



# THE HOOT OWL

SAN JOAQUIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

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## ARCHAEOPTERYX.....A BIRD?

"Although sometimes misclassified or even derided as a fraud, the prehistoric flier Archaeopteryx remains a rich source of information about the evolution of flight in birds."

"It is not currently possible to tell whether or not Archaeopteryx was the direct ancestor of all birds, but this correlation is not of major importance. What is significant is that the six known skeletons of Archaeopteryx and the single feather provide clues to how birds evolved." "They are documents without which the idea of evolution would not be as powerful." (Scientific American, May 1990)

## A LITTLE BIRD TELLS THEM SO

Kenyan tribesmen often embark on honey-hunting safaris. On their own, hunters take an average of 8.9 hours to find a bees' nest. However, it only takes hunters 3.2 hours to find a nest when they join forces with an unlikely guide, the African honeyguide bird (*Indicator indicator*)

When tribespeople are ready to hunt honey, they whistle to summon an African honeyguide. The bird soon appears and gets the hunters' attention by fluttering and calling "tirr-tirr-tirr". The bird then disappears for a while (possibly to reconfirm the nest's location). It then returns and starts a series of short flights, calling all the way to help the hunters navigate. Near the honey, the bird begins to fly lower and shorter distances. At the nest, the honeyguide cries a different call. The hunters then pillage the nest, being careful to leave a small reward for their guide. Presumably such guide-like behavior by the birds evolved with honey badgers. These animals, as well as humans, destroy the bees' nests, thereby leaving the bird a meal or two of otherwise inaccessible honey.

(Science, 3-10-89)

## BE A VOLUNTEER FOR THE COSUMNES PRESERVE

The Cosumnes River Preserve is located between Sacramento and Stockton and it provides an area for the preservation and restoration of natural riparian and wetland habitats. They are currently developing a volunteer group, whose functions would include interpretation, education, as well as restoration of buildings, trails, and wetlands. If you are interested or have questions, please contact Terre Ann Sadosky at 916 684-2816.

Some of our Stockton Audubon members are already helping with a monthly bird census of the Preserve. As many as 73 species have been seen on the count days. If you would be interested in this activity call John Schick at 464-7083.

## DOCUMENT THE DISAPPEARING

It is my belief that the most effective way that members of the San Joaquin Audubon Society can help with conservation is to do what they do best....watching birds.

Let me give you an example. The threatened Swainson's Hawk is currently the subject of a study by the City of Stockton, thanks to our local Audubon Society. This study should lead to the adoption of an ordinance with mitigation fees.

This means that if we can document that Swainson's Hawks use an area for hunting then houses could not be built on it unless the developer provides mitigation money or land for the establishment of permanent Swainson's Hawk conservation areas.

Swainson's Hawks need over a thousand acres of open farm land per breeding pair and San Joaquin County is thought to have 100 breeding pairs. (That is 20% of the species in California). Therefore, let us familiarize ourselves with the Swainson's Hawk. Report all locations of hunting activity anywhere in the county to Waldo Holt at 462-4438. and be a part of an effort to help save habitat. Thanks to all who have contributed information thus far.

## New Bill Will Save Last Ancient Forests

by Tensie Whelan

Vice-President, Conservation Information

**C**ulminating a year of intensive work and strategy, activists have put forward a proposal in Congress to preserve the remaining stands of old growth, or ancient forests, in the Pacific Northwest.

The Ancient Forest Protection Act of 1990 (HR 4492) aims to establish an "ancient forest reserve system" that includes all of the remaining ancient forests on public lands (about two million acres) and "associated forests." These associated forests are second-growth areas that link the highly fragmented stands of old growth so that endangered wildlife can move through "corridors," increasing habitat range and likelihood of survival. The bill was introduced on April 5 and is sponsored by Reps. Jim Jontz, Claudine Schneider, Bob Mrazek, and 30 others.

The Ancient Forest Protection Act is critical to the survival of old-growth forest and the more than 150 endangered species it supports, including the spotted owl, marten, and fisher. The act is needed because previous attempts to lower the rate of cutting of these forests to sustainable levels and to redirect the sales program have failed dismally.

Audubon lobbyists believe that the Ancient Forest Protection Act is a revolutionary step forward. Says Brock Evans, Audubon's vice-president for National Affairs, "The momentum is building at last to do something to protect ancient forests. How well we succeed now depends on the willingness of each American to put pressure on their representative to support the bill."

You can help by writing your representative and asking him or her to cosponsor HR 4492. You can also send in your tax-deductible contribution of \$100, \$50, \$25, or whatever you can afford, to support our lobbying efforts, to Ancient Forest Campaign, c/o Audubon Activist, 950 Third Ave., New York, N.Y. 10022.



