

# The Avocet

The Newsletter of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society

December 1993

## Bird Inventory Begins On South County Creeks

Coyote Creek Riparian Station in cooperation with SCVAS and the S.C. County Creeks Coalition was funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to conduct a year-long assessment of our county's creeks, rivers and streams. We are now beginning the inventory process for both Saratoga Creek and Stevens Creek.

The method chosen to collect information on bird use of riparian habitats is known simply as the Point Count. This method was first developed and used widely in Europe and has only recently been adopted in the United States. The points at which data are collected are spaced 500 meters apart along the creek, and teams of volunteers gather quantitative data at each location. Besides birds, information is being collected on water quality, vegetation, fish, reptiles and am-

phibians.

SCVAS is seeking seasoned birders, especially those proficient in birding by ear. Each point count is conducted quarterly between sunrise and 11 AM and is only ten minutes in duration. Saratoga Creek has about 39 points and we are estimating that six teams of two to three volunteers would take two mornings four times a year to complete the census.

Please note that our project covers all the creeks in the county, so if these creeks are not in your area, watch the *Avocet* for notification of upcoming assessments. Matadero, Los Alamitos and Guadalupe Creeks are next in line to be inventoried.

Clysta Seney (408)261-9431 is the Field Leader for Saratoga Creek and Jim and Sue Liskovec (415)969-5542 are Field Leaders for Stevens Creek. Please

contact these individuals if you are able to contribute your time and birding talents for these specific creeks.

If you are interested in other aspects of the creek inventory or would like to sign up for a creek in your neighborhood, contact Community Creeks Watch Coordinator Chris Fischer at (415)364-8723. She can also assist you to receive training in fisheries, vegetation, water quality, pollution control, reptiles and amphibians. This project provides volunteers a great opportunity to learn about our local creek habitats, enjoy some birding and contribute to our community's knowledge of local resources, and SCVAS is delighted to be involved.

### "Out on a Limb" Fundraiser

As the SCVAS Board continues to interview candidates for the newly-created Environmental Advocate position, we face the unenviable task of coming up with funding for the \$13,000/year half-time position. We feel so strongly that Audubon needs to take a more active, visible and vocal position in local environmental issues that we're going out on a limb to hire this person, even as our over-stressed budget begs for mercy.

That's why we're initiating the "Out on a Limb" fundraising campaign this month. When you receive our letter asking for money to support the Environmental Advocate hiring, please consider a generous gift. (Several Board members have already pledged to donate \$100 to this campaign, but any amount will be gratefully accepted.) Help SCVAS represent our position to local governments, agencies and decision-makers in order to preserve our bird (and birdwatcher) habitat. Thanks for your support.

### Save San Jose Creeks

Within the next few months San Jose government officials will be reviewing policy and adopting guidelines which affect the future of all the streams in the city. This will be an opportunity for SCVAS members, particularly for those who live in San Jose, to let our officials know that we value the riparian habitat and want to preserve it. Creeks provide many important benefits for the environment as a whole, including:

- filtering sediment from runoff before it enters larger waterways
- serving as a 'safety valve' for flood waters
- providing food and living space in an urban area for wildlife and plants

...continues on page 6

# Chapter News

## San Jose Christmas Bird Count

San Jose's participation in the 94th annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count will take place on Sunday, December 19. SCVAS birders and friends will once again meet at dawn, sign in, diligently bird all day (regardless of the weather), then convene at dusk at the Leininger Center in Kelley Park to eat, drink, visit and tally up our species count. Last year 108 counters totalled 164 species, including a first Santa Clara County record Eastern Phoebe. There is a \$5 fee to defray compilation and publication expenses.

To participate in the bird count, call one of the section leaders listed below. If you are new to the area or haven't previously worked on a CBC, call Reid Freeman (408) 255-4969 to receive an assignment. All levels of birding experience are needed to spot, count and record the sightings. If you can't get out that day, but live within the count circle and maintain bird feeders, call Reid to learn how to participate as a feeder watcher.

