



The Avocet

The Newsletter of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society

February 1996

The Ninety-Sixth Christmas Bird Count

by Mike Rogers

Once again this past December SCVAS members continued a long-standing tradition by fielding bird observers for three Christmas Bird counts, the ninety-sixth such nation-wide count sponsored by the National Audubon Society. As usual, the most popular choice was the San Jose count on Sunday 12/17, with 95 participants. The Palo Alto count conducted on Monday 12/18 attracted 63 observers and the Mt. Hamilton count fielded 19 sturdy birders ready for the chilling conditions of the Diablo Range in winter.

This year the weather was excellent for the San Jose and Mt. Hamilton counts and poor to miserable for the Palo Alto count. On 12/18 it rained for much of the day, despite weather forecasts that teased counters with empty promises of imminent improvement. Visibility was poor and birds were secretive. Pre-dawn owling provided little more than an opportunity to get wet for the rest of the day.

I have summarized the final totals for all species found on our three counts on pages 6-7. The columns are listed west to east, with Palo Alto on the left, Mt. Hamilton on the right, and San Jose in the middle. The Palo Alto count benefits from the moist Santa Cruz Mountains and the species composition re-

flects this. The Mt. Hamilton count was, not surprisingly, the only count to record Diablo Range specialties like Greater Roadrunner, Lewis' Woodpecker, Sage Sparrow, and Lawrence's Goldfinch, but of course missed out on most of the bayside waterbirds. The San Jose count had several rarities along creeks and in isolated vegetated areas in urban areas, as well as several good birds along the edge of the Diablo Range.

The San Jose count tallied 71,807 birds of 167 species this year. This is down somewhat from the 98,448 birds of 169 species recorded last year but is still a good species total. The reduction in the number of individuals was due largely to unidentified sandpipers (8462 last year, 1346 this year) and unidentified ducks (5168 last year, 374 this year). Among the identified species, Canvasbacks, Marbled Godwits, and Dunlin were all recorded at only about 10% of last year's levels. Thrush numbers were also not as high as last year, with American Robin dropping from 1408 to 466 and Varied Thrush dropping from 88 to 1. Pine Siskin, of which we found 113 last year, went undetected on the count.

Highlights of this year's San Jose count included the continuing presence of an adult Lesser Black-backed Gull (a first for

CBC continues on page 5...

Songbirds in Birdland

with Bob Barnes

General Membership Meeting

Wednesday, February 21

7:30 Refreshments, 8:00 PM Program

Palo Alto Cultural Center, Newell & Embarcadero

Bob Barnes from National Audubon's Western Field Office will provide an update on the collaboration efforts and successes of the Partners in Flight programs. Spanning international and government boundaries, these programs seek to bring together decision-makers who understand and respect the migratory nature of songbirds. Bob will discuss innovative songbird conservation programs in California, such as those found at Kern River Research Center, Bobelaine Sanctuary and Coyote Creek Riparian Station. Bob will also give us an overview of the challenges and opportunities ahead with the efforts of Partners in Flight to reach beyond U.S. boundaries. For an understanding about what is being done and what more needs to be done join us for a look at Birds in the Balance and Partners in Flight.

Chapter News

Fundraiser Brings In \$\$

The SCVAS 70th Anniversary fundraising campaign has raised almost \$14,000 as of Jan. 7! And it's not over yet—Chapter Manager Jayne DiCandio reports that our last two fall fundraisers continued to bring in money well into January and February. While our lofty goal of \$20,000 may not be reached, we'll certainly exceed \$15,000—a remarkable total, and well over last year's "Up a Creek" campaign which netted just under \$11,000.

SCVAS greatly appreciates this tremendous response to our request for financial support from our members. Thanks to you, we are able to maintain a first-rate professional staff, outstanding programs, and our cozy McClellan Ranch office and Nature Shop in Cupertino. Jayne and her fabulous corps of volunteers deserve special credit for running this fundraiser (including addressing every envelope by hand!) on a tight budget with great efficiency. A final total of funds raised will appear in the March *Avocet*.

Odds & Ends

Harriet Gerson has volunteered to chair the '96 Birdathon, coming in late April to a variety of birding venues near you. Start making plans to find and fund those birds with the SCVAS team of your choice . . . Dave Cook has stepped forward to fill the vacant Weekend Field Trip Coordinator slot. Look forward to a revitalized field trip program starting in early April, with some exciting new trips in the works. . . The *Avocet* editor is convinced that forces beyond his control are conspiring to prevent prompt delivery of the newsletter to our long-suffering readers. If it's not the post office or the holidays, it's Acts of God, namely the monster storm of early December. Power outages and the resulting communication breakdowns set us back at least a week, which, combined with the holiday season, made the January *Avocet* later than usual. We apologize for the inconvenience.

