

The Avocet

The Newsletter of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society

April 1994

Project Tanager Gets Results

Now More Volunteers Are Needed To Study Nesting Tanagers

More than 200 Project Tanager participants combed the forests of North America this past summer, looking for signs that these colorful migratory songbirds were successfully rearing young. Birders from 31 states and two Canadian provinces conducted nearly 1,000 point counts as they studied the effects of forest fragmentation on breeding tanagers.

Now the Cornell Lab of Ornithology is recruiting more volunteers for the summer of 1994. The lab developed the project as a way to get birders across the continent involved in scientific study; Project Tanager is one of three "National Science experiments" supported by the National Science Foundation. Through these experiments, the Ithaca, New York-based bird conservation center hopes to build a network of experienced amateur researchers who can study other important ornithological questions.

Project Tanager examines the relationship between forest size and breeding success of the tanagers nesting there. Across North America, road building, logging, and development have broken large forests into smaller fragments. Scientists have some evidence that Scarlet Tanagers in the eastern United States may not be able to breed in small

woodlots. Project Tanager is examining this relationship in more detail, not only for Scarlet Tanagers but for Hepatic, Summer, and Western Tanagers, which nest in other parts of the United States and Canada.

The project began in the summer of 1992, when coordinators developed the research methods in forests near the lab's headquarters. Last spring, they launched a continent-wide pilot study. Seventy teams searched for signs of breeding tanagers in forests of four size classes: 1, 10, 100, and 1,000 hectares (2.5, 25, 250, and 2,500 acres).

Their findings support the idea that Scarlet Tanagers are more sensitive to forest fragmentation than are other tanager species.

Participants spotted Scarlet Tanagers in a mere 20% of the 1-hectare forest fragments, compared to 50% of the 10-hectare forests and about 65% of the 100-hectare forests. Furthermore, teams confirmed that Scarlet Tanagers were breeding in 5-10% of the 10-hectare (or larger) forests but in none of the 1-hectare plots.

Continued on page 5...

The Birds of Chile, Including Tierra del Fuego

General Membership Meeting

Wednesday, April 20

7:30 PM Refreshments, 8:00 Program

Palo Alto Cultural Center, Newell & Embarcadero

Sharon Chester, author of *The Birds of Chile and Antarctica Birds and Seals: A Pocket Guide*, is a professional naturalist, lecturer, and photographer. She has made over 25 voyages to the southern ocean and innumerable journeys throughout the seven continents with 22 years of field experience in the southern hemisphere. She was the first woman to record seeing all the bird families of the world and is now finishing up a

masters degree in biogeography at San Francisco State. For our special program, she will introduce the biogeography of Chile, concentrating on the unusual species of birds that occupy Chile's varied habitats. Then she'll concentrate on the birds of southern Chile, including the passerines, waterfowl, and sea birds of the Fuegian region. This will be an outstanding program by an amazing naturalist.

Chapter News

Birdathon 94

Birdathon 94 is underway and we need your help to make it a success (please see flyer insert) ! This year the money we raise will go to SCVAS's Environmental Education Programs. Listed below are some of our new teams, who are looking for more team members and sponsors!

The Right Anser – Randi Needom & Pat Mann-Educ. Committee members, who are looking for teachers to join them.

The Jumping Jays – Jayne DiCandio, Jon Archer, Joan Mancini, Jim Danzenbaker-Join us if your name starts with "J".

Hunting the Bunting – Ed Rooks and other members of the Bird Discussion Group will be looking for just the Lazuli Bunting, May 3 at Grant Ranch.

If You Can't Eat Them, What Good are They! – Jean Dubois-This team is for Backyard Birders, who would like to bird at home.

"Quick Three Beers" & Other Members of Empidonax – Clysta Seney-She needs some teammates.

Owling Babblers – Don Schmoltdt & Sandy Cortright-They are planning to bird April 30th, come and join them.

Intermediate Birders – Go for 100 species, we will provide you with a Birding Expert.

Beginner Birders – Go for 50 species, we will provide you with a Birding Expert

Do an exotic birdathon, if you plan to be away during Birdathon month (April 15-May 15) in a good birding area, pick a day and do a Birdathon wherever you are. If you are interested in birding with any of the new teams or the old teams (listed in flyer) call Jayne at SCVAS office (408)252-3747, Gail Cheeseman (408) 867-1371 or Harriet Gerson (408) 252-6244. We will connect you with a team leader and get you all the information you need including stamps and a friendly letter explaining Birdathon to send to potential sponsors.

