsher, Deborah Kleffman, Ed Laak, Dave Lawlor, Jonathan Lawton, Jim Liskovec, Sue Liskovec, Gerry Livingston, Linda Lloyd, Leonora Main, Mike Mammoser, Peter Metropoulos, John Mewaldt, Dick Mewaldt, Lynn Miller, Mark Miller, Steve Miller, Randy Morrison, Leslie Morrissey, Vi Nisonger, Paul Noble, Phil Noble, Rod Norden, Duane O'Sullivan, Frank O'Sullivan, John Osner, Kathy Parker, Pam Price, Elsie Richey, Jerry Richey, Mike Rigney, Theresa Rigney, Bob Roadcap, Edward Rooks, Allen Royer, Pat Rupel, Nancy Ryan, Don Schmoldt, Kandice Scott, David Seals, Roberta Seals, Milton Seibert, Kathy Shannon, Beth Soltis, Bonnie Jo Spacek, Jean-Marie Spoelman, Don Starks, Shelley Stewart, Kep Stone, Dick Stovel, Lennie Stovel, David Suddjian, Sonia Sungail, Phyllis Swanson, Lynn Tennefoss, Alan Thomas, Dough

Tkechink, Paul Travis, Matt Van De Rijn, Ger Van den Engh, J.G. Van Stee, Sue Van Stee, Ann Verdi, Jack Wallace, Milt West, Mike Westfall, Anne Wilson, Chris Wolfe, Clair Wolfe, Peg Woodin.

Special thanks to the dinner committee headed by Judy McEuen, for the delicious lasagne dinner served to more than 60 hungry counters. Thanks to all the counters, party leaders, section leaders. Bill Bousman and his rare bird committee members did their usual fine job of handling all the reports. Special 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 Tennefoss who attends to the details and picks up loose ends so that everything runs smoothly for the CBC and all that SCVAS undertakes.

As most of you already know, we have decided to retire from the compilers' job. We have enjoyed working with all of you, especially the section leaders who handle the recruiting and the paperwork so well, and Bill for handling the rarities. Because of everyone's hard work and care in reporting, we have been able to submit error-free summaries to American Birds. Considering the frequency with which the California CBC editors chastise compilers for their mistakes, we have done very well thanks to you. Only once were we mildly criticized, this for reporting so many golden eagles on a day when raptors were in the skies everywhere.

For the 1990 CBC, mark Sunday, December 16. Till then, good birding, and have a great year.  
— Jim and Sue Liskovec

### SCVAS OFFICERS

Staff	Lynn Tennefoss	415/329-1811
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Photo Club	Pete LaTourrette	415/961-2741

General meetings are open to the public. Board of Directors meetings are open to all members. Call the office for times and directions. *The Avocet* deadline is the first Monday of each month. Send contributions to the editor, Jim Schwertman, 1168 Willow Glen Way, San Jose, CA 95125.

### Field Trip Report

#### Post CBC Rarities Chase

The 1990 post-Christmas Count rare bird chase attracted 20 birders on January 6 for a most enjoyable day of birding in the Elkhorn Slough/Watsonville/Monterey area. The trip began at Jetty Rd. in Moss Landing, where we scanned the harbor for the Black Scoter and Glaucous Gull which had been reported, but came up empty. We did, however, enjoy a lengthy observation of the juvenile Reddish Egret, which had been seen in and around Elkhorn Slough for several days, as it fanned its wings and hopped about in search of prey in a gawky, comical fash-

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# 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.*

Field trip coordinator for February: Mike Feighner (408) 354-0138

## **Fri, Feb 2, 7:30 PM Special South County Meeting.**

Saratoga Library, 13650 Saratoga Ave, west of Fruitvale. 7:30 refreshments, 8 pm program. Behavioral Ecology of Tropical Predators with Harry Greene from the Berkeley Museum of Vertebrate Zoology. At La Selva Biological Station in Costa Rica Harry Greene has documented the richest predator assemblage in the world, with over 100 species of vertebrates that eat other vertebrates. He will describe radio-tagging big snakes, analyzing Jaguar scat and will show slides of predatory birds, mammals, fish, reptiles, and amphibians. Please join us for a fantastic program!

