



THE HOOT OWL

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SAN JOAQUIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

JULY-AUG 1997 VOL. 35 #4

Saturday JULY. 12. Cosumnes Preserve Bird Census. Call John Schick for details at 464-8304. 5:00 at Willow Slough trailhead.

Fri-Sat. July 25-27. Yosemite-Mono Lake Area Field Trip Once again we will search for last year's highlights (Rosy Finch, Pinyon Jay, Sage Grouse) on this high elevation campout; we'll also try to add some new ones. Our visit will again include a canoe tour (\$15pp) among the tufas. Call Jim Rowoth (462-7512) for more details ASAP as he must make reservations and prepay for the canoe tour.

Sunday, Aug. 10 . Cosumnes Preserve Bird Census. Call John Schick for details at 464-8304. 5:00 at Willow Slough Trailhead.

Saturday, Aug. 16. Lodi Sewage Ponds/Flooded Fields Field Trip The shorebird migration will be in full swing. Join Kasey Foley & Rich Pedersen for a morning study. Meet at the park and ride at I-5 & Hwy 12 at 8am. (473-3904)

Saturday, Aug. 30. Lodi Lake Field Trip. Waldo Holt will lead a trip to the one spot that never fails when the migrants are on the move. We can expect good numbers of vireos, warblers and flycatchers. Meet at the end of Laurel St. on the east side of Lodi Lake at 7:00 am.

Saturday, Sept. 6. Woodbridge Road Field Trip. Ester Milnes will lead a trip to one of her favorite spots in the county. Hopefully, early Sandhill Cranes will be present, but waterbirds and neotropical migrants should abound. Meet at the park and ride at I-5 & Hwy 12 at 8:00 am. 368-9013

NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE WEEK

Events are being planned for next fall's Refuge Week. We will have activities planned so check your next "Hoot Owl" for details. We have many wonderful refuges in Central California which both protect wildlife and provide for recreation. October 12-18.

LODI CRANE FESTIVAL

MARK YOUR CALENDARS! 1ST ANNUAL Lodi Crane Festival is to be November 7-9. Field Trips, workshops, lectures, etc. Volunteers will be needed to make this a success. Please consider donating some time; contact any San Joaquin Audubon Board Member for more information.

AUDUBON NATIONAL CONVENTION FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY

July 6-12 1998. ESTES PARK CENTER/YMCA OF THE ROCKIES. programs for all ages field trips with expert leaders, leadership training, learning lab. phone 303-499-3622. Fax 303-499-0286 e-mail convention@ audubon.

BIRD SIGHTINGS FOR MAY/JUNE

All sightings pertain to San Joaquin County unless otherwise stated.

Single Greater Scaups at SSP May 9 (DGY) & 30 (WRH) were late spring migrants. The species is rare anytime in the county. Both a Willet at HSP May 7 (WRH, JB, SA, LB) and a Semipalmated Sandpiper at TSP May 3 (DGY, MFe) were one of few spring records. The Marbled Godwit at SSP May 19 (TRo) was an annual spring rarity, but the **Stilt Sandpiper** near LSP Apr. 19 (EM, NB, FO, SM) lacked spring precedence, indeed is very rare anywhere on the w. coast during spring.

Franklin's Gull literally invaded the SSP this spring: an amazing **five** May 13 (DGY, WRH); one May 16 (DGY, KLF, RP); one May 19 (TRo). For the first time since the 80's, a **Little Gull** graced the SSP May 9 (DGY, MFe). Up to **20 L.** Nighthawks at the w. end of Bird Rd. May 17 (JRo, MW) revealed how locally common they are in our portion of the Diablo Range. A Costa's Hummingbird at OGP May 10 (NK, SKS, CP) and a Calliope Hummingbird near Lodi May 5 (DGY) were both one of few for the CV floor. A Rufous Hummingbird at WS May 24 (FO, SM) was very late.

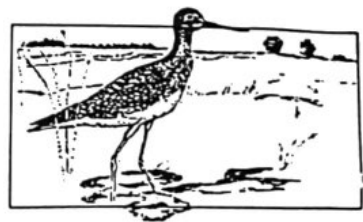
Among Empidonax Flycatchers, a Willow was at LL May 14 (TRo), single Hammond's were at LL Apr. 26 (JRo) & May 12 (CP), a Dusky was at KC May 10 (JRo et al.), and Grays were at LL Apr. 26 (JRo - two) and OGP Apr. 30 (EM). A Hutton's Vireo was at LL May 2 (DGY); this former breeder on the valley floor has now become a rare migrant. The county's first **Hooded Warbler** was a singing male at Caswell State Park June 18 (HMR); there were only one or two previous records for the CV. A Yellow-breasted Chat seen repeatedly at WS May 21+ (m.ob.) was observed carrying food to nestlings, and confirmed breeding within the county. The **Summer Tanager** along the Stanislaus R. near Caswell June 1-2 (JRo, MW) was only the county's 2nd. The county's only breeding Tricolored Blackbird colony this year was 300+ birds near Clements and Messick Rds (WRH).

Compiled by David Yee and Waldo Holt

Observers: Sylvia Ahn, Nancy Ballot, John Blades, Lynette Buckman, Marc Fenner, Kasey L. Foley, Waldo R. Holt, Neil Kerr, Ester Milnes, Suga Moriwaki, Frances Oliver, Rich Petersen, Cheri Pillsbury, Harold M. Reeve, Terry Ronneberg, Jim Rowoth, Steve K. Stocking, Margaret Williams, David G. Yee

Abbreviations: CV=Central Valley, HSP=Holly Sugar Ponds, LL=Lodi Lake, LSP=Lodi Sewage Ponds, OGP=Oak SSP=Stockton Sewage Ponds, TSP=Tracy Sewage Ponds, WS=White Slough, KC=Kiln Canyon

two



POWER LINE COLLISIONS

Collisions with power lines have caused death or injury to many cranes and other large birds. Power companies and wildlife agencies and organizations have been trying to find a solution.