April Special

Warm weather is here and it is time to spruce up your spring wardrobe with a bird T-shirt from the Nature Shop. This month we have 10% off t-shirts with about 16 different designs you are sure to find something!

Nature Shop Hours: Hours sometimes vary during the week, please call ahead.

M-F 10am-5pm
Sat 10am-2pm
Sun closed

Two Alaska Tours For This Summer

Denali, Kenai Peninsula, and Brooks Lodge, June 15-July 1; \$4180, with Roger Regnart. Wilderness Float Trip on Beaver Creek, July 18-28; \$2,200, with Ken Alt



Bewick's Wren by John Mariani

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

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Rare Bird Alert: 510/ 524-5592

March 1994 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

Saturday April 2, 8:00 AM. Half day. Alviso Levee Bicycle Trip. Leader: Steve Rottenborn. 415/497-9368. Meet at parking lot of Alviso Marina County Park. Take highway 237 to Alviso, exit on Gold St., go north to end, left on Elizabeth St. to end, right on Hope St. to parking lot. Bring water, your bicycles, bird book, and binoculars. Rain cancels. Highlights: water fowl, gulls, and shorebirds.

Sunday, April 3, 1:00 PM. Half day. Beginners to Mountain View Forebay. Leader: Steve Miller. 408/929-4439. Take Highway 101 to Mountain View, exit east on San Antonio Road to its end at Terminal Blvd parking lot. Bring water, and if you have a scope it would be useful. Highlights: gulls and shorebirds in spring plumage.

Tuesday, April 5, 9:30 AM. Eve Case Bird Discussion Group. Leader: Pat & Jean Dubois, 408/395-4264, 17150 Buena Vista Ave., Los Gatos. Topic: Bluebirds.

Wednesday, April 6, 7:30 PM. Bay Area Bird Photographers meeting. Leader: Charmaine Stansfield and Chuck Tribolet. A Photographer's Honeymoon. Lucy Evans Baylands Interpretive Center E. Embarcadero Rd., Palo Alto.

Saturday April 9, 8:30 AM. Half day. Beginners trip to Stanford University's campus. Leader: Judy Wagner. 415/941-7586. Take Highway 101 to Palo Alto, exit west on University Ave. It becomes Palm Drive. Meet at the end of Palm Drive at the entrance to Main Quad. Highlights: Acorn Woodpecker, Plain Titmouse, California Thrasher. Rain cancels.

Sunday April 10, 8:30 AM. Half day. Beginners trip to Charleston Slough. Leader: Rod Norden. 408/

264-7582. New meeting place: Meet at east end of Terminal Blvd parking area. Come early. Don't be late. Take Highway 101 to Mountain View. Exit east on San Antonio Rd. to its end at Terminal Blvd. Highlights: waterfowl and shorebirds in spring plumage. Bring binoculars and bird guides. If you have a scope, bring it. Rain cancels.

Sunday April 10, 8:00 AM. Half day. West side of Pinnacles National Monument. Leader: Nick Lethaby. 408/435-2729. Meet in Chaparral Parking lot at west entrance of the park. Take Highway 101 south to second Soledad Exit. Exit east on Route 146, follow signs to the park. Bring lunch, money for parking. Optional: early birders can join the leader along the entrance road at 7:30 AM. Hard core birders can join the leader on more rigorous trails after lunch. Highlights: Chaparral birds, Sage Sparrow, Lawrence Goldfinch.

Wednesday, April 13, 8:00 AM. Half day. Alum Rock Park. Leader: Bob Reiling 408/253-7527. Directions: Meet at 2nd parking lot at back near YSI. Take I-680 to Alum Rock Ave. East into park. Lunch optional. Rain cancels.

Saturday, April 16, 8:00 AM. Half day. Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve, Stanford University. Leaders: Bill and Jean Clark, Winkie Lenihan, and Bob Buell. By reservation only. Limited to 40. Call Clarks' 415/424-4371. Meet at Preserve Main Gate (Not Whiskey Hill Gate). Be prompt. Gate open from 7:45 - 8:10 AM. Take Sand Hill Rd, West exit, from Interstate 280, 2 miles to main gate on left. Trip goes rain or shine. Moderately strenuous walking, 2-3 miles. Bring lunch (optional) and liquids.

