



# *The Avocet*

The Newsletter of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society

April 1992

## *The Endangered Species Act*

### **Reauthorization Provides an Opportunity to Strengthen the Law**

By *Randall Snodgrass*

In the mountains of southern California, a great bird spreads its enormous wings and soars effortlessly through the sky. It peers down on a landscape it has never seen before, though its ancestors have flown there for thousands of years. The California condor, North America's largest bird, once stood perilously close to extinction. For several years, none of these birds has known freedom; all were in captivity, part of a last-ditch effort to rescue this majestic species from extinction. This winter, that rescue effort reached a dramatic milestone with the release of captive condors back into the wild. Two condor chicks, offspring of the last birds brought into the wild, will soar over the mountains northwest of Los Angeles. Against almost insuperable odds, the Endangered Species Act (ESA) is succeeding in turning the condor's road to extinction into a road to recovery.

The success of the condor does not stand in isolation. This fall, 50 young black-footed ferrets were released on a high, windswept plain in south-central Wyoming. Only a decade ago the species was thought to be extinct. Thanks to the success of a breeding program funded under ESA, there are more than 300 of these masked weasels in captivity, and biologists hope next year to double the number of ferrets placed in the wild.

Red wolves, bald eagles, whooping cranes, brown pelicans, peregrine falcons, alligators, gray whales, and many other plants and animals, both in the U.S. and abroad, also have benefited from recovery

programs under this landmark 1973 law. However, every four or five years, including next year, Congress must reauthorize the funding authority in the Act and, as always, this subjects the law to close scrutiny and opens the door for amendments.

#### **The Opposition**

In the past ESA reauthorizations, this process has resulted in a net benefit for endangered wildlife because many of the amendments adopted in 1978, 1982, and 1988 fine-tuned and strengthened the legislation. But 1992 may be different unless the environmental community bands together to defend the Act from the onslaught of amendments expected from a powerful, well-funded coalition of miners, loggers, shrimpers, ranchers, inholders, real estate developers, Western water barons, and others, joined by their ideological allies in Congress and the Bush Administration.

In addition to spawning a national anti-ESA coalition, powerful Pacific Northwest politicians, including House Speaker Tom Foley (D-WA), may align themselves with other regional delegations to support weakening amendments to the Act. For example, in August, Congressman Jim Hansen (R-UT) and thirteen Western Republicans introduced legislation that may well be the most dangerous assault on the ESA. Hansen's bill (H.R. 3092) cited as the Human Protection Act, would require "that potential economic benefits under ESA outweigh potential economic costs." In ten words, this amendment would completely gut the Endangered Species Act. Under current law, eco-

nomical considerations are taken into account in recovery efforts, but a determination of whether to *list* a species as threatened or endangered is based "solely" on biological factors. Hansen's amendment would strike the word "solely" from this provision and require federal agencies to consider the economic impacts of listing a species. This would not only bring the listing process to a virtual halt, but would fundamentally abandon the reasons Congress enacted legislation to protect endangered species — to prevent species from becoming "extinct as a consequence of economic growth and development" and to preserve their "esthetic, ecological, educational, historical, recreational, and scientific value to the Nation and its people."

More than 300 anti-ESA lobbyists, under the banner "Fly in For Freedom," stormed Capitol Hill in September. The group reportedly is preparing a comprehensive bill to weaken the Act. In addition to Hansen's bill, opponents are expected to champion an amendment that would eliminate protection below the species level, such as for subspecies like the northern spotted owl and for vertebrate populations like the Mohave Desert tortoise.

#### **The Conservationists' Agenda**

The conservation community, collectively known as the Endangered Species Coalition, has a list of amendments of its own that we recently presented to leaders of the Senate Environmental Protection Committee. Our amendments are designed to streamline the process of listing species, improve critical habitat designation,

*(continued on page 5)*

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# Chapter News

## Chapter Elections

SCVAS members present at the May 20 General Meeting at the Palo Alto Cultural Center will vote on the following nominated SCVAS officers and directors for 1992-93:

<b>President:</b>	Rob Colwell
<b>1st Vice Pres.:</b>	Nick Yatsko
<b>2nd Vice Pres.:</b>	Tony Eppstein
<b>Treasurer:</b>	John McLemore
<b>Rec. Secretary:</b>	Yana Arnold
<b>Directors ('90-'93)</b>	
Alan Thomas	
Bobbie Handen	
<b>Directors ('91-'94)</b>	
Earl Cilley	
Fran McTamane	
Mike Rigney	
<b>Directors ('92-'95)</b>	
Reid Freeman	
Clysta Seney	

