



# THE HOOT OWL

STOCKTON AUDUBON SOCIETY

Vol 23 #2

## Calendar



Mar-Apr. '85

Tuesday March 12 The Unseen World of Big Sur State Park will be shown to us on slides by Park Ranger Bill Moffit. This General Membership Meeting will be at 7:30 in the Central United Methodist Church Fire-side Room. 3700 Pacific Ave. Stockton. Bring a guest.

Sunday March 17. Oak Island Field Trip. This area is owned by the Tracy Wildlife Association and has some nice riparian habitat. Terry Ronneberg of Tracy visits this area regularly and has observed a wide variety of birds there. Meet at the intersection of Tracy Blvd. and Finck Road at 8:00. Call Terry at 835-7847 for information.

Saturday March 23. Corral Hollow Road area Field Trip. Several of the landowners along Corral Hollow Road, south-west of Tracy, have given us permission to go onto their land. This includes chaparral habitat and its typical birds as well as a good possibility of Golden Eagle and Prairie Falcon. Other wildlife including reptiles, wildflowers and mammals (Kit Fox?) is possible. Meet John & Kathy Schick at Burns Tower, U.O.P. at 8am to carpool. Bring a lunch and water. For more information call 464-7083.

Tuesday April 9. Join Ron Felzer for an evening of slides of his recent trek around Annapurna, the world's tenth highest mountain, during Nepal's summer monsoon season. The General Membership meeting will be at 7:30pm at Central United Methodist Church, refreshments will be served after the program, bring a friend.

Saturday April 13. Lodi Lake Field Trip. This beautiful area has good riparian habitat and long-eared owl and osprey have been sighted here recently. Many spring migrants should also be present on this date. This will be a rather easy morning outing. Join leader Kurt Mize on the east side of Lodi Lake Park at 8:00am. 957-0676.

Sat-Sun April 13-14. Spring Wildflower Show at the Mickies Grove Museum area. The common wildflowers of the valley and foothills will be on display both days from 11am to 5pm. Come on out!

Sunday Afternoons...April 14-21 and 28. Want to learn the local natural history and at the same time help out at Oak Grove Park as a docent? Come on out and help out in this productive effort. For more details contact Lois Davis at 477-8353.

Fri-Sat, April 19-20. Santa Cruz Field Trip. Spend a weekend with the shorebirds and migrants on beautiful Monterey Bay. There are over-night facilities for 13 courtesy of Ann Mullin (957-3366), call her if you are interested or you can arrange your own accomodations.

Docent led trips at Jepson Prairie Preserve. Visit our nearest Nature

over.....

(2)

Conservancy Preserve. Trips through this wildflower area will start at 10am sharp every Saturday and Sunday from February through May 12. The area is between Rio Vista and Dixon. Call Pat Hale at 1-916-752-6580 for further information.

CONSERVANCY  
WALLACE-BELLOTA  
H...

More on the following in the May-June Hoot-Owl

Sunday morning May 5. Field Trip, North Stockton Ponds & Parks.

Saturday May 11. Del Puerto Canyon Field Trip. All day.

~~Saturday~~ <sup>Sunday</sup> May 18. Annual Picnic, Meeting-Field Trip. Oak Grove Park

THE WALLACE-BELLOTA CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Despite some cold weather and what many described as "no birds" conditions, the 1984 Wallace-Bellota Christmas Bird Count was most definitely a success. A record high 30,609 individual birds were seen on Dec 29 by the 35 participants in their 15 mile diameter circle. A total of 125 species were seen which falls just one short of tying last years record effort. No doubt, increased participation and the noticeable increase in birding expertise by all is responsible for making this count a success. Highlights included 16 species of waterfowl including a Hooded Merganser, 2231 Ring-billed Gulls, 76 Mountain Bluebirds, a Merlin and 2 Hutton's Vireo. My thanks to all who participated on the count and to my wonderful wife, Sue, who organized the delightful meal after the count.

David Yee (Field Trip Chair)

The Tiniest Established Permanent Floater Crap Game in the Northeast.

This charming article by Susan M. Smith appears in the March 1985 issue of Natural History magazine. If you have always wanted to know more about the social behavior of those birds at your bird feeder, this may get you started. I will quote a few paragraphs in an attempt to get you to hunger and thirst for more.

Studying chickadees is addictive-I've been hooked on them for years. My current study, begun in 1979, involves banding as many local chickadees as possible each fall with unique combinations of colored plastic leg bands. This allows me to tell individuals apart at a glance.

My western Massachusetts study area is a wooded residential district, well supplied with feeders. It includes some old deciduous forest and is bordered on one side by an old field. Since the chickadees breeding in the area are nonmigratory, the birds and their social organizations can be studied year-round.

In winter each chickadee adopts one of two life styles: they are either regulars, always found in the same flock where I originally caught them, or floaters, which range among three or four flocks. What influence, I wondered, does the behavior of floaters have on the social patterns of black-capped chickadees?