Sunday, April 24, 8:00 AM. Half day. Alum Rock Park. Leader: Dorothy Johnson. work: 408/258-4322. Meet at Y.S.I. parking lot. Take Highway 680 in San Jose. Exit east on Alum Rock Ave. to the park. Moderate walk. Some uphill. Lunch optional. Highlights: spring migrants.

Wednesday, April 27, 8:30 AM. Half day. Stevens Creek County Park. Co-leaders: Roxie Handler, 408/730-1745, Rose Lin, 408/736-8207. Directions: Meet at first parking lot (Chestnut Picnic). From I-280 go south on Foothill Blvd (becomes Stevens Canyon Rd) 2.1 miles to entrance on left. Lunch optional. Highlight: nesting birds.

Saturday, April 30, 8:00 AM. Full day. Mines Road/Del Puerto Canyon. Leader: Art Edwards. 510/447-3720. 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. Car pooling necessary. Limited to 10 cars. Bring lunch. Full tank of gas. Limited facilities. Beginners welcome. Highlights: Wood Duck, Golden Eagle, Wild Turkey, Rock and Canyon Wrens, Lesser Night Hawk, Lawrence's Goldfinch.

Sunday, May 1, 8:00 AM. Half day. Sunol Regional Wilderness. Leader: Phil Hand. 415/851-2623. Take Interstate 680 North, past Fremont to Calaveras Rd. Drive south on Calaveras Rd. 4 miles to park entrance on Geary Rd. Meet at first parking lot, near headquarters. Highlights: Spring migrants, possible Rufous Crowned Sparrow, Golden Eagle.

Wednesday, May 4, 7:30 PM. Bay Area Bird Photographers meeting. Tim Davis and Renee Lynn discuss how they work with and photograph captive animals for fun and profit. Lucy Evans Baylands Interpretive Center E. Embarcadero Rd., Palo Alto.

Saturday, May 7, 8:00 AM. SCVAS Chapter Birdathon (Uncommon Loons) Leader: Nick Yatsko, 408/247-5499 and Rod Norden. The Uncommon Loons will meet at Arastradero OSP, at 8am, Stanford by noon, and Charleston Slough to see the team goal of 100 species. Directions: I-280, take Page Mill Rd, west. Turn right at Arastradero (1/3 mi.), to Preserve parking lot on right. Minimum donation of \$10 requested.

Field Notes

By Bill Bousman

Loons through Mergansers

A **Red-throated Loon** on Calero Res. 21-28 Feb (WGB,MJM,MMR) was the only loon found this month. A flock of **Cattle Egrets** has been found throughout February either at the Arzino Ranch or on the south side of Hwy 237 (m.ob.). Thirteen were along Nortech Parkway 20 Feb (SCR,AME) and the same number was at the Arzino Ranch 27 Feb (MJM). The imm. **Greater White-fronted Goose** at Hellyer CP was seen through 28 Feb (SCR) and has become quite tame. It will be interesting to see if this bird leaves in the spring or remains with the other geese for the unlimited handouts. The four White-fronts at Shoreline Park were reported 17 Feb (MMR) and one was also seen there 20 Feb (MJM). The **Ross' Goose** wintering at the Sunnyvale Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) has been found regularly during February (m.ob.).

A male **Blue-winged Teal**, sometimes accompanied by a female has been seen in the vicinity of Charleston Slough with observations on 12 Feb (MMR,SCR *et al.*) and 21 Feb (MJM). The hybrid male Blue-wing X Cinnamon Teal mentioned last month was seen again on 21 Feb in Charleston Slough (MJM). A male **Eurasian Wigeon** has apparently remained in the Palo Alto Flood Control Basin (FCB) this month as it was seen on 12 Feb (SCR *et al.*). The three males at Sunnyvale WPCP were seen again on 13 Feb (MJM). The **Barrow's Goldeneye** count at Shoreline Lake has varied between seven and ten during February (MMR,SCR). More surprising was a single female found at Calero Res. 26 Feb (MMR). Twenty **Hooded Mergansers** were found on Sausal Pond at the base of Windy Hill OSP on 2 Feb (GGH,RL).