## **Wednesday, February 7, 7:30 PM**

**Bay Area Bird Photographers**  
Baylands Interpretive Center @ the East end of Embarcadero, Palo Alto, Co-sponsored by the City of Palo Alto, Open Spaces & Sciences Division. Our speakers will be members Tim Davis and Renee Lynn, who will present a slide program on their travels in Africa during the last two years. They will discuss the pros and cons of traveling with a group versus going on one's own, especially with respect to the possibilities for serious wildlife photography.

## **Sat, Feb 10 7:30 AM**

### **Fall River Mills**

### **Note date change from Jan Avocet**

Leaders: Bob Yutzy, Bill Von (916) 246-2515

Combined trip with Wintu (Redding) Audubon. Directions: Meet at the Sears in Redding. Take the I-5 Hilltop exit N. to mall. Latecomers meet at Chevron Station in Fall River Mills. Redding is 6 hrs N. of Bay Area. Suggest participants stay in Redding or Fall River/MacArther Burney. Rain or snow cancels. Full Day.

## **Sat, Feb 10, 9 AM**

### **Livermore/Altamont Pass**

Leader: Don Schmoldt (415) 758-0820. Directions: Meet at the BP Station at I-580 and N. First St. (Hwy 84) in Livermore. Bring lunch and full tank of fuel.

Highlights: Hawks, Eagles, Falcons. Full Day.

## **Sat, Feb 10, 7 PM**

### **Alum Rock Park Owling.**

Leader: Dave Johnston Call (415) 329-1811 for reservations.

*Full roster—waiting list only!*

## **Sun, Feb 11, 9 AM**

### **Beginner's Trip to Charleston Slough.**

Leader: June DeBuhr (415) 948-2245  
Directions: Meet at the end of San Antonio Rd. in Mt. View at Terminal Way. Basics of birding with emphasis on shorebirds and waterfowl. Half Day.

## **Tues, Feb 13, 9:30 am**

### **Bird Discussion Group**

At home of Eve Case, 20537 Verde Vista Lane, Saratoga, (408) 867-4748. Topic: Anhinga. All members are invited to attend these monthly open discussions about different species. Call for details and directions.

## **Wed, Feb 14, 9:30 AM**

### **Campbell Percolation Ponds (Los Gatos Creek Co. Park)**

Leader: Gail Cheeseman (408) 741-5330. Directions: Winchester to Hacienda south, left on Dell and right at park entrance to parking lot. Half Day.

## **Sat & Sun, Feb 17-18, 8 AM**

### **Central Coast Weekend**

Leader: For info, Grant Hoyt (415) 969-7892  
Join two of Central California's top birders to central coast hotspots. Directions: On Sat, meet at Morro Rock at 8 am. Look for waterbirds and peregrine falcon, then go south to Morro Bay SP, Oceano, and Santa Maria River Mouth. Latecomers can meet group at 10:15 am at Laguna Lake. Take Madonna Rd exit west off 101 for 1-1/2 miles. On Sun, tour Carrizo Plains with John MacDonald, for raptors, sandhill cranes, and variety of open country species. Visit nearby Nature Conservancy property. Heavy rains prior to trip date may cancel this part. Motels avail in Morro Bay - suggested participants stay in Morro Bay Friday night. For more details, call Grant.

## **Wed, Feb 21, 7:30 pm**

### **General Membership Meeting**

Cosponsored with Palo Alto Open Spaces and Sciences Division, at the Palo Alto

Cultural Center, Embarcadero at Newell. 7:30 refreshments, 7:45 Bird Talk, 8 pm program. Bird Talk will feature Fox Sparrows and Green-tailed Towhees, two breeding birds of Yosemite in keeping with the theme this evening. SCVAS member and SFBBO Executive Director Don Starks will teach us the songs and discuss their behavior. See Don before meeting re: SFBBO Owl, Gull, Duck, Shorebird, and Passerine field courses available in 1990. Program will be a slide show titled "Yosemite in the Spring" with narrator Lee Hung and photographer Mike Dazenbaker. Thanks to Mike's incredible patience as a wildlife photographer, see Yosemite's wildlife in its most prolific time of year. The behavior of the many birds, mammals, and other features of Yosemite's springtime action that Mike Dazenbaker has captured on film will add up to an outstanding program. Yosemite's reputation may be deteriorating to "crowd city", but Mike and Lee will give us a refreshing evening of the many moments of solitude still to be experienced there.

