



# The Avocet

The Newsletter of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society

January 1995

## Environmental Gloom? Maybe Not

by Craig Breon

Earthquake! Landslide! Run for your lives!

That just about sums up the response of much of the environmental community to the November elections. Gloom and doom reigned supreme at gatherings of and conversations among environmentalists around the county and the country. It seems appropriate, however, to examine more closely what the repercussions might be, rather than simply assuming a Republican-controlled Congress means the Death of Nature.

### What We Had

First, Washington was not exactly Ecotopia with Democrats in control of both houses of Congress and the Presidency. Despite "Mr. Ozone" Al Gore in the Vice Presidency and Bruce Babbitt, a great lover of the western landscape, at Interior, environmentalists ended up spending a great deal of time and effort in squelching attempts to weaken environmental laws and regulations.

The last two years brought the Desert Protection Bill, thanks to Dianne Feinstein and we, the people. We have also seen some reform of forestry in the Pacific Northwest.

However, grazing and mining reform, both sorely needed, have gone almost nowhere. In addition, attacks on endangered species protection, wetlands, toxic cleanup laws and other measures have demanded the attention and resources of the major environmental organizations.

Why this mediocre performance when we expected better? Plenty of reasons. Republicans filibustered mining reform. Western Democrats threatened to withhold votes on the health bill if grazing reform went through. Clinton deserves his share of blame as well. People who cited his leniency with the chicken industry (big water polluters) in Arkansas as poor precedent were partially right. Environmental issues have not been big on his list of priorities, and without leadership from the top, his appointees lacked the backbone needed to push hard.

### What We Get

To really see what may happen in the next two or more years one has to look at the committee system. That's where bills start, where many amendments are made, and where differing bills on a single issue compete for votes. An example of this was covered last spring in the *Avocet*. The

GLOOM, Maybe Not *continues on pg 6...*

### California Birds of the Four Seasons with Lee Hung & Mike Danzenbaker

General Membership Meeting  
Wednesday, January 18, 1995  
7:30pm Refreshments, 8:00pm Program  
Palo Alto Cultural Center, Newell & Embarcadero

Lee and Mike are Santa Clara Valley Chapter members who will present an innovative slide collection gathered over six years, of California's birds. They have organized their presentation in a manner that will delight many of the "high tech" employees in the Valley. Themselves slaves to work during the week, they will show the what, where and when of weekend birding trips in our bird-rich state. Bring your pencils and jot down which season offers the best birding in places like Yosemite and the Mojave and which birds you can expect to see.

# Chapter News

## SCVAS Bird Sanctuary Project Update

*Our new Bird Sanctuary Program was highlighted in the November Avocet. SCVAS wants to encourage and reward people for creating habitat in their back yard. We will certify your yard or garden as a bird sanctuary if you provide food, water, shelter; have some California native plants; and use safe environmental practices in maintaining your yard.*

It was great to see so many people

interested in the Bird Sanctuary Project. We heard from many people who have great ideas and advice to share with other backyard birdwatchers. We will put these ideas and comments together and send these updates to those certified. The Bird Sanctuary is an ongoing program and we invite everyone to apply. For a Bird Sanctuary Packet contact the office at (408) 252-3747, 22221 McClellan Road, Cupertino, CA 95014.

## Nature Shop News

January brings after Holiday specials to the Nature Shop. We will have 20-25% off Audubon Calendars and our collection of Christmas Ornaments. We will also have specials on some books, feeders, and other gift items. Come visit the Nature Shop for our January Specials and bring your binoculars and enjoy winter bird watching at McClellan Ranch Park.

## Attention all Young Wildlife Artists: SCVAS 4th Annual Poster Contest!

Once again, SCVAS is sponsoring a California Wildlife and Local Habitat Poster contest in conjunction with our 4th Annual Audubon Education Day. This year the poster contest will be open to grades K-12th.

