

# El Tecolote

BULLETIN OF THE SANTA BARBARA AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

October, 1980  
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## MONTHLY MEETING—OCTOBER 31, 1980

### "Isles of Scilly—Britain's Fortunate Isles"

The Isles of Scilly are a tiny archipelago some 50 miles from Land's End, Cornwall, the far south-western tip of England. The islands, designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, are the home of a wide variety of sea and shore birds, breeding place of the Atlantic Grey Seal, and an excellent migration watch-point. Each year vagrant birds are recorded from as far away as North America, Scandinavia and even Central Asia. David Hunt has made his home in Scilly for the past fifteen years, most of which have been devoted to showing visitors the wealth of natural phenomena the islands have to offer. David's boat trips, wildlife safaris and lectures are a regular feature of the Summer season, and every winter he takes a selection of his best color slides on tour in Britain, and more recently to Sweden, where they are very well-received. Come join us for an exciting look at British wildlife in the Fleischmann Auditorium, Museum of Natural History at 8:00 p.m. Please remember to bring your own cup for refreshments and fellowship following the meeting.

## CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

- October 19  
Sunday**      **Gibraltar Dam Hike**—Meet at 5 Point Thrifty at 8:00 a.m. with a lunch and water for a moderately strenuous hike around and about this interesting body of water. Leader: Joe Gartland, 966-7029.
- October 25  
Saturday**      **Harbor, Bird Refuge, S.B. Cemetery**—Meet at the Bird Refuge Parking Lot at 8:00 a.m. for a half-day trip to look for fall vagrants. Leader: Jim Greaves, 968-9480.
- November 8  
Saturday**      **Santa Ynez Valley, Happy Canyon**—Look for fall vagrants and raptors. Meet at Thrifty's parking lot at Five Points at 8:00 a.m. Bring lunch and water. Driver donation: \$2.50. Leader: Joy Parkinson, 967-9371.
- November 22  
Saturday**      **Vandenberg Air Force Base**—A good spot for raptors, waterfowl and vagrants. Very little hiking as most spots can be reached by car. Limited to 30 people. You must be an **American Citizen**. Dress in layers and be prepared for a possible cold, windy day. Scopes are useful, but cameras can not be used on base. Bring a sack lunch and water. Meet at La Purisima Mission at 8:00 a.m. Driver Donation: \$3.00. Leader: Russ Spowart. Call either Russ Spowart, 733-1525 or Jim Hodgson, 968-0125 for reservations.

## BIRDS IN SANTA BARBARA

By Paul Lehman

September and October are typically the most exciting months of the year, bird-wise in much of California. This is because fall migration is at its peak at this time and with it comes a large number of vagrant species to our region. Many of these species are normally found only in eastern North America while others are out-of-range visitors from Siberia. Both land and waterbirds are involved in this displacement which is the result of both the random wanderings and misorientation of individual migrants, particularly of immatures. While such vagrants can turn up almost anywhere in our region, most records come from coastal areas.

While August is usually too early a time in which to see significant numbers of migrating landbirds, it is an excellent month in which to observe large numbers of shorebirds. This year the Santa Maria area produced a number of interesting shorebird records. A total of nine Semipalmated Sandpipers were found. This species had only been recorded once previously in the county; however, it may prove to be a rare but regular visitor at this season but is difficult to separate from the abundant Western Sandpiper. Another eastern shorebird, the Stilt Sandpiper, was also seen near Santa Maria. Amazing was the occurrence of up to nine Marbled Murrelets, July-September, at Point Sal, for this alcid is normally found only well to the north.

Vagrant landbirds started to appear at the end of August with the arrival of several Indigo Buntings in Goleta. Early September produced at least six Eastern Kingbirds in the Santa Barbara area; our region is likely the best in the state in which to see this species in the fall. Some of the more regular species of vagrants to our area which soon appeared included several Black and White, Tennessee, Virginia's, and Blackpool Warblers, American Redstarts, and Bobolinks. Rarer still, individual Red-eyed Vireos were seen in Santa Barbara and at Gaviota, Lucy's Warblers were logged in Goleta and at Gaviota, a Chestnut-sided Warbler was in Carpinteria, 3 Northern Waterthrushes were recorded (two in Carpinteria, one in Goleta), and two Dickcissels were in Goleta. A big surprise was a Northern Parula at Nojoqui Falls Park in early September. Not only are there only a handful of records for this eastern warbler, but this bird was found at an "inland" locality which is quite atypical.

