



El Tecolote

BULLETIN OF THE SANTA BARBARA AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

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MONTHLY MEETING — APRIL 27, 1979

"THE YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO"

There has been found a large population of this rare bird along the South Fork of the Kern River. Our guest speaker for this evening's program, Bob Barns, president of the Tulare County Audubon Society, has slides of this species together with others covering the natural history of this important habitat. Bob has taken a years leave from his teaching profession to generate support for the ecological preservation of the South Fork. The river begins its 85-mile course in the newly created Golden Trout Wilderness and ends in what the Department of Fish and Game states as the "finest Cottonwood-Willow forest remaining along any river in the state of California." Come and share these great slides of this beautiful area at the Fleishchmann Auditorium, Museum of Natural History at 8:00 p.m.

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

- April 7-8** **Figueroa Mountain Campout** Leaders: Bill Gielow, Joe Gartland
- ?** **An After Easter Midweek Mystery Walk!** Leader: Virginia Puddicombe. For time and day call Virginia at 969-1702
- April 21** **Refugio and Nojoqui Falls Park** Leader: Joy Parkinson. Meet at Thrifty Five Points
Saturday at 8 a.m. for carpooling. We will visit Refugio and then go on the Nojoqui for lunch and a walk up the canyon. Bring lunch and water. Driver donation \$2.00 967-9371
- May 5** **Starr Ranch Open House** Starr Ranch Audubon Sanctuary in Orange County.
Saturday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Write to Jeff Froke, manager, PO Box 157, San Juan Capistrano, CA. 92675 for maps and information or contact Wendy Bevier at 964-1030.
- May 5** **McGrath State Park—Ventura** Leader: Linda O'Neill. Meet at Museum of Natural
Saturday History for car pooling at 8 a.m., or at Seaward Avenue, Chevron Station at 8:45. Bring lunch. Call Chuck Lucey 967-6593 (evenings) for car pooling. Scopes are useful.
- May 12** **Goleta Point** 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. At this time of year we have an excellent chance
Saturday to see Red and Northern Phalaropes, Black-legged Kittiwakes, three species of Loons, and many other oceanic birds as they pass by in migration to the far north. Hopefully we will have a cold, blustery, west wind, as this improves birding the channel from this lookout point. Dress warmly in that event. Meet in the Fed Mart parking lot by the exit closest to the sewage plant at 2:00 p.m. for car pooling to Goleta Point. Scopes are especially helpful. Leader: Brad Schram
- June 2** **Audubon Annual Picnic** Election of Officers. Stow Grove Park. See Joy Parkinson
Saturday or Wendy Bevier for details.

Minna Smith, Field Trip Chairperson, is off on an adventure to Greece. For any additional information call Bill Gielow 687-3466 or Chuck Lucey 967-6593 evenings.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

ALASKA

The most disappointing "environmental" news in some time concerns the House Interior Committee's vote on H.R. 39, the Alaska Bill. As reported in the **Santa Barbara News-Press** on March 4, our representative, Robert Lagomarsino, voted with the one-vote majority for what has been described as "the single worst public lands bill ever adopted." Representative Morris Udall, the committee chairman and co-sponsor of the infinitely more desirable version of H.R. 39, doubts that President Carter would sign the "Huckaby substitute", for which Lagomarsino voted, because of its deeply flawed character. Briefly, while paying rhetorical homage to the preservation of millions of acres, it opens up vast tracts of wilderness to various types of economic exploitation. This is precisely the type of activity the original bill was designed to obviate.

We were in contact with Representative Lagomarsino's office before and after his critical vote. His rationale, in a letter addressed to us dated March 16, 1979, states: "If given an opportunity I would vote for last year's version—Udall's— of the bill again. . . . While I am strongly committed to protecting Alaska's unique and spectacular wilderness, because of present energy problems I voted for the Huckaby substitute which at least leaves open the possibility for continued exploitation of Alaska's energy potential in specific areas."

The first rationale is perplexing; he **had** the opportunity and cast what in essence was the deciding vote **against** it.

The second, in light of the facts and subsequent events, is most curious. The bill, backed by National Audubon and 39 other conservation organizations and 139 House co-sponsors includes only 5% of Alaska's known or suspected oil and gas reserves. Considering that the **Santa Barbara News-Press** of March 5 noted his laudable vote in favor of withdrawing from sale certain tracts in the Santa Barbara Channel one must ask why he expresses "concern for energy" in one vote but not another? We will be interested in Representative Lagomarsino's continuing record on this and other environmental issues.

It is not too late, however, for Alaska. President Carter, Secretary of the Interior Andrus, and our state's senators and representatives still must act with finality on this issue. Keep them informed of your concerns.

NAOMI SCHWARTZ

Rumor is circulating that Governor Brown may "axe" Ms. Schwartz from the State Coastal Commission for personal political gain. She has, in our opinion, responsibly discharged her duties, and is especially conversant with issues facing Santa Barbara County. You may be able to directly affect the course of events by writing Governor Brown immediately, requesting her continued appointment.

MARINE SANCTUARY

The California Coastal Commission has recommended that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA): 1) generate an environmental impact statement regarding the appropriateness of a Channel Islands Marine Sanctuary, and 2) seriously consider the **entire** channel for sanctuary status. Both of these positions were recommended by SBAS at the February 14 hearing in Santa Barbara, as reported in the last issue of **El Tecolote**. Your support for the channel proposal is requested. Please address comments to: Jo Ann Chandler, Acting Director, Sanctuaries Program Office, U.S. Department of Commerce—NOAA, 2001 Wisconsin Ave., N.W., Washington D.C. 20235.