## **Sun, Feb 25, 9:30 AM**

### **Grizzly Island Wildlife Area**

Leader: Joe Ferreira, DFG Biologist (707) 425-3828  
Directions: Take 680 to 80 east toward Sacramento, then Highway 12 towards Rio Vista. Go through town of Suisun, turning right on Grizzly Island Road (Sunset Shopping Center is just opposite G.I. Road) Meet at Hill Slough Bridge about one mile from Highway 12. Possible: waterfowl, raptors, tule elk, river otters, white-fronted and tule white-fronted geese. Full Day. Bring gas, lunch, liquids, rain gear. Primitive wildlife area (outhouses available). Goes rain or shine.

## **Wed, Feb 28, 9 AM**

### **Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve**

Leader: Jasper Ridge Docents  
Reservations required (415-493-9546). Take Sand Hill Rd. west from I-280 for 2 miles to gate on left (before Portola Rd.). Gates unlocked from 8:45 to 9:10. \$4 fee per person.

## **Sat, Mar 3, 9 AM**

### **Birding Sail**

The Second Joint Ocean Alliance/Audubon Society Birding Sail will be held on Saturday, March 3. Guests will be assigned to boats with experienced Ocean Alliance

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# Field Notes

By Bill Bousman

## Waterfowl

A *Red-throated Loon* has been at Shoreline Lake through at least 18 Dec (AKr, WGB). Another bird was at Felt Lake on the latter date (AME, JM-B). *American Bittern* have been scarce again this winter with one at the Palo Alto Baylands 18 Dec (MRo, JC). A *Cattle Egret* in Sunnyvale 5 Dec (AV) is the only report we have had

locally since early summer. *Tundra Swans* have been found widely this winter. A single bird was observed at Vasona Res.

12- 20 Dec (JDuB); fifteen were at Calaveras on 17 Dec (m.ob.) and at least 8 were still there 20 Dec (MFe); five were over Chesbro Res. 23 Dec (JG). Two probable *Snow Geese* were at Chesbro the same day (JG). A *Eurasian Green-winged Teal* was at the Palo Alto Baylands 15 Dec (WGB). A single male *Blue-winged Teal* was seen in the Palo Alto Flood Control Basin (FCB) on 12 and 21 Dec (MJM) where they have been regular in past years, but four on a pond near the Old Mountain View—Alviso Road 17 Dec (DSt, LSt, LL) were a surprise. *Eurasian Wigeon* have again been found in excellent numbers with up to six in the Palo Alto FCB through 18 Dec (MRo, MJM, JY, AL), two in Charleston Slough through 18 Dec (AKr, WGB), a single male at the Sunnyvale WPCP 18 Dec (WGB, AKI), and another male at the Oka ponds 10 Dec (MFe). A male and female *Barrow's Goldeneye* were found at Shoreline Lake 24 Nov (AV) and found there irregularly at least through 18 Dec (JY, AL, JDeB, WGB, AKr). A second

female was at the Stevens Creek Mitigation Area at Shoreline 18 Dec (AKr). These birds have been found here regularly in the last five winters. Exceptional numbers of *Hooded Mergansers* continue to be found in the county this winter. Three to four birds were at the Stevens Creek Res. 10-12 Dec (MFe, JSc). Five were found on the Oka ponds 16 Dec (AV). Ten on

Felt Lake 18 Dec (AME, JM-B) were from a lake they have not used on past CBCs.

