



THE HOOT OWL

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SAN JOAQUIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER
1990 VOL. 28 #5

NEW NATURALIST AT OAK GROVE

If you have had the opportunity to visit the Oak Grove Nature Center on a Saturday or Sunday this summer, you may have noticed a lot of activity among a surprisingly large contingent of visitors. A lot of this increase can be directly attributed to the new part-time naturalist at the nature center, Dennis Mayugba.

Many people have encountered Dennis' excellent skills in connection with the programs he runs through the University of the Pacific Lifelong Learning. For the past nine years Dennis has taught the ever popular classes in encountering insects, arthropods, and the natural world around us for students aged 6 through 12.

Now, in addition, Denis is bringing his knowledge of animals, his rapport with children, and even his miniature "zoo" to the Nature Center each weekend. Look for him during the Nature Center's open hours; Sat. and Sunday from 11 to 4.

Our Audubon Society can be proud of its roll in the establishment of the Nature Center back in 1978-9 when we donated \$1,000 toward its construction. Many of the docents who help out with the programs there are also members of Audubon.

OUR MEMBERSHIP

The latest printout from National Audubon shows that we have nearly 600 members in San Joaquin Audubon. As we approach our 50th anniversary in the spring of 1991, it is interesting to note that according to Natl. fewer than 15% of our members joined prior to 1980. This, hopefully represents an increasing awareness of conservation values as well as an increase in population.

If you value your membership, recruit a friend. Recycle your Hoot Owl by giving it to a friend and point out the membership application on the back.

Membership Chair.....John Schick

SWAINSON'S HAWKS MITIGATION

The department of Fish and Game has established the mitigation goal of no net loss of Swainson's hawk breeding or foraging habitat, and has developed the following strategies and mitigation criteria to reverse the dramatic population decline of this species in the Central Valley. San Joaquin County is the center of its nesting range in California, and you probably have only a vague idea of all the subdivisions which are in various stages of planning in this area.

It has been determined by telemetry that the foraging habitat is within a 10 mile radius of an active nest. Therefore, proposed development projects may be required to mitigate impacts at active sites and surrounding suitable feeding habitat areas; both of which are essential to the integrity of the breeding territory. In addition, since over 95% of Swainson's hawk nests occur on private land, a program of incentives for the private landowner is needed to ensure that crops which are compatible to the foraging needs of Swainson's hawks are not replaced by incompatible agriculture practices, urbanization, or other land uses.

If you have questions, contact our Conservation Chair, Waldo Holt 4624438

VALLEY SANDHILL CRANES

As you may know, the Thornton area northwest of Lodi is wintering area for both the greater and lesser subspecies of the Central Valley population of Sandhill Cranes. If you haven't been out to see them, check out Woodbridge Road west of I-5 this winter.

The California Fish and Game Commission has listed the greater sandhill crane as threatened since 1983. Their nesting areas are in northeastern California and eastern Oregon. That is where the problem is. As the Fish and Game's Ron Schlorff warns, "as long as the majority of the nesting habitat is on private lands and there is no control over it, the greater sandhill crane will remain threatened." To learn more about the biology of this interesting bird, read "Threatened in the Nest" by Andrew N. Cohen in the Fall 1989 issue of Pacific Discovery.



