




THE HOOT OWL

San Joaquin Audubon Society

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1994 VOL. 32 #6



WEDNESDAY ~~OCTOBER~~ 16. NOTE SPECIAL TIME AND PLACE FOR A VERY SPECIAL PROGRAM. Verna Johnston, local photographer and author will present a slide illustrated program on her new book; CALIFORNIA FORESTS AND WOODLANDS. 8pm in the Tillie Lewis Theatre at San Joaquin Delta College. Program to be followed by a book signing. Verna is a past President of San Joaquin Audubon, a retired Delta College instructor, her photography is excellent and her book is a rare treat. Co-sponsored by Delta, Sierra Club & Friends of the Library.

Friday Nov. 11. Acampo Road Natural Area Field Trip. This is always an interesting area which harbors a variety of bird life, including 1993's highlight, a Virginia Warbler. Who knows what will show up this winter? Call Kasey Foley for details (473-3904).

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

Sunday, Nov. 20. San Luis Wildlife Refuge Field Trip. Great place for Tule Elk and wintering waterfowl. We will also check out the Merced Refuge before we return. Rain or heavy fog cancels. Meet leader Steve Stocking at Burns Tower, U.O.P. at 8am. Bring lunch. (465-2729). Mostly birding from the car on tour routes.


Sunday, Nov. 27. Mickie Grove Park Field Trip. What better way to wind down your Thanksgiving holiday than a leisurely bird walk. Winter is one of the best times for this park: usual winter residents include Varied Thrush and White-throated Sparrow. Call leader Jim Rowoth (462-75212).

Saturday Dec. 3. Lodi Lake Park Field Trip. Led by "TBA". Birding in the Lodi Lake "wilderness" area is rewarding regardless of season. Come out for a morning of birds and fellowship. Meet leader to 8:00am along Laurel Avenue on the east side of the Lodi Lake Park off of Lodi Avenue in Lodi.

Saturday Dec. 10. Cosumnes River Preserve. (same as above, Nov. 12)

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS. CALLING ALL COUNTERS, BEGINNERS & VETS!
It will be Christmas Bird Count time again soon, so be sure to mark your calendars. The North Stockton/Delta CBC is set for Sunday, December 18; the Wallace/Bellota CBC will be Saturday, December 31. Come on out and be a part of this annual effort at collecting valuable data on winter bird populations. In recent years, we have exceeded 150 species, thanks largely to the exuberant participation of volunteers JUST LIKE YOU!
This is a great way to learn more about birds, whether you come along for all or just part of the day. Any and all skill levels are welcome.
Stockton Christmas Bird Count: Call Jim Rowoth 462-7512 to sign on.
Wallace-Bellota Bird Count: Call Waldo Holt 462-4438 to sign up.

TUE DEC 14. 7:30 CENTRAL UNITED CHURCH. COME PRACTICE BIRD I.D WITH DAVID YEE & WALDO HOLT. WHAT WAS THAT BIRD? ASK THE EXPERT



GREENING THE GOLF COURSE

"From their faultless fairways to their trim putting greens, golf courses evoke human perception of the ultimate in natural perfection. Over 100 courses entertain golfers in the Bay-Delta region. Maintaining these in the midst of the region's naturally golden landscape can mean heavy use of pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers and water. But golf course superintendents claim that a variety of new management methods may now be reducing the game's toll on the Bay-Delta environment."

The golf industry recently published guidelines for course managers on how to reduce chemical fertilizer use, dispose of clippings and other wastes, and protect and conserve water. They are researching new turf grasses that thrive on half as much water and require less pesticide. Some are using integrated pest management and monitoring fertilizer runoff. Others are leaving tree snags in place and protecting adjacent riparian habitat.

But many question the claims of net benefit to the environment since "you will always have some problems because in effect, you're creating an exotic landscape over many acres to achieve what people think of as a golf course." Some species such as Canada Geese and Coots are grazers and become pests on the turf where they leave their droppings. Other concerns involve loss of the increasingly scarce open space, streambed alteration, erosion, loss of riparian habitat and wetland fill.

(adapted from "Estuary": S.F. Estuary Project)



"Your generous donation," said the Dodo, "will help us in our quest to find a cure for extinction."

