



El Tecolote

BULLETIN OF THE SANTA BARBARA AUDUBON SOCIETY

Vol. 7 No. 4
April 1969

Janet Hamber
4236 Encore Dr.
Santa Barbara
California 93105

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

Apr. 25
Friday

FIELD IDENTIFICATION CLASS: 7:30 p.m. Junior Library. A display of spring wildflowers will be featured this evening.

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING: Farrand Hall, Museum of Natural History. Tonight a member of the U. S. Forest Service will present a program on the back country of the Los Padres National Forest.

May 1
Thursday

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING: 4:30 p.m. Junior Library. Anyone interested is welcome to attend the meeting.

May 3-10
Sat-Sat.

Les Cook will lead a trip to Arizona. For further information call 963-4501

May 4
Sunday

FIELD TRIP TO ZACA LAKE: This most popular of our spring trips requires advance reservations. There is a charge of \$3.75 per person which covers entrance to the resort grounds and noon dinner (including tip) at the Lodge. Send your checks, payable to the SBAS, to Mrs. Cooke at the Museum by April 29. Zaca Lake is without doubt the most beautiful spot in our "back country". It also offers wonderful birding at the height of the spring migration. On previous trips we have sometimes found as many as 7 species of warblers and six of flycatchers. Leave the Museum at 7:15 a.m. or meet at Mattie's Tavern, Los Olivos, at 8:30. DO NOT BRING LUNCH! Driver donation- \$1.50 Leader: Nelson Metcalf.

May 10
Saturday

FIELD TRIP TO REYES PEAK: Meet at the Museum at 7:30 a.m. or at the shopping center at the south edge of Ojai at 8:30. To get to Reyes Peak, drive north on Route 33 out of Ojai until reaching Pine Mountain Summit at 31.5 miles, then turn right and follow a rapidly rising mountain road for 8.5 miles to the top of Reyes Peak. Take lunch. Driver donation- \$2.50. Leaders: The Shannons

May 18
Sunday

SPRING BOAT TRIP: We have reserved 25 spaces aboard the Sierra Club chartered Swift for our annual Spring boat trip. The trip will go to Painted Cave on Santa Cruz Island. For reservations send a check for \$11.00, payable to Channel Island Cruises, to Mrs. E.A. Parkinson, 568 Beaumont Way, Goleta 93017. The Swift will leave the Public Dock, opposite the Harbormaster Office, at 8 a.m. and return about 5 p.m. Bring lunch. Leader: Waldo Abbott.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

On Tuesday, March 18, Dr. Elvis J. Stahr, President of the National Audubon Society, accompanied by Paul Howard, Western Representative, visited Santa Barbara for a first-hand look at the results of the oil disaster.

After a morning flight over the channel, somewhat hampered by fog, they lunched with several UCSB faculty members, Natural History Museum and SBAS representatives, who discussed with them the effects of the oil spill on marine life and sea birds, and the actions being taken by various local groups.

In the afternoon they visited the harbor to see the cleanup operations; the Child's Estate to see the few remaining survivors of the 1500-odd birds which the zoo personnel and volunteers have cleaned and cared for with such devotion; and several beaches where oil was still coming in on each wave. They found the pollution much worse than they had expected. Dr. Stahr told us that the public outcry caused by the Santa Barbara Channel disaster was louder than any protest heard in years.

In view of Secretary of the Interior Hickel's latest order permitting the resumption of drilling in the Channel, it seems that we must continue to cry out even more loudly. Not only must our voices be heard, but they must be heard continuously until our environment is properly protected.

Every oil rig spills some of the time, and many of them most of the time. The annual toll from many small spills may well be as great as a major leak. It is not necessary to have another well blowout to ruin our environment. A proliferation of wells in the Channel will do the job just as effectively, if somewhat more slowly.

Man is looking increasingly to the ocean as a food source for his exploding population while, at the same time, he is polluting the coastal shallows and estuaries which are the breeding grounds of many marine species, and a vital link in the ocean's great food chain.

These facts, so well known to conservationists, must be made known to everyone before the trend becomes irreversible. There is more at stake than our own area. The problem is world-wide.