Four were seen on Vasona Res. 20 Feb (CKS), but more surprising were birds found at two sites along urban Coyote Creek: 2-4 near Mabury 16-21 Feb (SCR)

and 3-4 near Montague Expy 20-21 Feb (SCR,MMR). Many people "value" this stretch of creek as an urban dumping ground so it is nice to see that some of our rarer waterfowl can find sustenance in the creek waters.

Raptors

Two **Osprey** were seen over the Ogier Avenue ponds 28 Feb (SCR). At least three **Bald Eagles** have been using Calaveras Res. in February as one to two adults have been seen 21-27 Feb (m.ob.) while a 1st-winter bird was there 21 Feb (MMR). **Ferruginous Hawk** reports include one near South County Airport 13 Feb (MMR) and 21 Feb (MJM), one over Alum Rock Park 20 Feb (AME), and one at Jos. Grant CP 27 Feb (MJM). Reports during February of three **Merlin**, seven **Peregrine Falcons**, and two **Prairie Fal-**

Chestnut-collared Longspurs found on Sierra Road are the first for the county

cons continue the good numbers we have had this winter.

Shorebirds through Woodpeckers

A single **Lesser Yellowlegs** near the Palo Alto Water Quality Control Plant on 13 Feb (MJM) is a repeat of last month's record. The **Common Black-headed Gull** at the Sunnyvale WPCP was seen 5 Feb (MJM) and 9 Feb (SCR). Steve Rottenborn has seen both the bird at Alviso last fall and the one at Sunnyvale this month and believes that one bird is responsible for both sets of sightings. A total count of 450 **Mew Gulls** in a flooded field in Alviso 27 Feb (AME) is unusual. A 1st-winter **Glaucous Gull** was again at the Sunnyvale WPCP ponds 9 Feb (SCR). A single **Greater Roadrunner** was heard in San Antonio Valley 2 Feb (WGB). Two **Long-eared Owls** were again found

in the Monte Bello OSP on 5 Feb (PLN). Two **Lewis' Woodpeckers** were found in San Antonio Valley 2 Feb (WGB) where they are permanent residents, but less expected were three vagrant birds in Jos. Grant CP 5 and 9 Feb (RWR *et al.*). It appears that the San Antonio birds have dispersed widely this winter as few have been found in the valley. A **Red-naped Sapsucker** along Coyote Creek above Kelley Park was found 28 Feb (SCR) for our only record this winter.

Flycatchers through Tanagers

The **Eastern Phoebe** south of Shady Oaks Park in San Jose has been seen regularly through 26 Feb, but not since then (SCR,m.ob.). A somewhat elusive **Canyon Wren** near Eagle Rock in Alum Rock Park was seen 13 Feb (MMR) and 25 Feb (SCR). Wintering **House Wrens** include two in Ed Levin CP 2 Feb and one at Sargent 13 Feb (both MMR). An **American Dipper** wintering along Penitencia Creek in Alum Rock Park was observed 5 Feb (MJM), 13 Feb (MMR), and 20 Feb (AME).

Wintering **Orange-crowned Warblers** have been reported in greater numbers this winter, in part because of extensive riparian censusing by SCR. One to four birds have been found on Coyote Creek below Hwy 237 through 28 Feb (SCR); a single bird has been above Hwy 237 through 27 Feb (m.ob.); three to five birds have been found on the creek between Montague and Charcot (SCR); a single bird remains along the Pajaro River through 13 Feb (MMR); and one was found near South County Airport 13 Feb (MMR). The **Yellow Warbler** along the entrance channel to the Mountain View Forebay was found again 11 Feb (MMR). We have no winter records for **Palm Warbler** following December so a bird along Coyote Creek below Hwy 237 through 15 Feb (SCR), one above Hwy 237 on 13 Feb (MJM), and a possible third bird on Coyote Creek at Levee Rd., 4-24 Feb (CKS) are without precedent. A wintering **Western Tanager** was found 15 Feb on Coyote Creek above Montague (SCR).