## Gifts & Bequests

### Gift of

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### In Memory of John Phillip Wessels Gift of Theresa & Carl Linkous

SCVAS welcomes gifts in general or gifts in honor of or in memory of relatives and friends. Such gifts will be used as specified by the donor or, if unspecified, at the discretion of the SCVAS Board of Directors. Please send your gift in the form of a check made out to: Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society, 22221 McClellan Road, Cupertino, CA 95014. All gifts are tax deductible. The Society is also appreciative of any bequests. Such bequests should specify as recipient the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society. All gifts, donations and bequests will be acknowledged in the *Avocet*.

## \*\* Birdathon Bulletin \*\*

Birdathon weekend is April 25-26. Help us reach our goal of \$10,000 by sponsoring the team of your choice:

"The Uncommon Loons"	Nick Yatsko, Cecily Harris, Rod Norden <i>et al.</i> (Official SCVAS Chapter team)
"The Wrentits"	Doug & Gail Cheeseman, Harriet Gerson <i>et al.</i>
"If You've Seen One Bird. . ."	Trish Mulvey
"The Vagrants"	Grant Hoyt, Dick Stovel, Mike Mammoser
"The Wrong Terns"	Bobbie & Cindy Handen, Allen Royer, Tyler Albrecht, Betty Parsons
"The Cardinal Virtues"	Tony Eppstein, Don Price, Chip Haven, Jules Resnick <i>et al.</i>
"The Band-its"	Mike Rigney & CCRS bird-banders
"The Poorwills"	Bill Bousman & Clark Blake
"The Bird Brains"	Alan Walther & Paul Edstrom
"The California Skimmers"	Mike Feighner & Kathy Parker
"The Wednesday Weirdos"	Alan Thomas & Friends

Call the office (408) 252-3747 to join a team or make a pledge. Support the Birdathon!

## SCVAS OFFICERS

President	Grant Hoyt	415/969-7892
1st VP	Nick Yatsko	408/865-4831
2nd VP	Tony Eppstein	415/326-1376
Treasurer	John McLemore	408/261-9431
Rec. Secty.	Yana Arnold	408/371-4393

## STAFF

Man. Director	Cecily Harris	408/252-3747
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## DIRECTORS

Rob Colwell	415/326-2400
Earl Cilley	415/854-6258
Bobbie Handen	408/356-4263
Fran McTamane	408/262-5513
Trish Mulvey	415/326-1252
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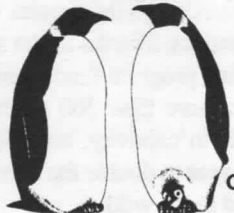
General meetings are open to the public. Board of Directors meetings are open to all members. Call the office at (408) 252-3747 for times and directions.

*The Avocet* is published monthly (except for July and August) by the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society, 22221 McClellan Rd., Cupertino, CA 95014. Deadline is the 25th of two months prior. Send contributions to *The Avocet*, c/o SCVAS at the above address.

SCVAS is a chapter of the National Audubon Society.

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# April 1992 Calendar

*On all field trips carpool and share expenses. Bring binoculars, field guides, warm clothing, lunch (optional on half-day trips) and liquids. Field Trip Coordinator for April: Mike Feighner (408) 354-0138, (408) 742-8660 (evenings)*

## \*\*Denotes Field Trip

### Wednesday, April 1, 7:30 PM.

**Bay Area Bird Photographers.** Pamela Daigneault and Glenn Sicklesteel will present a slide-dissolve program featuring birds, mammals, and general natural history. Meeting takes place at Palo Alto's Lucy Evans Baylands Interpretive Center on East Embarcadero Road.

### \*\*Saturday, April 4, 9:00 AM, Half day.

**Moss Landing/Elkhorn Slough.** Leader: Greg Meyer (408) 336-3513. Directions: Meet at Moss Landing Preserve parking area. Take unpaved road going east from Hwy. 1 at 55-mph sign. If you have reached Jetty Road, turn around and head north to first 55-mph-sign and turn right. Parking area is 1/4 mile on left. Highlights: Waterfowl, shorebirds, raptors.

