

# El Tecolote

BULLETIN OF THE SANTA BARBARA AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

January, 1986

Volume 23, Number 1



SBAS Office  
300 N. Los Carneros Rd.  
Goleta, Ca 93117  
(805) 964-1468

Hugh Ranson  
Editor

## JANUARY MONTHLY PROGRAM

On Friday, January 24, Dr. Lodewijk Van Den Berg, who last year spent a week orbiting the earth aboard the shuttle "Challenger", will reveal the practical side of living in space.

This meeting will be held at the Fleischmann Auditorium of the Museum of Natural History. Refreshments will be available before and after the 8:00 pm meeting.

## FEBRUARY MONTHLY PROGRAM

On Friday, February 28, our guest speaker will be Dr. Arthur G. Sylvester, who is Chairman of the Department of Geological Sciences at U.C.S.B. We are privileged to have a foremost expert in the subject speak on, "Prospects for the Next Large Earthquake in Southern California". All of us residing in this area are aware of the major faults that have caused great local damage in the past. The ever present threat of another jolt of 6, 7 or 8 on the Richter scale is always lurking in our future.

This California born scientist attended Pomona College and U.C.L.A. He was a Fulbright Scholar at Oslo University, Norway. Dr. Sylvester is Director and a lecturer at A.A.P.G. Structural Geology School. He belongs to many professional societies including the Seismological Society of America and has served on national committees such as Crustal Movements, Seismology and Geodesy and the National Academy of Sciences.

With this impressive background, you will want to be sure to hear Dr. Sylvester and see his slides of earthquake prediction experiments. Refreshments will be available before and after the 8:00 pm meeting at Farrand Hall. The best bird seed in Santa Barbara will be available for purchase to feed your backyard bird visitors.

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## MONARCH BUTTERFLY INFORMATION REQUESTED

Santa Barbara provides a wintering home for many thousands of Monarch Butterflies, which return each year to grace small groups of Eucalyptus trees, where they roost by hanging in large bunches on branches of the trees.

Recently, several wintering sites have been destroyed, mostly due to new property developments. Headed by Chris Nagano, the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History is working to save the trees favored by the butterflies from future destruction, and Chris welcomes any information about new roosting sites, and would also like to know of any sightings of wing-tagged Monarchs.

If you have any information, please call Chris at 682-4711.

### T-Shirt Competition

A decision will be made as to the winner of the T-shirt design competition at the Board of Directors meeting in March. If the board feels that a suitable entry has not been received, the decision will be deferred. The prize is the choice of a \$25.00 gift certificate to either the Museum of Natural History gift shop or the Botanic Gardens gift shop. The design should have a bird theme and should be sent to the office as soon as possible.



### SOUTH COAST BIRD REPORTS

Los Angeles	213/874-1318
San Bernardino	714/793-5599
San Diego	619/435-6761



For current news of rare and unusual sightings in the Santa Barbara area, call 964-8240 anytime, night or day. You will hear a three-minute recording giving all the latest information. If you have any unusual or exciting sightings, please call Chris Benesh at 968-9434. Good birding !!!

### Conservation News

Condor update: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has called for the removal of the remaining wild Condors, on the basis of seven points deemed necessary for the continued existence of the species. The National Audubon Society opposes such action, and has successfully filed a temporary injunction to halt the roundup. If you wish to express your views on this matter, write to the following people:

Eugene Hester,  
Acting Director,  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,  
Washington D.C. 20240  
(202) 343-4717

William Horn,  
Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife  
and Parks Department of the Interior,  
Washington D.C. 20240  
(202) 343-4416

Those wishing to learn more of the seven points are urged to call Chris Benesh at 968-9434.

Least Bell's Vireo: Plans continue towards giving this species the endangered species status it deserves, and towards developing a comprehensive plan to manage it's comeback and continued preservation. The major problem is that there is a direct conflict between the birds' habitat and several proposed water projects for Southern California.

Bird Refuge update: Meetings are being held to determine a plan for the management of the domestic bird population at the refuge. Recent plans include the construction of a "domestic bird fence", which in theory would keep the domestic birds at one end of the lake.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: The range of this species has been greatly reduced, and several projects are underway to census and thus determine it's scarcity. One project includes a study of the bird's breeding biology, and in order for the research to be completed, more funds are needed. Those wishing to donate to this cause should contact: Steve Laymon, 1406, Union Drive, Davis, Ca 95616.

