

# El Tecolote

NEWSLETTER OF THE SANTA BARBARA AUDUBON SOCIETY



February 1993

Vol. 31, No. 5

## Christmas Count Tallies Several Rarities; Misses Some Regulars

**A**FTER a day of scanning wetlands, scrambling up hiking trails, walking suburban streets from Ellwood to Montecito, and ranging from Gibraltar Reservoir out to four miles offshore in a boat, Santa Barbara birders came up with an impressive final species total of 198 [see page 3 for complete list]. Although several count results have not yet been compiled, it looks as if we'll be number five in the nation behind California communities Pt. Reyes 201, Moss Landing 202, Morro Bay 203, and of course Freeport, Texas with the highest total of 213.

This year's count uncovered several rare, out-of-range species. Flycatchers stole the show in Goleta with a scissor-tailed flycatcher and a tropical kingbird at UCSB, and a dusky-capped flycatcher in a little park near El Rancho School. Other unusual birds were five brant, four Ross's geese, a snow goose, a ferruginous hawk, a peregrine falcon, a yellow-bellied sapsucker,

two white-winged doves and an American redstart. The hepatic tanager is back for its 11th year at Rocky Nook Park!

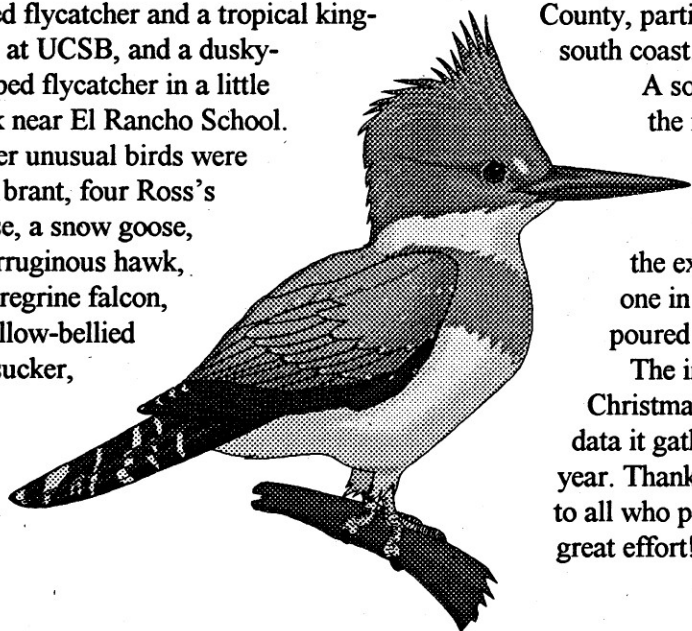
Despite the relatively favorable weather conditions, there were a number of birds we regularly get on the count that were missed this year. Cause for concern were: no blue-winged teal, no black-shouldered kite, no prairie falcon, no pygmy-owl, no dipper, no Townsend's solitaire and no mountain chickadee. Other species seemed to be at all-time lows in numbers of individuals seen. Some of this is due to the slow recovery from previous drought years, but it also reflects the gradual habitat loss for birds throughout Santa Barbara County, particularly along the south coast.

A sobering fact: this is the first count since the late 1970s that has fallen below 200, with

the exception of the one in 1985 when it poured rain all day.

The importance of the Christmas Count is the data it gathers year after year. Thank you, thank you, to all who participated in this great effort!

— Joan Lentz



## February Program

*Friday, February 26*

Farrand Hall, SBNH Museum

7:45 p.m. Refreshments

8:00 p.m. Slide program

*"Wildlife Rehabilitation  
in the Santa Barbara Area"*

Estelle Busch, President and Board Director of Santa Barbara Wildlife Care Network (SBWCN), brings to life the goal and inside story of this organization. She personally has been rehabilitating local wildlife for 20 years. Estelle holds several permits which allow her to educate the public and perform the professional work wildlife rehabilitation requires. Come meet the legend behind SBWCN and see what it takes for the people of this organization to support the Santa Barbara area's wildlife.

REMINDER: Anyone finding injured wildlife, including birds, call: Santa Barbara Wildlife Care Network HELPLINE 966-0023.



