



THE HOOT OWL

SAN JOAQUIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

MAR-APL 1993

VOL 31 #2

TUE. MAR. 9. PROGRAM; MADAGASCAR. DON ROBERSON WILL AGAIN GRACE OUR HALL WITH HIS SPECIAL BRAND OF STORY-TELLING, WIT, AND HUMOR AS HE SHARES HIS SLIDES AND EXPERIENCES OF HIS RECENT TRIP TO MADAGASCAR AND OTHER INDIAN OCEAN ISLANDS. OF SPECIAL INTEREST WILL BE THE MANY ENDEMIC BIRDS AND MAMMALS HE WAS ABLE TO WONDERFULLY CAPTURE ON FILM. DON IS A WORLD RENOWNED BIRDER & AUTHOR. 7:30 at Central United Church at Pacific & Fulton in Stockton.

SAT. Mar. 13. Sunrise Ranch Field Trip. A special trip to this new preserve which is just north-east of the San Luis Refuge. The preserve lands have never been leveled and contain many ponds and vernal pools which may be harboring ducks and other water birds. Call Terry Ronneberg 835-7847 for meeting place and times.

Tue. Mar. 16 San Joaquin Audubon Board Meeting at Dave Wagners. 943-6997.

Sun. Mar. 21 Elkhorn Slough Field Trip. (Near Monterey) Shorebirds, loons, and much more. Call trip leader Margery Fletcher: 526-4256 for details.

Sat. April 10: Monthly bird census. Call John Schick for Information: 464-8304.

Sat April 17. Lodi Lake Nature Area Field Trip. Nancy Ballot will lead us on a trip especially for beginners. Join her at 8:00am at the end of Laurel St. Lodi.

Tue. April 13. ECOLOGY OF THE SAN JOAQUIN GRASSLANDS. GRASSLAND BIOLOGIST TIM POOLE WILL PRESENT A MOST FASCINATING PROGRAM ON THE VAST GRASSLANDS OF MERCED COUNTY. THESE GRASSLANDS HAVE RECEIVED MUCH ATTENTION LATELY AS ONE OF THE KEY AREAS IN THE WEST UTILIZED BY NUMEROUS SHOREBIRDS AND WATERFOWL. THIS IS IN OUR BACKDOOR SO DON'T MISS: 7:30 at Central United Church at Pacific & Fulton, Stockton.

Wed. Apl. 21. Kiln Canyon Field Trip. Lots and lots of hummingbirds of several species should highlight this trip. Waldo Holt at 462-4438 can inform.

SAN JOAQUIN AUDUBON SPRING BIRD-A-THON. SAT. & SUN April 24 and 25, This is the weekend of our Spring Bird-A-Thon. The event has proven to be a lot of fun for all participants. This is our local societies only fund raising event to support our local conservation and educational activities. Here is the time of year when the most species of birds can be seen on a single day. Participants need to sign up as early as possible to facilitate planning for the BIG DAY. Call David Yee at 951-1526 or 466-3337.



Sunday. May 2. MODESTO SPRING BIRD COUNT. Stanislaus Audubon has a "Spring Christmas Count" when even more birds are to be seen. We are invited to Join in. Call Harold Reeve 527-2281 so he may plan the team effort.

Sat. May 8. Another Cosumnes River Census. Call John Schick at 464-8304.

Sat. May 15. OUR SPRING PICNIC; DETAILS IN MAY/JUNE NEWSLETTER.



A few bird observations follow since only a few have been received in writing and I tend to forget details of most of the others. For instance, Jim V. saw a Clark's Grebe at the Cosumnes Preserve, but I forgot what day and other species seen. So Terry Ronneberg saw a Tufted Duck at the Cosumnes Preserve about Jan 23. and Kasey Foley and M.O. saw a Lesser Scaup at the Lodi Sewage Ponds also about Jan 24. On 2-12 Waldo was standing next to David Yee and was therefore able to see a Cassin's Finch in South Stockton. 2-13, Steve & Linda Stocking observed a mature Bald Eagle adj. a small farm pond on Highway 120 at Hiway 63 junction in Fresno Co. On 2-15 they observed 100's of Horned Lark near Coalinga in western Fresno Co. Meanwhile Waldo was standing next to David Again on Feb. 14 and so was able to see 2 female Barrow's Golden eye at the Lodi Sewer Ponds. 2-20 S. Stocking observed a Rough-legged Hawk on Highway 12 near Rio Vista. 40 Pine Siskin were observed as they were feeding on the Delta Campus 2-26 by S. Stocking and S.O. March 1, Arnold and Carol Whipple observed 2 Bald Eagle on the Orvis Ranch along Highway 4.