Attention Wildlife Artists!

The 5th Annual California Wildlife and Local Habitats Poster Contest is underway. The contest is open to grades K-12. Call the office for details. Poster deadline is March 1st. Winners will be announced at our 5th Annual Audubon Education Day March 23, 1996.

Donations were made in Memory of

Jane Becker-Haven

by John & Ann Bender and

Jim & Sue Liskovec

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Palo Alto CBC Participants

(Section Leaders underlined)

Jane Ardley, Mike Azevedo, Roy Bailey, Penelope Bowen, Craig Breon, Phyllis Browning, William Cabot, Zoe Chandik, Joyce Chang, Bill Clark, Jean Clark, Jack Cole, Annette Coleman, Ann Colton, Rita Colwell, Patrick Congdon, Barbara Costa, Derek Currall, Rigdon Currie, Marge DeStaebler, Jayne DiCandio, David Drake, Alan Eisner, Janet Eyre, Ed Frost, Shirley Gordon, Pat Grange, Leda Beth Gray, Margaret Green, Rose Green, Chip Haven, King Huber, Caralisa Hughes, Sue James, Alberta Jasberg, Marcia Keimer, Pete LaTourrette, Rosalie Lefkowitz, Winkie Lennihan, Mike Mammoser, Adam Marcus, Robert Marcus, Donald Mayall, Bert McKee, Ethel Meece, John Meyer, Maria Meyer, Lincoln Moses, Dean Rinehart, Mike Rogers, Elizabeth Rush, Leonard Rush, Dick Stovel, Alan Thomas, Gene Troetschler, Ruth Troetschler, Pete van Heyst, Frank Vanslager, Ann Verdi, Alan Vishoot, Janet Wall, Robert Wallace, John Working, Scott Young

Of Note...

Special thanks to Mike Rogers, Ann Verdi and Don Schmoltdt for an outstanding job in compiling the three CBCs.

SCVAS OFFICERS

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Membership	Vacant	
Hospitality	Gail Cheeseman	

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

February 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

Saturday Feb. 3, 9 AM - 2 PM.

Restoration Work Day at Charleston Slough. Co-sponsored by Shoreline Park in Mt. View, Bay Area Action, and SCVAS. Call Jayne at the office to sign up.

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

Wednesday Feb. 7, 7:30-9:30 PM. Bay Area Bird Photographers. BABP member Richard Kuenne will show his slides on African Wildlife. Lucy Evans Baylands Interpretive Center, East Embarcadero Rd. Palo Alto.

Tuesday Feb. 13, 9:30 AM. The 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: Band-tailed Pigeon.

****Wednesday Feb. 14, 9:00 AM.** Half day. Ogier Ponds. Leader: Ed Gustafson (408)377-1123. From Hwy 101 in Morgan Hill take Cochrane Rd W to Monterey Hwy. Turn right, go N 2.6 mi. Turn right at road marked by signs for Dole Fruit Plant and Model Airplane Sky Park. Follow road for 1/2 mi., park in gravel lot on left. Fresh water marsh species, raptors. Rain cancels.

****Saturday Feb. 17, 8:30 AM.** Memorial Hike for Jane Becker-Haven at Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve. Sponsored by the Education Committee. Leaders: Bill & Jean Clark,

Winkie Lenihan, Bob Buell. Limit 40 participants by reservation only. Call SCVAS office to reserve space (408)252-3747. Voluntary donations in lieu of usual gate fee to Jane Becker-Haven Memorial Fund. Meet at preserve main gate (not Whiskey Hill Rd. gate). Gate is only open from 8:10 -8:40 AM. From I-280 take Sand Hill Rd. W 2 mi. to main gate on left. Good variety of waterfowl and woodland birds. Moderately strenuous walking 2-3 miles. Lunch optional. Trip rain or shine.

****Saturday Feb. 24, 8:30 AM.** Half day. Young Audubon Trip at Palo Alto Baylands & duck pond. Leader: Steve Rottenborn (415)497-9368. All ages are welcome on this family field trip. Emphasis on shorebirds and waterfowl. Some binoculars & field guides will be available. From Hwy 101 in Palo Alto take Embarcadero Rd. E, go approx. 1 mi. and turn left at T

intersection. Meet at first parking lot near duck pond.