## Activities Calendar

**Saturday, Feb. 6: Christmas Count Rare Bird Chase**  
Half-day. Clay-colored sparrow, black skimmer, Scott's oriole, hepatic tanager, tropical kingbird, dusky-capped flycatcher and scissor-tailed flycatcher will be sought at their known locations in Santa Barbara and Goleta. These birds are very rare in our area and may only occur every few years. This is your chance to see them. Meet at Andree Clark Bird Refuge at 7:30 a.m. Leader: Ron Hirst (967-0138).

**Saturday, Feb. 20: Goleta Beach to More Mesa**  
Half-day bird walk. From the heron rookery near the beach we will hike four miles to More Mesa cliffs along the bike path and trail system. Important wetland, riparian and grassland habitats occur along this unique green corridor. Bring lunch and water. Return transportation to Goleta Beach will be arranged. Meet at base of Goleta Beach pier at 8:30 a.m. Leader: Ron Hirst (967-0138).

**Saturday, Feb. 27: Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History**  
Behind the scenes viewing of the vertebrate collections such as snakes, mammals and birds, with Tamar Danufsky, Assistant Curator. RSVP with Audubon office by Feb. 25 so we can get an estimate of attendees. Meet by the blue whale skeleton near the entrance at 1:00 p.m.

**Sat.-Mon., March 20-22: Statewide Meeting**  
California Audubon chapter leaders will be meeting in Folsom, Calif. (20 miles east of Sacramento) to conduct workshops and lectures. A special trip to the State Capitol in Sacramento is planned for Monday the 22nd to lobby state legislators. This meeting is an opportunity for our leaders to develop strategies for coping with the crucial issues facing us in California.

### Reauthorizing the Endangered Species Act

*A Grassroots Organizing Workshop  
hosted by the Audubon Society*

**February 6, 1993**      **Carlsbad Safety Center**  
**9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.**    **2560 Orion Way, Carlsbad, CA**

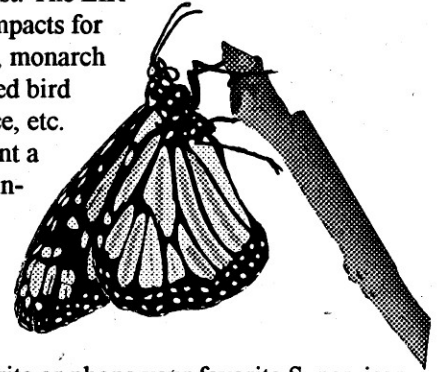
A special all-day meeting focusing on the Endangered Species Act (E.S.A.). The goal of the meeting is to increase grassroots participation in the E.S.A. reauthorization campaign. Audubon staff from Washington, DC and the Western Regional Office, representatives from allied conservation groups, local activists, and representatives from federal agencies who deal with the E.S.A. have been invited to take part.

Contact the Santa Barbara Audubon office for further details if you would like to attend. There is no charge.

## Conservation Notes

◆ **Goleta Valley.** The Board of Supervisors will hold hearings later this month or early March on the new Goleta Land Use Element update (completed last December). This is generally an excellent document for preserving open space, habitat, wetlands, creeks, viable agriculture and the mountain areas. We ask you to send a postcard or phone call to your individual Supervisor urging approval of the Goleta Element as is; lobbyists for developers will attempt to gut it.

◆ **Goleta Coastal.** The Supervisors will hear a proposal from a syndicate called SW Diversified (Chicago & Ontario land development investors) for the SB/Ellwood Shores area along the northwest Goleta coast. The EIR listed many Class One impacts for its effect on vernal pools, monarch butterfly roosts, threatened bird habitat, loss of open space, etc. The developers will mount a massive PR blitz; the Planning Commission has recommended denial. Audubon supports the efforts of Save Ellwood Shores to *reduce* the project's scale. Again, write or phone your favorite Supervisor.



◆ **C.R.E.F.** The Coastal Resource Enhancement Fund is "guilt money" the energy industry gives the County to offset pollution impacts in the coastal zone; its intent is to buy, preserve or improve coastal lands — the politicians try to use it all over the place to subsidize their own depleted budgets. *Don't let them do it!* Please write to Ms. Melanie Hale, RMD CREF Coordinator, 1226 Anacapa Street, Suite 2, to register your support for helping Wayne Ferren acquire more land in the Carpinteria Salt Marsh wetland, or your favorite other piece of sensitive coastal property. You have until March.