The theme is California Wildlife and Local Habitats and you can choose from several categories: San Francisco Bay, Parks, Wetlands, Forests, Creek or Streams, Pacific Ocean, Your Own Backyard. Any medium is acceptable but the poster must be 12" x 18" in size.

1st, 2nd, and 3rd place ribbons and

prizes will be awarded for each grade level up to 8th grade. High School Students (9th-12th) will be judged as one category. Honorable Mention ribbons will be awarded and all participants will receive a participation certificate. The deadline is February 10th. Winners will be notified at the end of February. All winning Posters will be displayed on Education Day, March 11th at McClellan Ranch Park.

For more information call the SCVAS office (408) 252-3747. Spread the word among young wildlife artists!

## Sealabration 1995

The San Mateo Coast Natural History Association will hold its annual fundraiser at Año Nuevo State Reserve on January 28. For a \$50 contribution (\$40 of which is tax-deductible) you will be bused directly to the rookery to observe Elephant Seals at the height of the breeding season. With newborn pups, protective mothers, and territorial males, it is a wonderful spectacle. Complimentary brunch will be served between 10:30 and 1:30. Tickets are limited—call for reservations (this event only) 1-800-668-SEAL.

### SCVAS OFFICERS

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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.

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

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

# January 1995 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 Jan. 4, 7:30 PM.**

Bay Area Bird Photographers. Long-time member Mike Danzenbaker will present a slide show on the birds of northwestern Europe—England, Norway and Sweden. Lucy Evans Baylands Interpretive Center, E. Embarcadero Rd., Palo Alto.

## **\*\*Saturday Jan. 7, 8:30 AM.**

Post-CBC Rarities Chase. Leader: John Mariani 408/997-2066. Meeting place and itinerary to be determined after Christmas Bird Counts. Come help us search for some of the holiday season's best bird finds! Bring bag lunch, drinks, and full tank of gas. Call leader for information after Jan 1. Heavy rain cancels.

## **Tuesday Jan. 10, 9:30 AM.**

Eve Case Bird Discussion Group will meet at the home of Jean and Pat Dubois, 17150 Buena Vista Ave., Los Gatos 408/395-4264. Topic: Birds of Antarctica.

## **\*\*Saturday Jan. 14, 8:00 AM.**

Beginners trip to Charleston Slough. Leader: Bob Reiling 408/253-7527. Take Hwy. 101 to San Antonio Rd. in Mtn. View, exit north on San Antonio to Terminal Way parking area (1/4 mile). An excellent opportunity to get acquainted with a variety of ducks, shorebirds, and other wetland birds. Emphasis on basics of bird identification. Bring binoculars (and a telescope if you have one).

## **\*\*Saturday Jan. 21, 9:00 AM.**

Half day. Sunnyvale Sewage Treatment ponds. Leader: Nick Lethaby 408/982-0921. Take Hwy. 101 to Hwy. 237 east. Exit north on Caribbean Dr. to Borregas Ave., right on Borregas to sewage treatment plant,

then left to public parking lot. A trip for the GULLible! Emphasis on gull identification (nine species possible—including Thayer's and the rare Glaucous—with at least seven likely). Other highlights: ducks (which could include rarities) and possibly Tricolored Blackbird.

## **\*\*Saturday Jan. 28, 9:00 AM.**

Full day. Merced Wildlife Refuge/Santa Fe grade. Leader: Don Schmoldt 510/215-1910. Directions: Meet at NW corner of Jct. of Rte. 59 and Sandy Mush Rd. Take Hwy. 152 east past Los Banos 20 miles to Rte. 59, then north about 7 miles to meeting place. Allow 2.5 hours, more if tule fog is forecast. Highlights: waterfowl, raptors, winter flocks of geese and Sandhill Cranes.

## **Wednesday Feb. 1, 7:30 PM.**

Bay Area Bird Photographers. Program not finalized—we hope to feature slides from the Cheesemans' recent cruise to the Falklands and Antarctica. Lucy Evans Baylands Inter-

pretive Center, E. Embarcadero Rd., Palo Alto.