SECTION	LEADER	PHONE
A Alviso	Mike Feighner	408 742-8660 (5pm-midnight)
B Fremont Hills	Mary Simpson	408 289-8400
C Calaveras	Reid Freeman	408 255-4969
D Alum Rock	Jae Abel	408 356-4945
E Evergreen	Rich Healy	408 578-0618
F South	Alan Thomas	408 265-9286
G Southwest	Mark Miller	415 967-3429
H Agnew	Grant Hoyt	415 969-7892
I Milpitas	Ann Verdi	408 266-2798
J Berryessa	Harriet Gerson	408 252-6244



### Other local CBC's:

Sat. 12/18	Crystal Springs
" "	Santa Cruz
Wed. 12/22	Mt. Hamilton
Tue. 12/28	San Francisco
Fri 12/31	South Marin
Sat. 1/1	Moss Landing
Sun. 1/2	Ano Nuevo

The 34th Palo Alto CBC will be held on Monday, December 20th, 1993. The Region Leaders for the count are listed below. Please contact them if you are able to help this year or contact Bill Bousman at the number shown below.

Region One:	Jack Cole	408-996-0434
Region Two:	Mike Rogers	415-962-8907
Region Three:	Bill Bousman	415-322-5282
Region Four:	Phyllis Browning	415-494-6360
Region Five:	Jane Becker-Haven	415-321-0776
Region Six:	Ruth Troetschler	415-948-4142
Region Seven:	Gloria Heller	415-851-2356
Region Eight:	Bill Bousman	415-322-5282

### SCVAS OFFICERS

President	Rob Colwell	415/326-2400
Past Pres.	Grant Hoyt	415/969-7892
1st VP	Tony Eppstein	415/326-1376
2nd VP	Nick Yatsko	408/247-5499
Treasurer	John McLemore	408/261-9431
Rec. Secty.	Clysta Seney	408/261-9431

### STAFF

Office Mgr	Jayne DiCandio	408/252-3747
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### DIRECTORS

Earl Cilley '91-'94	415/854-6285
Mike Rigney '91-'94	408/262-9204
Alan Thomas '91-'94	408/265-9286
Reid Freeman '92-'95	408/255-4969
Jane Becker-Haven '92-'95	415/321-0776
Bobbie Handen '93-'96	408/356-4263
Howard Johnson '93-'96	408/255-2422

### CHAIRPERSONS

CBC	Reid Freeman	408/255-4969
The Avocet	Grant Hoyt	415/969-7892
	Laura Lebherz	408/264-0533
Education Programs	Bobbie Handen	408/356-4263
	Doug & Gail Cheeseman	408/867-1371
Library	Reid Freeman	408/255-4969
Field Trips	John Mariani	408/997-1429
Aud Adven	Elaine Gould	408/448-0622
Photo Club	Pete LaTourrette	415/961-2741
Finance	Don Price	415/327-1254
BAAC		
Delegate	Trish Mulvey	415/326-0252
Membership	Vacant	
North County Field Trips		
	Alberta Jasberg	415/493-9546
South County Field Trips		
	Shirley Gordon	408/996-9863
Birdathon	Tony Eppstein	415/326-1376

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 the chapter of the National Audubon Society for Santa Clara County.

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**Rare Bird Alert: 510/ 524-5592**

# 1993 Calendar

*On all field trips carpool and share expenses. Bring binoculars, field guides, warm clothing, lunch (optional on half-day trips) and liquids.*

\*\*Denotes Field Trip

**Wednesday Dec. 1, 4:30 PM. Education Committee Meeting.** McClellan Ranch Park, 22221 McClellan Rd. Cupertino. For more information call Bobbie Handen at 408/356-4263.

**Wednesday Dec. 1, 7-9 PM. Burrowing Owl class at McClellan Ranch Park.** San Jose State Professor and Burrowing Owl expert Dr. Lynne Trulio will teach an informational class on Thursday evening and lead a field trip to study the owls in their natural habitat on Saturday Dec. 4 from 8-12 AM. Sponsored by SCVAS Education Committee; fee of \$25.00. Call Bobbie Handen at 408/356-4263 to register.