Chris D. Benesh

## CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

- Friday  
January 24      Monthly Program- see page one for details.
- January 31-  
February 2      Field Trip- Salton Sea Wildlife Reserve. This three day camping trip should provide views of the large numbers of wildfowl which winter on the Sea, plus some interesting rarities. Co-sponsored by the Sierra Club. Call Avis Keedy in evenings at 967-0593 for reservations.  
Leader: Hugh Ranson
- Saturday  
February 1      Post Christmas Bird Count Rarities Chase. This trip provides an opportunity to see some of the many rare birds wintering in our region, including those missed count day because of rain. We will meet at the Von's parking lot at Turnpike & Hollister at 8:00 am.  
Leader: Paul Lehman  
967-2450
- Sunday  
February 9      Bird Refuge and Harbor Area. This trip will last only a couple of hours and is a good opportunity for beginners to learn some of our regularly wintering waterbirds and see a few notable birds the refuge has attracted this year. Meet at the refuge parking lot at 8:30 am.  
Leader: Guy Tingos  
687-8266
- Saturday  
February 15      Morro Bay & Montana de Oro. An opportunity to see a great variety of waterbirds not often seen locally, all in Morro Bay's very attractive setting. Likely birds include Brants, Pigeon Guillemots, many ducks and shorebirds. There is the chance of seeing Peregrine Falcon and King Eider. We will leave at 6:00 am, as this is an all day trip. Bring lunch and water. We will meet at the Kmart lot at the corner of Storke & Hollister.  
Leader: Chris Benesh  
968-9434
- Saturday  
February 22      Pt. Mugu Naval Base. A long overdue return to this incredible birding area normally off limits to the public. This area is unequalled in bird abundance for anywhere so close to Santa Barbara. One can see 80 species of birds in a single morning and several marvelous birds always seem to turn up. A recent trip had Mountain Plover, Bald Eagle, Oldsquaw and White-faced Ibis. There is a 15 person minimum (25 Max.) needed before we can get on the base, so plan on attending. We will leave the Santa Barbara Bird Refuge for Pt. Mugu at 6:30 am and return around 2:00 pm. For reservations, call Chris Benesh at 968-9434 or the leader, Hugh Ranson, at 968-5165. Don't miss this rare opportunity! \* Make reservations by February 3rd.
- Friday  
February 28      Monthly Program- See page one for details.
- Saturday  
March 1      Botanical Gardens and Rocky Nook Park. A break from the waterbirds. This trip will provide the birder with most of the local birds of oak woodland and riparian habitats. This is also a great trip for those beginners. Meet at the entrance to the Botanical Gardens at 8:00 am.  
Leader: Joan Lentz  
969-4397

(1985)

JANUARY 4th, 1986

TOTAL - 193 SPECIES

## SANTA BARBARA AUDUBON CHRISTMAS COUNT

Record the total number seen beside each species name. Use an "x" to indicate a bird found during the count period but not on count day. Species marked by \* or not on this list require written details.