### \*\*Sunday, April 5, (Note daylight savings time!) 8:00 AM, Half day.

**Stevens Creek County Park.** Leader: Phil Hand (415) 851-2623. Directions: Meet in the first parking area below the dam. 1-2 miles of easy walking. Highlights: Early arriving breeding birds and migrants.

### \*\*Wednesday, April 8, 8:30 AM.

**South County trip to McClellan Ranch Park.** Come see our new home and bird with Frank Farran (408) 252-3874. From I-280 go south on DeAnza Blvd. Approximately 1/2 mile past Stevens Creek Blvd. go west on McClellan, past Monta Vista High School and down into the Canyon. The Park is on the right just before McClellan crosses the Creek.

### Saturday, April 11, 8:00 - 10:00 AM.

**Bird Banding Demonstration** at McClellan Ranch Park, 22221 McClellan Rd, Cupertino. Coyote Creek Riparian Station staff and volunteers will demonstrate the techniques of bird banding. Possible species include White-crowned Sparrow, Dark-eyed Juncoes and California Thrashers. An excellent opportunity to see birds in the hand. For information call Kristin Shields at (408) 262-9204.

### \*\*Sunday, April 12, 9:00 AM, Half day.

**Beginners Trip to Charleston Slough.** Leader: Ed Rooks (408) 867-4748. Directions: Take Hwy. 101 to Mountain View, exit at San Antonio Rd north. Meet at its end at Terminal Way parking area. Highlights: Basics of birding, with emphasis on shore birds and waterfowl.

### Wednesday, April 15, 7:45 PM.

**April General Meeting.** Topic: "A Successful Fledge: Update on the Marbled Murrelet in the Santa Cruz Mountains." (See box below.)

### \*\*Saturday, April 18, 8:30 AM, Half day.

**Jasper Ridge Preserve.** Leaders Bill and Jean Clark, Winkie Lenihan, Bob Buell (415) 424-4371. By Reservation Only/Trip limited to 40. \$4 Fee. Directions: Take Sandhill Rd. exit west off I-280 to main gate two miles on left. Gate will be open 8:00 AM to 8:30 AM only. 2-3 miles of easy walking. Highlights: Wide variety of species in varied habitats plus wildflowers. Lunch optional.

### \*\*Saturday/Sunday, April 18-19, 9:00 AM. Half or full weekend.

**Pinnacles National Monument.** Leader: Dan Keller (415) 365-2032. Directions: From Gilroy, take Hwy. 25 south through Hollister about 40 miles to Hwy. 146. Take Hwy 146 to east entrance. Meet at campground office at 9:00 AM both days (reserve campsite early). Please call leader to sign up for this trip. This trip is co-sponsored by Sequoia Audubon. Highlights: Prairie Falcon, warblers, grosbeaks.

### \*\*Wednesday, April 22, 8:30, AM Half day.

**North County Field Trip to Skyline Ridge OSP.** Leader: Alberta Jasberg (415) 493-9546. Directions: Park in new large lot at northwest corner of intersection of Page Mill Rd, Skyline and Alpine Rd. Lunch optional.

### \*\*Saturday, April 25

**St. Joseph's Hill Poorwill Trip.** Leaders: Mike Feighner (408) 354-0138, (408) 742-8660 evenings, Kathy Parker (408) 358-2832. Help leaders finish their Birdathon Day by looking for Common Poorwill on St. Joseph's Hill and any owls that may be around. Trip limited to 10 by reservation only. Directions: Meet at Park 'n Ride lot on Saratoga Ave. (Hwy 9) in Los Gatos behind American Savings Bank. We will carpool from there. Bring flashlights and binoculars. Call leaders to sign up for trip.

### \*\*Saturday, April 25, 8:00 AM.

**SCVAS Chapter Birdathon Team: Uncommon Loons.** Leaders: Nick Yatsko (408) 247-5499 and Rod Norden. The Uncommon Loons will begin at Arastradero OSP at 8:00 AM. Arrive at Stanford at 12:00 PM and then travel over to the Baylands. Directions: From I-280, take Page Mill Rd. exit west. Turn right at Arastradero Rd. (Approx. .3 mile), proceed to Preserve parking lot, approx. .4 mile on right. Minimum donation of \$10 requested.

