



El Tecolote

BULLETIN OF THE SANTA BARBARA AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

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REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING, FEBRUARY 25, 1977

"THE DRY TORTUGAS"

Dr. Ralph Schreiber, curator of ornithology at the Los Angeles County Natural History Museum, will present a slide-lecture on the Dry Tortugas, which lie near where the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean meet. They are a natural stepping-stone between the Yucatan Peninsula and Florida. Many "exotic" species are found there. Included will be underwater closeups of Brown Pelicans fishing. The meeting will be Friday evening at 8 p.m. in the Fleischmann Auditorium of the Museum of Natural History.

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

- February 17 Board of Directors Meeting - 7:30 p.m., Junior Library, Museum of Natural History. All members are welcome to attend.
Thursday
- February 25 Regular Monthly Meeting - "The Dry Tortugas" at 8 p.m. in the Fleischmann Auditorium of the Museum of Natural History, see details above.
Friday
Be sure to bring your own cup for refreshments!
- February 26 Lake Piru- Good area for raptors, especially eagles. Pack a lunch, spotting scopes are useful. Meet in Santa Barbara at the All Saints by the Sea Church parking lot (U.S. 101 San Ysidro Road exit, turn right onto Eucalyptus Lane, lot is soon on the left) at 7 a.m. In Ventura County meet at Henry's Cafe, just as you enter Fillmore, at 8 a.m.
Saturday
- Leaders: Jim Hodgson, 967-3627
Ron Smith, 687-3963
- February 26 Dune Lakes - a private reserve in San Luis Obispo County near Oceano on Highway 1. Fine natural area for wintering ducks, marsh birds, and raptors. Limited admittance, so phone leader for reservations and car-pooling information. Driver donation \$2.50. Pack a lunch and wear warm clothes. Priority will be given to those members who have not visited this beautiful area before.
Saturday
- Leader: Joy Parkinson, 967-9371
- March 6 Lake Cachuma - Two adult Bald Eagles have been seen at Lake Cachuma this year, along with hundreds of wintering ducks. Lunch is optional, spotting scopes will be helpful. Some rock-hopping may be necessary, so wear boots or old shoes. Car-pool from the Thrifty parking lot in the Five-Points Shopping Center at 8 a.m., or meet at the lake overlook on Highway 154 near the river's outlet.
Sunday

Leader: Ron Smith, 687-3963

Calendar of Coming Events, continued

March 12 Santa Clara River Estuary - McGrath State Park - Meet at Von's in Montecito near U.S. 101 and Hot Springs Road at 7:30 a.m. or at the Hungry Hunter Restaurant near the Seaward Ave. exit in Ventura at 8:15 a.m. for birdwatching in this productive coastal wetland area. Pack a lunch and your mud shoes; spotting scopes are helpful. Waterfowl, shorebirds, migrants. Driver donation \$1.50.

Leader: Paul Lehman, 968-7394

March 19 Point Mugu Lagoon - Reservations are required at least one week in advance for this trip to one of Southern California's remaining sloughs. As guests of the Navy, we learn about the lagoon ecosystem and its inhabitants. Excellent opportunity to view shorebirds, waterfowl, coastal migrants. No cameras. Limited to 25 current members, with preference given to those who haven't previously been on this field trip. Driver donation \$2.00

Reservations: Bill Gielow, 687-3466
(3043 Hermosa Rd., S.B., 93105)

Leader: Joe Gartland

Bird Refuge News

We are all disappointed that there are still about 20 domestic ducks at the Bird Refuge. Following the City Council's request that all such ducks be removed in the best interests of a wild bird refuge, the Domestic Fowl subcommittee tried over a period of time to comply. With much effort they did take over 60% of the ducks to their new home on Sunburst property. Most died, possibly due to polluted water, others were eaten by predators. The Domestic Fowl subcommittee requested that the remaining birds be allowed to stay, and that the city resume the feeding of grain. In view of the legal opinion that the presence of domestic ducks does not violate the will of Mrs. Clark, the City Council approved, at least for the present. As limiting their numbers is all important, the Santa Barbara Audubon Society will conduct a search for domestic duck eggs at the appropriate time. It was suggested that the Bird Refuge needs a curator or naturalist to maintain the best conditions possible.

The main efforts of the Bird Refuge Committee are now being directed toward cleaning the lake. Mr. Smith from the Montecito Sanitary District discussed the possibility of recycling waste water from the sewage disposal plant to be used on a continuous flow into the Bird Refuge. The various water regulation agencies involved and the necessary feasibility studies make this answer a costly and slow process. Sycamore Creek might also be diverted into the lake.

The City Park Department reported on the funding situation. The Clean Lakes Act offers lake restoration grants. Various other federal agencies may be approached under the new congress, as well as revenue sharing and private corporations, such as Exxon.

If any of you wish to attend the next Bird Refuge meeting please let me know.

Dorothy Martone, 969-0444

Bureau of Land Management Newsletter

The Bureau of Land Management (B.L.M.) publishes an excellent newsletter each month, called B.L.M. Newsbeat. For those of us who have been concerned about B.L.M. decisions regarding land use and conservation, this newsletter can help keep us up to date on present and future B.L.M. actions. It is available free of charge from: B.L.M. State Director, Federal Office Building, 2800 Cottage Way, Room e-2841,

Sacramento, CA 95825. The newsletter also lists local office addresses and phone numbers.

