



BIRD OBSERVATIONS

9-23 At Pt Reyes R. Lawson ob. Chestnut Sided Warbler, Bl-Th Blue Warbler & Yellow Warbler.

9-29 Jim Rowoth ob Townsends, Wilson's & Virginia's Warblers, Br. Creeper & Hutton's Vireo at Fitzgerald Marine Lab. and in a Brussel sprout field south of

Half Moon Bay he spied both a Belding's Savannah Sparrow & Lapland Longspur. On 10-7 he ob. Least, Pectoral, and Stilt Sandpiper at Woodland Sugar Pond. On 10-8 he found West.

Tanager, Hutton's Vireo & W.B. Nuthatch at Stockton Rural Cem.

10-9 He saw a WW Pewee, W. Tanager, Hermit Thrush & Fox Sparrow at Lodi Lake and Com. Snipe, BB Plover & Caspian Tern at Lodi Sewage Pond.

10-15, 8 W.Bluebirds were at Oak Grove Regional Park Kothe-Stocking. 10-14 the Whipples ob. W. Sapsuckers and Osprey at Bull Run Lake; 10-14, Bl-Th Hummers etc at St Helena by the Stockings. On 10-22

Jim R & Margaret Williams ob Townsends & Palm Warblers & a Says Phoebe at Neary Lagoon in Sana Cruz and near the Light-house, 6 Marbled Murrelets.

The next day at Elkhorn Slough they observed a Red Knot.

10-28. Canvasback, many Ring-neck Ducks, Kingfisher, Sandhill Cranes, White Pelican and coyote & tule elk up close at San Luis Refuge by many ob.

On 10-28 Jim R, & Margaret W. ob the following at Pt Reyes Chestnut-collared, Lapland & Smith's Longspurs, Snow-bunting & Blackpoll Warbler.

CONTINUED; JUST BLAME IT ON THE 'E.S.A.' Recently a letter to the editor in the Sunday San Francisco Examiner **blamed endangered species protection for the fire deaths of the elderly and crippled who could not make firebreaks around their homes because those areas were endangered species habitat.**

THIS SIMPLY DID NOT HAPPEN. Firebreaks are a must in many areas and should be in others. The deaths in the Berkeley Hills fire were never blamed on endangered species, rather on shake roofs, narrow streets, flammable exotic trees and other human caused factors. The same for the Malibu Fire. The claim was made that houses were lost in a Riverside County fire because of firebreak restrictions to protect certain endangered speices. But is was determined, to settle insurance claims, that the flames and embers were being carried great distances by high winds and firebreak could have done nothing to stop them. Also, noone was killed.

A similar tale blamed the overflow of a local creek and the flooding of homes near I-5 on the protection of elderberry bushes. Although I asked the writer for his sources, nobody could give me the who, what, where, and when of this "story". The idea was that the stream could not be cleared because of the presence of elderberry bushes which might harbor an endangered beetle. From what I can see of this creek it has no elderberry bushes because it has been cleared so often. But I havn't trespassed to see all of the creek.

One particularly disturbing, apocryphal tale related that a **washout of the I-5 bridge near Coalinga.** Somehow the clearing of the arroyo, which for some reason had been done to protect an endangered species, had led to the flash flood which had washed out the support for the bridge and killed several people. At least this one did not make it into print, it was related to me by an employee of the Fresno County Department of Public Works.

Mr.Pombo himself was found to have had to back down from his story that the Kit Fox protection had impacted the value of his property. It turned out that it must have been somebody else's property!

The next thing that we can expect is that the collapse of the timber industry will be blamed on some obscure species of owl!

E.S.ACT SUCCESS

Mollie Beattie, director of the Fish & Wildlife Service, is considering a recommendation by federal biologists to remove the American peregrine falcon from the endangered species list.

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WHITE-CROWNED SPARROWS

Populations of white-crowned sparrows appear here during winter due to the arrival of birds from the Sierra and the northern migrants. Those from the north come south from Washington to winter here. Some have already arrived.



PROUD TO BE A LISTER by KARL DAVID
In a letter to "Living Bird", this *Birder* defines the following:

Chaser 'cha-sar n: one who drops any commitment, travels any distance, endangers any relationship, in the hopes of adding a new bird to the list (see under lister).

