



THE HOOT OWL

SAN JOAQUIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

JAN. FEB. 1992

VOL 30 #1

TUES. JAN. 14. BURROWING OWL UPDATE: Join us as Dave DeSante gives us a report on the Burrowing Owl Census. Dave will also talk on the future of the bird in California & how we can help its survival. San Joaquin & other Audubon Societies participated in, and helped to fund this first census. 7:30 Central United Methodist across from U.O.P. in Stockton. Good parking, bring a guest.

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**SAT. JAN. 11. Cosumnes Census:** Call John Schick 464-7083

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SAT. JAN. 18 Trip to Grey Lodge. Lots of geese, ducks & waterfowl. This refuge is the crown jewel of the State Refuge system. Dave Wagner will lead, overnight optional. Meet at Burns Tower at 7am. Please call Dave for details at 943-6997.

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**SAT. JAN. 25 Trip to Merced Duck Club.** An excellent trip to tour the largest historic marsh in California. A day trip, bring a bag lunch to consume in the "Banquet Hall". Call John Schick 464-7083 or Pete Ottesen, 6 to 8am at 462-5237 for details.

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SAT. FEB. 8 Cosumnes Census. Call John Schick at 464-7083.

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**TUE. FEB. 11. PACIFIC FLYWAY PROJECT.** Dave Shuford will talk on the Point Reyes Bird Observatory's Shorebird censusing project. This is an attempt to inventory all species of shorebirds along the Pacific coast from Alaska to Baja. Crucial to the project is the identification and conservation of wetland habitat, especially in our own Delta areas. This is another project our local chapter has actively aided financially. 7:30 at Central United Methodist across from U.O.P.

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SAT. FEB 22. PANOCHÉ VALLEY FIELD TRIP. David Yee and Terry Ronneberg will lead to observe winter raptors and possible Mountain Plover. All day trip so bring lunch and layers of clothes. Meet at Burns Tower at 6:30 am. For details call David at 951-1526 or Terry at 835-7847.

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**SAT. MAR. 7. WHITE SLOUGH.** George Welch will lead us to the Sora, American Bittern, Marsh Wren, Virginia Rail, all possible here near Stockton and Lodi. Meet at 7:30am at the Park & Ride lot at Hwy 12 & Thornton Rd. One-half day trip....Call George for details 477-9618.

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13th Klamath Basin Bald Eagle Conference.....February 14-16.
Western Regional Audubon Conference. Asilomar.....April 11-14.
National Audubon Society National Convention.....June 13-19.

BIRDS

All sightings by David Yee unless noted. LL is Lodi Lake, SSP, our favorite local body of water, the Stockton sewage ponds. Oct. 23 David & Sue Yee sighted an Am. Redstart, a Hooded Warbler, a Scarlet Tanager, 2 Indigo Buntings and a Little Bunting at San Diego. Sue sighted a Clay-colored Sparrow by herself. 10-24 a Peregrine Falcon w. of Stockton, 10-25 a Bufflehead at SSP, 1st of Fall. 10-27 a Glaucous-w. Gull at Bouldin Island. 10-28 a Red-br. Merganser at Bouldin a Ross' Goose at SSP and 2 Mew Gulls at SSP the first of Fall. 11-1 a W. Tanager at LL (late), 11-2 a Thayer's Gull at Harney Lane Landfill with Waldo Holt and 2 Pacific Loon at Camanche Res with Waldo for 2nd County Record. also an Osprey at Camanche Res. 11-5 a Franklin's Gull at SSP. 11-8 a Wh-th Sparrow at LL (First of the Fall) 11-9 3 Swainson's Hawk at Bouldin Island and 5 Rough-legged Hawks (first of Fall). 11-12 a Franklin's Gull at SSP by Waldo H. 11-16 a Costa's Hummer at Corral Hollow Rd. w/Waldo. 11-20 a Winter Wren at LL 11-21 a Townsend's Warbler at Louis Park (repeat winterer?) 11-23 a Chipping Sparrow and 2 Bl-gr. Gnatcatchers at Acampo Road w/Waldo. 12-11 a Hutton's Vireo at LL as well as 2 Purple finch for a first of Fall-Winter record. 11-17 a "Bewick's Swan, a Merlin and a Short-eared Owl all at Rindge Tract with Waldo and Lorelee McGoy. Between Dec 27 and Jan 2 the following were observed by Steve & Linda Stocking: Pearl-eyed Thrasher, Mangrove Cuckoo, Lesser Antillean Bullfinch, Brown Booby, Northern Waterthrush, Green Throated Carib, Little Blue Heron, Black-faced Grassquit, Red-billed Tropicbird, Magnificent Frigatebird etc. all on St. John's the Virgin Islands where a Christmas Bird Count was conducted on Jan. 2