◆ **E.S.A.** The Endangered Species Act may come up for a reauthorization vote this year. If any chapter members know Congressmen Huffington or Gallegley, please write or phone them to let them know that National Audubon considers this the foremost piece of environmental legislation this year. Ask them to vote yes. The many "threatened" and "endangered" species of Santa Barbara will thank you.

◆ **To Park, or Not?** The SB County Park Dept. is soliciting "public input" on future uses of the spectacular coastal bluffs area between Ellwood Shores and the proposed Hyatt Hotel (Haskell's Beach). The County wants to pave and develop this fine open space/hiking/birding area for "active recreation." If you wish to see the Conner/Knill property maintained as open park space (its current condition), please write or phone Colleen Lund, SB County Parks Dept., 610 Mission Canyon Rd., Santa Barbara, 93105 (568-2461), to express your opinion. Or attend one of the ongoing public meetings in Goleta.

— Lee Moldaver

# Christmas 1992 Bird Count

## LOONS

10	Red-throated Loon
9	Pacific Loon
8	Common Loon

## GREBES

73	Pied-billed Grebe
8	Horned Grebe
22	Eared Grebe
386	Western Grebe
7	Clark's Grebe

## SHEARWATERS

—	Northern Fulmar
340	Black-vented Shearwater

## PELICANS

164	Brown Pelican
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## CORMORANTS

244	Double-crested Cormorant
277	Brandt's Cormorant
2	Pelagic Cormorant

## HERONS

2	American Bittern
45	Great Blue Heron
50	Great Egret
29	Snowy Egret
91	Cattle Egret *
6	Green-backed Heron
41	Black-crowned Night-Heron

## SWANS, GEESE & DUCKS

80	Canada Goose
3	Wood Duck
105	Green-winged Teal
218	Mallard
93	Northern Pintail
—	Blue-winged Teal *
11	Cinnamon Teal
145	Northern Shoveler
7	Gadwall
260	American Wigeon
14	Canvasback
70	Redhead
141	Ring-necked Duck
—	Greater Scaup *
199	Lesser Scaup
95	Surf Scoter
—	White-winged Scoter
5	Common Goldeneye
67	Bufflehead
2	Hooded Merganser
120	Common Merganser
40	Red-breasted Merganser
294	Ruddy Duck

## NEW WORLD VULTURES

136	Turkey Vulture
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## HAWKS

—	Osprey *
—	Black-shouldered Kite
1	Northern Harrier
17	Sharp-shinned Hawk
14	Cooper's Hawk
66	Red-shouldered Hawk
112	Red-tailed Hawk
—	Golden Eagle

## FALCONS

111	American Kestrel
9	Merlin
—	Prairie Falcon *

## QUAIL

256	California Quail
31	Mountain Quail

## RAILS & GALLINULES

3	Virginia Rail
5	Sora
2	Common Moorhen
1402	American Coot

## PLOVERS

70	Black-bellied Plover
101	Snowy Plover
3	Semipalmated Plover
178	Killdeer

## STILTS & AVOCETS

2	Black-necked Stilt
—	American Avocet

## SANDPIPERS

10	Greater Yellowlegs
—	Lesser Yellowlegs *
112	Willet
2	Wandering Tattler
9	Spotted Sandpiper
48	Whimbrel
1	Long-billed Curlew
67	Marbled Godwit
7	Ruddy Turnstone
23	Black Turnstone
302	Sanderling
40	Western Sandpiper
60	Least Sandpiper
12	Dunlin
63	Long-billed Dowitcher
2	Common Snipe
—	Red Phalarope *

## JAEGERS, GULLS & TERNS

3	Pomarine Jaeger *
4	Parasitic Jaeger *
341	Bonaparte's Gull
426	Heermann's Gull
286	Mew Gull
266	Ring-billed Gull
417	California Gull
4	Herring Gull
—	Thayer's Gull *
643	Western Gull
13	Glaucous-winged Gull
2	Black-legged Kittiwake *
—	Caspian Tern *
33	Royal Tern
120	Forster's Tern