## **\*\*Saturday Feb. 4, 8:30 AM.**

Half day. Hayward Regional Shoreline. Leader: Bob Richmond 510/475-5412. Directions: Take Hwy. 880 to Hayward, west on Hwy. 92, exit right at sign for Clawiter/Eden Landing Rd. (3rd and last exit before San Mateo Bridge). Continue straight ahead on frontage rd. (Breakwater Dr.) to interpretive center at end. Possibilities include Eurasian Wigeon, Peregrine Falcon, Clapper Rail, variety of shorebirds. Lunch optional. Trip goes rain or shine.

## **\*\*Saturday Feb. 4, 9:00 PM.**

South County Owling Trip. Leader: John Mariani 408/997-2066. Late evening outing to look and listen for those elusive nightbirds, especially Great Horned, Western Screech and Northern Saw-whet Owls. Trip limited to 12 participants; call leader for reservation and directions. Rain cancels.

## **Birding Classes Begin**

Sunbeam Ecology Explorations is once again offering birding classes at Little House, 800 Middle Ave. in Menlo Park. Maryann Danielson will teach 6 slide-lecture sessions for each class. Fee is \$30. Three field trips will be offered in conjunction with each class, with an additional fee.

**BIRDING BASICS** is for beginning and less skilled intermediate birders. The winter session will focus on the identification, basic biology and natural history of wintering waterbirds. Wednesday eves. 7:30-9:30, starting Jan. 11. Register at first class.

**BIRDS IN THE WINTER SEASON**, for intermediate and more advanced birders, will cover bird behavior and survival strategies for winter, as well as bird identification. Monday eves. 7:30-9:30, starting Jan. 9. Register at first class. Call 415/325-9349 for further information.



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# Field Notes

By Bill Bousman

## Grebes through Egrets

The grebes on Calaveras Res. are still raising young with two pairs of **Western Grebes** with one and three young each and a pair of **Clark's Grebes** with one young observed on 26 Nov (SCR,HLR). **American Bitterns** found this month include one at the Palo Alto Baylands 4 Nov (ADeM,MMR,AME), one on the Ogier Avenue ponds 19 Nov (KHt fide SCR), and one found again along Alviso Slough 24 Nov (MJM). A single **Cattle Egret** was found near the intersection of Bloomfield and Frazier Lake roads in the south county 27-29 Nov (SCR,MMR).

## Waterfowl

A widespread and very small invasion of **Tundra Swans** occurred mid-month with an imm. at the Campbell percolation ponds 18 Nov (EA,AT) and a second imm. off Palo Alto the same day (MMR). The next day an ad. and two imm. were at Artesian Slough (PJM). The wintering flock of **Wood Duck** at Almaden Res. has started to grow with a peak of 62 birds recorded 27 Nov (AV). One to two pairs of Blue-winged Teal have been found regularly this month on the North Pond in the Palo Alto Flood Control Basin (FCB) (m.ob.). **Eurasian Wigeon** have been found in record numbers with one to two males found regularly in the Palo Alto FCB or Mountain View Forebay (m.ob.), up to four birds on Salt Pond A2W in Mountain View 18-21 Nov (SCR), and three found on the Sunnyvale Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) ponds 24 Nov (SCR). The Palo Alto FCB **Red-head** flock has continued to build with a peak count of 78 birds on 26 Nov (MJM). A single male was on

the Coleman Road ponds 5 Nov (AV), the oversummering male continued in Charleston Slough 11-12 Nov (CW,MJM), four were seen at the mouth of Guadalupe Slough 12 Nov (MMR), two on Coyote Creek near Alviso Slough 14 Nov (PJM), one to three birds in the Alviso salt ponds 14-24 Nov (PJM,MJM), and a single bird in the Palo Alto estuary 22 Nov (SCR). The duck news of the fall is the concentration of **Tufted Ducks** that have been found. A total of three males were on Salt Pond A10 in Alviso 14-24 Nov (PJM,MJM). In addition, on 24 Nov, a female was in Guadalupe Slough, and a second female and a male were in the Sunnyvale WPCP ponds (SCR). This means a total of