SPOTTED OWL PROTECTION

The U.S. Court of Appeals ruled that a ban on new timber sales will continue at least until the Forest Service forms a plan to maintain the owl as a "viable" species. The court has ordered the Forest Service to develop a forest management plan and the study of effects of logging upon the owl by Mar. '92. The court also ruled that Portland Audubon could sue the BLM to force a new study of the adverse effects of logging on the owl.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS (CBC)CONTINUED SUCCESS!!!

The 22nd running of the Stockton CBC on Dec. 14 was again a major success in terms of identifying species of birds and their numbers. A most impressive 141 species were tallied during a winter that saw very little in the way of traditional invasionary birds present in the lowlands (Golden-crowned Kinglet, Brown Creeper, Pine Siskin, Red-br. Nuthatch were all missed). This is the 4th straight year that the count has surpassed the 140 mark, always a plateau of excellence for any inland count. As with the past 3 years, the reason for this excellence is the 60 plus participants (an all time high) who so willingly gave their all. Given that the weather was cold and foggy adds to the applause given to all who participated. Highlights included a Blue Grosbeak on Bouldin I. and a Red-br. Merganser at the Lodi Sewer Ponds (firsts for the count). Other notables were Hooded Merganser, Ferruginous and Swainson's Hawks, Thayer's Gull, Rock Wren, Vesper and Swamp Sparrows. David Yee

DAVID YEE PROFILED

Recently the Stockton Record profiled our past president and Stockton Bird Count organizer. Maybe you missed it, so to paraphrase: David is a cosmetic chemist who formulates and oversees production of hair and skin-care products for Lois Yee Cosmetics, a family run, Stockton-based company. Yee, an avid bird-watcher, also runs a mail-order catalog that caters to bird-watchers with outdoor related merchandise.

David is a native Stocktonian. His father was born in China and came to Stockton as a teenager. His mother is a second-generation Japanese who was born near Fresno. His wife, and fellow birder is Sue Lynn.

He graduated from Lodi High in 1972 and U.C. Santa Cruz in 1976 with a degree in biology with an emphasis in chemistry.

David is former President and still an active member of our Chapter. He enjoys birdwatching, traveling and spending time with his wife. Church activities and birding trips to Monterey and Bolinas are favorite activities.

David holds the San Joaquin County record for sighting the greatest variety of bird species. He was the second person in California to see an Eastern Wood Pewee. David is also a contributing editor for "American Birds", the field journal for the National Audubon Society. In 1980 he was the top fund-raiser for the Bird-A-Thon, a national fund raising drive. More recently he has organized the area wide survey for the Burrowing Owl. We congratulate David!

FARM BUREAU NOW OPPOSES GOLF COURSE

We are happy to see that the San Joaquin County Farm Bureau is now challenging the County in allowing a golf course on farmland receiving a Williamson Act tax break.

At first the Bureau was not sure of its stand but now seems to have taken a strong stand against both the private Brovelli Woods golf course and home development and the newer A.G. Spanos driving range and golf course. Both of these projects are asking for the tax breaks given by the Williamson Act to land which is to remain in agricultural production!

The difference between the projects is that the Spanos gold course would be open to the public.

You can drive out 8 Mile Road west of I-5 and see where construction has already started on this NOT YET APPROVED project?