About 70 observers observed some, or most of 60 species on our field trip to foothill ponds and reservoirs. These were recorded by Nancy Greenwood. We saw large numbers of snipe at the new landfill as well as Cinnamon Teal and Marsh Wren, Dowitcher etc. Common Merganser, Am. Widgeon, T. Swan and Bufflehead were at the Hiway 12-88 Pond & we enjoyed watching Anna Hummingbird on the flowering Manzanita at Pardee. Had lunch at Pardee and on to Salt Springs. Tree Swallow and Ring Necked Duck were on the pond north of Valley Springs. On the way home some saw a Bald Eagle over Little John Creek and others spotted a Ferruginous Hawk. A good day, 2-6-93.

YOUR EDITOR IS AGAIN OFFERING A WEEKEND SEMINAR IN WILDFLOWERS OF KINGS CANYON IT WILL BE THE WEEKEND OF JUNE 13-14. COLLEGE CREDIT IS NOW AVAILABLE. FOR \$ AND MORE INFORMATION CALL HIM EVENINGS AT 465-2729.



FIELD TRIP REPORT

FORM

540 California Tax Form

You may make a contribution of \$1 or more

48 Alzheimer's Disease Fund	• 48	----
49 Senior Citizens Fund	• 49	----
50 ENDANGERED SPECIES	• 50	15
51 Child Abuse Prevention	• 51	----
52 Olympics Fund	• 52	----
53 Vietnam Veterans Fund	• 53	----

All "Line 50" contributions go into a special program that gets needed help to troubled wildlife species all over California - such as the peregrine falcon, the desert tortoise, the San Joaquin kit fox, the bald eagle and a host of other species that really need it. And if you itemize, the contribution is deductible next year on both your federal and state returns. (So you can help yourself out a little bit, too!)

use "Line 50", and do something that can make you actually feel good at tax time.

BIRD READINGS

WHY CATFISH FARMERS WANT TO THROTTLE THE CROW OF THE SEA: Richard Conniff, in *Smithsonian* July 1991, pg 44-50.

If you are raising catfish the cormorants are pests. Recently they have made an extraordinary recovery from the effects of pesticides and human persecutions. (You may have noticed that they have increased here in the Central Valley too.) Not much has been very successful in stopping them except redesign of the ponds and stretching twine across the ponds to stop takeoff and landing. The most simple solutions are often the most effective.

SUDDEN LIFE ON STILT ISLAND: Keith Bellechambers & Graham Carpenter *Natl. History*, April '92, pg 42-49.

For the first time in 100 years the saline Lake Torrens filled in South Australia. Banded Stilts took advantage and nested and nested on islands in colonies of 50,000 & 100,000. This protected them from some predators but not from silver gulls which have increased in recent years because of abundant garbage food sources.

TERNs FOR THE BETTER: Joanna Burger and Michael Gochfeld, *Natl. History*, June '92, pg 44-49.

Black Skimmers nest with Common Terns in Long Island New York colonies. The Skimmers benefit since the Terns are noisy sentinels which aggressively chase off various predators.

NEST INVADERS: P. Trail *Pacific Discovery*, Spring 1992, pg. 32-37.

Possibly a population explosion of this nest parasite is continuing in the west whereas their population has stabilized in the eastern United States. Species such as White-crowned Sparrows which nest in cities where they are already heavily preyed on by cats and rats are most at risk. In 1990, 50% of White-crowned Sparrow nests were parasitized. Human activities have put the thumb on the scales which may tip it for some species.

MORE BIRD READINGS

KINGLETS' REALM OF COLD: B. Heinrich, *Natl. History*, Feb. '93, pg. 4-9.

Golden-crowned Kinglets can survive the winters of the far north when the thermometer reads -20degrees. They can survive and conserve their heat alongside the Raven which is much larger. They feed on insects, have less insulation than larger birds and somehow survive. Their behavior, forming huddles to keep warm may be one of the reasons they survive. (Perhaps you have been up skiing and watched the tiny juncos and chickadees. Do they have the same type of behavior?)