*A mind-boggling six  
Tufted Ducks were on  
South Bay ponds*

six birds were within a mile or two of each other - amazing! A male **Oldsquaw** seen in flight off Palo Alto 4 Nov (SCR), although the second record of the year, is only the fifth record for the county. The first of the Shoreline Lake **Barrow's Golden-eye** flock was a female seen on 11 Nov (SCR). Numbers increased with seven birds observed on 25 Nov (MMR). A male and two females were also seen on the Alviso salt ponds 14 Nov (PJM), and a female and an imm. male were on the Ogier Avenue ponds 19 Nov (SCR et al.). Wintering **Hooded Mergansers** have increased substantially in the last three to five years. A pair was seen on Coyote Creek near Mabury 10 Nov (SCR), single females recorded at Shoreline Lake 16 Nov (MMR, SCR) and the Alviso salt ponds 20-24 Nov (MJM), two females were on Sandy

Wool Lake 26 Nov (LC), and a pair on Felt Lake 26 Nov as well (TG). The largest concentration was of 18-26 birds on the Oka ponds 22-24 Nov (AW,AV). The first large influx of wintering **Common Mergansers** was noted on Uvas Reservoir where 46 were counted 21 Nov (DLSu). By 26 Nov at least 165 birds were on this reservoir (MMR,MJM).

## Raptors

An imm. **Bald Eagle** over Ed Levin CP on 19 Nov (MJM) was the first of the season. On 26 Nov both an adult and an imm. were at Calero Reservoir (MMR,MJM).

**Ferruginous Hawks** were found in good numbers: an adult and imm. on the Felter/Sierra Road loop 1 Nov (SCR), an adult near Felt Lake 13 Nov (SCR,HLR) and an imm. there 21 Nov (KHt), an adult and imm. east of the Ogier Avenue ponds 19 Nov (SCR et al.), one east of Uvas Reservoir 21 Nov (DLSu), and four birds found from Gilroy north to Coyote Reservoir 29 Nov (SCR). Always rare, an imm. **Rough-legged Hawk** was found along Bloomfield Road on 28 Nov (MMR) and re-found on 29 Nov (SCR). **Peregrine Falcons** have been found regularly along the bay. An imm. at the Ogier Avenue ponds 19 Nov (m.ob.), a different imm. along Bailey Road the same day (SCR), and a bird at Felt Lake 21 Nov (KHt) were away from areas of typical occurrence.

## Shorebirds through Owls

Single **Snowy Plover** were seen on Salt Pond A3N 12 & 13 Nov (MMR,MJM). A count of 21 there on 24 Nov (SCR) was an excellent total for this species. Late or wintering **Lesser Yellowlegs** include one in the Palo Alto FCB 4 Nov (SCR), one over South Coyote Slough 13 Nov (MJM), and one on the Alviso salt ponds 19 Nov (PJM). **Red Knots** are especially rare outside of their fall migration so a total of 23 feeding in

the Palo Alto estuary 12 Nov (MJM) was surprising. Single birds were seen there also on 15 Nov (MMR) and 22 Nov (SCR). A single **Sanderling** was off the Palo Alto estuary mouth 8 Nov and three were north of Salt Pond B1 on 12 Nov (both MMR). Two **Elegant Terns** were seen on Salt Pond A2W in Mountain View on 1 Nov (MMR) and a single bird was nearby at Shoreline Lake on 4 Nov (SCR). A **Greater Roadrunner** seen above Alum Rock Park 4 Nov (RC) is just about at the furthest extent of its range on the western slope of the Diablo Range. A **Short-eared Owl** at the Palo Alto Baylands 5 & 6 Nov (SCR, MJM, m.ob.) was the only one found this month.