There are three subspecies of the Solitary Vireo in North America. The race "cassini" is the one which regularly occurs in our area. Before this September neither of the other two had ever occurred here. But this year single individuals of the gray race "plumbeous" from the Great Basin/Rocky Mountains and of the bright, eastern race "solitarius", or "Blue-headed" Vireo, were seen in Santa Barbara and Carpinteria respectively.

A real goldmine in late September was Carpinteria Creek. During the four-day period September 20-23 this area produced a number of the above-mentioned species along with rarer sightings of a Scarlet Tanager, Orchard Oriole, and the first county record of Mourning Warbler.

## HERE AT LAST!

The long-awaited edition of *The Birds of Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties, California*, has arrived. The three brilliant young authors, Richard Webster, Paul Lehman, and Louis Bevier are to be commended for the hours of work invested in this popular book formerly known as *The Birds of the Santa Barbara Region* by Nelson Metcalf.

*The Birds of Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties, California* contains a list of the 423 recorded birds in our region, as well as a detailed map, clear bar graphs, habitat notes, and specific species references where changes occur. The book is now available in the Museum Shop at our Museum of Natural History at a cost of \$3.75.

## CONSERVATION

### Flood Control

This winter, the Board of Directors will sponsor a workshop on insect and vegetation killing in local creeks. We will hope to have representatives of Flood Control and various governmental and public agencies to explain their policies, as well as people who may have alternatives. Anyone interested in participating is urged to call Jim Greaves (968-9480), Eileen Gray (967-0698), or Nancy Crawford (964-7508) and sign up.

### Stow House

At its regular monthly meeting in September 1980, the Board of Directors reaffirmed its commitment to support only open space uses for Stow House and the surrounding park. Currently, a group is attempting to change use of the open land north of the Los Carneros Fire Station into one of intense sporting—softball. Opposition centers around increased noise, pollution (dust and transportation), lack of sanitary facilities, lack of parking areas, and the original use designation for Stow House Park—an open park without the intensive development for sports and other forms of destructive, non-appreciative uses. The founders of the park, including the county governments, intended the park to be an open space for more subtle forms of recreation. Since there are sufficient numbers of playing fields throughout the Goleta Valley (schools have developed ball parks) it is not a good investment. We urge members to inform their representatives (and Parks Director Pahos) that they oppose such formation at Stow House. "Give them an inch and they'll take a mile."

### Stanislaus River

The proposed legislation to protect the Stanislaus River from total annihilation was defeated in committee on a 20-19 vote. Congressmen Clausen and Lagomarsino voted to delete the river from HR.4223 (Omnibus Wild and Scenic Rivers bill). Congressman Lagomarsino's representative (Mike Wootton) in Santa Barbara informed the Conservation Chairman that Lagomarsino will be taking the matter up with the Department of the Interior, in order to protect the river from further destruction. So, although it appears that he voted to destroy the river, it may be that he will redeem his vote in other ways. We will keep members informed of this matter as more information becomes available. For further information, call Wootton at 963-1708.

### Sespe-Frazier Wilderness

HR. 7702 passed the House with little opposition, and is now awaiting action in the Senate. Please call, write, etc., your Senators in Washington DC (Zip Code 20510) and urge them to support this House-passed bill **this session**. Although they close up shop at the end of September, there will be a post election session prior to ending before Christmas, so there is still time to let them know your views. Call Jim Greaves for information.

### More Mesa

In response to repeated efforts to find alternate uses for More Mesa, the County Board of Supervisors finally voted (3 to 0) to send a letter to the State Coastal Conservancy recommending that they investigate alternate use and funding for purchase of the property as an open space preserve. Significantly, supervisors Kallman and Fletcher slipped out the back door minutes before the crucial vote on the subject. Supervisors Wallace, Hedlund, and Yager are to be congratulated on their clarity of vision in seeing that their vote to send the letter committed no one to a change in vote on the present political status of the property, nor to a change in zoning. We will keep members abreast of the issue as it develops.

Jim Greaves

## BIRD REHABILITATION CENTER

If you have ever found an injured or orphaned baby bird in Santa Barbara, then you are aware that besides a few caring individuals, there are no professional facilities available to accommodate these birds. Therefore, many birds are put to sleep each week.

In the past, birds have been brought to the Museum of Natural History and to the Zoo. In both cases they have been cared for despite lack of manpower and space. Presently the Zoo is not financially able to take in birds other than seabirds for rehabilitation. Thus, the Museum of Natural History has become overburdened by this problem that confronts us all.

A young man by the name of Jeff Berglund is in the process of initiating a service to fill this need. He plans to open a facility called the Wildbird Rehabilitation Center, which will be located in a donated building behind the Museum of Natural History.