### \*\*Sunday, April 26, 8:00 AM, Full day.

**Mines Road/Del Puerto Canyon.** Leader: Art Edwards (510) 447-3720. Directions: Meet at Nob Hill Shopping Center in Livermore. Take South Livermore Ave. to 8th St. in Livermore. 12 hour trip. Participants may turn back at San Antonio Junction. Please carpool and share costs. Maximum caravan of 10 full cars only. Bring lunch (dinner), full tank of fuel. Limited facilities. Highlights: Wood Duck, Golden Eagle, Wild Turkey, Phainopepla, Lewis' Woodpecker, Rock and Canyon Wren, Lesser Nighthawk (late), Lawrence's Goldfinch. Beginners welcome.

### \*\*Sunday, April 26, Half day.

**Audubon Canyon Ranch.** See page 8 for more details.

### \*\*Saturday/Sunday, May 2-3, 9:00 AM.

**Sutter Buttes.** Leader: Don Schmoldt (510) 215-1910. Trip Limited to 25 participants. \$25 fee. Directions: take Hwy. 20 west 7 miles from Marysville to Acacia Ave. Drive north to intersection of Acacia and West Butte Road. Meet at church at northeast corner. We will bird the Buttes Saturday and local ponds Sunday. Highlights: Golden Eagle, Phainopepla, Lawrence's Goldfinch. Motels and camping available in Marysville and Colusa. Call leader to sign up for trip and send check payable to leader: Don Schmoldt, 85 Scenic Ave., Point Richmond, CA 94801-3933.

## General Membership Meeting Wednesday, April 15, 7:45 PM.

### Topic: "A Successful Fledge: Update on the Marbled Murrelet"

Tonight's program brings you up to date on the latest research and management activities for California's newest endangered bird — the Marbled Murrelet. Our knowledge of this tree-nesting seabird continues to increase — as do the threats to its breeding (old growth forest) and foraging (near-shore water) habitats. We'll get 'up close and personal' with the discovery of the most recent and first successful California nest. The Santa Cruz Mountains Murrelet Group will present a multimedia, 3-dimensional program designed to entertain as well as inform. Co-sponsored by the Palo Alto Open Spaces and Sciences Division, at the Palo Alto Cultural Center, Embarcadero and Newell Road.

# Field Notes

By Bill Bousman

## Pelicans through Ducks

Lingering **Am. White Pelicans** have become more common in the late winter and early spring in recent years, so eight on Lake Cunningham 2 Feb (MMR) and 15 on Salt Pond A-1 in Mountain View 19 Feb (WGB) are not surprising. A single **Am. Bittern** in the Palo Alto Flood Control Basin (FCB) 5 Feb (RWR) is the only report this month. Twenty-five **Greater White-fronted Geese** settled down on the San Jose-Santa Clara Water Control Plant (WPCP) ponds on 31 Jan for at least a day (RC, CO); such a concentration is most unusual. The imm. **Ross' Goose** has remained at least through 23 Feb (m.ob.). A second bird was reported from Hellyer Park 11 Feb (BW *et al.*). A **Brant** on the San Jose-Santa Clara WPCP 18 Feb (SBT) is one of our few recent records, but did not linger. A small **Canada Goose** in the same area 31 Jan had a white collar at the base of the neck and may have been the Aleutian subspecies although the Cackling Goose sometimes shows this collar (RC, CO). Winter flocks of **Wood Duck** can occasionally be sizeable as the 36 birds on Almaden Res. 9 Feb show. Five on the Campbell percolation ponds the same day are more typical of winter concentrations (both AV). Two pairs of **Blue-winged Teal** on the Palo Alto FCB 5 Feb (RWR) were the only ones found this month. The **Redhead** flock on the North Pond in the Palo Alto FCB remained after the heavy rains with 45 counted on 12 Feb (MMR). A pair noted on the Campbell percolation pond earlier in the winter was also seen on 18 Jan and 9 Feb (AV). Some of the **Barrow's Goldeneyes** on Shoreline Lake have remained with three seen on 30 Jan (MMR) and 12 Feb (AME), and two remaining to at least 22 Feb (MJM). **Hooded Mergansers** have been a local treat as in the past few winters. A flock of 22 was found on Howell Res. above Los Gatos 29 Jan (JAC) and seven were still there 4 Feb (MiF). More expected was a female on the Campbell percolation ponds 30 Jan (BB), a pair on Stevens Creek Res. 9 Feb (MJM) and a female on Shoreline Lake 22 Feb (MJM). Small numbers of