## Raptors

A single adult *Bald Eagle* on Calaveras Res. 17 Dec (MD, J-MS) is down from the numbers that usually winter in this area. An imm. bird at Charleston Slough on 18 Dec (AKr) is exceptional for the bayside. Two adults in the Isabel Valley on 21 Dec (GHt, MJM) are typical. *Ferruginous Hawks* continue to be found regularly this winter. An adult in the area of Felt Lake and the Arastradero Preserve was found on 16, 18, and 27 Dec (AME, JM-B, GHt). Two adults were found on 17 Dec; one at the San Jose Airport (SM, AWi) and a second at the Wool Ranch (WGB, KS, NR). Additional birds were found on 21 Dec in the San Antonio Valley (RJR) and Isabel Valley (MJM, GHt). Exceptional numbers of Merlin continue to be found this winter. A male was in Los Gatos 10 Dec (MFe). The male Richardson's race mentioned last month continues to be found in Mountain View (16 Dec, MRo). Five were found on the San Jose CBC 17 Dec and four the next day on the Palo Alto CBC (m.ob.). A bird was found on the Mt. Hamilton CBC on 21 Dec as

well. *Peregrine Falcon* have been found in good numbers along the bay as well. A single bird was at the Sunnyvale WPCP 14 Dec (AS). Four were found on 17 Dec with one at Ravenswood Point (GHt), a pair at the Palo Alto Baylands (MRo, JC), and an additional adult at Charleston Slough (AKr). Another bird was seen over Mountain View 21 Dec (PMB).

## Shorebirds

*Single Lesser Yellowlegs* have been found in the Alviso salt ponds 2 Dec (MJM) and 17 Dec (PW et al.) for two of our few winter records. A *Ruddy Turnstone* on the San Francisquito Ck. delta 17 Dec was barely in the county. They are more likely to be found further up the bay. Eighty-three *Red Knot* there at the same time are exceptional but, again, this is a bird that tends to winter further up the bay (both MRo, JC).

## Owls et. al.

*Short-eared Owls* have been scarce in recent years. A single bird has been seen in the Palo Alto FCB 4 Dec (WGB) and 18 Dec (MRo, JC). A female *Red-naped Sapsucker* along Canoas Ck 29 Nov (DLSu) was the only one reported. Rare for this side of the bay are a *Tree Swallow* at Charleston Slough 15 Dec (EG) and a *Violet-green Swallow* at the Palo Alto Baylands 12 Dec (MJM). Wintering *House Wrens* were banded at the Coyote Creek Riparian Station (CCRS) 15 and 20 Dec and a single bird was found at Ed Levin CP on 17 Dec (CW, JH). It has been an unusual winter (mild?) for *Blue-Gray Gnatcatchers* with singles found along Los Gatos Ck. near Vasona Res. 16 Dec (AV) and Alum Rock Park 17 Dec (DJ et al.), and two birds found near the north end of Calaveras Res. the same day (DE et al.). Wintering *Townsend's Solitaires* have been found in Henry Coe SP 17 Dec (JY, AL) and the

## Extraordinary Winter Sightings of Sage Thrasher and Warbling Vireo

Isabel Valley on 21 Dec (MJM, GHt). These Diablo Range records are the first for the county since 1984. Exceptional any time of the year, but particularly for December was the find of a Sage Thrasher on the San Jose CBC on 17 Dec (DA et al.). Also exceptional was a *Warbling Vireo* the same day in Milpitas (PMB, EL). Although this species is common in the summer there are only a handful of winter records from northern California. A female *Black-throated Gray Warbler* in Menlo Park 18 Dec (PLN) was a good find — we tend to find this species every other winter or so. A *Wilson's Warbler* in the Overfelt Gardens in San Jose 17 Dec (PLN) is equally rare. Three different *Western Tanagers* were found in urban Palo Alto on the Palo Alto CBC (PMB, GR, PLN). Four *Chipping Sparrows* on the east side of Calaveras Res. 17 Dec (MJM, AR) are most unusual for the winter. One to two *Sharp-tailed Sparrows* were at the Palo Alto Baylands 11-13 Dec on the high tide (MJM, AWa). A *Swamp Sparrow* was seen there as well 12 Dec (AS fide MJM). Two different *Swamp Sparrows* were along Guadalupe River upstream of Hwy 101 17 Dec (PJM, DK). *White-throated Sparrows* have been found along Canoas Ck. 29 Nov (DLSu), Coyote Ck. 17 Dec (G&KHt et al.), the Carmelite Monastery 17 Dec (MM, BS), and Palo Alto 18 Dec (PMB, GR). A female *Northern Oriole* was on Geng Road in Palo Alto 18 Dec (PJM, DK). *Lawrence's Goldfinches* have still been found in good numbers in the Diablo Range with sizeable flocks found at Henry Coe SP on 25 Nov and fewer birds on 17 Dec (JY, AL). XXX found at Monte Bello OSP 18 Dec (CB, BL) represent a rare occurrence for the Santa Cruz Mountains. Four *Evening Grosbeak* in Los Altos Hills 18 Dec (PLN) are unusual for the county but, as usual, were found in an urban area.

