



# *The Avocet*

The Newsletter of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society

January 1996

## Songbird-Saving Efforts Thriving

By Bob Barnes

The National Audubon Society has been a leader since its inception of the International Partners in Flight (PIF) Program, whose goal is to halt and reverse the decline of migratory songbirds throughout the Western Hemisphere. Through Audubon's Birds in the Balance (BIB) program and the work of many of our 100,000 members enrolled in chapters throughout California and the Far West, there is much good news on the PIF, BIB and local Chapter fronts.

At the October 1995 Partners In Flight meeting in Cape May, New Jersey, scientists, activists, and a strong contingent of Auduboners helped draft a blueprint for the conservation of migratory songbirds throughout the hemisphere. Based on this blueprint, an action plan will be developed to lead the education, public outreach, monitoring, research, restoration and international cooperation necessary to bring back our beloved songbirds. PIF announced the funding of a position for the first full-time paid coordinator in the West. The new coordinator will help implement riparian and other songbird habitat programs in all

western states.

While at the Cape May meeting the PIF Western Working Group representing 12 states formally designated riparian habitat as the most critical factor to the long-term survival of migratory songbirds in the western U.S. They adopted the California Riparian Habitat Joint Venture (RHJV) as the model for use as the premier mechanism for protecting and enhancing riparian habitat and reversing songbird decline in the region.

The RHJV has made great progress in its first year, with the support of Audubon chapters throughout California. Members of the Joint Venture are currently reviewing proposals for flagship projects, including those submitted by the La Purisima, Sacramento, Santa Barbara and Tulare County Audubon Societies. Audubon, California Dept. of Fish and Game (DFG), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) have entered into a two-year cooperative agreement to hire a full-time state RHJV Coordinator, to work out of Audubon's Sacramento office.

See *SONGBIRD*, page 2...

### **Birds Of Alaska**

**with Nick Lethaby**

### **General Membership Meeting**

**Wednesday January 17**

**7:30 Refreshments, 8:00 Program**

**Palo Alto Cultural Center, Newell and Embarcadero**

Now, in the heart of winter, come experience the birds of Alaska at our first meeting of 1996. Nick Lethaby has led several field trips for our own SCVAS chapter and has visited Alaska annually for 10 years. Other birders have come to know Alaska from using his excellent book: *The Birds of Alaska*. Although he has traveled all over Alaska, Nick's favorite birding spot is Barrow on the North Slope, with its hordes of displaying shorebirds and breeding eiders and Snowy Owls. Glance at a map of Alaska, wrap up in a warm overcoat, and join us at the Palo Alto Cultural Center for a "chillingly" good program!

# Chapter News

## SCVAS Wetlands Education Program

By Elaine Gould

This past summer the Education Committee received a grant of \$2,900 from the Youth Education in Science Committee of San Jose Rotary to expand the Wetlands Education Program. We are very appreciative of their generosity, which will allow us to double the size of the program from ten to twenty schools and reach approximately 1300 upper elementary students throughout Santa Clara Valley. We hope to accomplish this over the next two years. In preparation, we have asked Carol Verbeck, the program's originator, to update and add a second set of materials for use in the schools. We have also purchased a second set of binoculars for use on the trips. The funds will cover the cost of busing these new classes to the Education Center in Alviso. At present, the Education Center is undergoing reconstruction. When that is completed in the spring, we will again have access to the facility and will begin training a new group of teachers. Even though parents and aides accompany these classes, we are always in need of people to help with bird identification as part of the field trip. Please contact Jayne at SCVAS if you have some time and would be interested in helping out.

### Audubon Nature Shop

We would like to thank everyone who did their holiday shopping at the Audubon Nature Shop. We hope you will come back this month for a store full of sales. Everything including books, feeders, T-shirts and all gift items are 10% off in January!

