

# El Tecolote

SANTA BARBARA AUDUBON SOCIETY

Vol. 29 No. 4

JANUARY 1991



## Carrizo Plains Field Trip

February 2 &amp; 3, 1990

"Carrizo Plain, land of extremes" was the title of an article in the November 1989 issue of *Sunset* magazine. "This remote 45-mile-long plain, in eastern San Luis Obispo County, is . . . an ecological 'island,' a landlocked ark for animals and plants vanquished elsewhere. Now it contains Carrizo Plain Natural Area, California's largest nature preserve. . . [Y]ou can marvel at sandhill cranes [in the winter], rare flowers later on, Chumash Indian art year-round."

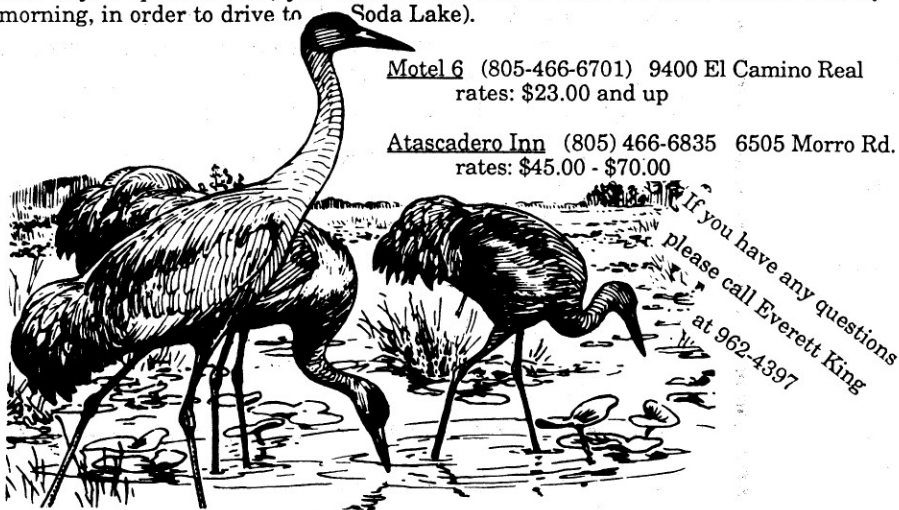
The trip will begin at 10:00 a.m., Saturday February 2, at Gaviota State Beach. We will then bird up the Central Coast, stopping at such places like Oceano State Park and Avila Bay. Moving inland, we will make a stop at Shell-maker road, and will arrive in California Valley at around 4:00 p.m.

Santa Barbara Audubon Society has made arrangements for accommodations at *Bergett's Carrizo Plains Resort*. Ten rooms have been reserved. Cost per person should be around \$40.00, which includes room, Saturday dinner, Sunday breakfast and lunch. Rooms have two or three double beds each - room mates to be negotiated!

Accommodations are also available in Atascadero at the following locations (note that if you opt for these, you will have to rise at least an hour earlier Sunday morning, in order to drive to Soda Lake).

Motel 6 (805-466-6701) 9400 El Camino Real  
rates: \$23.00 and up

Atascadero Inn (805) 466-6835 6505 Morro Rd.  
rates: \$45.00 - \$70.00



If you have any questions  
please call Everett King  
at 962-4397

Camping is also possible at the Los Padres National Forest, La Panza Campground.

On Sunday, we'll assemble at the Nature Conservancy overlook at Soda Lake, at 6:00 - 6:30 a.m. in order to get a good look at the Lesser Sandhill Cranes. We will then bird the remainder of the day in the Carrizo Plain area, finishing around 4:00 p.m. Expect to see many raptors, Pronghorn, Kit Fox, and small mammals.

Please bring Sack lunches for Saturday.

The weather can get quite cold in the Carrizo area, so please bring warm clothes, gloves, hat, jacket or sweater (or both!) and good walking shoes, especially if you are planning to camp.

Farrand Hall  
Mus. Nat. Hist.

8 P.M.

Friday Evening  
Jan. 25, 1991

JON DUNN: BIRDS OF ALASKA!!

SBAS is pleased to present as our January general meeting speaker, the noted birder, Jon Dunn, in a talk and slide show presentation selected from his dozen annual trips to Alaska since 1978.

The slides will feature the animals and birds, as well as the fabulous scenery of America's greatest wilderness, including Denali National Park.

Mr. Dunn's credentials as a birder are highlighted by his position as chief consultant to the National Geographic Society in the production of the Field Guide to Birds of N.A., and also his tours leadership for the WINGS organization.



Refreshments 7:45 pm. Bring Your Cup!

214 BIRD COUNT 2ND TO FREEPORT'S 218;  
AUDUBON SEES DROUGHT IMPACT ON TOTALS

SBAS Annual Christmas bird count on Saturday, December 29th, with over 100 birders participating, found 214 species in our area, for second place nationally after Freeport, Texas' 218.