Lister 'lis-tar n : one who compulsively keeps lists of all birds seen or heard in a lifetime, year, state, backyard, etc., often resorting to chasing (see under chaser) to add another tick to the list.

THE GOLD RUSH IS ON AGAIN?

The next time you travel I-5 south from Stockton look off to the right when you get to Lathrop. That is where Gold Rush City is planned on 6,000 acres of what is now farmland.

Here there are planned 4! large theme parks, each the size of Disneyland! It will be the home for 20,000 to 30,000. (To put that in perspective, Discovery Bay has about 10,000 residents in the Delta) The developers are wooing Stockton with an offer to tie into its Sewage Plant. What would this do to Stockton rates? Would it make more sense to tie into Manteca for treatment? What will be done about flood control? And where will their water come from? You could contact your city council person to get some answers?
Eric Parfrey, AICP. 462-4808

Back Door Attack on Arctic Refuge

The Senate Budget Committee has broken new ground by including revenue from oil production in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in the pending federal budget. This back door tactic to open the refuge buries efforts to ruin this pristine area in a budget quagmire. The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, which has been called America's Serengetti, is our country's largest wildlife preserve and is home to caribou, grizzly bears, wolves, foxes, musk ox and more than 130 species of shorebirds, loons, songbirds and geese. In May, senators in favor of drilling tied opening the refuge to the pending federal budget bill, making it more difficult to debate and vote on this crucial issue. President Clinton has pledged not to permit drilling, and needs to hear that he should veto a budget bill that allows development in the Arctic.

Opening the Arctic Refuge would mean offering 1.2 million acres of pristine coastal plain along the Beaufort Sea for energy exploration. Although this is only one-tenth of the refuge, the coastal plain is the most important calving ground for the Porcupine caribou herd and is considered the biological heart of the refuge. Oil exploration and drilling will also unalterably change the wilderness character of this arctic ecosystem.

Action: Write or call your senators and ask them to oppose the inclusion of oil production revenues from the Arctic Refuge in the pending federal budget. Such a sweeping policy decision should be thoroughly debated in full view of the American public, not buried in a budget bill. Let your senators know you support full protection for the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Call the White House Hotline (202-456-1414) and ask the President to veto a budget bill that opens the Arctic Refuge or rolls back other environmental protections. Contact: Evan Hirsche, National Audubon Society, 202-547-9009 (ehirsche@audubon.org).

SNOW GEESE HAVE ARRIVED

Many of the Pacific flyway group of snow geese winter in the Central Valley. Many of them leave the state and federal refuges to feed in surrounding farmland and rest at the refuge sites. In the wintering grounds they form pair bonds.

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE:HOLIDAY GREETINGS! FROM NANCY BALLOT

National Audubon is undertaking significant changes with the leadership of the new president, John Flicker (not a pseudonym). According to a recent communique from George Ellman, Regional Boardmember; (it is important)" ...how we as an organization relate to our members. My goal is to assure that the conception of the relationship is not one of members and magazine subscribers, but rather of members as friends and workers for the environment.we are to encourage an environmental ethic and a culture of conservation.....that produce(s) a nation of environmentally ethical people." If you are concerned about environmental issues, let your voice be heard. If you would like more information about issues of concern, the Audubon Activist is published ten times per year and is free to members who pledge to write or call their elected officials about environmental issues. To obtain a copy write or call National Audubon Society, Conservation information, 700 Broadway, New York, NY 10003, or phone (212) 979-3091. To encourage even more environmentally friendly activism and at the same time solve the problem of what gift is appropriate for those friends and relatives who have everything, may I suggest a gift membership to Audubon and an Audubon Calendar (available from Kasey Foley), or a gift of friendship by inviting them to an Audubon meeting or outing. The Central Valley is the wintering site for many of our feathered friends making this a great time of year to explore. For a full day of birding the best sites, join one or both of our annual Christmas Bird Count. My wish for you this holiday season is for peace to prosper and may a piece of the land remain intact for wildlife. Be a friend of the environment.

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