*Donations to SCVAS were made in memory of Jane Becker-Haven by Peter LaTourrette and in memory of Anne Wilson by Mrs. Janet Fisher.*

### Ecological Restoration Course

Ecological Restoration, a ten-session course, is being offered by UC Santa Cruz Extension's Environmental Science Department from February 14 through April 3, 1996. The course will be held in Santa Clara on Wednesday evening with at least one Saturday or Sunday field trip to be arranged. Call the instructors, Verna Jigour 408-246-4425 and Deborah Amshoff 408-265-2607 x2694 for a copy of the course outline, or UC Santa Cruz Extension 408/748-7380 for registration information.

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### Bird Classes in Menlo Park

Two classes for birders will be offered by Sunbeam Ecology Explorations at Little House, 800 Middle Ave. in Menlo Park this winter. Eight slide-lecture sessions and four field trips are included for a \$40 fee per class. Birding Basics, for beginning birders, will meet Wednesday evenings starting Jan. 10, and a more advanced class on Wintering Birds will meet on Mondays starting Jan. 8. To sign up contact Maryann Danielson (instructor) at 415-325-9349.

*From SONGBIRD, page 1...*

The Riparian Habitat Joint Venture is receiving Audubon's fullest possible commitment of time and resources. We invite chapters throughout the region to help us expand the joint venture concept into all parts of California, Nevada, Oregon and Washington. For more information, ideas, or opportunities to get involved, call Bob Barnes at Audubon's Sacramento office at 916-481-5332.

#### SCVAS OFFICERS

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Chapter Mgr	Jayne DiCandio	408/252-3747
Environmental Advocate		
	Craig Breon	408/252-3748
Office Fax		408/252-2850

#### DIRECTORS

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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**

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# January 1996 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 3, 7:30 - 9:30 PM.** Bay Area Bird Photographers Program. Our own Doug Cheeseman will present a slide show on the wildlife of Australia. Lucy Evans Baylands Interpretive Center, East Embarcadero Rd. Palo Alto.

**Tuesday Jan 9, 9:30 AM.** The Eve Case Bird Discussion Group will meet at the home of Pat & Jean Dubois, 17150 Buena Vista Ave, Los Gatos. 408-395-4264. Topic: Chestnut-backed Chickadee.

**\*\*Wednesday Jan. 10, 9:00 AM.** Half day. Alviso Environmental Ed. Center. Leader: Lee Lovelady 408-723-4864. Join S.F. Bay Nat'l. Wildlife Refuge Volunteer Naturalist for a walk on the trails along the Alviso Slough. From Hwy 237 going E from Mt. View, go N on First St. into Alviso, right on Grand Blvd to Ed. Center at end of road.

**\*\*Saturday Jan. 13, 9:00 AM.** Full day. Merced NWR/Santa Fe Grade. Leader: Don Schmoldt 510-215-1910. Meet at NW corner of junction of Rte 59 and Sandy Mush Rd. Take Hwy 152 E from Gilroy, past Los

Banos approx. 20 miles, then N on Rte 59 approx. 7 miles to meeting place. Allow 2.5 hrs, more if fog is forecast. Highlights include large flocks of ducks and geese; waterfowl, raptors, and possible Sandhill Cranes and White-faced Ibis.

**Wednesday Jan. 17, 7:30 PM.** General Meeting in Palo Alto: Birds of Alaska with Nick Lethaby (see Pg. 1)

**\*\*Saturday Jan. 20, 8:00 AM.** Half day. Sunnyvale Sewage Treatment ponds. Leader: Bob Reiling 408-253-7527. From Hwy 101 take Hwy 237 E, exit N on Carribbean Dr., turn right on Borregas Ave., then left to parking area. This is a great place to study gulls and ducks, and a favorite spot for rarities to show up.

**\*\*Sunday Jan. 21, 10:00 AM.** Young Audubon Whale-watching trip to Monterey Bay. Leader: Allen Royer 408-288-7768. Highlights include gray whales, sea otters, sea lions, pelicans, loons, and other seabirds. Boat leaves wharf in Monterey at 10:30; fees are \$10 for adults, \$8 for kids 13-18, \$6 for kids under 12. Call Allen Royer for details.