Towhees through Goldfinches

Almost the most exciting bird of the month was a **Green-tailed Towhee** found along Coyote Creek above Hwy 237 25 Feb (SCR), remaining there at least through the end of the month (m.ob.). This is the seventh county record for this Sierran and Great Basin species. A **Vesper Sparrow** was found at Shoreline Park 27 Feb (SCR) very close to where the Lapland Longspurs were found last fall. This is the third bird found this winter. Both a **Sharp-tailed Sparrow** and a **Swamp Sparrow** were at the Palo Alto Baylands 7 Feb where they have been found regularly this winter (WGB). Approximately 11 **White-throated Sparrows** have been reported this month. A single bird has been at a Los Gatos feeder through 18 Feb (S&ED); an imm. at an-

other Los Gatos feeder was joined by an adult 13 Feb (JD); two adults and an imm. were found at Ed Levin CP 2 Feb (MMR); an imm. was along San Francisquito Creek below Middlefield 12 Feb (WGB); one has been along Coyote Creek above Hwy 237 12-27 Feb (MJM, AME); one to three birds have been along Coyote Creek below Hwy 237 through 28 Feb (SCR); one has been found on Coyote Creek between Montague and Charcot 15-27 Feb (SCR); and an adult was at Smiths Creek 27 Feb (MJM). The biggest news of the month was Mike Roger's find of three **Chestnut-collared Longspurs** on Sierra Rd. 21 Feb; two males and a female. All three birds were refound on 21 Feb (SCR, DW) as well as 26 Feb (MJM), but not on the intervening days (m.ob.). This is the first record for Santa Clara County and does not fit with known movements of this rare species within California. The **Northern**

Oriole found on the Palo Alto CBC was heard but not seen on 9 Feb (SCR) for one of our few winter records. The winter bloom of **Lawrence's Goldfinches** has died back with nine at Isabel Creek 2 Feb (WGB) and a single bird on Summit Rd. on the Santa Cruz County border 12 Feb (RAM *fide* DLSu).

Observers: Bill Bousman (WGB), Steve & Elwyn Dorman (S&ED), Jean Dubois (JD), Al Eisner (AME), Gloria Heller (GGH), Rosalie Lefkowitz (RL), Mike Mammoser (MJM), Randy Morgan (RAM), Paul Noble (PLN), Bob Reiling (RWR), Mike Rogers (MMR), Heather Rottenborn (HLR), Steve Rottenborn (SCR), Chris Salander (CKS), David Suddjian (DLSu), and David Wilcove

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

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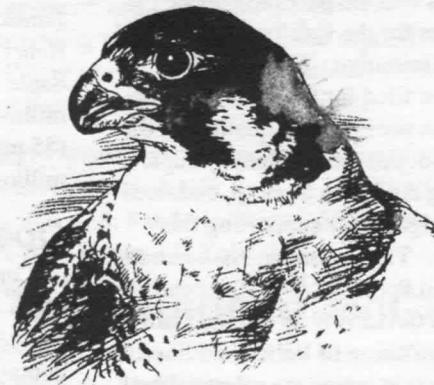
In contract, project participants found Western Tanagers in nearly 40% of the smallest fragments and about 55% of all the other forest sites. They confirmed that Western Tanagers, Summer Tanagers, and Hepatic Tanagers were breeding in forests of all four sizes.

Why do small woodlots make inhospitable homes for nesting tanagers? Scientists think the "edge effect" may be to blame. When a forest is carved into fragments, the distance from the edge of each fragment to its center is short. Some of the animals that threaten nesting birds—such as house cats and Brown-headed Cowbirds (notorious nest parasites)—prefer open habitat. They won't go deep into a woods, but they will venture in for a short distance. In large forests, tanagers can find a refuge from danger; in small fragments, even the very center of the forest is near the edge.

If you're a birder and want to use your skills for bird conservation, consider joining Project Tanager this summer. It's free, and it's fun. The more people who participate, the more reliable that data will be. We want to make intelligent recommendations concerning the habitat requirements of these beautiful neotropical migrants.

To participate, contact: Project Tanager, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, 159 Sapsucker Woods Rd., Ithaca, NY 14850, (607) 254-2446.

The Endangered Species of California



American Peregrine Falcon

California has nearly 300 animal and plant species that face the threat of extinction.

You can help them survive with a tax-deductible contribution on LINE 50 of your State Tax Return.

Please help if you can.



Environmental Action News

Environmental Action Platform

Some time ago it was decided that the Chapter ought to clarify our priorities on environmental activism. This would do two things: 1) let our members and the community know where our focus is; and 2) give direction to the environmental advocate. After several discussions and drafts, the Board approved the priorities printed below.