**\*\*Saturday Dec. 4, 9:00 AM. Half day. Beginner's trip to Charleston Slough.** Leader: Allen Royer 408/288-7768. Take Hwy. 101 to Mt. View, exit San Antonio Rd. N Meet at its end at Terminal Way parking lot (1/4 mile). Basics of waterfowl identification.

**\*\*Saturday Dec. 4, 9:00 AM. Half day. South County Reservoirs.** Leaders: Emelie Curtis 408/779-2637 and Jane Glass 408/779-3637. Meet at corner of Oak Glen Ave. and Uvas Rd. at N. end of Chesbro Reservoir. Lunch at Uvas Reservoir at noon. Highlights: ducks, oak woodland species, raptors (possibly eagles).

**Monday Dec. 6, 7:30 PM. Environmental Action Committee Meeting.** McClellan Ranch Park, 22221 McClellan Rd., Cupertino. Get involved with one of the chapter's most dynamic and committed groups. For more information call Tony Eppstein 415/326-1376.

**\*\*Wednesday Dec. 8, 9:00 AM. Half day. Arastradero OSP.** Leader: Shirley Gordon 408/996-9863. Directions: Take Page Mill Rd. W.

from I-280 to Arastradero Rd. (about 1/2 mile on right) and another 1/2 mile to parking lot on right. Beginners welcome. Heavy rain cancels.

**Sunday Dec. 19. San Jose Christmas Bird Count.** All day. See write-up on Page 2. Compiler: Reid Freeman 408/255-4969.

**Monday Dec. 20. Palo Alto Christmas Bird Count.** All day. See write-up on Page 2. Compiler: Bill Bousman 415/322-5282.

**Saturday Jan. 8. Post-CBC Rarities Chase.** Leader: John Mariani 408/997-1429. Call leader for meeting place and time.

## Non-Audubon Events

The Cheesemans are running two Monterey Bay boat trips, Jan 8 and 15, 7:30AM - 3:00PM, \$45. Leaders will be Doug and Gail, plus Allen Royer, Rod Norden and Mike Danzenbaker. Call (408)867-1371 to reserve space. There is also space available on the Venezuela trip with Venezuela Audubon April 16 - May 4 1994, \$2750. Limit of 12 participants; two leaders: Lynne Aldrich of Texas and David Ascanio, a professional full-time birding guide from Venezuela.

Two classes for birders will be offered by Sequoia Adult School at Little House, 800 Middle Ave. in Menlo Park. There will be 8 slide lecture sessions for each class. Instructor: Maryann

Danielson (415)325-9349. Fee: \$30 (subject to change). Four field trips will be offered with each class for an additional fee.

**Birding Basics**—for beginning and less skilled intermediate birders. Winter session will concentrate on identification and life styles of our wintering waterbirds and raptors. Wed. eves. 7:30 - 9:30 starting Jan. 12. Register at first class.

**Following Birds Through The Winter Season**—for intermediate and more advanced birders. This quarter will highlight species identification, flight patterns, foraging strategies, flocking and a host of other adaptations utilized by our wintering birds. Mon. eves. 7:30 - 9:30 starting Jan. 10. Register at first class.

Birds of the Bay Area will receive special attention during Coyote Point Museum's Bird Festival on Sat. Dec. 4 from 10 - 4. The program includes guided walks, speakers, live bird presentations, slide shows, information booths and crafts for children.

Scheduled speakers include raptorexpert Allen Fish at 10AM; PRBO director Dan Evans at 11AM; S.F. Zoo Zoomobile at 1PM; hummingbird rehabilitator Juanita Heinemann at 2PM, and bird photographer Katherine Rambo at 3PM.

The program is free with Museum admission (\$3 adult, \$2 senior, \$1 children, under 6 free). Coyote Point Museum is located at 1651 Coyote Point Dr., San Mateo, just east of Bayshore Freeway at Peninsula Ave.

## Audubon Adventures

Thirty-two upper elementary classrooms in the Santa Clara Valley will receive a subscription to Audubon Adventures this school year. This is possible due to generous grants from Applied Materials and Adobe Systems and individual contributions from Roxanne Wise, Relma Siirila, Claudio and Theresa Serafini and Chip Haven and Jane Becker-Haven. Many thanks to Cecily Harris for obtaining the two large grants which provided for schools in Santa Clara and Mountain View.