Joy Parkinson, President

NOMINATIONS

In addition to the five retiring members of the Board of Directors, we have learned, with regret, that John Knezevich and Bob Shannon will be unable to serve on the Board during the 1969-70 term. We are very sorry to lose them. They have been of great service to the SBAS during the past year- John as Conservation Chairman and Bob as Field Trip Chairman.

The Nominating Committee has presented the following slate of prospective directors for the May 23 election: Waldo G. Abbott*, David M. Caldwell, M.D., Wales R. Holbrook*, Mrs. George (Alice) Kladnik*, James G. Mills, Mrs. E.A. Parkinson (Joy), Mrs. Robert (Helen) Peteler*, Mrs. Margaret Powell, Mrs. Martin (Alice) Rypins, William Ure, M.D., and Mrs. T. Preston Webster (Fifi). *= Holdover members.

CONSERVATION CORNER

Plans are being formulated for the Santa Barbara airport master plan and for the condemnation proceedings for the Ward Memorial Freeway extension to service the UCSB campus so that tenders for construction may be let in June.

1. The slough is the home for many resident and migratory birds. among them are 3 species of egrets and herons, which would have no

where else to go if this habitat is destroyed. California has already lost most of its precious marshes and sloughs to developments.

2. Students spend thousand of hours annually studying th fauna and flora at the slough. The slough is so popular a study spot that one is never alone there even on a rainy winter day. Students from grade 1 to university level have used this natural facility.

3. The ecology of the slough should be seriously considered by the State Dept. of Highways and local governments before any freeway is built through it. Scientists at UCSB, the California Fish & Game, and the Audubon Society should be consulted before any construction is contemplated at the slough. It is up to us to remind them of the irreplaceable value of the slough as an estuarine nursery.

4. Alternatives should be considered including the question of the need for another freeway. Other universities in the State are not serviced by freeways.

The State of California Department of Education provides grants for outdoor classrooms. The slough would be an ideal site for all the Santa Barbara Schools, the City College and University. Let us strive to retain the slough as a wildlife and botanical sanctuary and as an outdoor educational facility.....John Knezevich

REFUGIO CANYON: This seems to be another case of "Let's not arouse the natives". State highway officials think the public is not interested in their plans for highway 101 at Refugio; not having been informed, the public has hardly been in a position to react! It is especially interesting that the State Dept. of Parks and Beaches apparently was not told of what interests it considerable: a plan to construct an 80-foot high land fill. (The alternative would, of course, be a bridge.) The land fill will affect the environment and the ecology of the area detrimentally in many ways; a bridge would be far less obtrusive (although somewhat more expensive). Surely we can afford to preserve the natural beauty of this area.....if we can stop the bulldozers, which are scheduled to start their work soon.

Fifi Webster

WINTER BIRD POPULATION

It has been an interesting winter for the local birders. Our two Christmas Counts were most successful in spite of the rain all afternoon for the Santa Barbara Count. Our field trip schedule was interfered with more than in most years by foul weather, slides and high water. But more than the usual number of rare species were reported both in the local area and in other parts of southern California.

The most notable local finds have been the Ruff at the Ventura County Game Preserve, the male European Widgeon in Dec. and Jan. at the UCSB Lagoon and Goleta Slough and later in the winter at Sandyland, the Brown Thrasher at the Millar's in Hope Ranch which was seen three times in Jan. and Feb., the Bohemian Waxwings found by several observers, the Harris' Sparrow at Waldo Abbott's feeder off and on from Dec. 1 to Feb. 25, and the Gray-headed Juncos at Tucker's Grove from Dec. 28 to the end of Jan. Other species not found every winter were the Cattle Egrets, White-faced Ibis, Whistling Swan, Blue-winged Teal, Common Scoter, Ruddy Turnstone, White-winged Dove, Ringed Turtle Dove, Yellow-shafted Flicker, Cassin's Kingbird, and Townsend's Solitaire.

Some of our members saw the Rock Sandpiper in the San Simeon area, the Little Gull near Mecca, the Least Bittern at the Salton Sea, and the Red-breasted Duck near the Wister Fish and Game headquarters.

It was a good year for Lewis' Woodpeckers with a large flock wintering along Figueroa Mountain Road. Our Santa Barbara Christmas Count recorded twice as many Robins, Canvasbacks, Whimbrel, American Goldfinches and Cedar Waxwings as ever before.....Nelson Metcalf