The high count, after the 1989 total of 205, surprised many involved, since the impact of the California

see BIRD COUNTS, pg 2.

## KLAMATH BASIN BALD EAGLE CONFERENCE

The 12th Annual Klamath Falls Conference is set for February 15-17, 1991. The Klamath Basin is the winter home for the largest concentration of Bald Eagles in the Lower 48 States, and is famous for spectacular flocks of migratory waterfowl.

Field trips and workshops include ski-tour at Crater Lake. Space is limited and early registration is suggested. Call SBAS Office for more information, or Klamath Audubon at (503) 882-8488 (evenings).

### FIELD TRIP LEADERS WANTED

Trip leaders are needed by the Chapter to fill out the Committee, and to help carry out our programs throughout the year.

Chair. Everett King invites any interested Audubonner to call him to discuss the work. Experienced leaders or interested beginners are equally welcome. Everett notes that a good birding spirit is the most important qualification.

Volunteers could lead as few or as many trips as they wish. Call Everett at 962-4397, or SBAS office, 964-1468.

### WINTER BIRDING GROUPS NOW FORMING

Beginning and experienced birders may join birding classes. The groups will meet weekly for two-hour sessions in the field, and will explore some of the best birding spots in the country, from slough to creek to woodland to beach, and with luck will come upon most of the 200 species residing hereabouts.

Ornithologist and author Joan Lentz will conduct three weekly groups, at varying levels of interest, on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings, at 8:30 am, for 9 weeks, starting on Jan. 7th.

Paul Lehman of UCSB, will hold one 6-weeks class starting on Tuesday, Jan. 8.

First meeting of each group will be at the Museum of Natural History at 8:30. Fees are nominal. Call 682-4334 for further information.

The compiled bird count for December 29, 1991 will be printed in the February El Tecolote.

## BIRD COUNTS (cont.)

drought has severely reduced total numbers in general, and bird "watering places" are also at a low point.

Other statewide counts include San Diego 206, Morro Bay 198, and Ventura 180.

Of the 228 species on our area's standard list (for Christmas count period), 201 were found on count day (up from 195 last year). In addition, there were 13 additional finds, including several which are becoming "new regulars":

Common Ground Dove	Xantus' Murrelet
Ferruginous Hawk	Gray Flycatcher
Hepatic Tanager	Warbling Vireo
Eastern Phoebe	Glaucous Gull
Stellar's Jay	Brant
Bald Eagle	Common Tern
Vesper Sparrow	

Of interest to Audubon are three species noted before-or-after count day, though they are excluded from count- a Scott's Oriole, a Palm Warbler, and a Black Skimmer.

A pleasant surprise find on count day was a burrowing owl, and at the airport, no less. This was a heartening reappearance of the species, despite the unfortunate find on the same day of a dead one on Cathedral Oaks Road. (Is there a moral here? -ed.)

Another unfortunate event relates to the non-finding of a Hermit Warbler on the count day (4 were found last year). This bird had been tracked by a Hope Ranch birder for several days before the count, but was last seen on Thursday, perched on a branch, and suddenly startled into flight by a Sharp-Shinned Hawk, to be seen no more.

Also missing from the count reports is a Rose-Breasted Grosbeak, which habitates a tree across the street, and out-of-bounds. of the count circle in Montecito.

The Chapter offers a vote of thanks to Paul Lehman, Joan Lentz, Pat Kelly, and the 100 others who poll our birds so conscientiously.

### SBAS Chapter Board Report...

NOVEMBER. President Hirst reported some small succession UCSB expansion plans in that negotiations had caused some cutback of units to be built on bluff.

Conservation Chair Eissler asked and received unanimous Board endorsement of letter to County Supervisors to stand firm against Chevron tankering proposals.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The 91st Christmas Count has come and gone. In the territory I cover the drought caused a significant decline in passerine birds. Much of their habitat is dead. Rain would be a blessing to our feathered friends as well as to our gardens, farms, and water bills.

Betty Bazzi has resigned her office staff volunteer position. She volunteered for five years. That is longer than anyone else and we greatly appreciate it. Betty continues as our invaluable Publicity Chair. Ada Babine has resigned as Education Chair. The tremendous accomplishments of Ada and her committee resulted in innumerable schoolchildren learning to appreciate nature. Many thanks to Ada for the great dedication and skill she wholeheartedly contributed. We are currently in a rebuilding phase in the Education Committee. Those interested in helping out please call me or Sally Walker.

The Chapter needs an IBM-XT type computer. It would help out a great deal in membership (timely address changes, etc.) and newsletters (lower costs, more flexibility, more issues). If you or a company want to make a tax-deductible donation of a used computer to this non-profit organization please contact me.

