



El Tecolote

BULLETIN OF THE SANTA BARBARA AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

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MONTHLY MEETING - OCTOBER 28, 1977

"ALASKA WILDLANDS FOR TOMORROW"

The Western Regional Office of the National Audubon Society has provided us with a slide presentation, titled "Alaska Wildlands for Tomorrow." The audio will be narrated by Mr. Ted Gates of the Santa Barbara County Planning Commission. This meeting should interest us as two congressional bills concerning Alaska are due for hearing in Congress (S1500 and HR39). The meeting will be at 8 p.m. in the Fleischmann Auditorium of the Museum of Natural History.

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

- October 15 Saturday Goleta Slough - Devereux Slough - Especially good areas for observing gulls, terns, shorebirds, marsh birds, and some hawks. Pack a lunch; spotting scope will be useful. Meet at Goleta Beach parking lot to the right of the entrance at 8 a.m.
Leader: Joy Parkinson, 967-9371
- October 20 Thursday Board of Directors' Meeting - 7:30 p.m., Junior Library, Museum of Natural History. All members are invited.
- October 23 Sunday Refugio Canyon - A good opportunity to view resident and migrating woodland and chaparral birds. Meet at Two Guys' parking lot (Hollister and Storke Rds.) at 8 a.m. Bring a lunch and water.
Leader: Minna Smith, 966-7971
co-leader to be announced
- October 28 Friday Regular monthly meeting - "Alaska Wildlands for Tomorrow" at 8 p.m., Fleischmann Auditorium, Museum of Natural History. Be sure to bring a cup for refreshments.
- November 6 Sunday Vandenburg Air Force Base - La Purissima Mission - Good birding for raptors, shorebirds in the Lompoc area. A short walk in the mission garden will precede a drive through portions of the missile base. Wear warm clothes including a windbreaker, gloves, and head protection. Bring a lunch; spotting scopes are useful. Meet at 6:30 a.m. at Thrifty Drug Store at 5 Points Shopping Center for carpooling, or at La Purissima Mission at 7:45 a.m. Driver donation \$1.50.
Leader: Russ Spowart, 1-733-1525

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS, continued

- November 12 San Roque Canyon - This is another good chance to observe woodland species and migrants. Meet at Fazio's parking lot (State St. at Las Positas). Bring water and wear hiking shoes.
Saturday
Leader: Joe Gartland, 968-3307
- November 19-20 Morro Bay-Montana de Oro - Meet at the museum at Morro Bay State Park at 9 a.m. Saturday. Allow 2 hours driving time from Santa Barbara. Either camp at the park, or make your own reservations at one of the local motels. A good chance to observe wintering waterfowl and shorebirds. Take lunch for 2 days. Please call Jim Hodgson if you plan to go.
Saturday-Sunday
Leader to be announced; call Jim Hodgson, 967-3627, for further information
- December 3 Carrizzo Plains - Plan ahead for this 13 hour bus trip. This year the bus will not only have reclining seats, but a restroom as well! Space will be limited to 39, and the fare will be \$10.00. Full details in the next El Tecolote.
Saturday
Leader: Joy Parkinson, 967-9371

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The last report received from NAS informed us that SBAS membership now totals 1,171. That is 1,171 memberships, not individuals, as many are family memberships with at least two, and often more persons included. It seems reasonable to say that SBAS has at least 1,350-1,400 individual members.

This is good news, indeed, especially when you realize that, when SBAS was founded in 1963, there were only 3,000 Audubon members in the entire state of California!! Membership in the state is now over 55,000. (In 1963 NAS membership nationwide was only about 55,000).

The reason I mention this is because something is bothering me. On Friday, September 23 we held our first meeting of the 1977-78 year. The program was "Members' Slides Night" and we saw some excellent slides, taken by our own members, of wildlife in many places--Australia, Baja California, Santa Barbara, etc. Brad Schram's slides of rare birds photographed in the Santa Barbara area were especially interesting. Everyone I talked to said they enjoyed the evening very much indeed.