Mr. Berglund's credentials for such an undertaking are impressive. He holds a Degree in Biology, 6 months research work on the California Condor with the Forest Service and 3 years as the Head Keeper at the Santa Barbara Zoo, during which he gained much experience working side-by-side with numerous local veterinarians.

The Wildbird Rehabilitation Center will be designed to handle birds ranging from hummingbirds to Golden Eagles. The facility will be open to the general public and will serve as a very valuable educational center. Springtime always produces many orphaned baby birds and a facility to handle them is definitely needed.

The Wildbird Rehabilitation Center will be a non-profit organization. Donations and grants (tax deductible) will be the major sources of income. All Audubon members are urged to join this worthwhile endeavor. Call the Museum of Natural History at 682-4334 during the day or 687-3904 after 5:00 p.m. for more information. The success of the Wildbird Rehabilitation Center will surely benefit both the future of the birds in our county and the people that share in their beauty.

## MEMBERSHIP AND MAILING

A special commendation to Jean Johnson for her superb job as Membership Secretary for 1979-1980. She left our records in meticulous order and has also devised a special system for dealing with the many detailed problems involved with "talking to a computer"! Many thanks.

The only source of Santa Barbara Audubon Society is the chapter split of the dues received from National Audubon Society. You can help us by paying your dues **on time**, as well as notifying both SBAS and NAS of any change of name or address.

This is the season to think of giving Gift Memberships to your friends and relatives.

After the summer we have a large amount of lapsing memberships. I would like a volunteer telephone committee to help find out if we can get these people to again join us. Please volunteer to help by calling Minna E. Smith, 966-7971. The cost of an "El Tecolote" only—for non-members is \$2.50. Send membership letters to:

Minna E. Smith—Membership Secretary  
1600 Garden St. #35  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

## EL TECOLOTE DEADLINE

The deadline for contributions to the November issue is Friday, October 31 (monthly meeting). Bring your contributions to the meeting or send them early that week to John Bullock, 217 South Third St., Lompoc CA 93436.

## BANDED SNOWY PLOVER SURVEY RESULTS

Volunteer participants all along the coast of Washington, Oregon, and California collected great information on the distribution and number of Snowy Plovers last winter and spring. In Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties 668 Snowy Plovers were seen in ten locations. This amounted to 25 percent of the total number of plovers estimated from the survey of the entire California coast. Santa Barbara County, with 448 of these birds, held the highest number of plovers seen in any county. Below is a table giving the locations of beaches on which plovers were found and the highest number of birds seen on the number of surveys indicated:

Site	Highest No. Seen	Banded Plovers	No. of Surveys
Santa Maria River Mouth	59	1	14
Purisima Point Beach	228	0	1
Santa Ynez River Mouth	150	0	6
Devereaux Slough	54	0	4
North Goleta Point	7	0	3
Goleta Beach Park	71	0	5
Santa Barbara Harbor Spit	68	0	9
West Beach	60	0	3
Santa Clara River Mouth	34	0	13
Mugu Lagoon Spits	127	0	10

If you find more Snowy Plovers at any of these sites than is reported above, or should you find plovers in any new sites, we would greatly appreciate the details of the sighting.

This summer we banded more adults and chicks at Mono Lake and on Monterey Bay at would like to continue the winter search for banded birds. If you would like to help us locate our banded plovers, help us learn more about wintering populations, or find out more about our studies of this secretive inhabitant of California's beaches and alkaline lakes, please write Gary Page at Point Reyes Bird Observatory, 4990 Shoreline Highway, Stinson Beach, CA 94970.

## BIRD COUNT

Paul Lehman will be in charge of this year's Bird Count. If you have any ideas or suggestions, contact Paul: PO Box 1061, Goleta, 93017. The tentative date for this year's count is January 3, 1981, and a festive dinner is being planned at the end of the "Big Day".

## PUBLICITY CHAIRMAN

SBAS has a new Publicity Chairman. Her name is Sheila Johnson, 1498 Tunnel Road, Santa Barbara, 93105, 682-4618.

## SANTA CLARA RIVER FIELD TRIP

Fourteen birders enjoyed a warm, partly cloudy day at the Santa Clara River. Viewed were many of the fall shorebirds. Spectacular views of three Black Skimmers and a Parasitic Jaeger harassing a Gull.

Jim Hodgson

## DIAL-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.

## 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. Members are always welcome to attend.

**EL TECOLOTE**  
Santa Barbara Audubon Society  
P.O. Box 2067  
Santa Barbara, CA 93102

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