****Wednesday Feb. 28, 8:30 AM.** Half day. Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve, Stanford. A docent-led trip through this unique and diverse habitat. \$5.00 admission. Reservations required. Limit of 15. Call Alberta Jasberg (415) 493-9546.

****Saturday Mar. 2, 8:30 AM.** Half day. Redwood Shores. Leader: Nick Coiro (415)349-1834. From Hwy 101 in San Carlos exit E at Holly St., which becomes Redwood Shores Pkwy. Continue 2 mi. to meeting place near radio tower at end of road. Possibilities include Hooded Merganser, Barrow's Goldeneye, Peregrine Falcon, Horned Lark. Bring scopes (and mud boots if recent rain).

Tuesday, March 12, 9:30 AM. The Eve Case Discussion Group will meet at the home of Pat & Jean Dubois, 17150 Buena Vista Ave, Los Gatos (408)395-4264. Topic: Feeding Behavior (including feeders).

1996 San Jose CBC Participants

(Section Leaders are underlined)

Lucy Abe, Roger Abe, Joan Armer, Paul Armer, Richard Ayala, Mike Azevedo, Bonnie Bedford-White, Eileen Bowden, Craig Breon, Robert Buell, Richard Carlson, Bill Carver, Doug Cheeseman, Gail Cheeseman, Les Chibana, Rita Colwell, Rob Colwell, JDavid J. Cook, David M. Cook, Charles Coston, Joan Coston, Rigdon Currie, Carolyn Curtis, Mary Ann Danielson, Al DeMartini, Jayne DiCandio, Howard Friedman, Harriet Gerson, Shirley Gordon, Ed Gustafson, Bill Hayashi, Rich Healy, Jan Hintermeister, Grant Hoyt, Karen Hoyt, Caralisa Hughes, Richard Jeffers, Dorothy Johnson, Dave Johnston, Sally Karas, Dan Keller, Kathleen Lee, Jim Liskovec, Sue Liskovec, Randy Little, Linda Lloyd, Bob Long, Steve Madsen, Mike Mammoser, Elizabeth Mancuso, Donald Mayall, David McIntyre, Lynn Miller, Mark Miller, Bob Moncrieff, Bryan O'Leary, Carol Oda, Tom Olson, Helen Peters, Nancy Peters, David Poeschel, Bob Reiling, Bob Roadcap, Nancy Robinson, Michael Rogers, Edward Rooks, Janice Rooks, Allen Royer, Chris Salander, Don Schmoldt, Steve Shunk, Clysta Seney, Mary Simpson, Charles Slater, Bonnie Spacek, Jean-Marie Spoelman, Louisa Squires, Keppler Stone, Dick Stovel, Lennie Stovel, Alan Thomas, Jerry Towner, Gene Troetschler, Ruth Troetschler, Frank Vanslager, J. G. Van Stee, Sue Van Stee, Ann Verdi, Milton West, Anna Wilcox, Christine Wolfe, Claire Wolfe

Field Notes

by Bill Bousman

Loonsthrough Waterfowl

A **Red-throated Loon** on Calero Res. on 26 Dec (MJM) was the first one reported this winter. A **Common Loon** was over the Alviso salt ponds on 17 Dec (MMR) and an imm. was seen at Calero Res. on 26 Dec (MJM). One or more **Brown Pelicans** lingered in the vicinity of Shoreline Lake from 8 Dec through the end of the month (TGr, MJM, RLe, RC) and two birds were on the Sunnyvale Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) ponds on 23 Dec (MJM). An **American Bittern** in the Mountain View Forebay on 13 Dec (RLe, RC) and 18 Dec (MMR) is probably the same bird seen there in November. A second birds was at the Palo Alto Baylands on the high tide on 23 Dec (MJM). **Cattle Egrets** were at the Arzino Ranch during December with four on 4 Dec (WGB) and three on 17 Dec (MMR). A **Greater White-fronted Goose** in Ed Levin CP on 17 Dec (LCh *et al.*) is unusual for the county. Our **Ross' Goose** returned for its fifth winter, joining its domestic pals on 23 Dec (MJM), but too late for the Palo Alto CBC. Almaden Res. continues to be the **Wood Duck** capital of the county with 50 counted there on 26 Dec (MJM). The Palo Alto Flood Control Basin (FCB), as in a number of recent years, has been a good spot for **Blue-winged Teal** with three to four birds seen from 9 Dec through the end of the month (MJM, RLe, RC, MMR, SS). Three birds were found in Menlo Park's Bayfront Park on 18 Dec (MJM). Male **Eurasian Wigeon** have been seen in the Palo Alto FCB on 13 Dec (RLe, RC) and 18 Dec (MMR) and a second male was on Salt Pond A1 on the latter date (MMR). A third male has been seen in the Sunnyvale WPCP ponds from 23 Dec through the end of the month (MJM). The Palo Alto FCB **Redhead** flock has been in three digits throughout December with a peak count of 132 on 9 Dec (MJM). We've not quite had the magnificent **Tufted Duck** show of the past two winters, but a single male on the Sunnyvale WPCP large pond on 23 Dec (MJM) is still a spectacular find. The **Barrow's Goldeneye** 'flock'