**\*\*Wednesday Jan. 24, 9:00 AM.** Half day. Foster City. Leader: Rose Green 415-493-8378. Directions: Take Hwy 101 N to Hillsdale Blvd. East. Follow Hillsdale about 1 mile to Shell Blvd., turn right and park at

Community Center. Rain cancels.

**\*\*Saturday Jan. 27, 8:30 AM.** Half day. Beginner's trip to Charleston Slough. Take Hwy 101 to San Antonio Rd. in Mt. View, exit N on San Antonio to Terminal Way parking area. Ducks, shorebirds, herons, etc. Emphasis on basics of birding. Leader to be announced.

**Saturday, Feb 3, 9 AM - 2 PM,** Restoration Work day at Charleston Slough. Volunteers are needed to help in removing of non-native plants along Charleston Slough as a first step in restoration. The work day is co-sponsored by Shoreline Park in Mountain View, Bay Area Action and SCVAS. Bring your work gloves and binoculars for a little birding as well. Call Jayne at the office to sign up 408-252-3747.

**\*\*Sunday Feb. 4, 8:30 AM.** Full day. Panoche Valley. Leader: Clay Kempf 408-761-8260. Meet at Paicines Store on Hwy. 25, approx. 11 miles S of Hollister. Mountain Bluebird, Prairie Falcon, Ferruginous Hawk, and Golden Eagle are likely, with such elusive species as Greater Roadrunner and Chukar possible.

**Tuesday Feb. 13, 9:30 AM.** The Eve Case Bird Discussion Group will meet at the home of Pat & Jean Dubois, 17150 Buena Vista Ave., Los Gatos. 408-395-4264. Topic: Band-tailed Pigeon.

## Field Trip Coordinator Wanted

The SCVAS weekend field trip program is in need of some help. Our once-flourishing Field Trip Committee is presently dormant, just waiting to be revived by an energetic person who could organize an informal committee meeting every 3 or 4 months, make some phone calls, and coordinate the monthly weekend field trips with Jayne. The paperwork now stays at the office, and Jayne handles all the mailings, so the job isn't as time-consuming as it used to be. If you're an active field trip participant with some extra time or just a volunteer looking to help the Chapter, please call Grant Hoyt at 415-969-7892.

## Kayaking the Salinas River Refuge

As chronicled in the December *Avocet*, the November 5 sea kayak trip to the Salinas River was a great success. In fact, we're offering another outing to the same location on Sunday, Feb. 25 to the same location, again through Eskape Sea Kayaking. Steve Shunk's lively account of the November trip has generated plenty of interest in this exciting and unique method of birding riverine habitats, so be sure to reserve space soon if you're interested. No experience is necessary, and all equipment is included for the special SCVAS fee of \$40 (\$50 for non-members). Limit of eight participants. To sign up call Eskape Sea Kayaking at 408-427-2297. Don't be left up the river without a paddle!



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# Field Notes

by Bill Bousman

## Loons through Waterfowl

A **Common Loon** in basic plumage on Salt Pond A3W in Sunnyvale 5(12 Nov (MJM, MMR) was a good find. Good numbers of **Brown Pelicans** have been found in November with a peak of 14 on Salt Pond A3W on 14 Nov (MMR). The **American Bittern** at the Mountain View Forebay was seen on a number of occasions at least through 12 Nov (TGr, KCW, JY). Another bird was near Triangle Marsh on Coyote Creek on 12 Nov (MJM). Five adult and 3 imm. **Snow Geese** were seen leaving the Emily Renzel Wetlands at dawn on 5 Nov (SCR) - an obvious reward for the early birder. There have been a smattering of **Wood Ducks** near the bay this fall but the major concentration has been on Almaden Res. again this winter with 41 counted on 15 Oct and a record 82 there on 19 Nov (AV). A male **Green-winged Teal** of the Eurasian race was found in the Stevens Creek Mitigation Area at Shoreline on 23 Nov (MMR). One wintered here last year. Three male **Blue-winged Teal** in Adobe Creek in the Palo Alto Flood Control Basin (FCB) on 3 Nov (KCW) were the last reports of the influx of October birds. Reports of **Eurasian Wigeon** from the vicinity of the Sunnyvale Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) ponds were sporadic with an imm. male there on 4 Nov (SCR, HLR), an adult male there

