



# THE HOOT OWL

San JOAQUIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

MAY JUNE 1991

VOL 29 # 3

**SUN. MAY 5. LAVA BLUFFS, CALAVERAS BIG TREES STATE PARK.** Spend a nice day in a marvelous place, be prepared for a 3-4 mi. moderate hike. Last year leader Jim Rowoth saw Pileated Woodpecker, Spotted Owl, Evening Grosbeak, Mt. Kingsnake, and Ringneck Snake here. Meet near El Polo Loco in the Costco parking lot on Hammer Lane at 7:30am. 462-7512.

FRIDAY, MAY 10. OUR 50th ANNIVERSITY DINNER WILL BE CELEBRATED WITH A DINNER TO BE HELD AT THE REGENTS DINING HALL ON THE U.O.P. CAMPUS AT 6:30 pm on Friday, May 10, 1991. OUR GUEST SPEAKER WILL BE Ms. CAROL WHITESIDE. Ms. WHITESIDE IS THE FORMER MAYOR OF MODESTO WHO HAS RECENTLY BEEN APPOINTED TO A KEY POSITION IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF RESOURCES. The cost per person is \$15 and checks should be made payable to the San Joaquin Audubon Society. Reservation should be made through John Schick. Call 464-7083 or send checks to John Schick, 940 N. Argonaut St. Stockton Ca. 95203. BY MAY 2nd!

SAT. MAY 11. Cosumnes Monthly Census. J.Schick 4647083.

Tue. May 14. Board Meeting at home of Nancy Ballot. 7:30

SUN MAY 19. MT. ST. HELENA FIELD TRIP. Have a good day on this beautiful Napa County mountain. You will probably find Lazuli Buntings, Band-tailed Pigeons as well as side-blotched & sagebrush lizards. Meet leader James Rexroth at 7:30 at the Burns tower of U.O.P. 951-6260

SAT. JUNE 8. Cosumnes Monthly Census. J. Schick 464-7083

TUE. June 11. Board Meeting at home of John Blades. 7:30pm.

FRI. JUNE 14. Our annual Xerces Society/San Joaquin Audubon Society Summer Butterfly Count will be held starting at 8:15am. The count starts at Oak Grove Nature Center. For more details call Kathy Schick 4647083

SAT. JUNE 18. ELECTRA ROAD FIELD TRIP. Great early summer birding when the birds are nesting at this pleasant spot in the foothills. Cool and green beside the river. Bring a lunch to enjoy after a morning of birding. Meet at Burns Tower of U.O.P. at 7:30am. Call Waldo Holt at 462-4438.

## BURROWING OWLS THREATENED !

Remember when you could see these interesting owls in many locations within north Stockton? They were along March Lane, the Calaveras River levee, near I-5 and the sewage plants. San Joaquin Audubon is helping to fund an effort to find out what is happening .....see page 2



## BIRDS AND BEAVER

When the Forest Service studied an Idaho beaver ponds breeding bird populations and community organization. The beaver pond dominated by willows was compared with an adjacent nonwillow riparian habitat. Total bird density in the ponded habitat was three times that of the nonponded area. Bird biomass, bird species richness, and bird species diversity were 3.49, 3.25 and 1.67 times higher, respectively, in the beaver pond habitat.

## GREAT GRAY OWL ENHANCEMENT

The Forest Service has found that practices which enhance habitat for Great Gray Owls include providing artificial nest platforms, *protecting existing nest platforms and large diameter dead trees*, providing dense tree cover around or near the nest, and providing perches for recently fledged young. Stanislaus National Forest is constructing nesting structures by topping cedar and pine trees 20 to 55 feet above ground and carving out a nest bowl in the top. This in the Domingo Flat area of the forest. They don't mention how this all fits in with their extensive program of clear-cutting over most of the Great Gray Owl range!

## HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP ?

San Joaquin Audubon could really use a person to handle publicity by contacting local papers and radio stations etc to tell them of our many programs. Contact any officer if you could help with this.

We also need a chair for Senior Awareness Day. You would organize a few members to staff a booth to pass out Audubon Information to Srs. at Mickies Grove. Must be available during the day on May 23. Call John Schick. 464-7083.

## SIERRA NEVADA FIELD CAMPUS

If you are interested in credit field classes on the north fork of the Feather River this summer contact Jim Steele at the School of Science, S.F.State University. S.F. Ca. 94132. Classes include Birds of the Sierra Nevada, Bird Identification by Song, Sierran Bird Banding & Bird Song Recording and Analysis.