The priorities are ranked, meaning the EAC and the advocate will most likely spend more time on the first than the sixth, for example. The list is not exclusive; we may occasionally act on issues which do not easily fit into these categories. We feel these priorities reflect both our past work and the concerns of our members for the future.

Our platform is to:

1) Protect and restore wetlands, creeks, and open space—especially habitats important to native animals and plants, with an emphasis on birds and their ecosystems.

2) Maintain and restore native bird, wildlife, fish and

plant populations.

3) Require that regional planning (including land use management, transportation and other infrastructures) respect the integrity of watersheds, and protect and restore stream-side corridors and the bay.

4) Require that the water quality in creeks and the bay be improved by reducing toxic residuals and by providing appropriate freshwater flows needed for habitat and wildlife protection.

5) Advocate that any public access or recreational opportunities along trails, creeks, and the bay shoreline be sensitive to the environment and wildlife habitats.

6) Implement a broad-based educational program among all segments of the community to support habitat protection and restoration and further understanding of the needs for and benefits of preserving the environment.

Volunteers Needed For Calpaw Initiative & Open Space Campaign

CALPAW

Last summer environmentalists, including Audubon members, took to the streets, and the craft fairs and the art shows and the parks to collect signatures for the California Parks and Wildlife Initiative. The 725,000 signatures filed for the initiative were more than necessary to qualify for the June ballot this year. Many groups, including Audubon Society, endorsed and are vigorously supporting this initiative. The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) recently endorsed CALPAW as did the California Organization of Police and Sheriffs (the initiative includes projects aimed at at-risk youth such as the Conservation Corps).

CALPAW would fund hundreds of state and local park and wildlife preservation projects throughout California, including coastal preservation projects, new and expanded wildlife areas, river protection projects, urban tree planting and recreation programs. The bond act includes \$49.9 million dollars slated for Santa Clara

County projects including Bear Creek Redwoods (\$15 million), Chitactac-Adams Heritage County Park (\$.9 million), Guadalupe River Trail Corridor (\$3 million), (Jacques Ridge) Jamison Open Space (\$5 million), Henry Coe State Park (\$10 million), Santa Clara Open Space Authority (\$10 million), Silver Creek Fault Serpentine (\$5 million) and Del Puerto Canyon (\$1 million).

Open Space Authority

Currently, the Santa Clara County Open Space Authority exists without a source of revenue. The June Ballot will contain an advisory vote on funding the Authority. This vote is crucial to preservation of open space and creation of parks in those areas of the County not covered by the Mid peninsula Open Space District. Voters will also be able to select board members for the Authority. The makeup of the board is important in establishing a philosophy for the Authority, which will likely impact the organization for years to come.

What You Can Do To Help

Although there is widespread support for these measures, we need to remind the electorate to vote. The principal contribution volunteers can make is to call voters and ask them to support these measures. CALPAW has established a phone bank at 530 University Avenue in Palo Alto. Another set of phones will be established in San Jose to work for both CALPAW and the Open Space Authority. Volunteers could work evenings or weekends, just once or many times. Just one evening of calls can make a difference!

Both these measures could have impact on our area for years to come. Most people, when told about what CALPAW and the Open Space Authority will do in their community, are very supportive. But we need to let them hear this message. Please consider volunteering. For more information, or to volunteer, call Craig at (408) 252-3748, or call the campaigns directly at (415) 323-9385 (CALPAW) or (408) 977-0460 (Friends of Open Space).

Field Trip Report

Although the calm seas looked promising, Pigeon Point proved disappointing for pelagic birds. However, good views of a sea otter and an elephant seal were had by all. A lucky few also saw a grey whale and a harbor porpoise. All three species of Cormorant, Brandt Pelagic, and Double-crested provided side-by-side comparisons on nearby rocks and the sea was covered in Western Grebes.

By diligently checking offshore rocks at Pigeon Point and Pebble Beach, good views were obtained of Black Oystercatchers, Black Turnstones, and Surfbirds. At Pebble Beach, we finally saw four Marbled Murrelets. Another highlight was everyone having good views of all three Scoter species.

About half the group also looked around a weedy field in Pescadero Village, but only three were lucky enough to see the Swamp Sparrow.