### Woodpeckers through Crossbills

Three **Lewis' Woodpeckers** in San Antonio Valley 19 Nov (WGB et al.) are likely part of the resident population. The imm. male **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** has remained faithful to its sap wells in Ed Levin CP at least through 26 Nov (SCR, m.ob.). Judging the bird in Palo Alto in 1987 and 1988 as a single record, and counting the one seen in Jos. Grant CP this October, there are only three records for the county. A female **Red-naped Sapsucker** was found near Little Arthur Creek at the end of Redwood Retreat Road 21 Nov (DLSu) to add to our sapsucker delights. A **Pileated Woodpecker**, only our sixth county record, was seen on four occasions in the Saratoga Gap OSP from 11-18 Oct (PC). Six **Tree Swallows** and two **Violet-green Swallows** were seen over the Ogier Avenue ponds 19 Nov (SCR, GHt, et al.) and are probably wintering birds. Three **Barn Swallows** flying north over Sierra Road 1 Nov (SCR) were very late and, perhaps, confused. A **House Wren** was found along Coyote Creek near Yerba Buena 18 Nov (SCR) and two were along Uvas Creek 21 Nov (DLSu). This species is very rare in the county after October.

A **Sage Thrasher** was found at the Alviso Environmental Education Center (EEC) on 19 Nov (PJM) feeding on toyon berries. This is our seventh county record and the third this year and was enjoyed by many through 24 Nov. An adult **Hermit Warbler** was seen in the Saratoga Gap OSP 2 Nov (SCR) for one of our few November records. The only **Palm Warbler** this month was of a bird along Coyote Creek below Hwy 237 on 28 Nov (SCR). The **Northern Waterthrush** found last month along Matadero Creek below the frontage road has been found irregularly throughout November (SCR, HLR, MJM, MiF) and up to 28 Nov (AME). A late **Wilson's Warbler** was banded at the Coyote Creek Riparian Station (CCRS) 19 Nov (fide LC). A male **Western Tanager** was found along Coyote Creek at Barber Lane 16 Nov and a female or imm. was along the creek near Shady Oaks Park 18 Nov (both SCR). These birds are probably attempting to winter. The first **Sharp-tailed Sparrow** of the season was seen at the Palo Alto Baylands during the November high tides on 6 Nov (MJM, DS). A **Swamp Sparrow** was at the Palo Alto Baylands 4 Nov (ADeM fide MMR), one was in the Mountain View Forebay 5 Nov, one was along Frazier Lake Road in the south county 27-29 Nov, and two were nearby on Llagas Creek above Bloomfield Road 27 Nov (all SCR).

**White-throated Sparrows** were banded at CCRS on 12 and 16 Nov (fide WGB), and single birds were seen along the Guadalupe River in Willow Glen 10 Nov (SCR), along Coyote Creek at Shady Oaks Park on 18 Nov (SCR), and next to Matadero Creek below the frontage road 28-30 Nov (AME, LC). A male **Lapland Longspur** was found along Bloomfield Road 27-28 Nov (SCR, MMR) for the third county record. A single, winter-plumaged female **Chestnut-collared Longspur** was found along Sierra Road 1 Nov (SCR) where last winter's flock was found. A **Red Crossbill** was heard along Wrights Station Road 5 Nov (MJM); always a good find in a noninvasion winter.

*Observers: Ernie Abeles (EA), Bill Bousman (WGB), Les Chibana (LC), Rita Colwell (RC), Patrick Congdon (PC), Al DeMartini (ADeM), Al Eisner (AME), Mike Feighner (MiF), Tom Grey (TG), Karen Hoyt (KHt), Mike Mammoser (MJM), Peter Metropulos (PJM), Chris Otahal (CO), Mike Rogers (MMR), Heather Rottenborn (HLR), Steve Rottenborn (SCR), Daan Sandee (DS), David Suddjian (DLSu), Alan Thomas (AT), Ann Verdi (AV), Alan Walther (AW), and Clark White (CW).*

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

## Mark Your Audubon Calendars For These Exciting SCVAS Events In 1995!

Before you get fully into the New Year planning, mark your new Audubon Calendar with our coming attractions for 1995 general membership meetings.