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on 23 Nov (AME) and another male nearby in Salt Pond A3W the same day (AME). An additional male was sighted on Salt Pond A9 in Alviso on 12 Nov (MJM). Four **Redhead** from the Sunnyvale WPCP on 4 Nov (SCR, HLR) were in a location where we often find a few birds. The Palo Alto FCB flock was not noted until 26 Nov this year when 32 were counted (TGr). Although **Surf Scoters** are fairly common along the bay we have fewer inland records so one on Vasona Res. on

*The first county record of Lesser Black-backed Gull provided mid-fall excitement.*

29 Oct is of interest (AV). The first **Barrow's Goldeneye** of the season was a male on Salt Pond A10 in Alviso on 12 Nov (MJM). Three birds at Shoreline Lake 18 Nov (MMR) were the first noted at this regular wintering location. **Hooded Mergansers** have been well reported although not in the high numbers of recent Novembers. A female was on a small pond at Ed Levin CP 6 Nov (KCW). At least six males were on the Oka ponds 15-18 Nov (GH). On 19 Nov four were observed on the Almaden Res. and two more counted on the Coleman Avenue ponds (AV). A well-studied female **Red-breasted Merganser** was found on the Ogier Avenue ponds on 18 Nov (SCR et al.).

## Raptors through Gulls

November **Osprey** are very

rare so a bird near Parkway Lakes CP on 11 Nov (MMR) was not expected. One to two imm.

**Ferruginous Hawks** were seen near the Ogier Avenue ponds 17-18 Nov (SCR et al.) and an adult was along the Sierra Road summit on 18 Nov (SCR, HLR). Very rare in fall and winter are jaegers in the South Bay so two imm.

**Parasitic Jaegers** at the Sunnyvale WPCP ponds on 4 Nov (SCR, HLR) was a double surprise. The 1st-winter **Franklin's Gull** found in September was seen at the Sunnyvale WPCP through 5 Nov (MJM). An adult **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was found at the Coyote Creek Riparian Station (CCRS) waterbird pond on 22 Oct (NL fide MMR) and seen there and near Alviso into late November (MMR, AME,

MJM, SCR, HLR, v.ob.). This is the first record of this Eurasian species in Santa Clara County.

## Woodpeckers through Goldfinches

The male **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** that returned to Ed Levin CP in October has been seen regularly through the end of October (m.ob.). In the search for this rare sapsucker a more surprising outcome was the discovery of an imm. female on 5 Nov (CIW, ChW) and this second bird was seen at least through 17 Nov (SCR, KCW). The returning bird represents the second record for the county while the imm. female is the fourth. A hybrid **Red-naped X Red-breasted Sapucker** was seen nearby on 11 Nov (SCR). A **House Wren** at Ed Levin on 11 Nov (LCh) is very rare and may be wintering in the

area. **American Dipper** are more widely found in the winter season so the one along Saratoga Creek near Tolgate on 1 Nov (JDiC, CF) is not a complete surprise. Our rare thrasher for this fall was a **Brown Thrasher** seen and photographed near Page Mill and Moody roads in Los Altos Hills on 21(22 Oct (BC, SY) for only the second record in the county. A male **Phainopepla** seen in Jos. Grant CP on 19 Nov (JY, AL) is from an area where they are sometimes found in the winter. The last of our **Yellow Warblers** usually pass through in mid-October so a bird found along the Guadalupe River between Montague and Trimble on 16 Nov (SCR) is very late or will winter locally. The **Black-and-White Warbler** banded at the Coyote Creek Riparian Station (CCRS) last month was re-captured again

on 8 Nov (fide MMR). Adding to our excellent showing this fall of **Northern Waterthrush** was one found on Coyote Creek at Oakland Road on 2 Nov (SCR). A **Clay-colored Sparrow** along a closed section of Silver Creek on 17 Nov (SCR) is the tenth for the county and the third this year! The first **Swamp Sparrow** of the season was banded at CCRS on 25 Oct (fide MMR). An imm. was found along Guadalupe River between Trimble and Montague on 16 Nov and, on the next day, single birds were found in two places along Silver Creek (above Tully Road and near Lake Cunningham (all SCR). Two imm. **White-throated Sparrows** were found along Guadalupe River between Trimble and Montague on 16 Nov (SCR). One was found at a Palo Alto feeder on 5 Nov (PMB) and a second was

found at a Los Gatos feeder from 14 Nov to the end of the month (JD). Two **Lawrence's Goldfinches** over Ed Levin CP on 7 Nov (SCR) were the only ones reported this month.