## BURROWING OWL CENSUS

The Institute for Bird Populations of Marin Co. has requested our assistance in conducting a census of Burrowing Owls. The Board of San Joaquin Audubon has decided to give \$500 to help this effort get started.

The Burrowing Owl is currently classified by the California Department of Fish and Game as a "species of special concern". Although some individuals and organizations have informally suggested that the species should be listed as "threatened" or "endangered", adequate data on local, regional and total populations of the owls in California are not currently available. The institute has proposed a three-year study beginning in the greater San Francisco Bay Area and in the central part of the Central Valley in 1991, and expanding into the rest of California in 1992 and 1993. A Geographic Information System (GIS) computer program will be used to map the area according to the favorability of habitat for the owls. Then, local volunteers will be needed to survey 5 square kilometer samples of each habitat type and to count all owls seen in each sample block, estimate the number of breeding pairs, and provide a map showing the distribution of the birds.

Volunteers will be needed to survey one or more 5km by 5km blocks during the early morning (sunrise to 10a.m.) or late afternoon (4pm to sunset) hours between May 1 and June 15. There will be a May 4th orientation for participants. Please contact our local co-ordinator David Yee for more information 9511526.

## ANOTHER CRUCIFIED OWL

An Olympic National Park ranger found a dead Northern Spotted Owl nailed to a sign in the park with a note warning "the match has yet to be struck". The young owl had the typewritten note under a fold of broken skin. The ranger believed the match phrase was a reference to the threat of forest fires in the park. Last year, a similarly crucified Great Horned Owl was found near the town of Alsea in Oregon's Coast Range.



Ancient Forests



## SPRING WILDFLOWER SEMINARS

In early summer Kings Canyon National Park provides a spectacular display of wildflowers. Kings Canyon Wildflowers will include a car wildflower tour the 30 miles from Grant Grove down 3,000 feet to Cedar Grove on Sat. and, after camping overnight at Cedar Grove, a tour of the Cedar Grove wildflower areas. (We will not ignore the birds.) This seminar will be June 15 and 16. The following weekend will be the 5th year of the popular Grant Grove weekend wildflower seminar. We will spend that weekend in the meadows, forests and Sequoia groves of this area, 60 miles east of Fresno. For more information on these or other seminars contact your leader; Steve Stocking at 465-2729.

Rural Cem by J.Rowoth. 3-29 a pr Redhead at SSP, 3-30 W.Kingbird, a R-br Nuthatch & a Wilson's Warbler at LL. 3-31, 3 N. Oriole, a Com Yellowthroat, 2 Or-crowned Warblers at Stillman Magee Park by J.Rowoth. April 1 a Osprey at White Slough & Franklin's Gull at SSP. 4-2 a Winter Wren at Stanislaus River near Ripon with Waldo H. April 3 a Nashville Warbler at LL with Waldo. 4-4 had 2 Caspian Tern at Woodbridge Rd. 4-5 10 Rufous Hummer, a Canyon Wren, a Warbling Vireo 2 MacG's Warblers and 2 Lawrence's Goldfish at Corral Hollow Road. 4-10 a Whimbrel over 8mi Rd by Jim Rowoth. 4-10 10 Cattle Egret at LSP and a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and 25 Tricolored Blackbirds at Oak Grove Park. 4-12, an Ash-th Flys. & 2 Wh-th Sparrow at LL. 4-13 a Common Poorwill, 2 Gr. Roadrunner, 25 Calliope Hummers, 5 Blk-th Gray Warbler at Corral Hollow Rd. and a Cassin's Kingbird at 580 & 132 by David & Waldo.

Observations by Primo birder David Yee, unless otherwise noted. SSP is Stockton Sewage Ponds, LSP is Lodi Sewage Ponds and LL is Lodi Lake.