### LARGEST SINGLE COMPONENT OF SOLID WASTE IN LANDFILLS?

You guessed it, newspapers make up 14% by volume. The total newsprint and percent of recycled newsprint used per year by:

- + The New York Times-  
450,000 metric tons (5-10% recycled)
- + The Los Angeles Times-  
417,000 metric tons (83% recycled)
- + The Washington Post  
280,000 metric tons (0% recycled)
- + The Wall Street Journal  
220,000 metric tons (1.4% recycled)
- + The Hoot Owl  
5-10 pounds (100% recycled)

(Source: Garbage: Practical J. of Environment)

## BIRD STUDY BIOLOGY

Birds are widely distributed, highly diversified, and exhibit behavior and social organizations equal in complexity to mammals, yet they are generally more conspicuous and approachable in natural environments. These attributes make birds excellent subjects in many areas of biological research.

The topics in which studies on birds have figured prominently include the mechanisms of species formation, the regulation of the distribution and abundance of animals, the effects of the environment on behavior and physiology, the biological and evolutionary significance of variations in social organizations, the encoding of information in animal communication, the sensory basis for migration and navigation, the effects of hormones on nerve cells and behavior, the ontogeny of brain and behavior, and the structure and function of the vertebrate brain.

The outstanding record of avian research suggests that birds will continue to provide important models for developing and testing new ideas in various fields of biology.

(Science, Oct. 27, 1989)

## GEESE & THE GREENHOUSE

"Each year, as winter eases its chilly grip on the landscape, hundreds of thousands of snow geese leave their seasonal haunts in the southern United States and congregate for the long flight back to the Canadian north. Following the receding snow line, the huge column of birds migrates up the continent until reaching the northern end of Hudson Bay. Once there the birds immediately fan out to establish their spring and summer residences in the lush wetlands of the adjacent Northwest Territories. Or at least that's what used to happen.

Robert Jefferies, a Botanist at the U of Toronto, has found that for most of the past decade heavy snowfall and sun-obscuring cloud cover have conspired to delay the Canadian snowmelt and interrupt the bird's migrations. In the 1980's Jefferies says, the snow line was 90 to 150 miles south of where it was in the 1970's on May 15, which typically marks the beginning of the nesting season.

As a result, when the geese arrive, the northern shores of the bay are still under snow. Immense gaggles of geese accumulate at its southern shores and remain trapped there for up to several weeks. The birds feed voraciously on then local salt marshes, turning the marshes into barren mud flats. The geese, says Jefferies, are changing the very nature of the landscape. Over the past four years marsh vegetation has decreased by a third in some of the areas he's studied.

# SUMMER

# BIRDS:



Apr. 27, a Sh-Dowitcher at SSP, Apr 29 a W. Wood-pewee, 7 Townsend's Warblers, a Purple Finch, 2 Pine Siskin all at LL. and 2 Blk Tern at LSP. May 2, 7 Spotted Sandpiper and 7 Wilson's Phal at SSP. May 3 a Hammond's Flycatcher, a Dusky Flycatcher, a Gray Flycatcher and 3 Solitary Vireo all at LL. and a Swainson's Thrush at Corral Hollow Rd. May 6 Dave Wagner observed a Pileated Woodpecker near Nevada City. May 8 a M. Godwit & 4 R-n Phalarope at SSP. On May 10, 12 Pacific-Slope Flycatchers ( a new name) and a Hermit Warbler at Oak Grove Park. and a Willow Flycatcher at LL by Waldo Holt. May 13 a G-cr. Sparrow at LL, May 14 a Olive-s. Flycatcher at the Oak Grove. May 15 a Herring Gull at SSP, May 17 a Redhead at LSP. May 23, there were 23 Sanderlings at LSP, a Com Loon, a W. Grebe and a Gr. Scaup at SSP. May 25 found 3 pr Pintail at SSP while on May 29 there were 4 L.Scaup there. June 3 brought 2 Wrenit to White Slough, June 6 found a Bufflehead at SSP. On 6-12 Waldo Holt and Josh and Kim Horner saw 10 Wh.f Ibis at Hiway 99 and 4 and an imm.G.Eagle at Jack Tone Road. On June 20 an Anna's Hummer was nesting in Sktn. at the Stocking's. Jim Rowoth reports a Golden Eagle near I-5 and Twin Cities on the 24th of June ALL OBSERVATIONS BY DAVID YEE EXCEPT AS MENTIONED. SEND YOUR OBSERVATIONS TO THE EDITOR.

## ELECTRA ROAD FIELD TRIP; THE REPORT .....

On the trip up through the hills of Calaveras County the following were noted, Pied-billed Grebe courting?, a Wood Duck, Ca.Quial and a Western Bluebird. The group was met by a loud House Wren upon arrival at Electra. Great views of Yellow Warbler, Black-headed Grosbeak, Western Tanager and Lesser Goldfinches. Lesser Goldfinch and N. Orioles were feeding nestlings. Many other birds observed including Common Merganser on what is left of Hogan Lake. Reported by Jim Rowoth.