*Observers: Phyllis Browning (PMB), Les Chibana (LC), Barbara Costa (BC), Jayne DiCandio (JDiC), Jean Dubois (JD), Al Eisner (AME), Chris Fischer (CF), Tom Grey (TGr), Gabriel Hirsch (GH), Nick Lethaby (NL), Amy Lauterbach (AL), Mike Mammoser (MJM), Mike Rogers (MMR), Heather Rottenborn (HLR), Steve Rottenborn (SCR), Ann Verdi (AV), Clark White (KCW), Chris Wolfe (ChW), Claire Wolfe (CIW), Scott Young (SY), and James Yurchenco (JY).*

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

## Condor Update

Regional Representative Jill Shirley, Sanctuaries Assistant Christine Caldwell and Director of Audubon's Western Sanctuaries Jesse Grantham attended the release of 8 California Condors into the wild last August 29 at Lion Canyon in Santa Barbara County. These birds joined five other youngsters already living in the same location.

The condor population now stands at 103 birds. Among the three breeding facilities, 22 eggs were laid last spring; 17 hatched and 15 chicks survived. Six of the birds hatched in '95 will be released in the Grand Canyon of Arizona, four will be released at Castle Crags in San Luis Obispo County, and the remainder at Lion Canyon.

## Bald Eagle Conference

February 16 - 18 marks the 17th annual Klamath Basin Bald Eagle Conference. The Basin is home to over 170 species of birds, including the largest wintering concentration of Bald Eagles in the lower 48 states. Over 800 eagles flock from as far north as Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories of Canada to winter at Klamath, feeding on the abundant supply of waterfowl found there in the winter months. The majestic raptors begin arriving in late October and many stay through the following March.

The conference is held at the Oregon Institute of Technology in Klamath Falls, Oregon, and includes speakers, workshops, and fantastic birding. The annual event is sponsored by the Klamath Basin chapter of the Audubon Society and co-hosted by Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Oregon Eagle Foundation and Oregon Institute of Technology.

For more details contact Klamath Basin Audubon Society, P.O. Box 354, Klamath Falls, OR 97601, or Ralph Opp at Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, 1400 Miller Island Rd. West, Klamath Falls, OR 97603 (503)883-5732 days, 882-8488 evenings.



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# Environmental Action News

## “Ask Not What Your Chapter Can Do For You...”

by Craig Breon

Our chapter offers a wide variety of services to our members, from answering questions about that bird on your back fence to helping you stop those bulldozers across the street. We, in turn, rely on our members for all sorts of support. Most of you will have received a fundraising letter about a month ago. Our deepest appreciation to those of you who answered that call; it allows us to do lots of good work. However, as the article below by Cynthia McLaughlin notes, we are just as appreciative of those of you who give your time and caring to the issues we all hold dear.

In addition to the letter-writing program Cynthia describes, there are many other roles out there for someone with a little time and a few skills. Some that come to mind are detailed blow.

Our chapter works with the Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge (CCCR), a coalition of activists working to protect wetlands around the South Bay and to add acreage to the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge. Currently, we have no one attending CCCR's monthly meetings. They meet the third Thursday of each month at the Refuge headquarters in Fremont, just across the Dumbarton Bridge from Palo Alto. No particular skills required for this job, just an interest in wetlands preservation and a willingness to report back to the

chapter what CCCR is working on.

