



THE HOOT OWL

San Joaquin Audubon Society

JULY-AUGUST 1995 VOL. 33 #4

Saturday, July 22 Lodi Lake Field Trip. We will be looking for nesters and early migrants at this favorite locale. Meet Waldo Holt at the end of Laurel St. off Turner Rd at 7:30am. 462-4438 is his number.

Wednesday, July 26 White Slough Field Trip: An evening on the edge of the Delta, yellowthroat, rails and more. Meet 6:30 at Burns Tower U.O.P. and 7:00 at the Wildlife area entrance. 462-7512 for Jim Rowoth, our leader.

Saturday, August 12 Cosumnes River Preserve. Monthly bird census. Call John Schick at 464-8304 for details.

Saturday, August 12, Big Trees Field Trip. It should be a good year for warblers and woodpeckers among the giant trees. Full day, bring lunch for the trip with Kasey Foley and Rich Peterson. Meet at Burn's Tower, U.O.P. at 7am. 473-3904.

Tues. August 15. San Joaquin Audubon Board Meeting. Details? Nancy Ballot 476-1926

Saturday August 19. Lake Winnemucca Field Trip. Spectacular day hike in a beautiful subalpine area. Clarks crows, maybe rosy finch, and lots of wild flowers. Will start at 10:00 at Carson Pass. Leave Stockton by 7am. For details call leader Steve Stocking at 465-2729.

Sat.-Sun. Aug 26-27 Monterey Bay Trip. Traditional highlight of the summer includes birding by land on Sat. and a boat trip on Monterey Bay on Sunday. Camping reserved. For more information call David Yee at 951-1526

Tuesday September 12. **General Meeting** Central United Methodist Church, across Pacific Avenue from U.O.P. Details in next newsletter.

LETTER FROM our new PRESIDENT

After a long rainy spring, Saturday May 20 dawned with sunny skies and a gentle breeze. Twenty members gathered for the annual Birdwalk-Brunch at Cosumnes Nature Preserve. Early arrivals enjoyed a birdwalk led by John Schick who guided those with boots through areas that have been under flood waters for much of the spring. It was refreshing to see the recovery of the heavily grazed lands now returning to the more natural status of wetlands. With the return of cattails and tules, there is the return of birds not seen at this site in recent times. For the first time, yellow-headed blackbirds are nesting here. Many common egrets including a rookery are making the preserve their home. Other birds of special note are white faced ibis, blue grosbeak, great blue heron, American bittern, black necked stilts, cinnamon teal, pied bill grebe with young, Canada geese, violet green swallow, tree swallows, house wrens, Townsend's warbler, American goldfinch, black headed phoebe, song sparrow, Swainson's hawk, red-tailed hawk, northern harrier, and many more.

If you have not visited the preserve recently, do spend an hour or six walking the grounds and visiting the nature center. Many persons have donated their time and energy to returning this site to its more natural state. Take the time to enjoy this wonderful area, an island of the natural California.

I would like to thank David Wagner for the leadership he has provided the chapter for the past four years. He has already offered to donate more time and effort in the coming years. I would also like to thank the many other members who have donated so much time and effort to help the conservation efforts of this chapter. Steve Stocking for producing the Hoot Owl, Waldo Holt for many hours as conservation chair, Nancy Greenwood as Hospitality chair, David Yee for field trips and programs, and other board members and members who so willingly support Audubon. (cont. on back pg.)

BIRD OBSERVATIONS May-June

5-27 Ca. thrasher, hairy woodpecker, wt. swift, rattlesnake, Mitchell Canyon Mt. Diablo by Jim R.
 5-29, bl.h. grosbeak, olive-s.i flycatcher, red-sh hawk and gr. heron on Calaveras River levee west of Grouse Run by Nancy B, Stacie L. & Cindy H. 6-3 a n. oriole at hummingbird feeder by Nancy B. On 6-3 a grhorned owl observed by Lamms-Maduros & Stockings at Smith Nevada. On 6-10 many-observed by S. Stocking observed wild turkey, western flycatcher, w.grebe & For. tern at Comanche Lake. June, 9 to 12, Jim R. observed the following along Carson/Truckee Rivers in Nev. blkh grosbeak Bullock orioles, h.wrens, spot sandpiper, yellow warblers, blch. hummer, Cass. finches. Then sage thrashers and in Sierra Valley: vesper sparrow, Yuba Pass bl-bk woodpecker, redbr. sapsucker, br. creeper (silver Band, Rt Leg) & Hammond's flycatcher. 6-17, S.Stocking observed mt quail at Indian Basin & v.g.swallows on the Kings River in Fresno Co. west tanager, br.creeper, fox sparrow, west. bluebird and many birds nesting at 5-7,000 ft. at Grant Grove.