Finally, response to my request in the last Tecolote soliciting donations for my 1991 World Birdathon has been paltry. I suggest that those of you who can, consider 10¢ per species and call me to pledge. Trip reports and recognition of your generosity will be given. All donations will go to the SBAS treasury. There are many issues and educational activities which require that we build up our funds.

- Ron Hirst.

### Santa Barbara Audubon Soc. Officers 90-91

President.....Ron Hirst.....967-4966  
Vice-Pres.....Lee Moldaver.....682-2120  
Secretary.....Nancy King.....687-2079  
Treasurer.....Anne Eissler.....964-2492  
Conservation...Margaret Eissler.964-6486  
Education.....(vacant)  
Field Trips....Everett King.....962-4397  
Fund Raising...Sally Walker.....569-5388  
Membership....Marie Slaton.....683-2935  
Newsletter.....Karl Weissmann...967-3008  
At Large.....Joe Martorana....685-4045

### Chairs

Hospitality....Carol Rae.....964-3827  
Publicity.....Betty Bazzi.....967-5200  
Rare Bird Alert.Karen Bridgers..964-1316  
Bird Refuge Census.Helen Matelson966-3217

## CHIRICAHUA BIRDING THREATENED

ISSUE: The nation's largest gold mining company has decided to postpone its plans to explore for gold in Cave Creek Canyon, Arizona. The delay of a year by Newmont Mining assists Tucson and Maricopa Audubon Societies in their campaign to block the project altogether.

BACKGROUND: The Chiricahuas are inhabited by a unique combination of species found in both the U.S. and across the border in Mexico. For birders, writes Santa Barbara's Joan Lentz in Great Birding Trips of the West (1989), going to the Chiricahuas is a "pilgrimage." Birder James Lane (1984) adds: "Even in Arizona with its abundance of spectacular scenery, the Chiricahua Mountains are outstanding. In any other state, they would be set aside as a national park. ...Many birders consider these mountains the best birding spot in the United States." "The most unforgettable of all" areas in the region is Cave Creek Canyon.

Newmont Mining applied to the Forest Service for an exploratory permit. Nearby residents of Portal anticipate an open pit mine with cyanide leach ponds and slag heaps, blasting, dust, the inevitable permanent poisoning of the water table as well as effects on scenery and diversity of wildlife. Mining laws provide for this operation, but the Forest Service has a mandate to protect areas of critical environmental concern. They are reluctant, however, to act against the mining industry.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO:

1. Thank Newmont Mining for the delay and urge the company to cancel the project. (Gordon R. Parker CEO, Newmont Mining Corp., One United Bank Center, 1700 Lincoln St., Denver, CO 80203)
2. Ask the Forest Service to withdraw the land from mining operations. (Mr. Jim Abbott, Coronado Forest Supervisor, 301 W. Congress St., Tucson, AZ 85701)

-Margaret Eissler  
Conservation Chair.

JANUARY

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**Cachuma Lake Eagle Tour.** A two-hour boat tour of Cachuma Lake to look at Bald Eagles, and loads of water fowl. Boat leaves at 10:00 a.m. from the Cachuma lake harbor facility. Audubon has reserved 15 spaces on this boat, and has pre-paid the \$8.00 per head fee; call the Audubon Office (964-1468) in order to sign-up. After the initial 15 spaces are filled, individuals will have to make their own reservations and pay their own deposits to insure space on the boat. Call the Audubon Office for the required telephone number and procedure.

~~25~~  
~~28~~

**BIRDS OF ALASKA:** Slide show trip through Alaska, presented by the eminent birder, naturalist, and WINGS Birding Tours leader, Jon Dunn. (see story, page one.)

FEBRUARY

2/3



**Carrizo Plains.** Led by Moose Peterson (569-3731), well known wildlife photographer, this is the first time in three years that we've run this trip. We will be looking for the Sandhill Cranes, Raptors, and others. Rooms have been reserved at Bergett's Carrizo Plains Resort for Saturday night. For trip itinerary and more details regarding accommodation and meals, call the Audubon Office (964-1468).

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**Cañada Larga Rd.** with Ron Smith (687-2990). Off the Ventura River, Cañada Larga is a great place for birding. Burrowing Owls, Barn Owls, Phainopeplas, Mountain Bluebirds, and Ferruginous Hawk are among the birds seen in past years. Meet Ron at the Andre Clark Bird Refuge at 7:30 a.m. Bring lunch and warm sweater.

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**Kinevan Rd. / East Camino Cielo Rd.** with Everett King (962-4397). The elusive golden-crowned Kinglet will be the primary objective of this trip, but expect to see other birds of the Chaparral and Riparian habitats. Possibility of a Golden Eagle. Meet Everett at Carl's Jr. (State and La Cumbre Rds.) at 7:30 a.m.



EL TECOLOTE

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