We have recently subscribed to an online service and are beginning to use e-mail and explore networking. We could use someone to help us understand what the info superhighway can do for SCVAS. Even better would be someone who is willing to put in some time getting information about our chapter out online—from action alerts to field trip schedules. This work could be done from home or at our Cupertino office. As an alternative, perhaps your company could sponsor a web page for us?

We can always use people with a background in environmental subjects (conservation biology, geology, hydrology, law etc.) to help us impact on various County projects. This might include commenting on an Environmental Impact Report or attending a few meetings of the Water District. This opportunity would vary greatly according to the skills and time schedule of the volunteer.

Invent your own role! We are always open to suggestions for volunteer opportunities or projects we should be working on. For example, There are “Friends of...” groups forming on a couple creeks in the County. If you would like to do this in your area, give us a call. In short, let your imagination run wild. Think to yourself, “If I could do something to really help the environment (and maybe have some fun doing it), what would I do?” Then let us know.

## Letter Writing Going Strong

by Cynthia McLaughlin, Armchair Activist Coordinator

The results of the November Armchair Activist survey are in, and they are great (late replies are STILL welcome). We had a good response rate and many positive comments. The Armchair Activist is a National Audubon environmental action program that our chapter joined in April 1993. At the time we already had a hardy band of “activists” who were writing letters and making phone calls to local, state, and national government officials about environmental

issues. We wanted to expand the group and make it more effective. It was also important to make participation enriching for our members. We have been successful thanks to Craig Breon, who has actively recruited members; the Environmental Action Committee (EAC), which has supported the program; and the activists themselves.

I was a member of the EAC when we started this program. I thought it would be valuable because it aimed at people who are concerned but have little spare time (which is just about ALL of us!). Also, I was impressed

because each month the program provided background information about a key issue and an example of a letter to write to a specific official. As one of the Activists said in their response to the survey, “The ‘Activist’ is a great way to get people involved, since all the information you need is right there.” Several other activists commented on the helpfulness of having a sample letter.

Since our first issue on the California Endangered Species Act, the number of Armchair Activists has grown from 20 to more than 90! In the November survey we requested that people let us know how often they

See *LETTER*, next page...