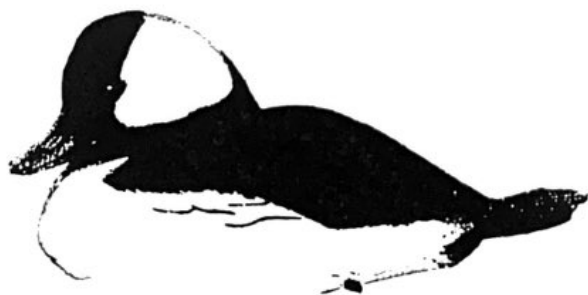
MORE ON BURROWING OWLS

A total of only 328 pairs of Burrowing Owls was found at a total of 264 breeding locations in 73 blocks during the 1991 census of Burrowing Owls in California.

Of these, 154 pairs were found at 122 locations that were within one km. of previously known breeding locations and 174 "new" pairs were found at 142 "new" locations. An analysis of these data suggests that the total breeding population of Burrowing Owls in the central California census area in 1991 may have been as low as 925 pairs, and that up to 69.4% of the 504 previously known breeding pairs and 65.6% of the 365 previously known breeding locations may have disappeared during the previous decade (1981-1990). The data also indicate that the disappearance rate for the breeding Burrowing Owls was greater in the Outer Coast and Bay Area than in the Central Valley, and that the disappearance rate in all three regions, but ESPECIALLY in the Central Valley, may have accelerated during the second half of the decade. (Anyone who has paid any attention to these birds in San Joaquin County knows that there are fewer.)

Support our Bird-A-Thon and support the Burrowing Owl survey!

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER



Buckeye Ranch Subdivision (Brovelli Woods)

This project seems to keep coming back, like the Peripheral Canal Catwail Corporation (Robertson Homes) is again proposing this ambitious and poorly conceived golf-course and housing development which threatens the unique biological and cultural resources of this area along the Mokelumne River northwest of Lodi.

"The rare mix of Oak-Buckeye Savannah, the last remnant of an interior live-oak riparian forest in the Central Valley, with the pluvial (after the ice age) Tracy Lakes, and the significant cultural resources on the site, preaches that this is not a place to build a golf course and homes." (J. Newbold)

There is no way to develop the site without serious sacrifice of these values. Solution? Possibly a local politician who has some power to bring the "players" together could arrange a land trade. The County owns potential park property along Dry Creek not too far from Buckeye/Brovelli. Possibly a three-way trade could be arranged to get the Buckeye/Brovelli property into State Hands since the County will have no money to develop this Park Land in the near future. And there is additional money which was set aside to purchase Buckeye/Brovelli by the State Bond Act. That money is already "earmarked". Or maybe you have a better idea. IN ANY CASE THE HEARING WILL BE SOON SO CONTACT YOUR SUPERVISOR AT THE COUNTY COURTHOUSE. 468-2350 (95202)

San Joaquin Audubon Society

Officers:

President: David Wagner

943-6997

President Elect:

Terry Ronneberg

Secretary:

Jean Gaia

Treasurer:

Jim Roweth 462-7512

Board Members:

Nancy Ballot

John Blades

Kasey Foley

Dennis Smith

Steve Stocking

Chairpeople:

Editor: S. Stocking

Programs: D. Yee

Field Trips: D. Yee

Conservation: Waldo Holt

Membership: Terry

Ronneberg

Publicity: Kasey Foley

Education: E. Johnson

Hospitality: N. Greenwood

>>Joint membership in the National Audubon Society includes a subscription to both Audubon magazine and The Hoot Owl. Make checks payable to National Audubon Society and send to Terry Ronneberg, 1035 Wood Thrush Ln. Tracy Ca. 95376. Send renewals directly to the National Audubon Society.

—\$35 individual—\$38 family—\$20 student—\$21 senior, \$23 senior family
—\$50 sustaining—\$250 contributing—\$1,500 life—\$5newsletter (non-member)

Name: _____ Address: _____
City: _____ State _____ Zip: _____

STOCKTON AUDUBON SOCIETY
236 West Knoles Way
Stockton, CA. 95204

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
Paid
Stockton, CA.
Permit No. 450