CONDOR

As noted in the Conservation Section of this issue of **El Tecolote**, SBAS's Conservation Committee requests your feedback on the Captive Breeding Program. National Audubon supports it and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has recently approved it. Please communicate with us regarding this matter.

We are entering spring migration time. April is an excellent month for birding the coast, ocean, and estuaries as migrants are heading north in large numbers at this time. It is one of the great Events of the year. Good birding. . .

Brad Schram

DESERT FILM

The Open Alternative School environmental studies program is showing the George Anderson film "What's the Use", concerning use of our deserts, on April 10. Call the school for details at 962-3826.

NATIONAL CONVENTION

National Audubon's biennial convention is being held June 29 through July 1 in Estes Park, Colorado. For details, write to CONVENTION, National Audubon Society, P.O. Box 3557, Boulder, Colorado 80307, or call (303) 499-0219.

CONSERVATION REPORT

As you know, the National Audubon Society strongly recommends a drastic program of human intervention in an attempt to prevent the extinction of the California condor. An Interior Department task force has proposed a program of greatly expanded research, habitat protection and captive propagation.

According to the February 23 Audubon **Leader**: "Research will be aimed at learning more about the seasonal distribution of condors, their daily foraging range, their use of available habitat, and the degree to which their food has been contaminated by pesticides. This last is a factor identified by the Audubon-AOU panel as being strongly implicated in the condor's past decline and present reproductive difficulties.

"Some of the research will be performed on close relatives of the California condor—the Andean condor and black and turkey vultures—which have similar characteristics. For example, by experiments on vultures it is hoped that more can be learned about how to rid condors of pesticide residues in their tissues. By experiments with the Andean condor the scientists will develop methods of introducing captive-bred condors to the wild in the manner that falconers hack back hawks.

"Other research, as well as the captive propagation program, will be accomplished by capturing wild condors, an operation. . .to begin as early as next fall. As many condors as possible will be captured, but at first most will be released after their sex has been determined, samples of their feathers, and stool have been taken, and the birds have been marked and equipped with tiny radio transmitters that will enable the research team to keep track of their movements.

"Nine wild condors are to be kept for captive propagation during the first two years of the program. . .the first condors to be kept will be either immatures, too young to have started breeding in the wild, or non-breeding adults. . .The long-term goal is as many as 20 captive breeding pairs whose offspring will be returned to the wild in a program that may last as long as 40 years."

Questions that need careful consideration are:

Will cage-raised birds do any better than wild stock if the present environment is poor for survival and reproduction?

Would released birds lack the survival skills that wild birds learn from years of following their elders?

Would cage-raised stock enhance the free-ranging population?

Is there sufficient habitat to support an expanded population?

Are we meddling in the destiny of the California condor?

For background information refer to the two-part article, "Last Days of the Condor?" in the March 1978 and May 1978 **Audubon**.

The Conservation Committee would appreciate your comments to aid in future deliberations. Please mail them to the committee c/o Joy Parkinson, 568 Beaumont Way, Goleta, CA 93017.

The last of the Buffalo Wolves (see November 1977 **Audubon**) will be having more pups soon, and there will be added veterinary and food costs. Please send your contributions to Dr. E.H. McCleery Lobo Wolf Foundation, Inc., PO Box 344, Gardner, Washington 98334.

The Santa Barbara City General Plan lacks a Conservation Element (as required by state law). Natural areas within the City limits are therefore, without protection from development. If you object to this present condition, please let your council-people know how you feel.

MORRO BAY TRIP

Only eight members and guests risked threatened rain on the weekend of February 24-25 to go to Morro Bay, but the weather was kind and left us dry overhead. The bay, the slough, and the rocky Montana de Oro Coast all produced their usual range of water-related birds, except that the White Pelicans had already moved inland. However, this was offset by sightings of the Red-necked Grebe, the Peregrine Falcon, and a huge flock of Brants. The camp areas were somewhat disappointing, except that they provided several good views of Rufous Hummers.

On the way home a stop at the upper end of Lake Cachuma produced Whistling Swans, a Bald Eagle, an Osprey, and fine views of the Western Grebe's courtship "dance". An amazing show! In all, just over 100 species were sighted; so it was a satisfying weekend.

Sid Tarbox

COLOR MARKED CORMORANTS

A three year program to color mark Double-crested Cormorants was started at Ninepipe National Wildlife Refuge this season. Birds are marked with standard USFWS aluminum leg bands plus colored vinyl leg streamers on one or both legs. The following information is requested on any sightings:

1. Color of streamer.
2. Location of streamer (which leg or legs).
3. Letter code if possible.
4. Date and time of sighting.
5. Exact location of sighting.
6. Was the bird in the company of other cormorants.
7. Plumage if possible.
8. Observer's name, address and telephone number.

Please report sightings to: Marcella M. Bishop, Shoreline Route, Polson, Montana 59860.

EL TECOLOTE DEADLINE

The deadline for contributions to the May issue is Friday, April 27 (the regular monthly meeting). Bring your contributions to the meeting or send them early that week to John Bullock, 217 South Third Street, Lompoc, CA 93436.

DAIL-A-BIRD

For current news of rare and unusual birds in the Santa Barbara area call 964-8240 anytime, night or day. You will hear a 3-minute recording giving all the latest information.

ADDRESS CHANGES AND EL TECOLOTE MAILING PROBLEMS

Send address changes to Joan Lentz, 433 Pimiento Lane, Santa Barbara, CA 93108, or call Joan at 969-4397.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The SBAS Board of Directors meets in the Junior Library at the Museum of Natural History at 7:30 p.m. on the Second Thursday of each month. The next meeting will be April 12. Members are welcome to attend.

EL TECOLOTE

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