Topics covered in Audubon Adventures this year will be: Wildflowers, Animal Communication, Marine Mammals, Snakes, Songbirds, Water, and Endangered Species (Audubon Month).

# Field Notes

By Bill Bousman

## Pelicans to Egrets

**Brown Pelicans** have remained in fairly good numbers during October with a peak of 13 on the Alviso salt ponds 30 Oct (MMR, SCR). The first **American Bittern** of the season was found in Artesian Slough 14 Oct (PJM, VL, ER, JR), which is early. Since then birds have been found along the Alviso salt ponds on 24 Oct (SCR, HLR) and 31 Oct (MJM, MiF, RF). An unfledged **Snowy Egret** in the Alviso heronry 4 Oct (VL, PJM) is evidence of a very late nesting season there. The last **Little Blue Heron** of the year was a very late adult on Salt Pond A10 on 2 Oct (JiC, PZ). The number of **Cattle Egrets** in the vicinity of the Arzino Ranch has declined with one reported on 3 Oct (AW).

## Waterfowl

**Greater White-fronted Geese** have been found more frequently than any fall within memory. Two were at the confluence of Coyote Creek and Mud Slough 29 Sep (VL *fide* PJM), six were on the Calabazas ponds 6 Oct (SCR), and three were seen over the marsh near the mouth of Coyote Creek 31 Oct (MJM). A male **Blue-winged Teal** was seen in Charleston Slough 7 Oct and nearby in the Mountain Forebay 21 Oct (both WGB). **Eurasian Wigeon** have been less frequent this fall with a male still in the Mountain View Forebay 4 Oct (SCR). A pair of **Redhead** on the Sunnyvale Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) ponds 3 Oct (MMR) were the first found this winter. A male **Tufted Duck** was found 30 Oct (SCR, MMR) in Salt Pond A10 along the Alviso Slough Trail for only the second county record. [The salt ponds encircled by the Alviso Slough Trail are, for a clockwise route, numbered A12, A11, A10, A9 (at the confluence of Alviso Slough and Coyote Creek), A14, A15, A13, and A12 again. This lovely walk often requires five hours and a scope is essential.] A female **Common Goldeneye** at the Ogier Avenue ponds 15 Oct (SCR) is a month or so early.

## Raptors

An **Osprey** was seen at Jasper Ridge Biological Reserve 27 Oct (HD, JB-H). A second immature **Broad-winged Hawk** was found migrating over Monte Bello Ridge on 3 Oct (SCR) for our third county record. The first **Ferruginous Hawk** of the season was an adult at the San Jose Airport on 14 Oct (SCR). **Merlin** sightings have been plentiful in October with individuals reported at nine locations including a male at the Alviso salt ponds 24 Oct (SCR, HLR) of the prairie race, *richardsonii*. **Peregrine Falcons** have also been well reported with a number of adults and immatures found along the bay throughout the month. A **Prairie Falcon** at the Coyote Creek Riparian Station

A Tufted Duck and a Lapland Longspur were exceptional finds

(CCRS) waterbird pond on 14 Oct (SCR) was away from typical breeding locations.

## Shorebirds to Gulls

A juv. **Pacific Golden-Plover** was found at Crittenden Marsh on 6 Oct (SCR) and 9 Oct (MJM), but all of the other Lesser Golden-Plovers found this fall have been identified as **American Golden-Plovers** including a juv. at the pond at Los Esteros and Spreckles in Alviso 17 Sep-15 Oct (EA, AT, SCR, MMR) and one to two juveniles at Crittenden Marsh 4-27 Oct (PJM, SCR, WGB, MMR). **Lesser Yellowlegs** numbers have stayed quite high for October. A sampling includes eight on the pond at Los Esteros and Spreckles 1 Oct (SCR), thirteen in the Palo Alto Flood Control Basin (FCB) 1 Oct (SCR), and numerous birds at Crittenden Marsh 6-24 Oct (m.ob.) with a peak of 34 on 7 Oct (SCR). As expected, good numbers of **Pectoral Sandpipers** have continued