SONORA PASS FIELD TRIP REPORT 6-7-95

On this unseasonably cold day the first stop for our group of 7 hardy birders was at Strawberry where we observed Nashville warbler and Cassin's finch. A walk on a logging road turned up a hairy woodpecker, wh-headed woodpeckers and a pair of Townsend's solitaires.

Another walk on a dirt road near the road to Beardsley Res. turned up golden-crowned kinglets and a hermit warbler. We followed a tiny brown bird downstream and identified it as a winter wren. But the best was yet to come, when we returned to our cars we observed a spotted owl about 20 feet up a tree!

At Sonora Pass the snow was still 10 feet deep so we turned around and went to Kennedy Meadows where we observed olive-sided flycatcher, western-wood peewee, warbling vireo, and a blk-headed grosbeak eating cantelope. Young Clark's nutcrackers were being fed by a parent. In a meadow near Hays Station a calliope hummingbird was seen.

Enroute home we saw many birds of the foothills including horned larks, tri-colored blackbirds and loggerhead shrikes. We decided to call it a day with the total species count at 61, a very successful trip.
by Richard Hieb

'COCKAMAMIE' HORROR STORIES & THE ESA
 The Senate may take up bills to "reform" the Endangered Species Act as soon as July or August. The House may act sooner as it has had completed a series of field "hearings" on the ESA.

Rep. Richard Pombo led the House Resource Committees Task Force on Endangered Species which held these very emotional, and not very factual taxpayer supported field "hearings". Taxpayers did not pay for all the costs, as meals were often at the expense of such as the Farm Bureau Federation, Oil and Gas Associations, Cattle Feeders Associations, Associations of Builders and other similar groups. While some true reform is needed, the process has proposed a butchering rather than needed reforms.

Many of the "cockamamie" stories told at these hearings were similar to the following which were told here in Northern California:

"the salamander caused the river to flood"

Because of concerns for an endangered salamander, the vegetation could not be cleared from the bottom of the Pajaro and Salinas Rivers. So the rivers broke out of their banks in January and did great damage to the surrounding farm lands.

the truth: the salamanders didn't do it

The salamander does not inhabit the river bottoms and survives on a tiny preserve near Aptos. The vegetation was allowed to grow up because the financially strapped counties did not want to spend the money to clear the river bottom.

"the fairy shrimp stopped the vineyard"

The San Joaquin Record reported that the existence of the fairy shrimp cost a local farmer \$40,000 in mitigation fees so that he could plant a vineyard.

the truth: the fairy shrimp was innocent

When I contacted the local Farm Bureau they stated that the problem was not the fairy shrimp. This was a situation where the farmer could not prove that the area had ever been farmed so loan restrictions came into play. In the process it was realized that there was a stream through the property which had to be protected to ensure its flow. When I contacted the County Planning Department I was told that the shrimp had not yet been an issue for any proposed project in the county.
by S. Stocking Ed.

THE FLICKERS AND THE SHUTTLE

We are sure that you have heard of the problem with the space shuttle Discovery caused by yellow shafted flickers. They made as many as 135 holes in the fo insulation for the external fuel tank!

This has delayed the shuttle launching. You, who have had to deal with local flickers may appreciate the problem. You may not have heard that there had been no previous problems because of great horned owls which had previously kept the flickers away.

PLEASE CALL!!!
your representatives and senators

OFFICERS FOR 1995-1996

President: Nancy Ballot
President Elect: Jim Rowth
Secretary: Jeanne Gaia
Treasurer: Dennis Smith
Board Members:
John Blades
Kasey Foley
Steve Stocking
Russ Stoddart

The other officers are appointed and will be announced later. This slate was voted on at the May meeting. Questions? Call Waldo Holt at 462-4438.

THE 1995 BIRD-A-THON SUCCESSFUL

Three teams, representing 9 birders, hit the field in early May for our Bird-A-Thon. The final tally is not in, but as far as species are concerned, we had a total of 156 identified. This is impressive bio-diversity as 171 species were reported by Monterey Peninsula Audubon in much more diverse habitat.