National Audubon Society
&
Turner Broadcasting
present

The World of Audubon 10th Anniversary Special

Join hosts Lauren Hutton and Richard Dean Anderson on this remarkable adventure, featuring Audubon's most powerful and controversial films of the last decade.

Premieres on TBS SuperStation
Sunday, November 20, 1994
at 9:00PM (EST)

Encores: Monday, November 21 at 12:00AM (EST)
Saturday, November 26 at 10:05AM (EST)
Monday, November 28 at 2:35AM (EST)

BE SURE TO WATCH!

COSUMNES RIVER PRESERVE ACTIVITIES

The Preserve Visitor Center will be open the first three weekends in December from 8-4. (located at 13501 Franklin Blvd. which is Thornton Road in San Joaquin County) Nature tours will be offered on Willow Slough Trail on Dec 3 and 10 starting at 10am, starts at Willow Slough trailhead on Franklin Blvd. Other activities are planned so call 916--684-2816 to confirm all dates & activities John Schick, a San Joaquin Audubon member, has been a regular preserve volunteer. On 9-20 he helped count waterbirds on the "regular, all invited, every other Tuesday, BLM sponsored" waterbird count. Over 7,500 ducks were seen including mostly pintail & mallards.

MT PLOVER/TRICOLORED BLACKBIRD COUNTERS NEEDED.

3,400 Mountain Plovers were counted in California in January 1994 and nearly 400,000 Tricolored Blackbirds last April. Several Audubon Chapters assisted Fish and Game, Fed Fish and Wildlife and B.L.M. with the census. Follow-up counts are being planned for the 1st half of 1995. If you are interested in participating in these important data gathering counts contact Bob Barnes, Birds in the Balance Coordinator, at Audubon's Western Regional Office in Sacramento, Phone 916-481-5332 or FAX: 916-481-6228.

CALIFORNIA DUCK DAYS 1994

This Wetland Festival, in the heart of the Pacific Flyway will be held again next Feb. There will be tours, workshops and exhibits on the weekend of Feb 17-20. \$15 donation. For a brochure to register, or more info, write to: California Duck Days, P.O.Box 5000-141, Davis Ca. 95617.

THE GOOD NEWS FIRST MONO LAKE TO BE RESTORED!

The State Water Resources Control Board ruled that because of "extensive environmental damage caused by diversions" the Lake must be permanently protected from further harm. This means returning the Lake to 6,392 feet and restoring damaged streams and waterfowl habitat in the Mono Basin.

DESERT PROTECTION ACT PASSES!

Two national parks and a park "preserve" as well as 69 new BLM wilderness areas have been created. The East Mojave, 1.4 million Park Serviced area was designated a preserve to allow hunting to continue. Joshua Tree & Death Valley have been changed to the increased protection of Natl Parks from their previous Natl Monuments. This is the largest wilderness bill since that for Alaska and it give additional protection to 7.6 million acres.

HOPE VALLEY; 25,000 ACRES NOW

Led by The Trust For Public Lands, this area just to the east of Carson Pass is now part of Toiyabe National Forest. It is now protected from the nearby sprawl of the South Lake Tahoe Area. Many other groups have helped the TPL in this effort.

AND NOW A LITTLE BAD NEWS

It appears that the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors will approve the "New Town" of Mountain House near the Altamont Pass. Many believe that this will just be another bedroom for the Bay Area. Apparently the developers have convinced the Supervisors to reduce the amount of Park land, a weak program of protection for the Swainson Hawk and not to require even a convenience store once the first 1,000 homes are built. There have been vague mentions, but no requirements that a business park will actually be built and provide on-site jobs.



MISCELLANEOUS BIRD SIGHTINGS:

8-11 A swarm of Bushtits & a Swainson's Hawk still in Stockton L. Stocking 8-13, White-faced Ibis Cosumnes Preserve by John & Kathy Schick.
9-3 Pileated Woodpecker. Bothe Napa State Park. Schicks. 9-5 P.S. Flycatcher, 2 W.Tanagers, MacG., GTG, Wilson, Or. Crown & Nashville Warblers. Jim Rowoth. 9-10 BG Gnatcatcher, BTG Warbler & Warbling Vireo all at Cosumnes Preserve by Schicks. 9-8 8 Swainson's roosting Swain Rd. S. Stocking. 9-10, Wrentit, W.Tanager, Solitary Vireo, Mac G, Willson, OC, BTG, Hermit & Yellow Warblers at Lodi Lake by JimR.
9-11 at Stockton Rural Cemetery Jim ob. GH Owl, BTG Warbler, W.Tanager, WT Swift & Swain. Hawk
9-17 at Caswell State Park JimR & Kasey Foley ob Wilson & MacG Warblers, WW Pewee, Wrentit, Ca Thrasher & Fox Sparrow. 9-19 at Lodi Lake by JimR. RC Kinglet, PS Flycatcher, WW Peewee, BTG, OC, Wilson's Yellow & MacG Warblers. Warb. Vireo. 8 Sandhill Cranes at Woodbridge Road. 10-3 at SRC by JimR. RB Sapsucker, YR Warblers, GC Sparrows, GH Owl RC Kinglets and a Cockatiel. 10-8, Bald Eagle, Rough-leg Hawk at Smith Nev. L&S Stocking. 10-11 JimR. ob. 22 Sandhill Cranes over Stockton.
10-15 thousands of Eared Grebes Mono Lake & 2 Mt. Bluebirds on the Monitor Pass on 10-16. S&L Stocking. 10-23 a R.S.Hawk eating a mouse on the Jelly Belly building in Fairfield. S.Stocking.
10-23 Carol & Arnold Whipple ob the following in the Sonoma area; West Bluebirds, GC. Kinglet, Varied Thrush, Am.Goldfinch, Yellow Warblers, and Pileated Woodpecker. 10-29 Pileated Woodpecker, and all the regulars at Calaveras South Grove by Neil Kerr and George Welch.
OAK ISLAND 7 TRACY SEWAGE PONDS REPORT
Thanks to Terry Ronneberg who arranged access to both of these areas. With a total of 47 species identified at Oak Island and 21 more at the sewage ponds, the trip was an unqualified success. Life birds for some and Terry ID'ed his 200th San Joaquin County Bird with a sighting of a Red Necked Phalarope at the sewage ponds. Other sightings included wood ducks, a common yellowthroat, thrasher, shrike and a hermit thrush. Two Burrowing Owls were at the ponds as were many shorebirds and ducks and an eared grebe. Dozens of barn swallows entertained the group of 8 with their aerodynamic approach to insect control.
Reported by Margaret Williams.

SHOULD WE PROTECT A FAIRY SHRIMP?

You may have heard the strident cries of those who say that doom will befall California's weak economy as a result of the recent listing of "the fairy shrimp" as an endangered species. You may not have heard that some worried landowners have already plowed up their vernal pools hoping to destroy their shrimp! An amazingly misinformed editorial in the Sacramento Bee warned of lost jobs and ruined investments in the millions of dollars. You may even have wondered how "environmentlists could favor giving more value to a shrimp than to jobs. It should be obvious that many, including the Bee editor, either are unaware of the facts or disregard them. First, the editorial speaks of a "fairy shrimp that is literally everywhere, so no one can set foot on a sidewalk or turn a spadefull of earth without disturbing them." This is nonsense, they live only in pools and puddles which hold water for weeks. The writer of this prose also does not seem to realize that there are some relatively more common species of fairy shrimp that are not covered by the recent government designation. They are the ones which are common in valley pools and puddles. But, there are also several species which are quite rare, thus THEIR designation as endangered species. Three of the four rare species are found in very unusual habitat types and may not even be present in San Joaquin County. The fourth species is more widespread, but nowhere common. So these endangered species are certainly not everywhere as claimed in the editorial.

But why protect any of them? For one thing, they are food for thousands of "puddleducks" which nest and feed in such pools in winter & early spring. For another, they and their close relatives the brine shrimp, hold much information in their DNA which may explain how they can survive long dry periods. Think of the many possible uses of this information, through the wonders of genetic engineering, in our land of drought. So what is behind the indignantly ignorant attacks on the Endangered Species Act? Could it be that those who don't want to fix the Act are taking advantage of the lack of adequate dissemination of accurate information to muddy the waters?

>>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 Dennis Smith 1253 S. Tuxedo Stockton, Ca. 95204. Send renewals directly to the National Audubon Society.

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