during October with 1-2 on the pond at Los Esteros and Spreckles 1-8 Oct (SCR, MMR), 6-14 on the CCRS waterbird pond 1-14 Oct (SCR), 23 on the San Jose-Santa Clara WPCP drying ponds 1 Oct (SCR), 5-24 on Crittenden Marsh 6-10 Oct (SCR, MMR, PJM), a single bird on Artesian Slough 14 Oct (VL, PJM), and two at the Mountain View Forebay 16 Oct (MMR, MJM). Much more exciting was the single juvenile **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** that was found with the Pectorals at Crittenden Marsh 8 Oct (SCR, PJM) and remained there at least through 11 Oct (m.ob.) for our seventh county record. Equally rare were the four **Stilt Sandpipers** found at Crittenden on 4 Oct (PJM) of which at least one remained in the area through 8 Oct (MMR, MiF). This is the fourth county record of this species. Our **Ruff** incursion has continued this fall with a female remaining at the pond at Los Esteros and Spreckles 1-15 Oct (SCR, AW, MMR) and a juvenile male has been in Crittenden Marsh from 7-27 Oct (SCR, m.ob.) [Is the 10/27 record from Crittenden?] A **Sabine's Gull** was found on Coyote Creek within the San Francisco Bay NWR 10 Oct (VL, SM *fide* PJM) for our fifth county record.

## Woodpeckers to Warblers

A **Lewis' Woodpecker** was found 30 Oct (SCR, HLR) at Monte Bello OSP. We occasionally enjoy the winter presence on the peninsula of this delightful woodpecker. A **Northern (Yellow-shafted) Flicker**, showing no intergrade features, was along the Pajaro River below Hwy 101 just across the San Benito County line 17 Oct (SCR). A late **Willow Flycatcher** was banded at CCRS on 2 Oct (*fide* SCR). Also late were six **Tree Swallows** over the CCRS waterbird pond 1 Oct (SCR) and 30 **Violet-Green Swallows** along the Pajaro River 16 Oct (MMR, SCR). A **Red-breasted Nuthatch** at a feeder in San Jose 27 Oct (MiF) is the only sign this fall of local movement of this irruptive species.

**Rock Wrens** are largely resident in Santa Clara County but a bird at Coyote Creek below Hwy 237 22 Oct (CO) and banded

there 23 Oct (*fide* WGB) may have been a dispersing bird or a migrant. A **Varied Thrush** banded at CCRS 17 Oct (*fide* WGB) is the first noted this season. A **Phainopepla** was found along Coyote Creek below Hwy 237 22 Oct (AT,EGu) for one of our few records this year away from the Diablo Range. A **Nashville Warbler** near the Palo Alto Water Quality Control Plant (WQCP) 14 Oct (SCR) was a good find. This fall has seen exceptional numbers of **Palm Warblers** all along the California coast and the number found locally has been unprecedented. One was found at Crittenden Marsh 8 Oct (SCR,PJM), another was near the Palo Alto WQCP 13 Oct (SCR,m.ob.) and the next day two more were found near the WQCP and on the ITT property (SCR). On 15 Oct one was found along Coyote Creek near the Ogier Avenue ponds north of Morgan Hill (SCR) and the next day a single bird was along Coyote Creek below Hwy 237 (MJM). An individual was at the Sunnyvale Baylands Park 24 Oct (AME) and on 31 Oct two were found on Coyote Creek below Hwy 237 (MJM). Counting the September bird from the south county this gives a total of nine or ten birds!

## Sparrows to Grosbeaks

Late **Chipping Sparrows** were found along Stevens Creek at L'Avenida 22 Oct (MMR) and next to the Palo Alto estuary 24 Oct (SCR). A **Clay-colored Sparrow** was banded at CCRS 11 Oct (*fide* SCR) for our fifth county record and, making a clean sweep of the *Spizella* sparrows, Rottenborn found a **Brewer's Sparrow** on the bike path north of the Emily Renzel Wetlands. This latter bird is the fourth record of this species in the county. One to two **Sharp-tailed Sparrows** were observed on an October high tide at the Palo Alto Baylands with one seen on 17 Oct (MMR), two on 18 Oct (SCR), and two on 19 Oct (RL). A **Swamp Sparrow** was found along the Pajaro River below Hwy 101 on 17 Oct and another at the Palo Alto Baylands 18 Oct (both SCR). **White-throated Sparrows** found this month include one at a San Jose feeder 11-12 Oct (EA), birds banded at CCRS 18, 20, and 26 Oct (*fide* SCR), and one along Coyote Creek above Hwy 237 24 Oct (GHT, DS). An imm. female **Lapland Longspur** was found in the Horned Lark flock at Shoreline Park 27