14	Common Loon	5	Virginia Rail
13	Artic Loon	6	Sora
13	Red-throated Loon	1	Common Gallinule
9	Horned Grebe	801	American Coot
51	Eared Grebe	120	Snowy Plover
205	Western Grebe	13	Semipalmated Plover
118	Pied-billed Grebe	169	Killdeer
	Northern Fulmar		*Lesser Golden Plover
1	Manx Shearwater	106	Black-bellied Plover
53	Brown Pelican	4	Ruddy Turnstone
	*White Pelican	17	Black Turnstone
261	Double-crested Cormorant	30	Common Snipe
30	Brandt's Cormorant	1	*Long-billed Curlew
3	Pelagic Cormorant	77	Whimbrel
36	Great-Blue Heron	8	Spotted Sandpiper
9	Green Heron	82	Willet
38	Great Egret	11	Greater Yellowlegs
71	Snowy Egret		*Lesser Yellowlegs
10	*Cattle Egret	59	Least Sandpiper
52	Black-crowned Night Heron	11	Dunlin
6	American Bittern	19	Long-billed Dowitcher
	*White-faced Ibis		*Short-billed Dowitcher
1	Canada Goose		Dowitcher (species?)
	*"Black" Brant	15	Western Sandpiper
	*White-fronted Goose	157	Marbled Godwit
	*Snow Goose	642	Sanderling
228	Mallard	4	American Avocet
16	Gadwall	3	*Black-necked Stilt
30	Pintail	8	*Red Phalarope
49	Green-winged teal + 1 "Eurasian"		*Pomarine Jaeger
8	*Blue-winged teal	1	*Parasitic Jaeger
8	Cinnamon Teal	14	Glaucous-winged Gull
	*Eurasian Wigeon	1119	Western Gull
114	American Wigeon	12	Herring Gull
202	Northern Shoveler	6	Thayer's Gull
	*Wood Duck	859	California Gull
264	Redhead	377	Ring-billed Gull
29	Ring-necked Duck	479	Mew Gull
1	Canvasback	124	Bonaparte's Gull
1	*Greater Scaup	220	Heermann's Gull
47	Lesser Scaup		*Black-legged Kittiwake
	*Common Goldeneye	164	Forster's Tern
54	Bufflehead	8	Royal Tern
1	White-winged Scoter		*Caspian Tern
112	Surf Scoter		Common Murre
	*Black Scoter	1	*Ancient Murrelet
219	Ruddy Duck	7	*Cassin's Auklet
10	*Hooded Merganser	1	*Rhinoceros Auklet
27	Common Merganser	193	Band-tailed Pigeon
18	Red-breasted Merganser	719	Rock Dove
40	Turkey Vulture		*White-winged Dove
21	White-tailed Kite	767	Mourning Dove
10	Sharp-shinned Hawk	3	Spotted Dove
8	Cooper's Hawk	2	Roadrunner
70	Red-tailed Hawk	1	Barn Owl
77	Red-shouldered Hawk	3	Screech Owl
3	Golden Eagle	11	Great Horned Owl
9	Marsh Hawk	1	Pygmy Owl
1	*Prairie Falcon		Burrowing Owl
4	*Merlin		*Spotted Owl
104	American Kestrel	1	Short-eared Owl
128	California Quail		White-throated Swift
13	Mountain Quail		*Costa's Hummingbird
	Turkey	568	Anna's Hummingbird

Clark's Grebe-6

Least Bittern-1

Sanderling Tattler-1

1985-1986, continued

		*Rufous Hummingbird (male)	
	4	*Allen's Hummingbird (male)	
	5	Selasphorus (species?)	
	19	Belted Kingfisher	
	280	Common Flicker (Red-shafted)	
		*Common Flicker (Yellow-shafted)	
	470	Acorn Woodpecker	
		*Lewis' Woodpecker	
	1	*Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	
	15	Red-breasted Sapsucker	
	11	Hairy Woodpecker	
	16	Downy Woodpecker	
	19	Nuttall's Woodpecker	
		*Tropical Kingbird	
	1	*Cassin's Kingbird	
	1	*Ash-throated Flycatcher	
	186	Black Phoebe	
	69	Say's Phoebe	
		*Western Flycatcher	
	5	Horned Lark	
		*Violet-green Swallow	
		*Steller's Jay	
	720	Scrub Jay	
		Yellow-billed Magpie	
		Common Raven	
	1041	Common Crow	
	1	Mountain Chickadee	
	333	Plain Titmouse	
	1546	Common Bushtit	
	28	White-breasted Nuthatch	
		Red-breasted Nuthatch	
		Brown Creeper	
	220	Wrentit	
	1	Dipper	
	46	House Wren	
	9	Winter Wren	
	109	Bewick's Wren	
	25	Long-billed Marsh Wren	
	10	Canyon Wren	
	1	Rock Wren	
	268	Mockingbird	
	189	California Thrasher	
	584	American Robin	
		Varied Thrush	
	78	Hermit Thrush	
	65	Western Bluebird	
		Townsend's Solitaire	
	5	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	
	12	Golden-crowned Kinglet	
	532	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	
	91	Water Pipit	
	573	Cedar Waxwing	
	5	Phainopepla	
	22	Loggerhead Shrike	
	1627	Starling	
	82	Hutton's Vireo	
		*Black-and-white Warbler	
		*Tennessee Warbler	
	124	Orange-crowned Warbler	
	1	*Nashville Warbler	
	1	*Yellow Warbler	
	2290	Yellow-rumped Warbler (Audubon)	
	28	Yellow-rumped Warbler (Myrtle)	
	3	*Black-throated Gray Warbler	
	129	Townsend's Warbler	
	2	*Hermit Warbler	
	2	Grace's Warbler	