at Shoreline Lake has ranged from two to five birds throughout December (m.ob.). The peak count was of three males and two females on 9 Dec (MJM). **Hooded Mergansers** continue to be seen at the Oka perc. ponds with 10+ birds seen 10-24 Dec (RcW). Fifteen **Common Mergansers** on Calero Res. on 26 Dec (MJM) is the peak count this winter and down from recent winters.

Raptors through Skimmers

An **Osprey** near Parkway Lakes on 1 Dec (SCR) and 3 Dec (MJM) is in an area where a bird was seen in November. A near-adult **Bald Eagle** was found at Calaveras Res. on 16-17 Dec (MJM *et al.*) where they regularly winter. Four birds at Isabel Res. on 20 Dec (MJM,

Summer Tanager and Chestnut-collared Longspurs have joined continuing rarities such as Lesser Black-backed Gull, Black Skimmer, and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

Ght, DJ) was a real treat and included two adults and 1st- and 2nd-winter birds. An adult and imm. **Red-shouldered Hawk** in the Isabel Valley the same day are winter dispersants well away from any of their nesting areas (MJM, Ght, DJ). **Ferruginous Hawk** reports include an imm. at the Sierra Road Summit on 3 Dec (Ght & Kht *fide* MMR), two unaged birds there 16 Dec (MJM), and an adult in the Isabel Valley on 20 Dec (MJM, Ght, DJ). An excellent count of **Red Knots** was obtained at the San Francisquito Creek delta on 18 Dec (MMR) just outside of the county. **Sanderling** have become less common in recent winters so two on the Alviso salt ponds 17 Dec is of interest as were the five birds found on the San Francisquito Creek delta on 18 Dec (both MMR). Three **Red Phalarope** found on the salt ponds near Ravenswood Point on 18 Dec (JAC, EF, MJM) were unusual for the Palo Alto CBC in recent years. An additional surprise for that count was a **Heermann's Gull** near the Redwood City Marina on 18 Dec (JAC *et*

al. fide AME). This species rarely turns up this far down the bay. The adult **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was found again on 17 Dec on the levee between salt ponds A11 and A12 in Alviso (MMR). This bird has been present since late October. The **Black Skimmers** have remained at Charleston Slough with three seen through 9 Dec (NY *et al.*) and two birds still there on 18 Dec (MMR).

Owls through Goldfinches

A **Short-eared Owl** seen at dusk on 2 Dec (WCa) is the only report of this rare owl this December. Eight **Lewis' Woodpeckers** were found in the Isabel Valley on 20 Dec (MJM, Ght, DJ). The **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** wintering at Ed Levin CP was found on 17 Dec (MMR, LCh) to make the San Jose CBC. Two **Pileated Woodpeckers** in Mt. Madonna CP on 25 Nov (DLSu *et al.*) are the southernmost records in the Santa Cruz Mountains. They fit the pattern of winter dispersants from the Santa Cruz Mountain population. It has been a better than average winter for **Tree Swallows**. Three were seen over the Alviso marina on 24 Dec (RSTh) where they are occasionally found in the winter, but the two found in the Isabel Valley on 20 Dec (Ght, MJM, DJ) were really surprising. Far more rare was the adult **Barn Swallow** found on 9 Dec alongside the Mountain View Forebay (NY, AV, *et al.*). This is a first December record for the county. A **House Wren** in the vicinity of Agnews on 17 Dec (Ght & Kht) is always a good find for the winter. It does not appear to be a major invasion year for **Golden-crowned Kinglets**. Thirteen found south of Arroyo Hondo on Marsh Road on 17 Dec (RWR) are good numbers anywhere in the Diablo Range. More expected were two along San Francisquito Creek at Webster on 19 Dec (MMR). A male **Phainopepla** was found west of Calaveras Res. on 17 Dec (MMR) in the same area a female was found last winter. A **Nashville Warbler** found in the Overfelt Gardens on the San Jose CBC on 17 Dec (RGJ *et al.*) was a good sighting for winter. A **Yellow Warbler** at the Alviso Environmental Education Center (EEC) on 2 Dec (AME) is unusual for the winter. A male and female **Black-throated Gray Warbler** were found in the Isabel Valley on 20 Dec (Ght, MJM, DJ). It has been a few