**Common Mergansers** have been found on the county reservoirs this month with up to 10 on Guadalupe Res. 21-28 Jan (KP, MiF), three on Almaden Res. 9 Feb (AV), and three on Anderson Res. 11 Feb (BW *et al.*)

## Raptors

A single **Bald Eagle** was along Calero Res. 9 Feb (AV) where other birds were seen in January. A **Ferruginous Hawk** near Coyote Res. 11 Feb (BW *et al.*) and an adult near Alpine Rd. and I-280 20 Feb (KHt) were both good finds. An ad. **Golden Eagle** over Black Mountain 2

## The rarest thing found in February were the welcome, substantial rains.

Feb (WGB) and three birds over Stevens Creek Res. 9 Feb (MJM) were from northern Santa Cruz Mountain locations where they are less common. A **Merlin** was recorded over the Campbell percolation ponds 17 Jan and again 21-22 Jan (BB). Other sightings were of individuals at the Palo Alto Baylands 30 Jan (KP, MiF) and at Coyote Res. 11 Feb (BW *et al.*). The male *richardsoni* in Mountain View was seen again 27-28 Jan and 21 Feb (MMR).

## Rails to Hummingbirds

The high tide on 16 Feb brought out at least 3 **Black rails** at the Palo Alto Baylands (MJM, JCo *fide* MMR). Winter records of **Spotted Sandpipers** include two along Coyote Creek below Hwy 237 18 Jan (MJM, GHt) and two more on Stevens Creek Res. 17 Feb (MJM). A **Franklin's Gull** was reported from Ed Levin CP 25 Jan (JS) but no description was provided. A male **Rufous Hummingbird** at Coyote Res. 16 Feb (HG) was quite early while an **Allen's Hummingbird** in Woodside 10 Feb (GH) was a more typical arrival.

## Passerines

The **Northern Rough-winged Swallow** along Coyote Creek below Hwy. 237 has apparently wintered successfully with observations on 28 Jan (MR) and 16 Feb (m.ob.). Two **Rock Wren** noted on the Anderson Res. dam 11 Feb (BW *et al.*) are in one of the few public areas where this species is regularly found. An **Orange-crowned Warbler** in Los Altos 11 Feb (PLaT) was undoubtedly a wintering bird. A female **Western Tanager** in Los Gatos 7 Feb (KP) also fits this pattern as our first migrants do not arrive normally until late April. A **Sharp-tailed Sparrow** was found again at the Palo Alto Baylands 30 Jan (KP, MiF). A **White-throated Sparrow** at a feeder in Los Altos was recorded at least through 16 Feb (J&SL).

*Observers: Bonnie Bedzin (BB), Bill Bousman (WGB), Jack Cole (JAC), Jim Corliss (JCo), Rita Colwell (RC), Al Eisner (AME), Mike Feighner (MiF), Harriet Gerson (HG), Gloria Heller (GH), Grant Hoyt (GHt), Karen Hoyt (KHt), Peter LaTourrette (PLaT), Jim & Sue Liskovec (J&SL), Mike Mammoser (MJM), Chris Otahal (CO), Kathy Parker (KP), Bob Reiling (RWR), Mike Rigney (MR), Mike Rogers (MMR), Jean Shurtleff (JS), Scott Terrill (SBT), Ann Verdi (AV), Betty Wyatt (BW).*

RARITIES: Please drop me a note: Bill Bousman, 321 Arlington Way, Menlo Park, CA 94025 (415) 322-5282.

## Calling All Birders!

We are starting to prepare a checklist of the birds in McClellan Ranch Park and need your records. Any sightings, seasonal or breeding records would be helpful. Please call Cecily Harris, SCVAS office at (408) 252-3747.

## ESA, (cont. from page 4)

enhance recovery planning, strengthen enforcement provisions and insure adequate funding for conservation activities.

Frantic last-ditch efforts to save a species like the California condor or the black-footed ferret from extinction are expensive and labor intensive, but unfortunately, often necessary. Many more species could be saved, but the agencies with principal jurisdiction over the endangered species program, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service, are woefully understaffed and underfunded. As a result, there are hundreds of species on the endangered species list that do not receive the attention they deserve, dozens receive no funding at all, and more than 250 do not have recovery plans. Currently, there are more than 600 plants and animals on the U.S. endangered species list and more than 3,800 candidate species that federal agencies believe warrant listing. Obviously, this is not what Congress intended for the Endangered Species Act.