Bob Kvass, 964-4626

Everglades Adventure, November 11-21, 1976

The "Questers" Nature Tour of the Everglades and Southwest Florida covered over 900 miles of travel. It included the extreme entrances of the Everglades National Park, which are 40 miles apart, Key Largo, the Pennekamp Coral Reef, the Fakahatchee Strand, Goodland, Ten Thousand Islands, Shark Valley, Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary, Seminole State Park, Marco Island, Sanibel, and the "Ding" Darling Wildlife Refuge, Captiva, Fort Meyers, and Lake Okeechobee. At Jewfish Creek in Key Largo, we were delighted to meet Sid and Mary Tarbox.

Our leader, Dr. Woodie Hartman, is an authority of ecological sciences, including Ornithology, Geology, Botany, and Zoology. We saw alligators, crocodiles, pigmy rattlesnakes, manatees, otter, marsh rabbits, grey and fox squirrels, raccoon, and opossum. We sighted 118 bird species, of which 24 were firsts. In the Everglades we saw vast assemblages of Limpkin, Anhinga, Roseate Spoonbills, Ibis, egrets, herons, and a Least Bittern, as well as Wood Storks. In Miami we saw a flock of Canary-winged Parrots, and 6 Spot-breasted Orioles. In the Darling Sanctuary we saw a flock of Green Parakeets. In Key Largo we sighted the White-crowned Pigeon. Through the park we saw the Prairie, Parula, Palm, and Yellow-throated Warblers. We went swamp-slogging--took an air boat with a Seminole Indian guide over the Sea of Grass, and explored the Pine Rocklands, Hardwood Hammocks, Mangrove swamps, freshwater swamps, the bays and keys, and coastal prairies. A rise of from 1 to 3 feet in elevation made for a completely different range of grasses, bushes, and trees for each foot of elevation.

While we were on the pier in Naples, a flock of Fulvous Tree Ducks flew overhead. In the wild we saw many species of orchids and bromeliads. Other outstanding sightings were the Yellow-billed Cuckoo, the White-eyed and Solitary Vireos, the Pileated Woodpecker, Great-crested Flycatchers, and Smooth-billed Ani.

In Sanibel and Captiva Islands we marvelled at the hordes of shell hunters who prowled the beach for shells at night and early morning, using flashlights to pick out the exotic shells deposited by the waves and tides. Here we saw Laughing Gulls, Sandwich Terns, and both the Wilson's and Piping Plover, and 5 Reddish Egrets.

We were a well-integrated group of 14 people who came from 10 states. The group total came to 122 species. It was a trip of continuous excitement, and ranks high on our list of trips taken.

Minna and Maxim Smith

Gibraltar Dam and Reservoir Field Trip

Our group of 48 birders had beautifully clear weather for this backcountry outing. Most of us had a good look at an adult male Merlin, on our descent by car to the lake from East Camino Cielo. Mr. Stewart, the helpful reservoir caretaker, took us over the dam to view a Red-tailed Hawk's nesting site. Ring-necked Ducks, grebes, and other waterfowl were spotted from this vantage point. The group split roughly in half, and Minna Smith took birders along the river below the dam where chaparral and wintering birds were seen. The others hiked to the mine at the upper end of the lake to view species on the water. Common Mergansers (both sexes), Cinnamon and Green-winged Teal, and Bufflehead were spotted. Other birds of note: Rufous-crowned Sparrow, another Merlin, and a Rock Wren at the mine, and a Winter Wren that refused to come out for the rest of us when spotted by a birder. Total species seen was 44. Our thanks to the folks in the City Public Works Dept. for arranging to make this trip possible.

Bill Gielow

Sespe Christmas Bird Count - Even though no Condor was sighted - and this is a cause for deep concern - our count was quite successful. 111 species were counted by 36 observers in 7 parties. This is a high total for this count. In view of the low totals on other counts this can only be attributed to good birding. My personal and deepest gratitude is extended to all who participated.

Michael Goodwin

"Bird Works"...Larger than Life Drawings by artist Teri Matelson - Teri is a resident of southern California, and has done most of her bird watching and research for her work locally in Santa Barbara. She will be present at the Santa Barbara Natural History Museum to discuss her work on Monday, Feb. 21, and Saturday, Feb. 26. The display will be at the Museum from Feb. 21 to April 14.

Volunteers Needed - Gerrie Human is returning to school, so someone who is home most of the time is needed to receive and pass along rare bird information. Also, if you are a printer, or if you know one who would volunteer printing services for El Tecolote, it would be most appreciated. Call Joy Parkinson, 967-9371 to volunteer for these or any other Audubon tasks.

Address Changes or Mailing Problems - contact Barbara Greene, the membership chairperson, 4512 Via Huerto, Santa Barbara, CA 93110, or call Barbara at 964-3075.

El Tecolote Deadline and new address - Deadline for the March issue is Saturday, February 25, 1977, PLEASE try to get your contributions in on that date or earlier. Send or bring your entries to Mary Lou Hand, 1731 Robbins Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101, or phone 682-4044.

El Tecolote
Santa Barbara Audubon Society
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