## COMING ACTIVITIES:

**INTRODUCTION TO BIRDWATCHING:** Special opportunities for children. Learn about the major types of birds and how to identify many of our native wild birds in the field. July 16-20. 11 to 1pm. 9 to 12 yrs. \$25.00. Call the Zoo for more info. 331-7270, 953-8840.

**UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA FIELD RESEARCH** Pelicans in Peril, Wildlife of the White Mts., High Country Trek of Sierra Mule Deer, Mono Lake: An Alpine Oasis for Birds. All of these are offered in July through Sept. Call (415) 642-6586...join a research team.

**ECUADORIAN WILDLIFE ADVENTURE.** Dec 23 through Jan 9. Spend your holidays in the tropics. Rainforest, Andes, and Galapagos, all in one trip. You are sure to add many to your life lists. Join Jim Rowoth for this nature lovers extravaganza. Call 953-8840 or 331-7270 for more information and a detailed itinerary.

## GET A NEW BIRD CHECKLIST!

David Yee has just revised his "Field Checklist of the Birds of San Joaquin County. If you would like a copy of this 1990 list, send a business sized self addressed stamped envelope (SASE) to San Joaquin Audubon Society at 236 W. Knoles Way, Stockton. 95204.

## MONTEREY BAY BOAT TRIP

One of the year's favorites will be Sunday, Aug. 26 this year. Our early fall trips onto the Bay have been nothing short of extraordinary. During this time of the year migrating pelagic seabirds and mammals come very close to the shore allowing us to see them within 30 minutes of the dock. We have missed very little in the past few years. Last year's highlight was a Laysan Albatross! The boat leaves at 7:30am and returns about 3:30. Cost is \$35. The boat fills fast so send your check to reserve your spot ASAP. Make checks out to David Yee and send to 2930 Driftwood Pl #39, Stockton Ca. 95207. A group campsite has been reserved at Veteran's Park in Monterey for Saturday night. For more information call 951-1526 or 466-3337.

## LONG-EARED OWL NESTING

Long-eared owls (*Asio otus*) nest in stands of grand fir (*Abies grandis*) in northeastern Oregon. Nineteen of 20 nests were in dwarf mistletoe brooms in Douglas-fir trees. Young long-eared owls were raised at 70% of the nests, and brood size averaged 3. The northern pocket gopher was the primary prey item in both frequency and biomass. (Move over Spotted Owl or leave the mistletoe?) (U.S. Forest Service, Northwest Research '90)

# JULY AUGUST CALENDAR

**NOTES on field trips:** Whenever possible, please carpool, bring a trashbag to help to pick up recyclables, and call the leader before the trip to confirm if the trip details (meeting place, time) have had to be changed or if the trip has been cancelled.

**TUE. JULY 17. BOARD MEETING.** 7:30pm at John Blades, 3749 14mile Dr. 473-7073.

**SAT. JULY 21. SONORA PASS FIELD TRIP.** Grosbeak, Goshawk, Rosy Finch and many others among gorgeous wildflowers, giant Jeffrey Pines, and striking scenery make this a most enjoyable summer trip. This is an all day affair, so pack a lunch. Leaders George Welch and Neil Kerr are very enthusiastic about this subalpine area. Meet them at the Bruener's parking lot in Stockton at 6:30am. 477-9618.

**SAT. AUGUST 11. CARSON PASS FIELD TRIP.** Get away from the heat of the valley to check out the late summer birds and wildflowers near the beautiful Carson Pass. Current conditions will determine our exact itinerary but it will include short walks at numerous locations and quality time to enjoy the scenery. We may go as far as Genoa Nevada, so bring a lunch for this all day trip. Meet leader Steve Stocking at his home in Stockton, 236 W. Knoles Way, at 6:30am, secondary meeting place may be arranged. 465-2729.

**TUE. AUGUST 14. BIRD CHECKLIST PROGRAM.** David Yee will go over the how-to's on his new revision of the San Joaquin County bird checklist. This will be a very informal question and answer type gathering. He will also touch on keeping a county checklist, strategies for seeing 200 plus species in the county, rarities, etc. Meet at his home, 2930 Driftwood Place, #39 in Stockton at 7:30pm. 951-1526 for more information.

**SAT. AUGUST 18. LODI LAKE FIELD TRIP.** No other area in the county attracts migrants like this nature area. The fall landbird migration is well under way by this time of year. We will expect many species of flycatcher, warbler, and vireos, with rarities like Rose-breasted Grosbeak observed in the past. Meet Waldo Holt at the end of Laurel St. off Turner Rd. at 7:30am. 462-4438.

**SUN. AUG. 26. MONTEREY BAY BOAT TRIP.** One of the year's favorites. See details inside.

## 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.

\_\_\_\$30 individual \_\_\_\$38 family \_\_\_\$18 student \_\_\_\$21 senior \$23 senior, family \_\_\_\$50 sustaining  
\_\_\_\$250 contributing \_\_\_\$500 donor \_\_\_\$1,500 life \_\_\_\$5 newsletter only (not member)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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STOCKTON AUDUBON SOCIETY  
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