YOLO BASIN WILDLIFE AREA

The Yolo Basin Foundation is a non-profit group working to promote the wise management of, and public access to wetlands and other natural habitats in the Yolo Basin, the area west of Sacramento crossed by Hiway 80 and I-5.

This area is prime habitat for waterfowl.. They plan to create a wildlife area made up of thousands of acres in a mosaic of publicly and privately managed lands.

Following two years of effort the Yolo Bypass' Wildlife Area has been created. On Dec. 31 the State of California Wildlife Conservation Board completed the acquisition of this area, approximately 3,100 acres of land east of Davis and south of I-80 referred to as the Putah Sinks. This area is a vital link in the Pacific Flyway. P.G.& E. sold the property for \$4.65 million to make this area possible.

Local activists, including members of the Putah Creek Council, Yolo Audubon, and the Sierra Club conceived the concept for restoration of the Putah Creek Sinks. A formal dedication ceremony is being planned for February.

The Yolo Basin Foundation has planned a series of field trips to introduce the public to wetlands. These include West Davis Ponds 2-15, Copta Slough 3-28, North Stone Lakes 4-25, and Lighthouse Marina 5-25. For more information or to make a reservation call 916 756-7248.



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DELTA COLLEGE COURSES

As a result of cutbacks in State funding Delta College will not be offering classes in the areas of "Natural History" which are of interest to many Audubon members. Natural History of Central California and Field Botany will, for the first time in 15 years, not be offered again until this situation changes.

You may remember that Verna Johnston, who started this program, was not replaced when she retired. 3 or 4 other instructors in biological sciences have not been replaced during the last few years. Steve Stocking has recently been teaching these classes, but will not be able to continue when his teaching assignment changes as a result of another retirement. (again no replacement) When interviewed by your editor, Mr. Stocking stated that it was a shame that the once strong program in the areas of biological sciences is being greatly reduced and weakened.



GE: BRINGS GOOD THINGS?

If you remember, Stroh Brewery backed out as a sponsor for the Audubon Television Specials as a result of the controversy over the film "Rage Over Trees" which depicted the destruction of our last ancient forests. We hope that your consumption of Strohs beer is greatly reduced.

Audubon has now lost its million dollar contract with GE as a result of the Audubon Special, "The New Range Wars" which depicted the devastation of our public lands in the West by overgrazing. This displeased the National Cattlemen's Association although the show portrayed the ranchers' perspective as well as Audubons.

Here's where to write: Mr. Jack Welch, Chairman of the Board, GE, 3135 Easton Turnpike, Fairfield CT 06431.

SAVING THE WELANDS: STOCKTON AUDUBON PRIORITY

Have you been on a Stockton Audubon Christmas Birdcount or have you recently driven out Eight Mile Road or across the Delta on Highway 12 or Highway 4? If you have you couldn't help but notice the magnificent flocks of swans and other water birds which depend upon these wetlands for their wintering habitat. But you probably have also seen that even the wetlands of the Delta are not protected from development. Expansions of Discovery Bay, new subdivisions west of Stockton, and the proposed golfcourse being built (before permits!) on Eight Mile Road all are "in the works".

But the battle for the nation's wetlands is heating up. Powerful interests (guess who) are attacking Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, hoping to weaken its already limited ability to protect wetlands. Legislation (HR 1330) has been introduced in Congress that purports to protect wetlands, but actually deregulates "low value" wetlands, eliminates EPA's ability to veto wetlands development permits and requires compensation for wetlands that are to be protected.

It is not just "environmentalists" who are against these changes. Ducks Unlimited has requested that these proposed changes in national policy be abandoned. Also officials of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in San Francisco said that their field tests of the proposed rules showed them to be "burdensome and unnecessarily laborious. They opposed the changes which would eliminate areas which now support wintering ducks and endangered species.

ACTION; Write to President Bush (Washington DC 20500) and your legislators (Congressmen, Washington DC 20515) asking them to oppose weakening of wetlands protection and to support a sound system of wetland identification.



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473-7073

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