When Congress reauthorizes the law this year, these problems must be addressed. But lawmakers should go a step further. The Endangered Species Act would be strengthened substantially if Congress would adopt a provision that requires federal agencies to take a more proactive, multi-species approach aimed at preventing species from becoming threatened or endangered. This is easier and makes far more economic sense than forever racing to save individual species from the brink of extinction. The conservation community is preparing to offer such an amendment.



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## Timing

The funding authority in the ESA expires on September 30, 1992, but otherwise provisions in the Act remain in force. Congress has been known to delay reauthorization for several years because of controversy surrounding substantive changes in the law. Congressional leaders may opt to defer floor consideration until after the '92 elections. However, we can expect the heat to be turned up considerably on this issue as both sides posture and the media fans the flames. Over the course of the next year, we can expect several committee hearings and perhaps even votes on the various legislative proposals. But it is simply too early to predict whether ESA will be reauthorized this Congress.

## What You Can Do

- Please write to Representative Tom Campbell or Norm Mineta and urge them to oppose H.R. 3092, Congressman Hansen's Human Protection Act. Write to them at: House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515.

- Ask the members of the California delegation, Senators John Seymour and Alan Cranston, to take a leading role in reauthorizing ESA by championing amendments supported by the Endangered Species Coalition. Write to them at: U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510.

- Join the SCVAS Phone Tree and make phone calls or write letters on local, state and national conservation issues. Contact: Gail Cheeseman (408) 867-1371 or Cecily Harris at the SCVAS office at (408) 252-3747.

- Join the Endangered Species Coalition. For more information, call Beth Levine at (510) 848-2211.

## Announcing New Editor

Chrysanthe Fitzpatrick will be the new editor of *The Avocet* beginning with the May issue. Many thanks to Chrys for 'taking over' so effortlessly.

Thanks to Cecily, Grant and everyone with SCVAS who made my year-and-a-half as editor so enjoyable.

— Michele Girard

## Non Audubon Events

### 10 years of Groundwater Cleanup in Silicon Valley: A Conference.

Expectations, Discoveries, Accomplishments, and Challenges. Sponsored by SCC Hazardous Materials Advisory Comm., SCC Manufacturing Group, SCV Water District, League of Women Voters, US EPA, and Regional Water Quality Control Board. Thursday, April 30, 1-5 PM and 7-9:30 PM. This is a one-day conference on the investigation, and cleanup of groundwater contamination in the South Bay. The conference will review what has been accomplished in the ten years since groundwater contamination was recognized as a problem in the South Bay area. It will examine how the actual accomplishments compare to our original expectations for action and cleanup.

### Join the Migration — Come Learn Raptors!

If you want to learn to identify the hawks, falcons, and eagles of California *and* you want to be part of a long-term wildlife conservation project, then we at the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory (GGRO) want you! Come attend our only 1992 GGRO Orientation Meetings either on Thursday, April 23, at 7:00 pm, *OR* on Saturday, May 3, at 10:00 am. Both hour-long programs will be held at GGRNA Headquarters, Building 201, Upper Fort Mason, San Francisco. Enter at Franklin and Bay.

The GGRO is a group of more than 150 volunteers dedicated to tracking and monitoring the autumn flight of 19 species of birds of prey over the Marin Headlands. We are currently seeking new volunteers for our 1992 class who can commit one day every two weeks from August through December 1992, along with some weekend and evening training in July. For more information, please call the GGRO (415) 331-0730.

# Environmental Action News

## Audubon News From Sacramento

### Planning and Conservation League: Lobbyists for the Environment

At the age of 27, the Planning and Conservation League is the oldest environmental lobbying group in the state. The California Legislature credited this nonprofit alliance of more than 100 organizations and 9,000 individual members with being "instrumental in the passage of every piece of environmental legislation in California." As a part of the Bay Area Audubon Council, SCVAS has benefited from the PCL support for our conservation priorities for many years.

Represented on its board of directors by members of both major political parties who have considerable strategic and technical expertise, PCL enjoys special credibility because of its strictly non-partisan approach. Its reputation for thoughtful, well-researched analysis has earned the respect of a number of organizations which have presented PCL with state and national awards for effective environmental lobbying. The most prestigious award, however, is the results.

Believing that careful decisions about natural resources will result in a sustainable economy and a healthy environment, PCL has played a key role in the passage of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the State Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, the Coastal Protection Act, the Integrated Waste Management Act and the Lake Tahoe Compact. PCL also helped establish the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), the Energy Commission, the Coastal Conservancy, the Tahoe Conservancy, and the new Riparian Conservancy.