Observers: Darryl Anderson (DA),

Clark Blake (CB), Bill Bousman (WGB), Phyllis Browning (PMB), Jim Corliss (JC), Maryann Danielson (MD), June DeBuhr (JDeB), Jean DuBois (JDuB), Al Eisner (AME), Dick Elliott (DE), Mike Feighner (MFe), Jane Glass (JG), Ed Gustafson (EG), Jo Haskell (JH), Grant Hoyt (GHt), Karen Hoyt (KHt), David Johnston (DJ), Dan Keller (DK), Allan Klonick (AKI), Andy Kratter (AKr), Ed Laak (EL), Amy Lauterbach (AL), Briana Lindh (BL), Linda Lloyd (LL), Mike Mammoser (MJM), Peter Metropulos (PJM), Mark Miller (MM), Steve Miller (SM), Janet Mohle-Boetani (JM-B), Paul Noble (PLN), Gwyneth Ragsone (GR), Bob Richmond (RJR), Mike Rogers (MRO), Nancy Ryan (NR), April Sapsford (AS), Jim Schwarz (JSc), Kandis Scott (KS), Beth Soltis (BS), Jean-Marie Spoelman (JMS), Dick Stovel (DSt), Lennie Stovel (LSt), Audrey Stoye (AS), David Suddjian (DLSu), Ann Verdi (AV), Alan Walther (AWa), Anne Wilson (AWi), Claire Wolfe (CW), Peg Woodin (PW), and James Yurchenco (JY).

*If you see an "uncommon to rare" or spot early arrivals and migrants please drop a note or call: Bill Bousman, 321 Arlington Way, Menlo Park, CA 94025 (415) 322-5282*

### Field Trips

*Continued from page 3*

skippers. Boats will leave at 9 am from various locations around the Bay and return at 6 pm. A raftup and potluck lunch will be held at Treasure Island, with awards to boat spotting the greatest number of bird species. (Last year it was 47 species). Cost is \$15 for OA members, \$20 for nonmembers. Persons selected as birding docents will not be charged. If you would like to attend as a guest or docent, please call (415) 441-5970.

### Sun, Mar 4, 8:30 AM

#### Steven's Creek County Park

Leader: Phil Hand (415) 851-2623  
Directions: Meet at lower picnic area before reservoir. Take Foothill Blvd. west off I280, follow to Park turnoff on left. Half day.

### Sat, March 10

#### Coyote Creek Riparian Station

Leader: Allen Royer (408)288-7768  
Bird banding including Hermit Thrush and White Crown Sparrow subspecies. Limited to 10 participants. Call for reservations. Half day.

### Sun, Mar 11

#### Beginners Trip to Charleston Slough

Leader: Dick Stovel (415) 856-6105  
Directions: Meet at the end of San Antonio Rd. in Mt. View at Terminal Way. Basics of birding with emphasis on shorebirds and waterfowl. Half Day.

### Wed, Mar 14, 9 AM

#### Chesbro Reservoir, Morgan Hill

Leaders: Jane Glass, 408-779-3637, and Emily Curtis, 408-779-2637  
Directions: Take Almaden Exp. S from San Jose, left on McKean Rd (becomes Uvas Rd., 11 miles S to junction of Uvas Rd. and Old Oak Flen Rd. Lunch optional. Half Day.

Want to help plan field trips? The Field Trip Committee is looking for new members. Committee meets quarterly. Please call the office (415) 329-1811.