winters since we've had this species show up locally. A female **Summer Tanager** was found along San Francisquito Creek above Middlefield on 2 Dec (AME), near where one was seen late last winter in February and March. The bird has been found irregularly through 27 Dec (AME, MiF). A **Western Tanager** was also found near the Summer Tanager on 2 Dec (AME) and a different bird, probably, was in the vicinity of Parkinson and Pine in Palo Alto on 5 and 13 Dec (NH *fide* RLe). A **Swamp Sparrow** along the Guadalupe River between Montague and Hwy 101 on 17 Dec (DJK & ADeM *fide* GHt) was a good find for the San Jose CBC. **White-throated Sparrows** have been well represented at feeders this win-

ter with two in Los Gatos on 3 Dec (JD), one in Saratoga on 6 Dec (HG), and one at a Los Altos feeder on 9 and 13 Dec (RC). At least two birds, perhaps more, were found along the Guadalupe River on 17 Dec (DJK & ADeM *fide* GHt, MMR, DSt *fide* GHt). At least two **Chestnut-collared Longspurs** were found along Sierra Road on 17 Dec (MMR, LCh) where this species has been found intermittently for the last three winters. The only report of **Lawrence's Goldfinch** was of a single bird heard over the Isabel Valley on 20 Dec (MJM, GHt, DJ).

Observers: Bill Bousman (WGB), William Cabot (WCa), Les Chibana (LCh), Jack Cole (JAC), Rita Colwell (RC), Al

DeMartini (ADeM), Jean Dubois (JD), Al Eisner (AME), Mike Feighner (MiF), Ed Frost (EF), Harriet Gerson (HG), Tom Grey (TGr), Nancy Hay (NH), Grant Hoyt (GHt), Karen Hoyt (KHt), Richard Jeffers (RGJ), Dave Johnston (DJ), Dan Keller (DJK), Rosalie Lefkowitz (RLe), Mike Mammoser (MJM), Bob Reiling (RWR), Mike Rogers (MMR), Steve Rottenborn (SCR), Steve Shunk (SS), Dick Stovel (DSt), David Suddjian (DLSu), Ron Thorn (RSTh), Ann Verdi (AV), Dick Williams (RcW), and Nick Yatsko (NY).

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

...CBC continued from page 5

the count) in Alviso. Other rarities included Lesser Yellowlegs, Tree Swallow, and Ruff in Alviso; two Greater White-fronted Geese (in Alviso and at Ed Levin CP); an Osprey over Calaveras Reservoir; two Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers (the expected one at Ed Levin CP and a newly discovered bird at the Carmelite Monastery); two House Wrens (near Arroyo Hondo and near Lick Mill Parkway); two Nashville Warblers (at Overfelt Gardens and the Santa Clara Civic Cemetery); a Palm Warbler in Fair Oaks Park; a Swamp Sparrow and three White-throated Sparrows along the Guadalupe near Montague Expressway; and Chestnut-collared Longspurs on Sierra Road. Embarrassing misses included three shorebirds: Semipalmated Plover, Whimbrel, and Short-billed Dowitcher.

The Palo Alto count found 82,918 birds of 159 species, down from 122,224 of 163 species last year. The weather undoubtedly was largely responsible for this reduction, although the government shutdown prevented coverage from some parts of the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge that are normally quite productive. In general duck numbers were similar to those of 1994, but shorebirds and passerines were reported in smaller numbers than last year. Black-bellied Plover, Western Sandpiper, and Dunlin were down from over 10,000 each last year to a few thousand each this year and 10,000 fewer "peep sp" were noted. Gulls were also all represented in smaller numbers this year. Like the San Jose count, thrush numbers were less than last year, with American Robin decreasing from 1636 to 775 and Varied Thrush dropping from 424 to 15.