So why, I ask myself, were there only about 40 people present (including the 10 who showed slides)? I would very much like to know and I am asking you to write or telephone me to let me know how we can serve you better.

The Board of Directors, Committee members, and field trip leaders all work very hard to provide a good balance between conservation activism, education, and fun for our members. Our Education Committee is highly regarded in the community. Our opinions on conservation issues are respected and even, occasionally, accepted by government and industry. Our programs and field trips are, we hope, varied and interesting.

But if, out of over 1,300 members, we can only attract 40 people (not all of them members, incidentally, there were several guests) to a meeting, something must be wrong! Any suggestions from you would be very much appreciated by all of us who try to plan Audubon activities in our community. If you have suggestions, but do not wish to use your name, that is fine with us--just send them to me without a signature. But please do let us know. Thank you.

Congratulations to Virginia Smith for her very fine Audubon exhibit in La Cumbre Plaza on Saturday, September 24. We have already received several enquiries regarding membership as a result of her efforts. And thanks, also, to those members who manned (personned?) the exhibit.

In today's mail I received an exciting new book published by Alfred A. Knopf, entitled "The Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Birds, (Western Region)." This is the

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, continued

first all-photographic field guide--627 full color identification photographs. 855 pages--birds are grouped by color or shape--the first 335 pages are photographs or diagrams. The text is arranged by habitat. This is an entirely different field guide from anything I have ever seen. It should be of great use to beginning birders, and a lovely addition to Peterson for more experienced birders. It has a soft vinyl cover, and the photographs themselves are worth the price of \$7.95. I will bring it to our October 28 meeting for members to examine. I think it would make a wonderful Christmas gift for someone interested in birds. I do hope to see you all at our program on Alaska.

Joy Parkinson

BIRD REFUGE NEWS

Audubon continues to be concerned with the future of the Bird Refuge.

The city Park staff is at present working on a time table for development. Unfortunately the \$4,000 allocated for core samples to be taken from the bottom of the lake was placed in the contingency reserve fund by the City Council during budget hearings. An attempt will be made to return this amount to the Bird Refuge account.

Jose Torres, a park commissioner, is seeking a grant of possibly \$35,000 to be used for a pilot project of deeutrophication of the lake as a method of improving water quality. He is also hoping to arrange a bus tour to the Bird Refuge for City Council members. An on the spot opportunity for informal discussion of needs.

In spite of discouragements, the water seems to have less algae and the future domestic duck population has been cut by Audubon members who gathered eggs last spring. The Great Blue Heron still sails high over the water while the small night heron hides in the grasses.

Dorothy Martone

NATURE CONSERVANCY BUYS 90% OF SANTA CRUZ ISLAND

The Nature Conservancy has announced that it intends to buy 90% (55,000 acres) of Santa Cruz Island, the largest of the Channel Islands. The Conservancy will gain control of 15,000 acres next July, and will have a conservation easement over the remaining 40,000 acres.

It will maintain the island as a preserve, with naturalist groups allowed on at various times. The Conservancy hopes to remove any feral domestic animals which may harm the unique island habitat, although cattle grazing will continue. It will be closely studied to determine grazing's effect on native grasses. University of California research will continue, as the island supports 31 plant species found nowhere else. There are 44 resident bird species and 121 migrants; the endangered Channel Island Fox and Brown Pelican live there, as well as 6 kinds of sea mammals and other native wildlife.

The Nature Conservancy now faces the problem of funding, which will amount to over \$4 million. The Conservancy preserves biologic diversity through acquisition of natural areas, financed by private donations, often from corporate sources. This appears to be a project that Santa Barbara Audubon could help support financially.

For further information about the Nature Conservancy and the Santa Cruz Island preserve contact Virginia Smith at 963-2875.

Virginia Smith

WRONG NUMBER

The number listed for Ron Smith in the August-September El Tecolote was incorrect. The correct number is 687-3963. Sorry, Ron.