(Now if you have become interested you may find a copy of the March Natural History magazine and find the answer.)

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CONSERVATION TOPICSWASTE ALERT 800-25-TOXIC

Hazardous waste control laws in California are the strongest in the nation. But concerned citizens are needed to help spot and report the violations. Have you seen illegal dumping, leaking waste or abandoned barrels? Call Waste Alert at the number above.

SAVING SEA OTTERS

These are fully protected, but not from drowning entangled in fishing nets. Their population is not growing and may be dropping. The drop correlates with the net-related mortality estimates. Write to your State Senator or Assemblyman to support S.B. 89 which would prohibit use of entangling fishing nets within the 90 foot depth curve throughout the sea otter range. (State Capitol, Sacramento, Ca 95814)

MONO LAKE

This extraordinary natural treasure has had a reprieve given by three winters of heavy snowpack. Mono activists are now trying to have some water released into the Lake from Lee Vining and Rush Creeks. This would help to protect trout in the creeks, and the Lake level which was not protected by recent successful Mono Lake and Basin Scenic Area designation.

SACRAMENTO RIVER BANK PRESERVATION

Rip-rap bank protection is proposed for the Chico to Red Bluff stretch of the Sacramento River. This would remove the riparian forest and destroy habitat for birds, fish and other wildlife. Rip-rapping is ineffective in halting erosion and downstream sedimentation, is not cost effective and is destructive to wildlife. Similar plans are in the works for the San Joaquin River. To help fight this you may wish to join or support the non-profit Sacramento River Preservation Trust, 708 Cherry Street, Chico, Ca 95926, (\$10. individual membership)

IT LOOKS LIKE A DRY YEAR

Free water-conserving kits are available from the California Department of Water Resources. Each kit contains showerhead flow restrictors, dye tablets to detect leaks from the toilet tank, and a toilet tank displacement bag. From the Department at, "Office of Water Conservation, P.O. Box 388, Sacramento, Ca 95802.

Try Water Conserving Gardening.

- (1) Cultivate completely and deeply to get deeper root formation.
- (2) Plant fast-maturing vegetables.
- (3) Plant compact vegetables
- (4) Always mulch after planting
- (5) Use water properly

THE INVISIBLE BIRDS

Experiments with birds and other objects have shown that reasonably skilled observers will miss 50% of the objects when observing alone, but miss only 13% of the objects when observing in 3-person census parties. The fraction of species missed similarly drops from 15% to 5% as the party size increases from one to three. (Ecology 60(3):451-454. 1979)

BIRD PREDATION ON FOREST INSECTS

Exclusion experiments show that birds significantly reduce densities of larval Lepidoptera on forest understory vegetation. When insect densities are already low, bird predation may act both as a population regulator and as a strong agent of natural selection. (Science 206 260ct. 1979 462-463)



TOUR ANNOUNCEMENTS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED FOR THE FOLLOWING COMMERCIAL TRIPS:  
For more information on any call your editor at 463-2459 evenings

Kenya....June 15-July 19 Ecology Safaris/ Non-Smokers  
Peru.....July 17-August 6 Ecology Safaris/ Non-Smokers

Oregon River Raft Trips in Cooperation with the Lane County and Portland Audubon Societies. May 18-22/24-28 (Owyhee R.), May 24-27 (Rogue R.), May 24-27 (John Day R.)

The University Extension, U.C. Davis offers the following:  
Birding Trek in Historic Britian, May 18-June 2 and other trips including Land of the Maasai, Hiking in the Alps, Wildlife of Nepal etc.

Peru for Adventurous Birders: 1700 species await you in Peru. 21 day trip led by expert ornithologist. Trip highlighted by a leisurely 9 day trek through the four ecological zones of Machu Picchu National Park. July 10-30. Land cost \$1950. Information from Peruvian Adventures, 444 Redlands Ave. Claremont, Ca 91711. (714) 626-2905 evenings.

One place on this trip has been donated by Peruvian Adventures as a major prize in this year's fundraising raffle for the Western Region of National Audubon. Should a person who has already signed up become the winner, he will receive a refund. The prize is contingent, however, on there being adequate sign-up for the trip to take place.

GLOBESCOPE: MAKING AN IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT OF OUR PLANET

Fully endorsed by National Audubon, this National Assembly will provide the tools for you to act on global concerns and help to establish an ever-growing network of citizens and organizations working cooperatively on new approaches for action towards a sustainable future.

The town-meeting style gathering will be in Portland Oregon April 17-21. For information call 1 (503) 295-0382 or 295-0383.

GOLDEN TROUT WORKSHOP

This Audubon-sponsored Workshop will be held three times in the Golden Trout Wilderness in the southern Sierra Nevada between July 28 and August 17.

An informal field natural history program, consisting of naturalist led hikes by resident naturalists. For details call Cindi McKernan at 1 717 793-7897.

National Audubon Expedition Institute

Northwest Mountain Semester: June 17-Aug 25. Minimum age 16, up to 16 credit hours of course work, \$3,390.