### Non-Audubon Events

- SFBBO general meeting at the Alviso Environmental Ed Center, Thurs., Mar. 1, is on California Gull chicks with Biologist Jan Dierks. Call Don Starks at SFBBO in Alviso for details, 408-946-6548.
- City of Palo Alto Baylands Interpretive Center offers bird walks on Sun, Jan 7; Sun, Feb 11; and Sun, Feb 25. Call 329-2506 for more info.
- Environmental Volunteers lecture/video presentation about the making of full-length film on California's disappearing redwoods, "The Forest Through the Trees" by Frank Green, \$8, call (415) 424-8035 for info.
- Oceanic Society Expeditions offer full and half day whale watch cruises through the end of April, 1990. From San Francisco and Half Moon Bay. Call (415) 474-3385 for info.
- Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris are offering a special tour of Trinidad and Tobago as a benefit fundraiser for SCVAS. The tour will see a wide variety of habitats from June 25 to July 8, 1990. Leaders are Edward Rooks, birder and wildlife artist, who grew up in Trinidad, and Janice Rooks, Professor of Biology and Ecology at Santa Clara Univ. Contact the Cheeseman's at (408)741-5330 for more details about this great trip.

# Environmental Action News

## Senate to Act on Clean Air Legislation

The Senate clean air bill, S 1630, is headed to the Senate floor for one of the most important environmental votes of the new decade. The decisions made now will affect the clean air program for the next decade. In late January, the U.S. Senate will reconvene and at that time, Majority Leader George Mitchell (D-ME) will make action on clean air legislation a top priority.

### The Bill

S 1630 is a good piece of legislation that covers a variety of important clean air issues: air toxics, acid rain and urban smog pollution. It is a compromise bill that still goes a long way to protect our environment and our health. S 1630:

- sets new deadlines and control requirements to clean up the air in polluted cities,
- proposes a 10 million ton acid rain control program,
- begins the job of reducing toxic chemical pollution,
- proposes a virtual phase-out of ozone-destroying chemicals
- limits carbon dioxide emissions from cars for the first time, a "down payment" on halting global warming.

But, like any compromise, S 1630 needs improvements:

### Urban Smog

Our Cities: Three of every five Americans still live in areas where air does not meet one or more of the federal health standards, according to EPA. And without major new pollution control initiatives, air quality will only get worse.

Cars, Buses and Trucks: None of our cities and urban areas will be able to improve air quality without cleaner cars coming off the assembly lines. S 1630 requires two rounds of pollution reductions:

Round 1: in 1993, new cars would have to meet a standard

already in place in California;

Round 2: ten years later, emissions would be cut to half of the 1993 levels.

### Air Toxics

Billions of pounds of toxic air pollutants are routinely and legally released each year from factories, motor vehicles and other sources, causing thousands of cancer deaths each year. S 1630 will regulate 192 hazardous currently unregulated industrial air pollutants through two rounds of standards. The first is a technology standard, the second will require tighter controls where health risks still remain. The bill also sets up a Chemical Safety Board to cut the toll of preventable accidents and requires accident hazard assessments by industries handling extremely hazardous chemicals.

### Acid Rain

The Senate bill calls for a 10 year, 10 million ton reduction in sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) emissions, and a 2.7 million ton reduction in nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>). One of the most important features of the Senate acid rain program is a cap on SO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The cap prevents growth from eroding the pollution reduction gains achieved in the program. More than ever before, people want clean, healthful air and we can have it at a reasonable cost, without damaging our economy.

### What you Can Do

Now is the best time to write and call. Now is when your opinions will make a difference as the Senate considers clean air legislation in late January and into February. Passing strong clean air legislation is one of our highest priorities in the early months of a new decade.

Write your two senators and ask them to cosponsor S 1630. Use the information in this article and

## Ten Minute Activist

YOU can make a difference

### BLM takes action to protect desert tortoise

Many of you have read by now that California State Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Director, Ed Hasty has indefinitely suspended the motorcycle enduro races in the California desert. Tremendous political pressure from ORV interests pushed the BLM into granting permission to run the Barstow to Las Vegas race this year, but the BLM put restrictions on the width of the route. The racers ignored the restrictions, giving the BLM the leverage it needed to suspend the races.