FIELD TRIP REPORTSSan Miguel Island & Outer Channel - August 28, 1977

This eleven hour journey was highlighted by the sighting of Arctic Terns and Leach's Petrels. Several Dall Porpoises swam near the boat for several minutes. At the island we were greeted by hundreds of California Sea Lions. As we came close to shore we were able to view several Elephant Seals and Northern Fur Seals as well. Twenty plus species of birds were identified on the trip.

Ron Smith

Santa Clara River Estuary - September 10, 1977

Despite a heavy overcast, 48 species were seen by 15 avid birders. Especially exciting was being able to observe a small flock of Least Terns (including immatures) for some time. Also noteworthy were a cooperative Osprey who sat quietly while everyone got a good look at him through a spotting scope, and Parasitic Jaegers harassing Elegant Terns just offshore. Flocks of terns (Elegant and Forster's) and Sanderlings rested on shore, and a large assortment of shorebirds and waders searched for tidbits. Among the passerines were Yellowthroats, Red-winged Blackbirds, and numerous Song Sparrows. Green Heron and Pigeon Guillemot were also sighted.

Linda O'Neill

Santa Barbara Harbor and Bird Refuge - September 18, 1977

On Sunday, September 18 a dozen birders explored the breakwater, sandspit, and Bird Refuge. The weather was superb, but birding was sparse, due in part to the presence of loose dogs on the sandspit. A total of 47 species was seen, including a Wandering Tattler, Elegant Terns, and several species of heron.

Florence Sanchez

AUDUBON WORKSHOP OF THE WEST

Thank you so much for the scholarship to the Audubon Workshop of the West. The experience was one I shall always treasure.

All the instructors were outstanding. The entire program was ecology oriented and each instructor tied his/her specialty into an overview of all nature. As an example, the ornithology instructor did not simply lead us around and name birds. Instead there was discussion as to why birds have different colored feathers, why the colors are brighter in spring and summer, why they sing. On one trip he used his tape recorder and played a Song Sparrow's song. All of a sudden, from his nearby nest, appeared the Song Sparrow replying to the recorder, telling it that this was his area.

We had several excellent field trips, led by the same outstanding instructors. One such trip to the alpine meadows had the photo bugs going mad with pictures of the beautiful flowers there. It was interesting to note how much redder their Indian Paint Brush is compared to ours. And the Monkey Flower at the altitude of 10,000 feet is a bright orange, almost red, compared to our dull orange Monkey Flower. I learned that there is a law regarding this: the higher the elevation, the brighter the colors within a species.

We had two class sessions per day plus evening entertainment after dinner which was also knowledge sharing. Basic subjects were ornithology, geology, vertebrates, invertebrates, and botany. I especially enjoyed seeing the petroglyphs along the lakes since I have a similar interest in the Chumash art. And one day, I found myself running around with a butterfly net catching insects. It may look silly, but it's not as easy as it looks! There were so many things I learned and I could not begin to list them all.

I also met some wonderful people with a wide range of occupations and ages: retired postman, young factory worker, Sierra Club coordinator, teachers, fellow rangers. I only wish that every person could experience that Wyoming Audubon Camp. The knowledge, friendships, approach to nature has made an indelible mark on my memories that will follow me wherever, whatever I do.

Ann Puddicombe, Los Padres National Forest ranger

POINT REYES BIRD OBSERVATORY TOUR OF S.E. ARIZONA, AUGUST 6-16, 1977

Leaders: Ornithology - Richard Stallcup; Botany, Zoology - Peter Warshall

A flying excursion during "Second Apache Spring" through the Pajarito, Santa Rita, Patagonia, Huchuca, and Chiricahua mountain ranges proved fruitful, exciting, and memorable. From the low desert (2,500 ft.) up to Rustler's Park (9,500 ft.) traversing many plant communities such as oak woodland, chapparal, pine forest, grassland, and desert helped to amass a group total of 197 species of birds.