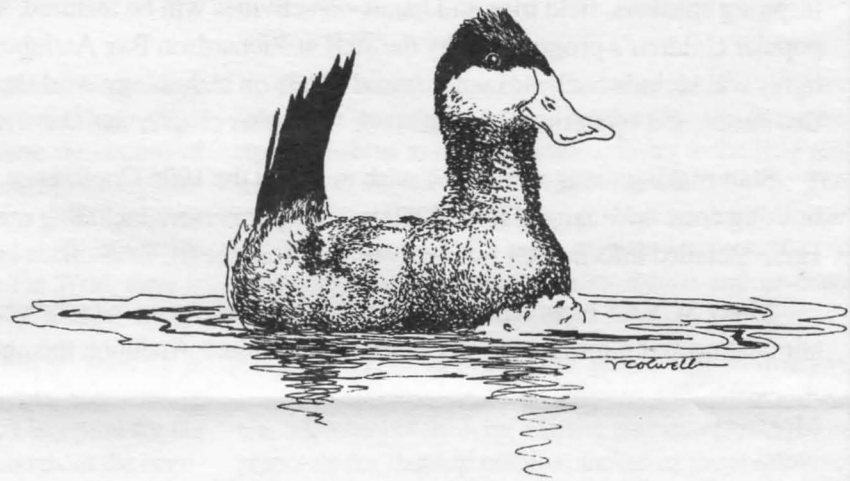
# Sacramento Valley Field Trip

As always, the Sacramento Valley wildlife refuges field trip was a spectacular experience for all. Co-led by Doug and Gail Cheeseman and with the sharp eyes of the number of other super-birders, we saw over 100 species of birds on this two day trip! The weather was fantastic on Friday, Nov 24 and overcast with showers on Saturday. Quite a contrast! On Friday, we explored Sacramento Nat. Wildlife Refuge (NWR); the west boundary of Sutter Buttes (West Butte Road); and Gray Lodge State Wildlife Refuge. On Saturday, we explored Colusa NWR, and the Cheesemans led a group back up to Sacramento NWR on Saturday afternoon. Highlights were many, with 10's of thousands of Snow/Ross' geese "bubbling up" whenever an eagle or airplane disturbed them; the many ducks, and of course, the spectacular evening "flyout" at Gray Lodge. Noteworthy birds observed were: Cattle Egret (20 on Abel Road), several Blue-morph Snow Geese, Wood Duck (2), Blue-winged Teal (1 male at Colusa NWR), 6-8 Eurasian Wigeon, one partial albino Gadwall, Greater Scaup (2, Colusa NWR - rare inland), Hooded Merganser (1 female, Colusa NWR), Bald Eagle (3, Sacramento and Colusa NWR's), Rough-legged Hawk (2-3, Sacra-

mento NWR), Merlin (2, Colusa NWR), Peregrine Falcon (1, harassing a Rough-legged Hawk, Sacramento NWR), and up to six Yellow-headed Blackbirds!

Grant and Karen Hoyt and Rob and Rita Colwell explored the east and south sides of Sutter Buttes after the group parted, and found 1500 Tundra Swans along East Butte Road; Lewis' woodpeckers along North Butte Road; and Vesper Sparrows along Pass Road (south side of Sutter Buttes).

—Don Schmoltdt



Original artwork by Rita Colwell

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wrote letters, what issues they felt were most important, and suggestions for improving the program. 56% said they write MOST of the time (on all 12 issues for the past year), 30% write SOME of the time and four fibbers claimed to write ALL the time (just kidding). It is always valuable to write a letter, even if just occasionally. We know from discussions with elected officials that letters count, not only in influencing how legislators vote but how bills are written.

Habitat (protection, preservation, and specific areas like the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge) tied with clean

water and air as the key issues most frequently mentioned. Next was the Endangered Species Act, followed by another tie between forest and population (management and stabilization), and then environmental education. Other issues that were mentioned were diversity, creeks, and open space. One Activist suggested that we provide more than one issue a month. We do occasionally have multiple issues, as in August last year when we highlighted both creek protection and San Jose's urban growth boundary.

People had many positive and helpful comments. One of the best was "We must all keep fighting the fight and not become depressed and cave in

to those who would 'pave paradise and put up a parking lot.'" Suggestions for improvements included more timely mailings and follow-up on issues. Jayne DiCandio now prints mailing labels which helps a lot on timeliness. In addition, I now have access to the Worldwide Web and can get information more quickly.

If you have only a little time but a lot of concern about the environment please contact Craig, our Environmental Advocate, at (408) 252-3748 or Cynthia McLaughlin at (408) 253-4588. As another letter writer noted, "I feel that the Audubon Armchair Activist Program makes it very easy to participate in a positive way."

Santa Clara Valley  
Audubon Society  
22221 McClellan Road  
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## Plan Now For Asilomar '96

The next Audubon Western Regional Conference will be held March 30 - April 2, 1996 at the beautiful Asilomar conference grounds on the Monterey Peninsula. An exciting agenda reflecting Audubon's renewed commitment to birds and wildlife is being planned. Interactive workshops, inspiring speakers, field trips and hands-on activities will be featured, as well as the increasingly popular children's program led by the staff at Richardson Bay Audubon Center. Conference highlights will include backyard wildlife and hands-on technology workshops, discussions about legislative issues, and opportunities to network with other chapter members and activists.

Start making plans now if you wish to attend the 1996 Conference. In the past, registration and housing costs have ranged from \$250 to \$390 per person, including meals in the Asilomar Dining Hall. Detailed information will be available from the SCVAS office in early February.

Many SCVAS members have attended this conference over the years, and have always found it stimulating and informative. It's a great way to meet Audubon members from California and other western states, to share ideas and concerns, and enjoy the wonderful scenery and great birding around Monterey.

**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.

**Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society Subscription:** Check One  
 Subscriber \$10  Supporter \$20  Donor \$35  Patron \$50 and more  
Members receive *The Avocet* newsletter. Make check payable to SCVAS.

**Or**

**National Audubon Society Membership:** Check One  
 New members \$20  Membership renewal \$35  
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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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