Let the BLM know that we applaud their decision to opt for protection of the desert and the desert tortoise! Please write to thank the BLM. Also, you might mention in your letter that you are pleased to see this decision reflects the stated national goal of the BLM to give high priority to wildlife and recreation.

Send your letter to: Cy Jamison, Director, BLM, Interior Building, Washington, DC, 20240. Please also send copies to Senators Alan Cranston and Pete Wilson, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC, 20510.

your own knowledge of your state and community to tell them why and how the bill should be improved. Just letting your senators know you care about clean air is important. Ask them specifically to:

- reject any amendment to weaken car standards.
- support an acid rain bill with a cap.
- Support shorter deadlines for achieving controls on toxics

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- Support better definitions of control technology so that industry can't wiggle out of using the best technology to control emissions.

Address: The Honorable Alan Cranston, Suite 112 Hart Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC 20510 and the Honorable Pete Wilson, Suite 720 Hart Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC 20510.

Thanks for your help. Please contact Lynn Tennefoss at (415) 329-1811 if you have further questions.

## Save St. Joseph's Hill

by Curt Ireland

A developer plans to construct a 30 foot wide private access road to serve the old Guadalupe College property. The proposed roadway alignment will completely bisect the St. Joseph's Hill Open Space Preserve. The 170 acre preserve is located east of Highway 17 between Lexington Reservoir and the Town of Los Gatos. The preserve as well as the adjacent water district land is being used by ever increasing numbers of people for hiking, jogging, bicycling and, of course, birdwatching. The proposed 1.4 mile roadway will require extensive grading and the movement of massive quantities of earth. A total of 18 acres lies within the grading limits for the road. A project of this magnitude will cause irreparable damage to the preserve and to its wildlife that no amount of time, effort and money can mitigate. The Town of Los Gatos and the developer are currently embroiled in litigation over the roadway. However, this litigation will be totally irrelevant if the developer cannot obtain an easement through the adjoining water district land. Nearly one quarter of the roadway alignment traverses lands owned by the Santa Clara Valley Water District and administered by the Santa Clara County Parks and

Recreation Department. The Citizens for the Preservation of St. Joseph's Hill (CPSJH) was organized nearly two years ago to oppose construction of the road through the open space preserve. CPSJH is appearing before the parks commission on February 7, 1990 to request that the Commission: 1) Take a firm stand in opposing this project; 2) Urge the water district to refrain from granting any easements or permits to build this road.

### What you can do to help

1) A strong show of public support at this meeting is vital. Please attend this meeting, if you are able to do so, on Wednesday, February 7, 7:30 pm at the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors Chambers, 70 W. Hedding Street, San Jose; or,

2) Write a letter to the parks commission stating your opposition to construction of this road. Address it to the County Parks and Recreation Commission, Douglas J. Gaynor, Director, 298 Garden Hill Drive, Los Gatos, CA 95030; or,

3) Help raise money to continue the fight to prevent the destruction of the open space preserve. Please send your donations to: Citizens for the Preservation of St. Joseph's Hill Suite 109-237, P.O. Box 38003, Los Gatos, CA. 95031. Please make checks payable to: "Save St. Joseph's Hill Fund"

For additional information call (408) 356-5558.

## Quiet Places

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California and worldwide. Please describe a "Quiet Place" or places that you know and mail your description to Paul Matzner at The Oakland Museum, Natural Sciences Division, 1000 Oak St., Oakland CA 94607. For the file, describe the possible disturbances one might encounter as well as the outstanding features for hearing natural sounds. For more info, call Nature Sounds Society members Gail and Doug Cheeseman, 408-741-5330.

## Field Trip Report

*Continued from page 2*

ion. (The word "reddish" doesn't begin to describe the odd purplish-putty plumage of this vagrant, whose normal winter range barely reaches southern California.) Mark Miller found a Common Tern in with the group of Forster's Terns, and after identifying 8 gull species, 3 loons, various grebes, ducks and shorebirds, the group moved on to nearby Moonglow Dairy, where we were treated to an excellent view of a Peregrine Falcon perched in a eucalyptus tree. When a smaller falcon buzzed over, the Peregrine naturally had to take flight and chase the intruder off, and as the second bird made its way towards us, the dark back, streaked underparts and direct flight pattern identified it as a Merlin. We were fortunate to have it land on a nearby fencepost for several minutes of intensive scoping.