January 18th	California Birds of the Four Seasons
February 15th	Druk Yul—the Kingdom of Bhutan
March 15th	An Ear for Birds
April 19th	Baikal Wonderland
May 17th	Backyard Bird Habitats

All of these programs are co-sponsored by the City of Palo Alto, Recreation-Open Space and Science Division.



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## GLOOM, Maybe Not *continued from pg 1...*

House committee on Public Works and Transportation has authority over reauthorizing the Clean Water Act (CWA). The CWA in turn contains the main body of wetlands protection laws. Last year as many as four different bills with serious potential to alter wetlands protection were put forth. The bills which gathered the most steam looked injurious. Luckily, Norm Mineta of San Jose was Chair of this committee. Under his leadership no bill got out of the committee, which left the status quo rather than defeat. Hoorah for gridlock!

Now, however, the Public Works and Transportation Committee is likely to be headed by Bud Shuster of Pennsylvania, who according to the League of Conservation Voters has a 0% voting record on environmental issues. At the end of last spring's session Shuster proposed a Clean Water Act bill including the Hayes Provisions on wetlands, which are generally considered the worst wetlands protection measures ever proposed in Congress. They would define wetlands in such a way as to eliminate half of all wetlands from any protective regulation. The remainder would be ranked. The highest ranking wetlands could be protected, if the Government paid full value for them (not likely in days of budget cutbacks).

So what do we have to contend with? Perhaps we'll see wetlands protection provisions overhauled and renamed. How about the "Clean Up That Swamp Act of 1995"?

Speaking of name changes, the House Natural Resources Committee will be renamed the House Public Lands and Resources Committee. Evidently the word "natural" didn't pass muster. This committee was headed by George Miller of California, to whom we all owe a debt of thanks. Miller pushed and passed the Central Valley Improvement Act. This bill to restore fresh water flows to the Delta and restore portions of the Pacific Flyway was covered in last month's *Avocet*.

Miller will likely be replaced by Don Young of Alaska, a man whose career has been based on resource extraction and who also has a 0% record on environmental issues. Young wants to open up the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge to oil exploration and hopes to increase timber harvesting in the Tongass National Forest (the largest National Forest in the U.S.). He was a leader in the efforts to stop reform of the 1871 Mining Act, which was originally designed to provide incentives for settling the West (it succeeded) and has become a major government giveaway to mining corporations.

### It's Not All Bad

Of course not all committee changeovers look that bad. For example, in the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee Democrat Max Baucus of Montana will likely be replaced by Republican John Chafee of Rhode Island. Baucus was one of the instigators of the "We won't vote for the health bill unless you allow cows to graze the White House lawn" approach. Chafee, meanwhile, has compiled a long record of good stewardship. He has defended the

Endangered Species Act and most recently worked on reauthorizing the Clean Air Act. Chafee may not get this post, despite the fact that he is the most senior Republican on the Committee, because he is seen by others in his party as "too green".

In the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee J. Bennett Johnston of Louisiana may be replaced by Frank Merkowski of Alaska. This is somewhat of a wash. Johnston was perceived as far too friendly to Louisiana's oil industry, while Merkowski is reportedly sympathetic to the "wise use" anti-environmentalists. Johnston's ranking with the League of Conservation Voters is only 50%, while Merkowski's is a lowly 6%.

### Points of Concern

In addition to wetlands protection as mentioned above, there are two local issues which could be directly affected by the changes. First, protection of the Delta. At worst, there may be attempts to repeal much of George Miller's work; or, the needed changes may simply go unfunded and neglected.

Perhaps even worse are prospects for the Presidio in San Francisco. While National Park status is established, a maneuver by Senator Dole on the last day of Congress before the elections held up the long-term loan needed to bring buildings up to code and make the conversion from military to public use complete. Now the prospects for funding the loan are truly in doubt.