Trailside Country School, ages 13-18, spring semester Mar-May \$3,864.

Newfoundland-Labrador Summer Expedition; 4 weeks, June 22-July 19.

all c/o Northeast Audubon Center, Sharon Conn. 06069.

National Audubon Society Natl. Convention Ju 16-21


Lake George in the Adirondacks of New York State will be the setting for the 1985 Biennial Convention. See Feb. Audubon Action for info. registration forms. 63 workshops, field trips and much much more.

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# BIRDS

Bird sightings are by David Yee unless otherwise noted.

Dipper at Bear Valley 1-3 Russ Lawson, A Little, a Franklin's & a C. Black-headed Gull at S.S.P. (Stockton Sewage Ponds) all on 1-10. On 1-12 a

Brown Creeper, 10 Golden-crowned Kinglets, 1 Hutton's Vireo and 10 Pine Siskin (all at Oak Grove Park O.G.). In 1-23 a Great-horned Owl at Potatoe Slough/Bouldin Island in the Delta by Norm Smith. 1-24 2 Common Loon, 60 Common Merganser, 2 Prairie Falcon & 6 Mt. Bluebirds at Commanche Res. On 1-25 a Ross' Goose and on 1-27 a Thayer's Gull both at the SSP. On 1-27 a Costa's Hummer and a Rough-legged Hawk at Corral Hollow Road. 1-30 also at C.H. Road a Sage Thrasher. 2-1 found 30 L.B. Curlew in a field near Fairfield and 2-2 a Common Loon & a Common Goldeneye at Bodega Bay both by S. Stocking. 2-5 David found a Merlin at the S.S.P.. 2-3 Karl Kothe reported an Orange Crowned Warbler in Stockton yard. 2-7 found 6 Lesser Goldfinch feeding in Birch Trees on the Delta Campus, L.Pederson. 2-7 David found a Solitary Vireo, a Slate-colored Junco and 4 Cassin's Finch at Lewis Park in Stockton. 2-9 L. Pederson observed 12 Evening Grosbeak near West Point (Calaveras Co). 2-9 also found a Long-eared Owl, 2 Wrentit and 2 Hutton's Vireo at Lodi Lake. 2-12 George Welch & Neil Kerr reported 80-100 W. Pelican over San Joaquin City, a Mt. Bluebird and 2 Golden Eagle in Del Puerto Canyon and a Snow Goose (blue phase) at Merced W.C.A. Mike Salladay reported 2 B.S. Kites in mating behavior over Morada on 2-13. 2-14 found a D.B. Grebe and Linda Stocking near the Calaveras River in Stockton. Kurt Mize reported a Wilson's Warbler and 2 Black-th Grey Warblers at Lodi Lake on 2-16. 2-16 also found 2-Red-shouldered Hawks acting interested in nesting in Morada, reported by the Lamms. 2-19 an Osprey and a Say's Phoebe at Lodi Lake reported by Helen Talbot. 2-28, Shirley Keller reports 9 Evening Grosbeaks in north Stockton. 2-23 Karl Kothe observed a Common Egret walking on the lawn at Oak Grove. 2-23 George Welch observed 6 Snipe, a Marsh Wren nest building, and a Common Yellowthroat  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile west of the intersection of I-5 and 12. T. Benjamin reported 12 Turkey Vultures in her trees at the corner of Jack Tone and 8Mi on 2-26. 2-27 Nancy Greenwood reports R.S. Towhee in her shrubs in Stockton. At the Oak Grove on 3-2 were 2 B.S.Kites, a Marsh Hawk, a Red Tail, 100's of Y.R.Warblers, Titmice, Nuttal's and Acorn Woodpeckers, Hermit Thrush, B. Phoebe and others as Well as S. Stocking and K.Kothe. 3-3 S. Stocking reports a Ferruginous Hawk (resembling iron rust in color) in the hills n.w of Rio Vista.

THANKS TO ALL THE OBSERVERS....MORE REPORTS THAN USUAL.

## BIRD SIGHTINGS APPEAL

Again I'm going to make an appeal to all of you who watch birds, no matter how actively you may watch them. I'm still in the process of updating the San Joaquin County bird checklist and need your continued assistance in completing it. Already many of you write me or call me to tell me of what birds you have seen lately. I really appreciate it, no matter how mundane you think that they may be. I'd like to encourage you to keep informing me of your observations.

For those of you who havn't let me know what you've seen, but would like to share it, I'm more than willing to know. Even if it's a common bird! I'm very interested in the status and distribution of all birds within San Joaquin County. In fact, I have an even stronger interest in the regular occuring one that often go unnoticed that in the real rare ones. I'm also very interested in any old bird records which you may have. Please write or phone me any time.

David Yee, 6035 Kermit Lane, Stockton Ca 95207. ph 951-1526  
(or send them to Hoot Owl 236 W. Knoles Way, Stockton 95204 463-2459)