## AUKS & MURRES

1	Common Murre
1	Cassin's Auklet *
5	Rhinoceros Auklet *

## PIGEONS

1015	Rock Dove
196	Band-tailed Pigeon
5	Spotted Dove
553	Mourning Dove
—	Common Ground-Dove

## CUCKOOS

3	Greater Roadrunner
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## OWLS

2	Barn Owl
6	Western Screech-Owl
15	Great Horned Owl
—	Northern Pygmy-Owl
—	Burrowing Owl
—	Short-eared Owl *

## SWIFTS

230	White-throated Swift
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## HUMMINGBIRDS

1131	Anna's Hummingbird
—	Costa's Hummingbird *
1	Allen's Hummingbird *
6	Selasphorus sp.

## KINGFISHERS

14	Belted Kingfisher
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## WOODPECKERS

568	Acorn Woodpecker
3	Red-naped Sapsucker *
7	Red-breasted Sapsucker
42	Nuttall's Woodpecker
39	Downy Woodpecker
9	Hairy Woodpecker
166	Northern Flicker (Red-shaft.)
—	Northern Flicker (Yel.-shaft.) *

## TYRANT FLYCATCHERS

173	Black Phoebe
66	Say's Phoebe
1	Tropical Kingbird *
6	Cassin's Kingbird *

## LARKS

—	Horned Lark
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## SWALLOWS

—	Violet-green Swallow *
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## JAYS & CROWS

566	Scrub Jay
895	American Crow
6	Common Raven

## CHICKADEES & TITMICE

—	Mountain Chickadee
227	Plain Titmouse

## BUSHTITS

1385	Bushtit
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## NUTHATCHES

4	Red-breasted Nuthatch
40	White-breasted Nuthatch

## CREEPERS

3	Brown Creeper
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## WRENS

3	Rock Wren
12	Canyon Wren
67	Bewick's Wren
41	House Wren
5	Winter Wren
8	Marsh Wren

## DIPPERS

—	American Dipper
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## OLD WORLD WARBLERS & THRUSHES

10	Golden-crowned Kinglet
573	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
44	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
190	Western Bluebird
—	Townsend's Solitaire
117	Hermit Thrush
415	American Robin
6	Varied Thrush
150	Wrentit

## THRASHERS

248	Northern Mockingbird
48	California Thrasher

## WAGTAILS & PIPITS

80	American Pipit
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## WAXWINGS

663	Cedar Waxwing
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## SILKY FLYCATCHERS

6	Phainopepla
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## SHRIKES

43	Loggerhead Shrike
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## STARLINGS

1993	European Starling
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## VIREOS

42	Hutton's Vireo
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## WOOD WARBLERS, TANAGERS & SPARROWS

—	Tennessee Warbler *
150	Orange-crowned Warbler
2	Nashville Warbler *
2	Yellow Warbler *
3295	Yellow-rumped Warbler (Audubon's)
63	Yellow-rumped Warbler (Myrtle)
3	Black-throated Gray Warbler *
136	Townsend's Warbler
2	Hermit Warbler *
—	Palm Warbler *
—	Black-and-white Warbler *
77	Common Yellowthroat
3	Wilson's Warbler *
2	Summer Tanager *
7	Western Tanager *
1	Rose-breasted Grosbeak *
1	Black-headed Grosbeak *
57	Rufous-sided Towhee
560	California Towhee
10	Rufous-crowned Sparrow
5	Chipping Sparrow
15	Lark Sparrow
—	Sage Sparrow *
167	Savannah Sparrow
15	Fox Sparrow
206	Song Sparrow
59	Lincoln's Sparrow
1	Swamp Sparrow *
2	White-throated Sparrow *
488	Golden-crowned Sparrow
1867	White-crowned Sparrow
—	Harris' Sparrow *
896	Dark-eyed Junco (Oregon)
1	Dark-eyed Junco (Slate-colored)
—	Dark-eyed Junco (Gray-headed) *

## BLACKBIRDS & ORIOLES

188	Red-winged Blackbird
26	Tricolored Blackbird
444	Western Meadowlark
358	Brewer's Blackbird
66	Brown-headed Cowbird
—	Orchard Oriole *
—	Hooded Oriole *
9	Northern Oriole (Bullock's) *
2	Northern Oriole (Baltimore) *
2	Scott's Oriole *