Once these commissions and conservancies are established, PCL works to keep them funded. Widely known for its ability to go straight to the people when the Legislature does not listen, PCL is responsible in whole or in part for the following:

### New Legislative Affairs Director for California

John McCaull is the first California Legislative Affairs Director for the National Audubon Society and the Audubon Chapters in California. John is a graduate of the U.C. Davis Law School and most recently was General Counsel of Californians Against Waste. His ambition as a conservationist has been to work full-time in the area of wildlife habitat protection.

John is thrilled to be joining Audubon team and is eager to get to know our issues and most important, our people. Since his arrival late in February, John has been spending time at the NAS Western Regional Office as well as at his downtown work location near the State Capitol in the offices of the Planning and Conservation League (see related story). John is looking forward to meeting Chapter leaders and activists at the NAS conference at Asilomar in April, and will be conducting a workshop on the Legislative Affairs Program.

—Dan Taylor and Trish Mulvey

## SCVAS Joins California Burrowing Owl Census

Last year, 13 Bay Area Audubon Chapters and bird clubs, including SCVAS, participated in the 1991 Cooperative Census of Burrowing Owls in California. Each Chapter was given 40 census blocks for volunteers to complete. Disturbing results came from the data collected. In Santa Clara County over the past decade, owls have declined 70.7%. They have disappeared from 118 of the 167 known breeding locations. We have lost 172 of the 237 pairs known to be here in the last decade. Unfortunately, the south bay is one of the few remaining parts of the Bay Area with owl pairs and appropriate habitat remaining and we are seeing these disappointing results.

This year, 30 Audubon Chapters and bird clubs have been approached to participate in this Census. Central Valley

(continued on page 8)

\* Prop 70: A \$776 million bond act for wildlife, coastal and park lands (CAL-PAW);

\* Prop 99: The cigarette tax which includes \$30 million for parks and wildlife;

\* Prop 117: The mountain lion protection act that also requires the state to spend at least \$30 million per year for the next thirty years on wildlife habitat; and

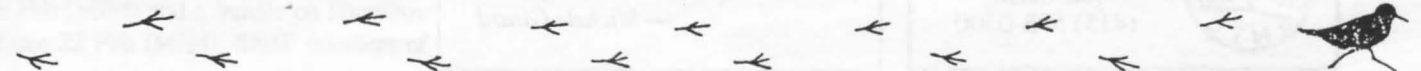
\* Prop 116: The Passenger Rail Bond Act that will build \$2 billion of rail throughout California.

Because PCL's only mission is to lobby California's state government for a broad assortment of effective environmental laws, regulations and funding, PCL is unique in its ability to focus, coordinate and maximize its efforts. By providing part-time office space for John McCaull, Audubon's new California Legislative

Affairs Director, both groups will benefit from new networking opportunities with Audubon activists statewide.

Bay Area Audubon Council Chapters have long been sponsors of PCL, joining more than 100 other organizations in contributing about 10% of PCL's total budget. The rest of the money that supports PCL comes almost exclusively from individuals. SCVAS members are invited to consider giving their personal support to PCL by joining. Annual dues are \$33, and members receive the highly regarded PCL quarterly newsletter, *California Today*. Checks made payable to PCL should be sent to 926 J Street, Suite 612, Sacramento, CA 95814. If you have questions about membership, please call PCL at (916) 444-8726.

—Lynn Sadler and Trish Mulvey.



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## Do You Have A Little Time To Share?

With the recent move to Cupertino, SCVAS is experiencing rapid growth in many areas. We are interested in finding out about your interests and to see how we might better involve our members. To do this, we need your help. Be among the first to join us at our new home at McClellan Ranch Park! Many folks don't want to volunteer because of lack of time or perceived lack of ability. You don't have to be a trained volunteer to volunteer at SCVAS. We have something for everyone. Try it for a year. We have divided volunteer opportunities by category. If there is anything you would like to do, but don't see listed, PLEASE ask. We may have forgotten to include it.

### SCVAS Office:

- I would like to volunteer in the SCVAS Nature Store/Library
- I would like to design flyers/brochures
- I have these other office skills: \_\_\_\_\_

### Education:

- I am interested in joining the SCVAS Speakers Bureau.
- I am interested in producing conservation-related slide shows or lectures.
- I am interested in joining the SCVAS Education Committee.
- I could staff a booth at a fair or special event.