Red-rumped Sapsucker - 1

Vermilion Flycatcher - 1

Swallow sp. - 1

Virginia's Warbler - 1

		*Palm Warbler	
	78	Common Yellowthroat	
	1	*Wilson's Warbler	
		*American Redstart	
	1021	House Sparrow	
	524	Western Meadowlark	
		*Yellow-headed Blackbird	
	290	Red-winged Blackbird	
	8	Tricolored Blackbird	
	3	*Orchard Oriole	
	1	*Hooded Oriole	
		*Scott's Oriole	
	8	*Northern Oriole (Bullock's)	
		*Northern Oriole (Baltimore)	
	1519	Brewer's Blackbird	
	285	Brown-headed Cowbird	
	8	*Western Tanager	
	1	*Summer Tanager	
		*Rose-breasted Grosbeak	
		*Black-headed Grosbeak	
	72	Purple Finch	
	302	House Finch	
	1	Pine Siskin	
	221	American Goldfinch	
	336	Lesser Goldfinch	
		Lawrence's Goldfinch	
	185	Rufous-sided Towhee	
	535	Brown Towhee	
	96	Savannah Sparrow	
		*Vesper Sparrow	
	78	Lark Sparrow	
	5	Rufous-crowned Sparrow	
		Sage Sparrow	
	1507	Dark-eyed Junco (Oregon)	
	2	Dark-eyed Junco (Slate-colored)	
		*Dark-eyed Junco (Gray-headed)	
	4	Chipping Sparrow	
		*Harris' Sparrow	
	3242	White-crowned Sparrow	
	968	Golden-crowned Sparrow	
	1	*White-throated Sparrow	
	24	Fox Sparrow	
	36	Lincoln's Sparrow	
		*Swamp Sparrow	
	217	Song Sparrow	

Hyacinth Tanager - 1

Additional Species:

Count Period:

Olive-sided Flycatcher  
Red-breasted Nuthatch  
Brown Creeper  
Warbling Vireo

Many thanks to Paul Lehman for once again organizing the count, and also to all those who braved the cold and rain to participate.

## Splinters from the Board Highlights

At the December meeting the board accepted John Flavin's resignation as Field Trip Chairman. The board also voted to host the Western Regional Audubon Co-ordinating Council meeting in 1987.

At the January meeting the board voted Chris Benesh as the new Field Trip Chairman. The board also voted to give \$200 to the Nature Conservancy to buy property on the Carrizo Plains for a reserve. The reserve will be home for the Kit Fox, Kangaroo Rat, Blunt-nose Leopard Lizard, California Condor and various endangered plants.

The next meeting will be held at 7:00 pmon February 13 at Audrey Von Bieberstein's house, at 4690 La Espada Drive, Santa Barbara, 93111.

### Office News

Please welcome W. Leoti Fisher as our regular Monday office volunteer. We are happy to say that each week-day is covered again.

Thanks to Joan Lentz for sending us a copy of the recent Santa Barbara Magazine which published her fine article on our Christmas Bird Count.

The office regularly receives newsletters from many other Southern California Audubon chapters. If you are planning to travel to any of these areas and want information about meetings and/or field trips, perhaps we can help you.

We also have in the office: a) new vinyl "I'd Rather Be Birding" bumper stickers; b) a long article from another newsletter about buying binoculars; c) a letter from N.A.S. regarding removing condors from the wild- it states both Audubon's and Fish and Wildlife's arguments; and d) many travel announcements. We hope to have copies of Joan Lentz's book for sale soon.

Audrey Von Bieberstein  
Office Coordinator

### Mono Lake Update

The Ventura County Chapter of the Mono Lake Committee has invited Martha Davis, Executive Director, Mono Lake Committee, to provide an update on Mono Lake. She has accepted and the date of the event will be Friday, February 21. Time and place of the event to be announced.

The meeting is co-sponsored by Ventura Audubon Society, Sierra Club, Shannel Islands Chapter of the Native Plant Society and Environmental Coalition. Call Jean Dale at 525-9296 for further information.

### Education Committee

Minna Smith is currently vacationing in Australia and New Zealand and will be resuming duties in early March. Until her return, call Virginia Collette at 967-0697.