Continuing down the coast to Monterey, we stopped at Cannery Row in hopes of finding the Thick-billed Murres reported there, but despite excellent viewing conditions and the presence of several Common Murres in varying plumages, we were unsuccessful. Somewhat surprising were the numbers of Rhinoceros Auklets close to shore, providing several of the group with their best looks ever at this small alcid. We left Monterey for Pinto Lake in Watsonville, where a Solitary Sandpiper had been seen on the Moss Landing Xmas Count several days earlier. We missed the sandpiper, but found numerous other species there, including Blue-winged, Cinnamon and Green-winged Teal, Caspian Tern, Peregrine Falcon, Merlin, Common Snipe, American Pipit, Cedar Waxwing, Common Yellowthroat and Townsend's Warbler. We concluded the trip with an impressive total of 106 species.

-- Grant Hoyt

## Spring Bird Seed Sale!

Once again, SCVAS is offering *Quality Seed at a Reasonable Price*. The custom-blended **PREMIUM MIX** was formulated by the staff at Western Regional Audubon Society in Tiburon. This high protein 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 or feed stores—only through SCVAS. 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". To mix with other seed, or offer alone: **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; **THISTLE SEED**, a small seed, rich in oil, that appeals to smaller birds.

**Please Note:** Unclaimed seed must be resold at the close of each sale unless alternate arrangements have been made in advance. No exceptions can be made!! Confirmations of orders will be sent upon receipt of order and check.

Please tell your friends and neighbors about the sale. We will all benefit - you, the birds, and your Audubon chapter. Have any questions? Please call SCVAS office at (415) 329-1811.

Karen Sullivan from Hummingbird Gardens will again join us at the Palo Alto and REI sale, offering fine hummingbird-attracting plants for sale, with a portion of proceeds going to SCVAS.

## Bird Seed Sale Order Form Spring 1990

		# 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	5 lb @ \$10/bag	_____	_____
	20 lb @ \$35/bag	_____	_____
Subtotal			_____
+ 7%Tax			_____
<b>Total</b>			_____

Please select ONE pickup location:

- PCC, 2448 Watson Ct., Palo Alto, Sat, 3/17, 9-11 am
- YSI, Vasona Park, Los Gatos, Wed, 3/21, 4-6 pm
- YSI, Alum Rock Park, San Jose, Wed, 3/21, 4-6 pm
- REI, 20640 Homestead, Cupertino, Wed, 3/28, 5-7 pm

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, ST, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

**This is a prepaid sale.** Please send this order and a check payable to SCVAS, by **Monday, March 5** to 415 Cambridge Ave., Ste. #21, Palo Alto, CA 94306.

**DONATIONS** - SCVAS welcomes gifts in general, or gifts in honor or memory of relatives and friends. All gifts and donations are tax deductible.

**MEMBERSHIP** - To join the National Audubon Society/SCVAS, send a check payable to NAS, to the SCVAS office, 415 Cambridge Ave., Ste. 21, Palo Alto, CA 94306. Membership includes "AUDUBON" magazine, and "The Avocet" newsletter. "Audubon Activist" quarterly subscription is separate at \$9/yr., with checks made payable NAS. "The Avocet" subscription alone is \$8/yr, with checks made payable to SCVAS.

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS** - Send all changes of address promptly to the SCVAS office.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ St: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Gift from: \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_ SCVAS Subscriber-\$8
- \_\_\_\_\_ SCVAS Supporter-\$20
- \_\_\_\_\_ SCVAS Donor-\$35
- \_\_\_\_\_ SCVAS Patron-\$50 or more
- \_\_\_\_\_ Introductory - \$20
- \_\_\_\_\_ Individual - \$35
- \_\_\_\_\_ Family - \$38
- \_\_\_\_\_ Audubon Activist - \$9