### Environmental Action:

- I am interested in joining the SCVAS Phone Tree
- I am interested in joining the SCVAS Letter Writing Team
- I would like to be a SCVAS spokesperson on the following issue \_\_\_\_\_

### Field Trips:

- I would like to lead birding or natural history field trips
- I would like to lead birdwalks around McClellan Ranch Park
- I would like to help coordinate field trips

### Research:

- I would like to census Burrowing Owls in May/June, 1992.
- I would like to inventory Santa Clara County Creeks in Spring '92

Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please fill out this form and mail it to: Volunteer Opportunities, SCVAS, 22221 McClellan Road, Cupertino, CA 95014. Questions? (408) 252-3747. You will be contacted within 1-2 weeks. We'll work with you to find the most appropriate volunteer opportunity.

Santa Clara Valley  
Audubon Society  
22221 McClellan Road  
Cupertino, CA 95014

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage Paid  
San Jose, CA  
Permit No. 5869

## Special SCVAS Field Trip to Audubon Canyon Ranch

To celebrate John James Audubon's birthday, we'll be visiting the Audubon Canyon Ranch in Marin County on Sunday, April 26th. Audubon Canyon Ranch (ACR) is a private nonprofit organization dedicated to nature education, conservation, and management of wildlife sanctuaries in northern California. ACR's three locations include canyons and heronry of Bolinas Lagoon Preserve, rolling hills of the Bouverie Audubon Preserve in Sonoma County and the salt and fresh water marshes of Cypress Grove Preserve on Tomales Bay. ACR contains a major heronry of Great Blue Herons and Great Egrets. Each spring these birds nest in the tops of the tall redwood trees and fish in nearby Bolinas Lagoon. The total number of nests varies between 125 and 175 each year with egrets predominating. The herons begin to arrive the last week of January and start court-

ship and nesting in February. The egrets arrive in mid-March and begin nesting later in March. On our April field trip, we'll see courtship behavior and the adults will be rotating the eggs in their nest. The Preserve is open to the public during the heronry's nesting season every weekend from mid-March to mid-July. Volunteer Ranch Guides serve as interpreters at the heronry outlook, the ponds, and other points along the trail. The nation's first Audubon Society was created to protest the slaughter of Great Egrets for women's hats. This trip is *limited to 16 people*. Please call office at 408-252-3747 to make your reservation. There are telescopes available at ACR. Wear comfortable walking shoes because we'll be walking about 1/2 mile to the overlook. Plan on being at ACR at least 2 hours. Meet at Page Mill Park-n-Ride at 8:15 AM or at ACR at 10:00 AM.

### *Burrowing Owl Census (continued from page 6)*

Chapters from Redding down to Bakersfield and coastal chapters from Monterey to Mexico will participate. SCVAS will receive all the owl blocks that were censused in 1992 and some new random blocks from areas that are suspected to have owls.

Volunteers will cover the entire 5 km square block during the early a.m. (sunrise to 10 a.m.) or late p.m. (4 p.m. to sunset) during the two month period that Burrowing Owls are likely to be in their nests feeding their young. At this time one or both parents will always be present.

40 Volunteers will be asked to complete the Census between May 15 and July 15, 1992. Each volunteer or team of volunteers will be trained in census techniques to identify Burrowing Owls and their burrows. Detailed map blocks and data sheets are provided. Training will be held on April 18 at Mission College both in the morning and late afternoon.

Interested? Call Cecily Harris, SCVAS office at (408) 252-3747 for more information.

**Membership:** We invite your membership in the National Audubon Society/SCVAS. To join, please complete and mail this form with payment to SCVAS, 22221 McClellan Road, Cupertino, CA 95014.

*Please choose one:*

**National Audubon Society Membership:** Check One

Introductory \$20  Individual \$35  Family \$38

Members receive *Audubon* magazine and *The Avocet* newsletter. Make check payable to National Audubon Society.

—or—

**Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society Membership:** Check One

Subscriber \$10  Supporter \$20  Donor \$35  Patron \$50 and more

Members receive *The Avocet* newsletter. Make check payable to SCVAS.

**Donation:** SCVAS greatly appreciates your tax-deductible donation. Your gift helps to fund the Chapter's birding, education, conservation and research programs.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

This is a gift from: \_\_\_\_\_