Yellow balls, fiberglass hanging plates and spiral vibration dampers have all been shown to mark the lines and so cause the birds to change their flight path. Collisions were reduced by 40 to 60% but there was abrasion to the power lines. A new marker developed in Europe appears to be an improvement.

Efforts to reduce the collisions continue. (Endangered Species Bulletin, U.S. Fish & Wildlife)


SAVING MAGNIFICENT SEABIRDS

The National Marine Fisheries Service has issued new regulations to prevent the endangered short-tailed albatross and other seabirds from dying on long-line fishing hooks in Alaska. The estimate is that 3,000 to 4,000 Laysan and black-footed albatrosses are killed each year by the 120 swordfish and tuna boats based there. This "bycatch" is wasteful and preventable. Now the challenge will be to see that these regulations are implemented, enforced and imposed elsewhere. (EDF)

LOGGING VRS. NESTING

The bad news is that the Federal Govt. has exempted itself from the Migratory Bird Treaty Act which prohibits the killing of songbirds. The courts have ruled that the law does not apply to logging operations.

In the South-eastern National Forests it is estimated that 1.2 million young songbirds and eggs are destroyed each year by logging from April through June. The problem is not only in the rainforests!



NEST BOXES = WOOD DUCKS

The last time we took a walk from Lodi Lake up the Mokelumne through the "Wilderness Area", we were thrilled to see two families of wood ducks on Pigs Lake. We saw green heron and other wildlife as well but for most this opportunity to see the ducks was most impressive. Why are there so many when a few years ago they were hard to find?

For last twenty years or so people have been helping out these hole nesting ducks by providing holes! As riparian forests and their old cottonwood trees have disappeared to clearing and "flood control" their habitat has suffered. So statewide the wood duck population has been up each of the last five years. Locally Pete Chadwick has led the effort to maintain and monitor 130 wood duck nesting boxes. You can't just put up the boxes, they need care and cleaning. To help out call Pete (an Audubon member) at 727-3124

OTHER NESTING CAVITIES

Until recently, it was thought that the Tree Swallow had been extirpated as a breeding species in Southern California. This was due to a loss of viable nesting cavities as trees were removed for development and agriculture. A program to put up nest boxes around sewage ponds and a private ranch near the Santa Clara River has been very successful and breeding Tree Swallows have increased dramatically. (J.Wasserman)

Locally we have had Western Bluebirds nesting in cavities of dead oaks in Oak Grove Park. This began during the drought when a few trees died and were left standing. Prior to that no nesting had been reported in that vicinity. Nest boxes are being added at the park. (S. Stocking)

THREE

FROM THE PREZ.....BY JIM ROWOTH

It's hot while I write this, so I'll be brief. I am grateful for the support expressed to me as incoming president of YOUR local Audubon. I look forward to the challenges in the two years ahead as our efforts in defense of nature and the environment continue unabated. I encourage YOU to think about increasing YOUR level of involvement in our activities. We have a dynamite core group of activists in SJAS, but, quite frankly, some of us are getting tired! Don't wait to be invited; identify a need or some area where you feel you could help out...e.g., field trips, Christmas Counts, fund-raising, programs, conservation, identify yourself! (For example if you have a good idea for a field trip, or if you know of a destination we should check out, volunteer to lead a trip. You don't have to know every bird you see to be a successful trip leader; some of our most enjoyable trips have featured "consensus birding".) If you need help figuring out how you could be of use, contact one of your board members and do some brainstorming.

SAN JOAQUIN AUDUBON T-SHIRTS

Medium, large and extra-large 100% preshrunk cotton shirts are what you have been waiting for! The unique design of a Swainson's Hawk on its nest is by noted wildlife artist Keith Hansen. The shirts are \$11 each or 3 for \$30. Call 473-3904. Get yours now.

THE ORIGIN & EVOLUTION OF BIRDS

According to one reviewer this new book may be "the most controversial, most reviewed paleontological work of the decade." The author, Alan Feduccia, takes the position that birds are not derived from dinosaurs but rather from reptiles which lived in trees. You must go figure. (Yale U. Press 1996 for \$55) Reviewed in Science 276:1209-10. 5-23-97.

YOU COULD MAKE AN IMPACT

State Senator Make Thompson has introduced Senate Bill 2, which would go on the ballot in 1998. This new park bond measure would provide nearly \$500 million in funds for state and local parks, for the Wildlife Conservation Board, and for the Coastal Conservancy and other regional land conservancies. Also proposed for the 1998 ballot is Assembly Bill 1000, sponsored by Assemblyman Fred Keeley, which would provide bonds to protect California's water resources, including productive wetlands and riparian woodlands. California's legislators need to know how much you value our parks and natural resources.

They may not hear from us, but they will hear from others:

- (1) E-mail spreads information rapidly but it is easily ignored by legislators.
- (2) Form letters and cards are nearly worthless. Cards are nowhere near as good as a hand written letter.
- (3) Telephone calls are effective because the staff must take the time to deal with you and attempt to find an answer.
- (4) Try to develop personal relationships with your legislators. This may take spending some money to go to a fund raiser or helping out as a campaign volunteer. But isn't helping to make this a real, responsive democracy worth the cost of some theater tickets and a meal out with your family?

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