Oct (SCR) and seen by many observers through the end of the month. This is the second county record for this species. A female **Lawrence's Goldfinch** at Monte Bello OSP 3 Oct (SCR) is the only movement we have seen of this finch away from the Diablo Range. A female **Evening Grosbeak** over Coyote Creek at Tennant Road 27 Oct (SCR) is the first of the season.

*Observers: Ernie Abeles (EA), Jane Becker-Haven (JB-H), Bill Bousman (WGB), Jim Corliss (JiC), Herb Dengler (HD), Al Eisner (AME), Mike Feighner (MiF), Ed Gustafson (EGu), Grant Hoyt (GHT), Valerie Layne (VL), Rosalie Lefkowitz (RL), Sue Macias (SM), Mike Mammoser (MJM), Peter Metropulos (PJM), Mike Rogers (MMR), Ed Rooks (ER), Janice Rooks (JR), Heather Rottenborn (HLR), Steve Rottenborn (SCR), Dick Stovel (DS), Alan Thomas (AT), Alan Walther (AW), Pete Zell (PZ)*

**RARITIES:** Please drop me a note: Bill Bousman, 321 Arlington Way, Menlo Park, CA 94025.

## Accipiter Antics

On October 25 at noon we glanced out of the window and saw a hawk in our birdbath. The hawk was in no hurry and spent 1 and 1/2 hours grooming himself, his presence clearing the area of doves and small birds, and soaking his really lethal-looking feet.

Naturally we tiptoed around, got out many bird books, a camera and binoculars and generally had a grand time deciding just what this visitor was. We've had Merlins blasting doves into eternity for some time but this was a more personal visit than the usual Merlin fly-by.

I kept thinking Goshawk, but having seen one up close and for a long period of time, I knew if it were a Goshawk I probably would have fainted. So we narrowed it down to either a Cooper's or a Sharp-shinned Hawk. The books' description of size didn't fit a "robin" or "crow" sized bird (maybe a fluffed up raven—?)

In the paper the next day was a picture of the Hawk Hill banding operation and sure enough, the Sharp-shinned pictured looked pretty similar to our bird. So with the help of "Hawks in Flight" and "Birds of North America" (Nat'l.

Geo.) we decided our visitor was a male Sharp-shinned Hawk.

Whatever it was, seeing a bird of prey lollygagging among the dahlias and ivy and preening in the birdbath was a sight to remember. Has such a thing happened often?

—Gail Stigen

(A few field notes: Slate grey top of head, lighter slate grey head; fluffy fanny feathers white; longish black and white tail; butterscotch-colored chest feathers; tip of tail: very thin grey or white band.)

**Editor's reply:** *Ninety-minute preening sessions in suburban birdbaths would seem unusual for the normally shy accipiter hawks, but obviously not impossible. Ms. Stigen's Mountain View yard probably contains some decent tree and large shrub habitat, and midday is often a quiet time for these bird-hunting raptors, so this one apparently felt protected enough to take an extended break from its daily business of songbird depopulation.*

*What does happen often is confusion in separating Cooper's from Sharp-shinned hawks. Some of the de-*

*Continued on page 7...*



# Environmental Action News

## Letter-Writers Help Save CEQA!!

CEQA, the California Environmental Quality Act, was passed over twenty-five years ago and is California's broadest environmental protection law. It established a legal "infrastructure" requiring businesses, private landowners and state and local governments to follow numerous mandates for environmental protection.