Highlights of the Palo Alto count included the continuing presence of two Black Skimmers at Charleston Slough, a count first! Other rarities included a Heermann's Gull in Redwood City, 8 Red Phalaropes near the west end of the Dumbarton Bridge, and a surprising 217 Red Knots at the San Francisquito Creek Delta, as well as our more expected rare ducks, including Eurasian Green-winged Teal, Blue-winged Teal, Eurasian Wigeon, and Barrow's Goldeneye. After missing both pelicans last year, 194 American White Pelicans and 8 Brown Pelicans were a welcome sight. Unfortunate was the disappearance of the

Sunnyvale Tufted Duck and the San Francisquito Creek Summer Tanager on count day as well as the tardy return of our Sunnyvale Ross' Goose, which was first detected three days after the count this year. Embarrassing misses included Whimbrel and Common Snipe, while the absences of Red-breasted Nuthatch and Winter Wren were perhaps expected given the weather conditions in the Santa Cruz Mountains.

The Mt. Hamilton count recorded 6,038 birds of 102 species, compared with 7,462 of 102 species last year. The decrease in number of individuals is hard to attribute to any particular species, although this year the total number of Dark-eyed Juncos dropped by nearly 500 birds. Like the other two counts, thrushes were down, with American Robin dropping from 236 to 16 and Varied Thrush falling from 9 to a single bird.

Highlights of the Mt. Hamilton count included several extremely rare birds for the Diablo Range in winter, including two Tree Swallows, a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and two Black-throated Gray Warblers. Raptors included an impressive four Bald Eagles in Isabel Valley, the first Northern Harriers for Isabel Ranch on the count, and the fourth count record of Red-shouldered Hawk, a bird that is currently expanding its breeding distribution in the Diablo Range. Record high counts for Pied-billed Grebe, Turkey Vulture, and Wrentit were also obtained. No real embarrassing misses happened on the count, but several waterbird species found last year were not noted this year. Also, like on the San Jose count, Pine Siskin went undetected.

Organizing these counts takes a lot of work, including distributing party packets, obtaining permits, ensuring that each section has adequate coverage, planning the count dinners, adding up the many numbers on all the tally sheets, and other tedious tasks. We owe a large thank you to Jayne DiCandio, who bravely took on many of these chores for both the San Jose and Palo Alto counts this year. We look forward to seeing you all for the 97th count next year!

See table on following pages—a summary of all birds tallied on the Palo Alto, San Jose, and Mt. Hamilton Christmas Bird Counts in 1995. Note "CW" denotes birds seen during "Count Week" but not on count day.

Summary of Santa Clara County CBC's

Birds	San Jose			Mt Hamilton		
	Palo Alto 12/18	Jose 12/17		Palo Alto 12/18	Jose 12/17	Hamilton 12/20
Common Loon	1	1				0
Pied-billed Grebe	111	138				41
Horned Grebe	95	24				0
Eared Grebe	11	2,055				0
Western Grebe	9	92				0
Clark's Grebe	9	6				0
<i>Aechmophorus spp.</i>	7	16				0
American White Pelican	194	24				0
Brown Pelican	8	6				0
Double-crested Cormorant	283	332				0
American Bittern	1	3				0
Great Blue Heron	28	46				7
Great Egret	61	108				1
Snowy Egret	104	104				1
Cattle Egret	0	3				0
egret spp.	0	0				1
Green Heron	5	7				1
Black-crowned Night Heron	51	104				0
Gr. White-fronted Goose	0	2				0
Canada Goose	86	557				0
Wood Duck	9	56				4
Green-winged Teal	412	189				0
(Eurasian)	1	0				0
Mallard	815	1,727				37
Northern Pintail	1,243	32				2
Blue-winged Teal	5	0				0
Cinnamon Teal	33	17				0
Northern Shoveler	8,371	3,444				3
Gadwall	3,079	187				54
Eurasian Wigeon	5	0				0
American Wigeon	3,694	96				53
Canvasback	996	173				0
Redhead	128	0				0
Ring-necked Duck	206	132				91
Tufted Duck	CW	0				0
Greater Scaup	116	54				0
Lesser Scaup	52	1				0
scaup spp.	2,286	63				0
Surf Scoter	5	0				0
Common Goldeneye	40	28				0
Barrow's Goldeneye	4	0				0
Bufflehead	226	118				38
Hooded Merganser	10	8				0
Common Merganser	5	19				0
Red-breasted Merganser	20	109				0
Ruddy Duck	6,875	1,066				40
duck spp.	225	374				0
Turkey Vulture	23	145				9
Osprey	0	1				0
White-tailed Kite	15	13				0
Bald Eagle	0	4				4
Northern Harrier	13	33				2
Sharp-shinned Hawk	9	19				6
Cooper's Hawk	16	11				5