We can also look for the rise of ominous new buzz words like "unfunded mandates" and "risk assessment". The former may be used to relax requirements that the states protect their resources, and the latter to compromise public health.

### The Message

We may be in for a bumpy ride. On the other hand, the James Watt years brought unprecedented numbers of people into environmental organizations large and small.

I've heard several environmentalists discuss what message will revitalize the environmental hearts of America. Some say we need to stress that a healthy environment is good for the economy. Others say that we have to focus everything on people, so as not to be perceived as tree (or bird) huggers.

Both approaches may be useful, but worry me. I've never been thrilled by marketing ploys. I believe we should simply say we care, A LOT, and back up that caring with deeds, and direct both our words and our deeds in the appropriate directions. If enough of us speak out, we WILL be heard.

A good way to start is by joining Audubon's Armchair Activist Program. If you sign up—at no cost—you will receive a monthly notice of an important issue and who to write about it. The time commitment is about one half hour. The people I have talked to in the program find it a rewarding way to be heard. We also have a phone tree, which we use to get people to call local representatives at key moments.

If you wish to sign up or simply have a question, leave a message for me at 408-252-3748.

## Ten Hardy Birders Brave A Chilly Charleston Slough

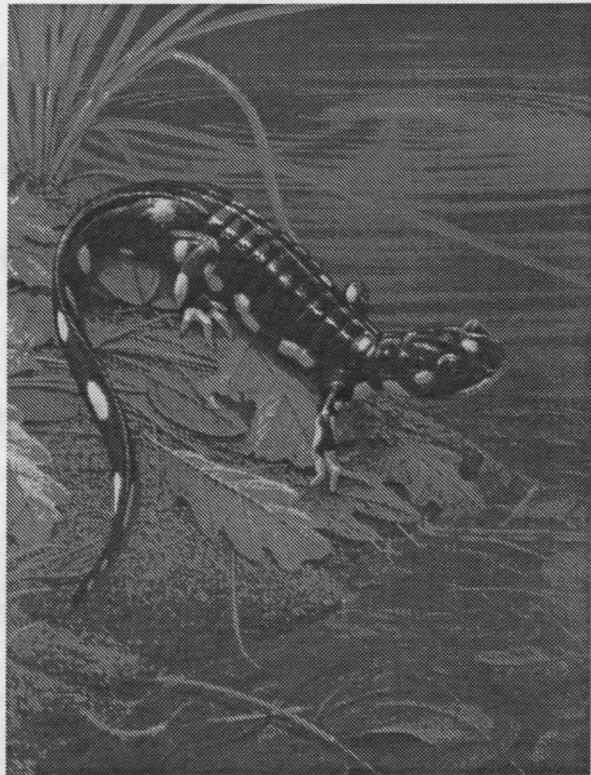
December 3rd was a cold, windy, rainy day when ten hardy birders, including eight beginners (four couples!!), met at Charleston Slough for the monthly beginners birding trip. Despite the inclement conditions a total of sixty species were seen before the group was finally rained out. "Best" birds included a male Ring-necked Duck and a male Barrow's Goldeneye on Shoreline Lake, a male Blue-winged Teal (possibly two) and a male Eurasian Wigeon in Coast Casey Forebay.

Discussions concerned extensive gunfire which was being heard from Salt Pond A1, the possibility of hitting people, duck hunter contribution to existing water fowl habitat and the fact that nonmembers are always welcome on SCVAS birding trips.

Participation of knowledgeable birders (especially those with scopes) on beginner birding trips help to make the event a positive one for the group as a whole; as such, I would like to acknowledge the valuable contribution of Tom Murray and Frank Vanslager.

—Bob Reiling

## Ed Rooks Prints On Sale



If you've never seen Edward Rooks' artwork, come to the SCVAS Nature Shop, where Ed's beautiful portrait of the endangered California Tiger Salamander is now on sale. The salamander is featured on California's official wildlife preservation stamp, and a limited edition print plus a block of four stamps is available from SCVAS for a reasonable price. Proceeds benefit the state Fish and Game wildlife conservation efforts and SCVAS.