During the past year, California's economic climate and the focused publicity campaign by industry convinced nearly all legislators that the CEQA process had become cumbersome and ripe for abuse. CEQA mandates the preparation of an environmental impact report (EIR) for projects carried out or approved by a public agency which will have a "significant effect on the environment". CEQA does not prevent any project from being implemented, it merely provides for consideration of environmental impact and encourages considerations of alternatives and mitigation requirements. The

business community charged that there were significant and unnecessary costs associated with CEQA review due to the fact that EIR's go through several drafts and can take months or even years to finish and cost several hundred thousand dollars.

Audubon recognized the need to address business concerns but was determined that the environmental protection CEQA provided not be weakened. The state Legislature passed three landmark CEQA bills this year which the environmental community feels will represent meaningful CEQA reform without weakening the law's standards. The bills provide for some streamlining of environmental review and also for procedural and litigation reforms. *The Avocet* called for letters from Audubon members in March of this year to get the conservation message to Sacramento, and you responded. Thanks for writing those letters—they helped!

## Upper Klamath River Threatened

The Upper Klamath River straddles the California-Oregon border, flows through a rugged high desert canyon cut into volcanic rocks, and is an important riparian corridor within the Pacific Flyway. The Bureau of Land Management has recognized the Upper Klamath for its threatened and endangered wildlife habitat, wild trout fishery, magnificent scenery and important historical and cultural values.

In 1988 the citizens of Oregon voted to protect the Upper Klamath from Salt Caves hydroelectric project which would divert as much as 80% of the flow and create a large dam and reservoir. The city of Klamath Falls, however, continues to press for a federal license to build the dam and generate electricity.

Oregon governor Barbara Roberts has taken the first step in the designation process by recommending to the Dept. of Interior that the Upper Klamath be declared a Wild and Scenic River. According to the National Wild and Scenic River Act Secretary Bruce Babbitt has the authority to designate the Upper Klamath as Wild and Scenic based on Gov. Roberts request. The Dept. of Interior needs to hear from Californians on this issue.

You can help by taking an active part in conserving our natural resources and wildlife habitat right here in Northern California. Write to Secretary Babbitt and urge him to include the Upper Klamath River in the National Wild and Scenic River system. A postcard will do; it's the effort that counts!

Sec. Bruce Babbitt  
Dept. of Interior  
1849 C St. NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

## San Jose Creeks *cont. from pg. 1...*

- allowing recreation opportunities and aesthetic pleasure for many people in an urban area.

Here's what you can do to help save San Jose's creeks. Write to the members of the S.J. Park and Recreation Commission and the members of the San Jose Planning Commission. Make these four points:

1. Ask them to approve the San Jose Riparian Study with modifications.
2. Say that larger setbacks are necessary to accomplish the goal of protecting the resource value of San Jose riparian corridors. (Setbacks are the distance buildings and other imperme-

able surfaces must be from the edge of waterways.)

3. Note that development setback guidelines should apply to all non-cement waterways so that they can be replanted and restored in the future.

4. Ask them to support the recommendations of the Santa Clara County Creeks Coalition (SCVAS is a member!).

Send letters to Chairman Caruso and Members of the San Jose Planning Commission, and also to Chairwoman Sager and Members of the Park and Recreation Commission, San Jose City Hall, 801 N. First St., San Jose CA 95110.

# World Birdwatch '93 Field Report

A first-ever World Birdwatch was conducted Oct. 9-10 by Harriet Gerson and Gail Cheeseman, representing the Cheesemans' Ecology Safari Team. As participants we decided to join a scheduled Monterey Bay pelagic trip with Shearwater Journeys on the 9th, and then add the land birds of the Monterey area on the 10th.

Early on the 9th as we watched a beautiful sunrise, we felt relieved that the day looked good. The Pt. Sur Clipper, with Skipper Richard Trujillo and Ted Chandik and Ken Kellman as leaders and 25 participants on board, left dock in calm waters, but this soon changed. In spite of rough water, the weather held. Richard and Ted announced to the group that the sightings for the day would become an official part of the first annual World Birdwatch.