Birds	San Jose			Mt Hamilton		
	Palo Alto 12/18	Jose 12/17		Palo Alto 12/18	Jose 12/17	Hamilton 12/20
Accipiter spp.	1	5				0
Red-shouldered Hawk	11	13				2
Red-tailed Hawk	40	177				25
Ferruginous Hawk	0	2				2
<i>Buteo spp.</i>	0	7				0
Golden Eagle	0	11				11
American Kestrel	32	110				4
Merlin	4	6				1
Peregrine Falcon	4	1				0
Prairie Falcon	0	3				2
Ring-necked Pheasant	9	12				0
California Quail	239	265				408
Clapper Rail	9	2				0
Virginia Rail	9	25				0
Sora	6	24				0
Common Moorhen	5	25				0
American Coot	7,163	3,862				795
Black-bellied Plover	1,765	25				0
Snowy Plover	2	0				0
Semipalmated Plover	483	0				0
Killdeer	108	185				7
Black-necked Stilt	2,131	796				0
American Avocet	2,184	1,283				0
Greater Yellowlegs	32	63				10
Lesser Yellowlegs	1	3				1
Willet	1,731	112				0
Spotted Sandpiper	1	4				0
Long-billed Curlew	104	118				0
Marbled Godwit	5,392	56				0
Red Knot	217	0				0
Sanderling	9	2				0
Western Sandpiper	2,852	236				0
Least Sandpiper	1,643	240				0
Dunlin	3,655	81				0
<i>Calidrid spp.</i>	3,737	964				0
Ruff	0	1				0
Short-billed Dowitcher	62	0				0
Long-billed Dowitcher	62	2				0
dowitcher spp.	925	382				0
Common Snipe	0	11				0
Red Phalarope	8	0				0
phalarope spp.	0	1				0
Bonaparte's Gull	271	606				0
Heermann's Gull	1	0				0
Mew Gull	2	253				0
Ring-billed Gull	333	652				0
California Gull	335	1,379				0
Herring Gull	40	920				0
Thayer's Gull	1	11				0
Lesser Black-backed Gull	0	1				0
Western Gull	118	47				0
Glaucous-winged Gull	88	31				0
gull spp.	1,498	18,284				0

Summary of Santa Clara County CBC's

Birds	San		Mt
	Palo Alto 12/18	Jose 12/17	Hamilton 12/20
Forster's Tern	75	16	0
Black Skimmer	2	0	0
Rock Dove	1,627	2,589	0
Band-tailed Pigeon	20	3	78
Mourning Dove	1,342	1,039	20
Greater Roadrunner	0	0	1
Barn Owl	1	2	0
Western Screech-Owl	7	7	2
Great Horned Owl	7	11	5
Northern Pygmy-Owl	1	0	1
Burrowing Owl	6	14	0
Northern Saw-whet Owl	1	0	0
White-throated Swift	3	43	0
Anna's Hummingbird	163	504	2
Belted Kingfisher	9	29	9
Lewis' Woodpecker	0	0	9
Acorn Woodpecker	92	60	255
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	0	2	0
Red-breasted Sapsucker	2	14	7
Nuttall's Woodpecker	64	92	26
Downy Woodpecker	10	11	1
Hairy Woodpecker	6	1	12
Northern (Red-sh) Flicker	123	300	90
(Yellow-shafted)	CW	1	0
(Yel-sh x Red-sh)	0	2	0
Black Phoebe	94	181	29
Say's Phoebe	5	23	6
Horned Lark	7	180	0
Tree Swallow	0	15	2
Steller's Jay	180	131	37
Scrub Jay	403	526	419
Yellow-billed Magpie	0	204	134
American Crow	39	370	15
Common Raven	20	14	36
Chestnut-backed Chickadee	352	149	3
Plain Titmouse	99	106	241
Bushtit	714	948	60
White-breasted Nuthatch	25	57	84
Pygmy Nuthatch	4	0	0
Brown Creeper	11	1	1
Rock Wren	0	19	3
Canyon Wren	0	1	3
Bewick's Wren	72	51	40
House Wren	0	2	1
Marsh Wren	30	111	1
Golden-crowned Kinglet	2	17	8
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	132	220	102
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	0	0	1
Western Bluebird	44	123	152
Hermit Thrush	40	72	7
American Robin	775	466	16
Varied Thrush	15	1	1
Wrentit	91	20	77
Northern Mockingbird	52	199	0