— Nick Lethaby

Tricolored Blackbird Census Set For April 23

The California Department of Fish and Game's Tricolored Blackbird Working Group has taken notice of the success of the January California Mountain Plover Census, especially the important role of Audubon chapters and members. As a result, they have asked the Western Regional Office of the National Audubon Society to help coordinate the first, single-date, stateside census of Tricolored Blackbird nesting and foraging locations. The census will be held Saturday, April 23.

Your participation will make an important scientific contribution by helping to determine overall numbers of Tricolored Blackbirds, size and location of nesting colonies, and foraging areas. Furthermore, the data you gather will be used to help shape this year's research when it is reviewed at a tricolored Blackbird Working Group meeting held within two weeks of the census.

For further information, contact Bob Barnes, Birds in the Balance Program Coordinator, at Audubon's Western Regional Office in Sacramento, (916) 481-5332, or fax at (916) 481-6228.

Mountain Plovers Count Reaches 3,436 In California

On Saturday, January 29, 3,436 Mountain Plovers were



Townsend's Warbler by John Mariani

counted in California on the first, single-date, statewide Mountain Plover census. The census was coordinated by the Western Regional Office of the National Audubon Society. Several Audubon chapters and their members joined personnel from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, and California Department of Fish & Game in providing census assistance and support. The Mountain Plover census was part of National Audubon's Birds in the Balance migratory bird program.

The country breakdown for the 3,436 Mountain Plovers censused was: Imperial, 2,119; Kern, 2; Los Angeles, 36; San Bernardino, 118; San Luis Obispo, 587; Santa Barbara, 27; Solano, 242; Tulare, 21; Yolo, 284.

New Trail Guide at McClellan

It has been almost 11 years since the City of Cupertino put out a field guide for McClellan Ranch Park. Visitors to the park have wondered for years why there were markers along the trail. No more wondering! SCVAS has put out its first trail guide for McClellan Ranch Park. The trail runs along Stevens Creek and takes about 45 minutes to walk. We have an updated Bird Checklist for McClellan and we also keep monthly lists of the birds we see here. All are available at the office. Come out and visit!

Special thanks to Rosalie Lefkowitz, Harriet Gerson, and Barbara Banfield for their help on the trail guide and to Jeff Hollobaugh for putting together the bird checklist.

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

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

Third Annual Education Day A Success

With a great deal of help from Mother Nature and many wonderful volunteers, the Third Annual Education Day was a resounding success. After a few morning sprinkles, the skies cleared and the shuttle bus made frequent trips to bring some 300 parents and children to participate in the Education Day activities.

Using Binoculars provided by SCVAS, they went on bird walks led by Allen Royer, Reid Freeman and Mike Rigney or went on a historical creek walk with Lee Lovelady, Louise Levy, and Barbara Banfield. In the morning, kids were fascinated by the bird banding demonstration done by the Coyote Creek Riparian Station. They had a chance to become acquainted with the animals in the Junior Nature Museum as well as the Burrowing Owl brought by Joan Priest from the Humane Society of Santa Clara Valley. Other organizations that participated were: Cupertino Historical Society, Environmental Volunteers, Hidden Villa Farm & Wilderness Preserve, Peninsula Conservation Center, Santa Clara Valley, Santa Clara Water District Nonpoint Division, Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley, and Wildlife Rescue.

The two raffles attracted large groups, with kids hoping to win one of the many prizes generously donated by local organizations and individuals. The winners of the poster contest were announced at the raffles. The Education Committee was delighted with the marvelous posters submitted this year from kindergarten to eighth grade.

While waiting for the shuttle bus at Monta Vista High School, kids began their activities with some wonderful pen and pencil games designed by Jane Becker-Haven. Clysta Seney and Nick Yatsko manned the table and were rewarded for their efforts with sightings of a Merlin, Red-Tailed Hawk, Red-Shouldered Hawk and Coopers Hawk.

The Education Committee (Bobbie Handen, Pearl Lawson, Jane Becker-Haven, Allen Royer, Pat Mann, Randi Needom, Elaine Gould, and Jayne DiCandio) would like to express their appreciation to the SCVAS members who came out to help, the organizations and individuals who participated, and to those businesses and individuals who contributed raffle prizes.

– Elaine Gould

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.

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Or

National Audubon Society Membership: Check One
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Donation: SCVAS greatly appreciates your tax-deductible donation. Your gift helps fund the Chapter's birding, education, conservation and research programs.

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