# BIRDS

2-22, Db-cr. Cormorants 2,200! Empire Tract. 2-23, Harris Sparrow, Jahant Road. A Red-th Loon & a Merlin on Empire Tract 1-23 w/Waldo Holt. 2-24 19,000 Wh-fr Geese and 40 Aleutian Geese on Staten Is. 6 Chipping Sparrow on Acampo Rd, David & Sue Yee. 3-2, 4 R-w Swallow on Staten Is. & a Bendire's Thrasher on Jahant Rd. for its last spring date. pr Blue-w Teal, Staten Is & 3 Barn Swallow on Empire Tract on 3-8. 3-10 David and Waldo Holt & Terry Ronneburg ob 15 V-gr Swallow at Corral Hollow Rd. 3-10 a pr L. Shrike on Pearson Rd by Jim Rowoth. 3-10; Merlin, Fer.Hawks, Bald Eagles in Salt Springs Valley, Wh-th Swifts & Bald Eagles at Pardee by R.Chambers & S.Stocking. 3-11-3-12 a Franklin's Gull at SSP. 3-12 & 3-13 a Glaucous Gull was seen at SSP by Steve Glover. 3-16 a Gold Eagle at Knight's Ferry & Bald Eagles, Ca. Golden Violets, West. Bl. Birds, Tree Swallow, & Fer.Hawks in Salt Springs Valley by the Audubon Field Trippers. 3-17, 6 Wh-th Sparrow, a GrHr Owl, 2 Varied Thrush at Micke Grove Park by J.Rowoth & Jas.. Rexroth. 3-18 a mature Bald Eagle at Salt Springs Res. by Russ Chambers. 3-19 found 25 Purple Finch and 1 Pine Siskin at LL. 3-22 a Phainopepla at LL and a Whimbrel at SSP. 3-23 a Sage Thrasher at Corral Hollow Rd. (Yee and Holt). 3-25 a Sh-b Dowitcher at SSP also Yee & Holt. 3-28 a Eur Wigeon & 5 Lesser Golden-plover at Woodbridge Rd., a "Bullock's" Oriole at Stockton Rural Cemetary and a Townsend's Warb. at Louis Park. 3-28 a male Phainopepla at Sktn.

## FIELD TRIP REPORT

Eleven participants showed up for the 4-14 field trip to two local Mokelumne River Parks. At both places the tree swallows were out in force. At Sillman Magee Park, we were serenaded by both House & Bewick's Wrens. We got very good looks at perched & swooping Rough-winged Swallows. The biggest excitement was the male Calliope Hummer that perched for us--a treat for all. The resident Red-shouldered Hawk was still on its nest, and as we left, we observed a Cooper's Hawk soaring overhead.

At the Mokelumne River Park we passed great clumps of blue bush lupines.. As we approached the river, we heard the "kabrick!" of an Ash-throated Flycatcher. After finding him, we headed east toward the heron rookery. On the way, Ester Milnes espied both Northern and Hooded Orioles.

The rookery was completely occupied. It is amazing to see such large birds perched up in such tiny branches. Moving on, just below the dam we spotted a spotted Spotted sandpiper. Later, an American Bittern rose up from behind the hatchery fence and flew. Finally, as we relaxed in the parking lot, listing what we had seen, we startled a pair of Barn Owls.

## HELP SAVE THE ARCTIC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Write your U.S. representative and both of your senators, asking them to support legislation designating the coastal plain of the Arctic Refuge as wilderness (Sen. bill S.39 and House bill H.R.39) and to oppose efforts to open the Arctic Refuge to oil exploration. Also, ask them to support the auto efficiency bills introduced by Sen. Richard Bryan (S.279) and Rep. Barbara Boxer (H.R. 446). Write to Senator Alan Cranston and Senator John Seymour, U.S. Senate, Washington D.C. 20510 and Rep. John Doolittle, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington D.C. 20515.

It is a tremendous mistake to destroy this area for oil when other oil-saving strategies have not been pursued, e.g. raising automobile efficiency standards, developing alcohol fuels, building better mass transit, encouraging solar etc. Seven times as much oil could be gained by improving car/light truck MPG to 40/30. And 20 times as much oil is still in existing fields and accessible with current technology.

Other points to make include:

Oil drilling will result in a significant drop in the numbers of caribou, musk-oxen, grizzlies, polar bear, wolverines and snow geese that thrive in the area.

Drilling will seriously affect the numbers and migration route of the caribou and so the *Øwich* in people who have depended on the caribou for thousands of years will face cultural annihilation.

For more information contact: Arctic Campaign  
National Audubon Society  
801 Pennsylvania Ave. S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20003

## Stockton Audubon Society

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473-7073

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Joint membership in the National Audubon Society and the Stockton Audubon Society includes a subscription to both *Audubon* magazine and *The Hoot Owl*. Make checks payable to National Audubon Society and send to Stockton Audubon Society c/o John Schick, 940 N. Argonaut, Stockton, CA. 95203. Send renewals directly to the National Audubon Society.

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