Birds	San		Mt
	Palo Alto 12/18	Jose 12/17	Hamilton 12/20
California Thrasher	21	5	12
American Pipit	121	202	0
Cedar Waxwing	146	200	0
Phainopepla	0	1	2
Loggerhead Shrike	11	63	3
European Starling	1,177	2,661	130
Hutton's Vireo	9	5	0
Orange-crowned Warbler	3	13	0
Nashville Warbler	0	2	0
Yellow-rumped Warbler	555	750	9
(Myrtle)	2	13	1
(Audubon's)	114	346	10
Black-throated Gray Warbler	0	0	2
Townsend's Warbler	18	9	1
Palm Warbler	0	1	0
Common Yellowthroat	22	27	0
Rufous-sided Towhee	95	66	91
California Towhee	227	333	100
Rufous-crowned Sparrow	0	15	1
Lark Sparrow	0	23	58
Sage Sparrow	0	0	11
Savannah Sparrow	129	118	29
Fox Sparrow	10	24	112
Song Sparrow	119	498	4
Lincoln's Sparrow	13	107	8
Swamp Sparrow	0	1	0
White-throated Sparrow	1	3	0
Golden-crowned Sparrow	914	1,396	278
White-crowned Sparrow	832	2,496	287
sparrow spp.	0	157	0
Dark-eyed Junco	352	391	0
(Oregon)	0	0	660
(Slate-colored)	0	0	2
Chestnut-collared Longspur	0	2	0
Red-winged Blackbird	697	2,573	78
Tricolored Blackbird	305	79	1
Western Meadowlark	250	702	88
Brewer's Blackbird	1,662	1,671	126
Brown-headed Cowbird	8	42	1
blackbird spp.	220	644	10
Purple Finch	5	1	9
House Finch	579	3,143	56
Pine Siskin	8	0	0
Lesser Goldfinch	105	355	93
Lawrence's Goldfinch	0	0	43
American Goldfinch	28	417	1
goldfinch spp.	0	22	6
House Sparrow	69	237	50
TOTAL individuals	82,918	71,807	6,038
TOTAL species	159	167	102
Number of Observers	63	95	19

Santa Clara Valley
Audubon Society
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Compiler's Perspective

by Ann Verdi

San Jose CBC counters who traversed the Diablo Foothills came upon some special wildlife treats—a badger at the summit of Sierra Road and a possible mountain lion sighting at Cherry Flat, as a frightened deer hurriedly swam across the reservoir while a dark feline shape slunk away in the underbrush. We are fortunate to have these open spaces so near at hand as well as such fine county parks as Ed Levin and Alum Rock; birding and counting in these areas is surely a pleasure.

Then there is the flip side—the urban flatlands. Over the years it has become increasingly frustrating and disappointing for counters to come upon areas which were once viable habitats now filled in with industrial parks, shopping centers or housing developments. The encroachment of urban sprawl is becoming an unfortunate but important factor in our count circle reflecting not only what is happening to the birds, but also to the environment. Counters in urban sectors visit

not only urban parks, but also shopping centers recording the scavenging gulls, starlings, and Rock Doves as representative avian species in the ever-expanding urban environment. Because of this trend, we especially treasure such havens as Overfelt Gardens, the Carmelite Monastery, and the riparian corridors as the need to preserve and protect these special places becomes ever more apparent. Not surprisingly, many of the rarer passerines on the count have been found in these pocket oases. As urban development continues to grow, so does our need to continue monitoring the bird life in the urban sector, and in so doing we contribute to the bigger picture which is at the heart of the Christmas Bird Count.

Many thanks to all who participated in this year's successful count, including the section leaders who pulled it all together. A very special "thank you" to our tireless Chapter Manager Jayne DiCandio, whose assistance and support were invaluable. We hope to see all of you on the 1996 San Jose CBC.

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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