BIRDS

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

6-7, 4 L.Scaup & 8 Blk-B.Plover, LSP.
 6-8, 1 Olive-sFly & 1 Swainson's Thrush, LL
 6-9 a "West" Flycatcher at Corral Hollow Rd.
 6-26 A Bufflehead & a "Bonie" Gull at SSP.
 6-28 a Gr.Yellowlegs, a L-b Curlew, 11 W.
 Sandpiper and a L. Sandpiper all at LSP. On
 the 29th a Bufflehead at Tracy SP. July 6
 12 Wh-f Ibis, 8 Bank Swallow at LSP & a
 Marbled Godwit and a Whimbrel at SSP,
 these last two by Waldo Holt. 7-7 a Snowy
 Plover at LSP. 7-11 16 Wh.Pelican & a
 Wood Duck at SSP a brood of Green-w Teal
 9 Sh-b Dowitcher & 10 L-b Dowitcher at
 Tracy SP. 7-13 an Ash-Th Flycatcher, a
 W.B.Nuthatch etc at Oak Grove Park by
 Waldo & Karl Kothe. 7-14 a W-Tanager at LL
 and a Willit at TSP. 7-19 a Hutton's Vireo
 and a Warbling Vireo at LL. 7-20 a Red-n.
 Phal at LSP, 7-22, 2 Pac-sl Flycatcher at
 LSP, 7-26 a Semipalmated Sandpiper at LSP.
 7-29 a Blk & Wh Warbler at LL. 7-31 a
 Clark's Grebe at SSP, a L Yellowlegs and 6
 Burrowing Owls at TSP. End of July to first
 part of Aug TR Chambers observed at least
 8 Osprey on the far north coast of Calif.
 8-1, Karl Kothe observed a Peregrine on
 the Calaveras River near U.O.P. (J. Bell
 later had a "probable" Peregrine at Lodi
 Lake.) First Week in August S.Stocking
 observed the following in the upper San
 Joaquin drainage near Mono Pass, N.
 Goshawk, Ruf.Hummers, Cassin's Finch
 Pine Grosbeak, MacG's Warbler, Y.G.
 Swallow, Spt. Sandpiper, Rock Wren
 and many others including 2 Whitetailed
 Hare at about 11,500ft. 8-9 Waldo Holt
 observed 4 Solitary Sandpipers at Ripon
 Sewage Ponds. Also 8-9 a Swainson's
 Thrush and 2 Nashville Warbler at LL.
 David and Waldo observed the following
 on 8-11 on a trip to Salton Sea. a Wh.-w
 Scoter, a Per.Falcon, 3 Br. Boobies, a Tri-
 colored Heron, 2 Brant, a Wood Stork, 5
 Stilt Sandpipers 100+ Laughing Gulls, 50+
 Yellow-footed Gulls, & 20 Blk Skimmers.
 8-16 a Redbr Nuthatch, a Cedar Waxwing,
 and 2 Yellow Warb. at LL. On 8-18 Waldo
 & David observed 2 Blk-th Gray Warb & a
 Hermit Warb at Bruella Rd & Moke. River.
 8-19 6 Baird's Sandpipers at TSP.. (All the
 above observations are by David Yee except
 as noted. LL is Lodi Lake, LSP, SSP & TSP are
 the sewage ponds of Lodi, Stockton & Tracy.



Sonora Pass, July 24. Seven of us enjoyed
 ourselves at the 6,00-9,500 ft elevation in
 the mid Sierra. We saw about 35 species of
 birds in total (From Stockton including Wh-
 Breasted Nuthatch, Dipper, Warbling Vireo,
 Cassin's Finch, Chipping Sparrow, Hermit
 Warbler and Bl.Headed Grosbeak. We also
 saw Marmots, Gray Fox, Pale Swallowtail
 and California Sister. The wildflowers,
 while not profuse, were more than adequate.
 Some Columbine, Castilleja, Penstemon,
 Angelica, Ladies Tresses and Jacob's Ladder.
 Lots of Scarlet Gilia, Mule's Ears & Green
 Gentian. We also saw the world's largest
 Jeffry Pine at Douglas Flat, 98" dbh.
 Thanks to Neil Kerr for leading this splendid
 trip. Reported by Vic Wykoff.



Carson Pass, Aug 12. Eight members and
 guests observed more than 47 species, most
 above 5,000 and some above Frog Lake. The
 birds included N. Goshawk, Pine Siskin, a
 record number of Townsends Solitaires (8),
 Olived-sided Flycatcher, Hamonds Flycatcher,
 Hermit Warbler, male and female Williams
 Sapsucker and Rufous Hummers among others.
 The day was very hazy with the smoke from
 the Yosemite fires but we saw a lot including a
 garter snake. Many wildflowers were ob-
 served including several monkey flowers & an
 orchid. Jim Rowoth celebrated breaking
 500 species on his bird life list, he added 4.
 Reported by Steve Stocking

Cosumnes Preserve, Aug 11 2 volunteers
 (We need more!) saw a total of 42 species of
 birds and 239 birds is all on the monthly
 census. Marsh Wren, Wrentit, Common
 Yellowthroat and many others were present.
 We hope to see the ponds filled soon and so
 have more waterfowl and shorebirds. Dates
 for fall are

September 8,
 October 13
 November 10
 December 8..

These are all on
 Saturday and are subject to change. Call
 John Schick at 464-7083 to confirm.

Lodi Lake Aug 18. 41 species were seen
 including a W.W.Pewee, 8 Warbling Vireo
 a Hutton's Vireo, 14 Orange-cr. Warblers, 2
 Yellow Warblers and a MacGillivray's
 Warbler.



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TRUST FOR OPEN SPACE

The San Joaquin Open Space and Farmland Trust has been created to provide the opportunity for open space and farmland preservation. This non-profit corporation has a board of directors which represents business, development, farming and conservation interests. The board hopes that mitigation fees and land will be donated to this trust which will in turn attempt to acquire "open space" easements to additional land in the areas most desirable for continuing farmland or open space-wildlife habitat. The chairman of this new trust is County Supervisor George Barber. John Schick, our Audubon vice president, is secretary and board member to this new trust.