Our list of 27 species included wonderful looks at the Buller's Shearwater, a treat. As we headed out we came into large numbers of Pink-footed Shearwaters with the ever-present Sooty's, all following large schools of tuna. Besides the four shearwater species we had good looks at Northern Fulmar in all plumages

and more than usual numbers of Pomarine Jaegers, many showing their distinctive tail feathers. Skittish Cassin's Auklets were about with Rhinoceros Auklets. As we docked, we agreed it had been a good day, but with only 27 species we had lots of birding to look forward to on Sunday.

Another early morning start on the 10th found us on our way to the Carmel River mouth where we joined the Santa Cruz Bird Club, led by Clay Kempf. As we walked the dry riverbed, we kept our eyes open for fall migrant rarities. The Northern Waterthrush teetering along below the underbrush was our reward, and a Chestnut-sided Warbler showing off its chartreuse crown was a good spot. Also seen were the Blackpoll Warbler and a Black-throated Gray, while Townsend's Warblers were everywhere. A special view of a feeding Merlin perched on a tree snag was a gorgeous sight. (Gail's Questar really showed it off!)

On to Mission Trail Park where we had four woodpecker species and also filled out our raptor list. Fall arrivals were noted: Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Yellow-rumped Warblers, crowned sparrows, Hermit Thrushes along with lingering

Orange-crowned and Wilson's Warblers. Again, Townsend's were all about.

Next stop, Pt. Pinos to add the Black Oystercatcher, gulls, and a special addition—several accommodating Palm Warblers in the shrubs bordering the golf course. Moonglow Dairy added a number of distant duck species thanks to the Questar. A pair of Pectoral Sandpipers was a nice addition, and we enjoyed watching a Merlin spook the blackbirds. With a good list to show for the weekend, we left the group with our thanks for their contributions.

A last stop at Zmudowski State Beach turned out to be a good decision as we added Marsh Wren and Blue-winged Teal, and reinforced our duck list with better looks. The clear call of a Sora was welcomed as was our only sighting of a Kestrel and Lesser Goldfinches.

Our total list for the weekend was 112 species. We would like to encourage SCVAS members to form a number of teams next year to represent the chapter in the World Birdwatch and make a better contribution for the USA.

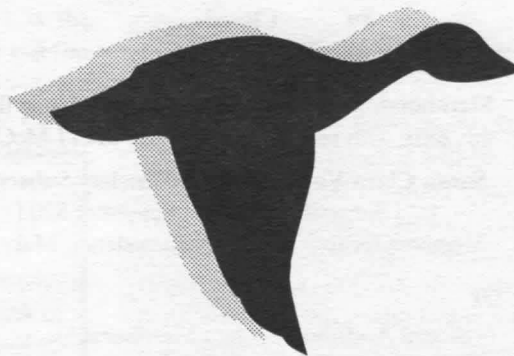
—Harriet Gerson

## Oaks of California —A Celebration

Bruce Pavlik, principal author of the award-winning and beautifully illustrated book "Oaks of California" will give his compelling talk on conserving oaks and oak landscapes in California on Friday Dec. 3 at the Palo Unitarian Church, 505 E. Charleston Rd. at 7:30 PM. The event is a benefit for St. Patrick's Preservation Committee whose mission is to preserve the historic oak landscape at St. Patricks Seminary in Menlo Park. This land, threatened by development, contains the last of the Peninsula's mixed oak forest, as first described by 18th-century explorers. SPPC has filed a lawsuit to protect the land.

Come and meet noted environmental attorney Mark Massara, who is representing SPPC. Mark recently won the second largest settlement ever under the Clean Water Act for the Surfrider Foundation. Janet Cobb, President of the California Oak Foundation, will also be there with exciting information about how we can help preserve oaks statewide.

Tickets are \$15. Call Judith at 415/424-8110 or SPPC at 415/369-7512 to reserve seating.



### Accipiter Antics *continued from page 5*

*scriptive points suggest Cooper's and others suggest Sharp-shin, so we'll happily accept Ms. Stigen's verdict of the latter, since we weren't there to carefully observe and research this mysterious visitor as she did. While many experts will claim to be able to identify every glimpsed accipiter (or any other bird, for that matter), the truly enlightened know that some birds must remain tantalizingly unidentifiable.*

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