## FINCHES

194	Purple Finch
1697	House Finch
280	Pine Siskin
212	Lesser Goldfinch
—	Lawrence's Goldfinch
273	American Goldfinch

## OLD WORLD SPARROWS

223	House Sparrow
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## ADDITIONAL SPECIES

1	Snow Goose
4	Ross's Goose
5	Brant
1	Ferruginous Hawk
1	Peregrine Falcon
90	Black Skimmer
1	Murrelet sp.
2	White-winged Dove
1	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
1	Dusky-capped Flycatcher
1	Scissor-tailed Flycatcher
7	Yellow-billed Magpie
1	American Redstart
1	Hepatic Tanager
1	Clay-colored Sparrow

\* Requires written description.

GRAND TOTAL: 198 Species



## President's Message

The 93rd Christmas Count has come and gone. Special thanks go this year to the more than 120 spirited and intrepid volunteers who fanned out January 2 from dawn to dusk to continue the Christmas Count tradition, recording bird species and their numbers in our area.

We especially appreciate the invaluable help of count compiler Paul Lehman, as well as Joan Lentz and Pat Kelly, who organized and deployed the volunteers. Our pelagic count received a huge boost because of Henry del Giudice's generous loan of his motor boat, and Shawneen Finnegan's expert offshore birding.

Marie Slaton has stepped down as our Membership Chair. She served for more than five years, longer than anyone else in that position, and we greatly appreciate it. Nancy King, board member and owner of Magic Carpet Travel, replaces Marie as Membership Chair.

Finally, we have a new opening for chapter Treasurer, to learn alongside Ben Berkowitz, who will step down as treasurer this June. If anyone is willing to assist our chapter in this key role, please contact me or Ben.

— Sally Walker



## Volunteers Needed! Please Sign Up

Are you looking for ways to help the environment? Santa Barbara Audubon Society has volunteer opportunities in the following areas:

**Office Staff.** We would like to have our office open six days a week. People are needed for 2-hour shifts on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Among the duties are: answering the phone, distributing mail, helping visitors, referring problems to the appropriate officer or committee chair, research, and responding to routine correspondence. To volunteer, call Joy Parkinson, 964-1468.

**Chapter Treasurer.** Capable person required to learn and train alongside Treasurer Ben Berkowitz, who will step down in June. A good head for math, an eye for detail, and hopefully some computer experience would be helpful. Please call Ben at 687-6122.

**Education Volunteers.** Enjoy kids? Like to share environmental information with interested groups? Audubon has easy, pre-packaged slide shows complete with scripts, ready to take to classrooms and to other community groups. Our office will handle scheduling. Two to four hours a month required. To volunteer, call Sally Walker, 569-5388.

### SANTA BARBARA AUDUBON SOCIETY

#### OFFICERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

President: Sally C. Walker ..... 569-5388  
 Vice President: Lee Moldaver ..... 682-2120  
 Secretary: Everett King ..... 962-0883  
 Treasurer: Ben Berkowitz ..... 687-6122  
 At-Large: Don Rathbun ..... 964-5521  
             Jim Greaves ..... 682-4638  
 Conservation: Lee Moldaver ..... 682-2120  
 Education: (vacant)  
 Programs: Elan Sutton ..... 683-1143  
 Field Trips: Ron Hirst ..... 967-0138  
 Membership: Nancy King ..... 964-4741  
 Hospitality: David Wass ..... 682-6962  
 Publicity: Betty Bazzi ..... 967-5200  
 Bird Refuge Census: Helen Matelson 966-3217  
 Rare Bird Reporter: Karen Bridgers . 964-1316

Rare Bird Alert ..... (805) 964-8240  
 SBAS Office ..... (805) 964-1468

#### MEMBERSHIP

Special new member rate ..... \$20  
 Individual ..... \$30  
 Family ..... \$38  
 Student ..... \$20  
 Senior citizen ..... \$21  
 Senior citizen family ..... \$23

Please send *only* new member applications and *El Tecolote* subscriptions to: Santa Barbara Audubon Society, 5679 Hollister Ave., Suite 5B, Goleta, CA 93117.

#### EL TECOLOTE

Editor: Dorin Mayes ..... 683-1079

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