Some developments still in the planning process indicate that they may provide land or funding to mitigate destruction of habitat caused by their proposals. Perhaps in this way San Joaquin County will manage to preserve some green and open areas during this era of rapid urban sprawl.

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WHAT THEY DO IN SANTA ROSA

In 1989 residents of Santa Rosa formed a committee to establish a bike and pedestrian trail along 2.25 miles of Santa Rosa Creek within the city of Santa Rosa. This has now been approved. The remarkable thing is that there was an unusual AGREEMENT reached between the committee, the City & County and the Property Owner DEVELOPERS to allow the trail to go forward.



Puffin Decline Concerns Audubon Scientists

by Steve Kress, National Audubon Society
Research Biologist

Few of the puffin chicks fledged during the period 1984 through 1987 from Eastern Egg Rock and Seal Island—both off the Maine coast—have returned to their home colonies, leading to speculation that they perished at sea. These Atlantic puffins (*Fratercula arctica*) were hatched as part of Audubon's Puffin Project, which has successfully restored populations of the seabirds to portions of their former range. Under the project, numbers of puffin chicks are transplanted to artificial nesting burrows on the coastal islands, where they are hand-reared by Audubon biologists.

The low rate of return—only 1 percent (6 of 534) of the birds fledged during the four-year period, as opposed to 32 percent for the period 1977 through 1980—has Audubon scientists looking again at the factors that affect puffin chick survival and mortality.

It is not clear exactly what risks puffins face at sea and how chance events influence survival. Young puffins spend their first 2 to 3 years at sea before returning to land, and during that time they must learn how to find ample food while avoiding predatory gulls and fish, plastic debris, oil spills, and drift nets. Weather and the amount of available food vary greatly from year to year, but favorable and unfavorable years seem to occur in distinct stretches.

Audubon's research suggests that both wild and transplanted colonies of puffins will need to have several unbroken years of favorable conditions in order to reach viable population levels. To be successful, restoration programs such as the Puffin Project must be conducted over a long period. In that way, seasonal fluctuations, and perhaps even those occurring over several years, can be overcome.

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER CALENDAR

- TUE. SEPT 11. REPTILES BY BILL GILLINGHAM.** Our first monthly meeting of the Fall will feature a slide program and a opportunity to observe and handle some reptiles. Mr. Gillingham is starting a reptile zoo in Lodi and well represents the Herpetological interests in this area. 7:30 at Central United Methodist in Stockton. (just off Pacific Ave.)
- SAT. SEPT 15. NORTH STOCKTON FIELD TRIP.** White Slough, Oak Grove Park & Lodi Sewage Ponds will highlight this outing. Shorebirds and waterbirds should be abundant. Meet our new President John Blades at Rocky's Restaurant at 7am (I-5 & 12)) 473-7073.
- SAT SEPT 29. MOKELUMNE RIVER FIELD TRIP.** Jim Rowolth will show us some great riparian areas including Van Assen Park & Sillman McGee Parks. Warblers and vireos should be there. Meet Jim at the Breuner's parking lot at 7am to carpool. 462-7512
- SAT OCT 6. 1990 CONSERVATION FAIR.** Many organizations will be represented at this fair which will emphasize the wise use of natural resources. It will be at the Micke Grove Zoo this year. 5K Run, Junk Art Contest, Food. Call 953-8840 for info.
- SAT/SUN OCT 6,7. MONTEREY AREA AND MONTEREY BAY FIELD TRIP.** Land birds on Sat, the best of pelagic birding on Sunday. Rarities are common on this one. \$35/person camping available. Call David Yee for info. 951-1526 or 466-3337.
- TUESDAY OCT 9. THE SAN FRANCISCO ESTUARY PROJECT. Dr. Wm Tuohy PhD.** Slides will illustrate this program on environmental issues which confront the Bay and Delta. The Project is concerned with the promotion of effective management for water quality, wildlife and recreation. Program Chair Geo Welch for info 4779618.
- SAT OCT 20. Llewallen Ranch Field Trip.** Possible golden eagles, night herons, and white pelicans. Meet at 7:30am at the Schick's. Call John 464-7083 to confirm.
- SUN. OCT 21. White Slough Field Trip.** We hope to see Sora and Virginia rails at this popular birding spot near I-5 and 12. Meet George Welch (477-9618) at 7am at U.O.P's Burns Tower.
- SAT OCT 27. YEAR OF THE OAK TREE PLANTING.** Help plant acorns and seedlings to replace some of the trees which have died following the 4 years of drought. Come at 8:30, bring gloves and we will provide the tools. Those seedlings we have planted in the last 2 years planted are doing well. Over by 12:30. Karl: 464-1004.

Stockton Audubon Society

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465-9461
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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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