## Coming In February

For those of you who keep track of local winter bird populations and enjoy poring over lists, the February issue of the Avocet will contain complete results of both the San Jose and Palo Alto Christmas Bird Counts. Reid Freeman, Bill Bousman and Ann Verdi will tally, tabulate, compile and compute these results from the thousands of sightings reported by loyal SCVAS birders last Dec. 18-19, including highlights, rarities, and unusual numbers.

And speaking of numbers, we'll have an updated report on our "Avocet-up-a-creek" fundraising campaign. As of early December we had received almost \$7,000 in donations—many thanks to all contributors. (If you haven't sent your check in, it's not too late!)

### California Birds—The Last 50 Years With Arnold Small

Santa Cruz Bird Club will be sponsoring the program "California Birds—the Last 50 Years" with guest speaker Arnold Small at their Annual Dinner in January. Dr. Small will explore changes in California's bird life over the last 50 years and how our understanding of the birds in the state has grown and developed.

Date: January 27, 1995      Time: 6:30pm  
Location: Santa Cruz Eagle's Lodge, 306 Mission Street, Santa Cruz  
Cost (Catered Dinner & Program): \$16.00 club members, \$20.00 non-members  
Membership Cost: \$12.00 individual, \$16.00 family

Send checks made out to "Santa Cruz Bird Club" with a SASE to "Annual Dinner", Santa Cruz Bird Club, PO Box 1304, Santa Cruz, CA 95061 (before Jan. 13th).



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

Non-Profit Organization  
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Permit No. 5869

## So Long, Reid

Every now and then, before you even realize just how special they are, someone drops in out of the blue to make a unique and positive impact in your life. Such was the case a few years ago when Reid Freeman casually stopped by the Audubon office to learn more about his new hobby, birding, and possibly do a little volunteer work. Little did we know that he would quickly become one of our chapter's most enthusiastic (maniacal?) birders, as well as our librarian and volunteer extraordinaire.

Reid had a knack for finding projects that needed doing and taking them on in his calm, efficient, cheerful manner. Office staff, committee chairs, and other volunteers soon learned to rely on him in numerous capacities. From addressing envelopes to leading field trips, selling birdseed to compiling the Christmas Bird Count, Reid seemed to do it all. Indeed, he occupied a seat on the Board of Directors for three years without ever getting angry or dozing off during meetings, and that's hard to do!

One of his most significant contributions to SCVAS has been the creation and meticulous cataloging of our library. Field guides, references, and recreational bird/nature books, combined with a variety of bird-related newsletters, journals, and magazines comprise this outstanding collection, organized entirely by Reid. It is a resource we are most

fortunate to possess, thanks to Mr. Freeman.

When Reid wasn't in the office or at a chapter event, he was "in the field." His passion for birding took him all over the county, then Northern California, then Oregon, Southern California, and even Costa Rica, among other bird-rich environs. A keen and careful observer with a great memory, he'd return from a bird trip with detailed descriptions of the birds he saw, other birders he ran into, and plenty of helpful pointers for anyone interested in birding that area themselves.

It didn't really come as a surprise when Reid casually mentioned that he was moving to Oregon; he'd been talking about it for a while but we just didn't want to hear it! The disappointment over losing a stalwart chapter member, birding buddy, and good friend is offset by our sincere best wishes for Reid and Romy as they relocate to Eugene, Oregon to be closer to family. And we suspect that many of us will stay in close contact with Reid; after all, it's only a few hundred miles north to those (considerably) greener pastures and exciting new birding spots—we'll need to hear all about them!

Our loss is Oregon's gain, and the birding community of central Oregon is about to get lucky with the arrival of Reid Freeman. From everyone at SCVAS, thanks for all the amazing energy and wonderful camaraderie you've given us, Reid—we wish you and your family great happiness in your new home. Good luck and good birding!

**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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