Richard Stallcup is a genius! He can distinguish each bird by its song. He called out the Whiskered and Elf Owls in Madera Canyon until they were in the nearby oak tree when we caught them in our flashlights. Some of my firsts were the Scaled Quail, Zone-tailed and Gray Hawks, Olive, Virginia, Grace's, and Red-faced Warblers, Stilt Sandpiper, the Crissal, Curve-billed, and Bendire's Thrashers, the Black-tailed Gnatcatcher, and all of the buntings. Even the elusive Yellow-breasted Chat made an appearance.

Peter was well versed in the flora and fauna of the region, and a large variety of turtles, lizards, snakes, deer, javelina, as well as numerous insects and wild flowers were sighted.

Mile-Hi in Ramsey Canyon is now the property of the Nature Conservancy. They hosted nine varieties of hummingbirds around their feeders. They still rent out cottages by the day, week, or month.

If you are not averse to moving rapidly, camping out four nights, (motels for three), birding sometimes twelve hours a day, by all means enroll in this marvelous tour. If this tenderfoot managed, anyone is capable!

Minna E. Smith

PEREGRINE FALCON SYMPOSIUM

The National Audubon Society will sponsor a symposium on The Current Status of Peregrine Falcon Populations in North America on Saturday, October 22, 1977. This day-long program will be held in the Oakland Museum.

Representatives of both private organizations and public agencies will present a discussion on current population trends and recovery efforts to restore Peregrine Falcon populations.

Registration for the symposium will be by mail only. No tickets will be sold at the door. To register, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope and \$3.50 per person to: Peregrine Falcon Symposium, National Audubon Society, Whittell Education Center, 376 Greenwood Beach Road, Tiburon, California 94920. Checks should be made payable to the National Audubon Society.

THE CALIFORNIA CONDOR - 1977 (Proceedings of the Audubon Symposiums)

Based on a series of symposiums, papers, and personal communications, the National Audubon Society's George Whittell Education Center has recently published an up-to-date summary of information available on the California Condor.

This special publication recounts the history of condor preservation efforts and describes the current status and recovery efforts proposed to help insure the future survival of this magnificent bird.

The California Condor-1977 may be ordered by mail for \$2.50 plus 35¢ postage and handling. (California residents add 15¢ sales tax). Address orders and make checks payable to: National Audubon Society, 376 Greenwood Beach Road, Tiburon, California 94920.

BOTANIC GARDEN PLANT SALE - October 22, 1977

The Santa Barbara Botanic Garden is sponsoring a plant sale on October 22, 1977. Although California natives especially suited to home gardens will be featured, a variety of hanging baskets, succulents, and other non-native plants will also be available.

The sale will be open to the public from 1 to 4 p.m. All proceeds will benefit the continued work of the Botanic Garden, and memberships will be available on the day of the sale.

NEW BIRD PHONE

The new Santa Barbara Dial-a Bird phone is now installed and operational! A 3-minute recorded message will locate rare birds in the area and provide information on interesting and/or unusual migrants. The number will be listed in the telephone book under Santa Barbara Audubon Society - Bird Report. The number is 964-8240.

Cherie Bratt

WATER FOR THE BIRDS

Along with a human water shortage comes a wildlife water shortage. A Wilson's Warbler was so thirsty that he flew to a hose held by Joy Parkinson's husband Ed for a badly needed drink, approaching much closer than he would come under normal circumstances. You can help with the thirst problem -- keep you bird bath full, it's more important to the birds now than your feeder.

ADDRESS CHANGES and El Tecolote mailing problems - send to Barbara Greene, 4512 Via Huerto, Santa Barbara, CA 93110.

EL TECOLOTE DEADLINE - The deadline for the November-December issue is Friday, October 28, 1977. Send or bring your contributions to Mary Lou Hand, 1731 Robbins Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101, or call 682-4044. Your contributions (and your promptness) are greatly appreciated.

El Tecolote
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