### We Extend Our Thanks

Many thanks to Goleta Veterinarian Dr. Eric Westheimer, who treated, free of charge, an injured wild bird brought to him by a member. Because of his kindness, the society has received a contribution from this member.

Also thanks are due to the anonymous person who left a \$100.00 donation in the office.





## WITH TIME COMES CHANGE

Birding is a pastime shared by an increasingly large number of people, and for many, part of this pastime involves keeping a list of those species they have seen, be it their life list, state list, year list etc. Those of us who choose to "list" as part of our birding experience will be interested in three changes of species recently approved by the American Ornithologist's Union (A.O.U.).

The purpose of this article is to make birders aware of these recent changes, and briefly discuss plumage differences that will help birders recognise these new species.

The A.O.U. is a large group of ornithologists whose research dictates which birds warrant the status of new species, and which warrant subspecies status. The problem for birders like you and I is that the A.O.U. is always uncovering new information which forces them to change previously accepted dogma about a bird's status. Three birds, found at times in Santa Barbara, have recently been given such attention, leading to their elevated status as full species. They are the Clark's Grebe, Pacific Loon, and Red-naped Sapsucker.

What follows is a brief description of each, so that one can separate them from those species with which they were previously lumped.

First is the Clark's Grebe. It was formerly considered a race of the Western Grebe, but differs in having the black on the head above the eye, has paler sides, and a yellow-orange bill rather than the yellow-green bill of the Western. Both of these species are found commonly during the winter months in Santa Barbara, and can often be seen together. Evidence suggests that these birds segregate into different breeding groups on their nesting grounds.

For most Californian birders the next species will more likely involve a name change rather than the addition of a new species. This bird is now called the Pacific Loon, it being formerly considered a subspecies of the Arctic Loon.

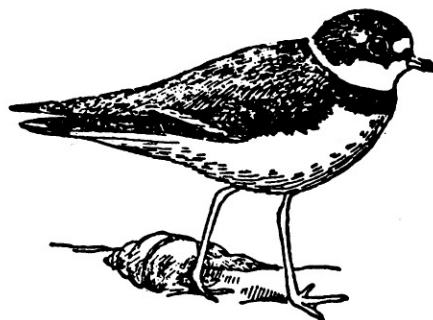


What this now means is that the Arctic Loons you see along the Pacific ocean are in reality Pacific Loons. Makes sense! But seriously, differences between the two have been deemed sufficient for full species status. The Pacific Loon differs from the Arctic Loon in being slightly smaller on average, especially the bill and feet. Also, in breeding plumage, the Pacific Loon has a purplish throat patch, while the Arctic's is greenish. But this last fact is not much help to California birders who see these birds in basic plumage.

Finally, the last new species declared this time around is the Red-naped Sapsucker, formerly part of the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker complex, which also included the Red-breasted Sapsucker until recently. The Red-naped differs from the other two in having red on the cap, nape and throat, yet still possessing the strong facial pattern lacking in the Red-breasted. (see National Geographic field guide, pp. 268-269.) All three of these Sapsuckers occur in Santa Barbara County, though the Yellow-bellied and the Red-naped are exceedingly rare.

Don't think for a moment that the A.O.U. hasn't got more tricks to unload at a future date. Let me end by suggesting birders check out those Golden Plovers and Solitary Vireos very carefully. Just when you thought it was safe to go back into the field..... A.O.U.!!!

Chris D. Benesh



# SANTA BARBARA AUDUBON SOCIETY

*Committed to the sound use and conservation of our natural resources*

SBAS OFFICE  
300 North Los Carneros  
Goleta, California 93117  
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Bill Dahlke	683-3315
Jim Hodgeson	969-1209

Rare Bird Alert 964-8240

EL TECOLOTE, the SBAS Newsletter, is published 11 times annually and is free to members. Subscriptions to non-members cost \$10.<sup>00</sup>. For information about membership, please call our office.

## COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Field Trips	Chris Benesh	968-9434
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Christmas Bird Count	Paul Lehman	967-2450
Rare Bird Alert	Chris Benesh	968-9434

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Monthly programs are held at 8:00 pm in Farrand Hall at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History on the 4th Friday of each month, September through May. The November-December program is held the 1st Friday of December. Non-members are welcome to attend.

EL TECOLOTE  
Santa Barbara Audubon Society  
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Goleta, CA 93117

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