Anyone wishing to pledge after the fact may do so by calling 462-7512. We depend a great deal on the income derived from our Bird-A-Thon to further our efforts in conservation and education.

J. Rowth

VULTURE MIGRATION BEHAVIOR

As spring migration approached, two elderly vultures doubted they could make the trip north, so they decided to go by airplane. When they checked their baggage, the attendant noticed that they were carrying two dead armadillos. "Do you wish to check the armadillos through as "luggage?" he asked. "No thanks," replied the vultures, "They're carrion."

Ted Chandik

FIELD CLASS: SIERRA BUTTES

"Sierra Bird Banding" is being offered by Dave DeSante July 21-23, Contact Jim Steele at 916 862-1230 for information. \$135 for this S.F.State course.

LOOK FOR THEIR BANDS

Go to the foothills of the Sierra Nevada from Chico to Placerville, be on the look-out for banded orange-crowned warblers and Nashville warblers. Thousands have been banded and have dispersed into the higher elevations. If you can help in locating their nesting sites call Jim Steele at 916 862-1230.

ARCTIC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE & OIL?
163 species of migratory birds from five continents depend on this area for survival. 200 species of other animals including caribou and polar bear depend on the Refuge. This is the only section of America's 1,000 mile coast which is not already available for oil drilling. Forces in Congress are pressing to open the coastal plain for drilling.
Contact Senators Dianne Feinstein in Washington D.C. 20510

GALAPAGOS ISLANDS BIRDING TRIP

A group of wildlife and nature enthusiasts is being organized by Dr. Jack Kirkley, ornithologist of W. Montana College, to visit the Galapagos Islands and key natural areas in Ecuador from Dec. 12-Jan 3. Call him at 406 683-7321 for information.

NORTH AMERICAN MIGRANT COUNT

The DAY, the second Saturday in May, dawned ominously. This "warm weather" bird count had weather more like a Christmas Count! But my team of one plunged into it, determined to make a decent showing for our local birds. I started at 6:45 at Lodi Lake. On to White Slough, Lodi Sewage Ponds, Louis Park, Stockton Rural Cemetery, John Van Assen and called it a day at Stillman-McGee Park at 7:30pm. It was a very "happening day" for the birds as a whole. I ran into David Yee at White Slough. He had already done a count at Oak Grove Park earlier. Dave found phenomenal totals of migrants, e.g. 70 warbling vireos, 45 Townsends warblers, 60 western tanager etc. His total added greatly to my report. THANKS! The DAY ended with a total of 121 species and 4006 individuals for the county, not bad for just 2 counters. Some critical areas were not censused at all. With greater participation we could expect more complete coverage and higher numbers. Mark your calendars for next year, May 11, 1996! J. Rowth

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LETTER FROM our new PRESIDENT (cont)

This year we need the support of our members more than ever. The political rhetoric has not been so hostile to environmental issues for many years. As Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy stated at graduation Convocation at UOP., the time has arrived to restore rationality to public discourse. The recent attacks on many issues, including the Endangered Species Act, attest to the incredible lack of rationality and honesty in public discourse.

If we are going to pass this earth on to the next generation so they can also enjoy clean air and water, natural areas, biodiversity, we must plan not just for selfish economic gain but for prudent long term planning. Currently there are 115 threatened and endangered species in California. This is a fact. The causes are several, but all are primarily related to the rapid population increase with resulting urban development. Do we blindly continue this same destructive pathway? Are there alternative ways to accommodate human needs that will be more environmentally friendly? The challenge is here! Now! Will this state be a better human habitat without this diversity? Will future generations look at the 90's as a time of great progress or great destruction?

We invite you to bring your ideas, your friendship, and your friends to the chapter. Please join us in our activities. If you would like to know more about those little feathered creatures that inhabit this area, please join one of the scheduled walks. We all were beginning bird watchers at one time. We would be happy to share the time to help you learn more. If you know of a wonderful birding area that you would like to share with other members, please call me at 476-1926. Nancy Ballot Pres.

San Joaquin Audubon Society

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President: Nancy
Ballot 476-1926

President Elect: Jim
Rowth 462-7512

Secretary:

Jeanne Gaia

Treasurer:

Dennis Smith

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Nancy Greenwood

Programs:

David Yee

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