



El Tecolote

Newsletter of the Santa Barbara Audubon Society, Inc.

Volume 37, Issue 5

February 1999

S. B. Birders Soar with 211 Species

by Joan Lentz

THE 1998 SANTA BARBARA AUDUBON SOCIETY Christmas Bird Count, held Saturday, January 2, 1999, tallied 211 different species on a day of calm, sunny weather and lots of good birdfinding. If the large crowd at the compilation dinner held at the Museum of Natural History was any indication, everyone had a great day. As the list of bird species was read out, the number of "Yes" responses amazed even veterans.

Goodies turned up included many species of geese--Canada, Greater White-fronted, Snow, Ross's, and Brant. Two Oldsquaws were counted swimming at the mouth of Mission Creek near the harbor. A Bald Eagle and two Golden Eagles flew up the Santa Ynez River near Paradise Road. A Peregrine Falcon perched at Goleta Beach, as did one at East Beach. A Broad-billed Hummingbird, usually in Mexico at this time of year, lingered at a flowering Tree Tobacco on San Jose Creek in Goleta. Two eastern vagrants--a Tennessee Warbler and a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker--decided they'd rather spend the winter in Montecito, where they got counted, rather than further south where they belonged.

A couple of interesting contradictions were noted. On the one hand, we witnessed a minor influx of montane birds, which brought Red-breasted Nuthatches, Brown Creepers, and Pine Siskins into the lowlands. We squeaked by with two Mountain Chickadees and only one Varied Thrush, however, so the montane invasion was not a very large one. So much for a more "northern" influence on our Count.

But what about those warm-weather-loving swallows and poor-wills? What were they doing lingering this far north and how did they manage to survive the freezing weather just prior to the Count? Seven Tree Swallows and eight Barn Swallows tallied were unusual, but the two Common Poorwills sighted on East Camino Cielo were truly remarkable. It has been many, many years since this species was recorded here in winter.

We lucked out on the owls, too. Barn, Western Screech, Great Horned, Northern Pygmy, and Burrowing were sighted, as well as the Short-eared Owl, which visited More Mesa to hunt at dusk on Count Day.

Of the returnees--those individual birds which reappear year after year to winter in Santa Barbara--the most famous is the Zone-tailed Hawk. It's back for a sixth winter soaring over Goleta, imitating the

(Continued on page 3)

South Goleta Coastal Ecosystem Globally Important Bird Area and Spring Seabird Migration Count

by David Kisner

DUE TO THE QUANTITY of sensitive bird life that can be seen in the South Goleta area, this site has been recognized as Globally Important by the international Important Bird Area program. Paul Lehman's investigation of the Spring seabird migration past our coast 1976 through 1978 was instrumental in getting this region recognized (*Birds of Santa Barbara County, California, 1994, Lehman*). He recorded 174,144 birds in 83 hours of observation from Goleta Point in the Spring of 1976, or an average of 2098 birds per hour.

The idea for the Important Bird Area (IBA) program originated in Europe through a series of unpublished studies conducted in the early 1980s by BirdLife International and the International Wetlands Re-

(Continued on page 2)

<i>Contents</i>	<i>page</i>
<i>1998 Christmas Bird Count</i>	<i>1, 3</i>
<i>Globally Important Bird Area in Goleta</i>	<i>1,2</i>
<i>Monthly Program</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>February Field Trips</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Volunteer Opportunities</i>	<i>4</i>

BIRD COUNT- 2A, 2B



(Continued from page 1)

search. This program then spread through the Middle East by 1994, and programs have been initiated in Africa, Asia, and the Americas. The IBA program reached the United States by 1995 and is a cooperative effort between the American Bird Conservancy and the National Audubon Society. Canada's and Mexico's IBA program began in 1996. The United States', Canada's, and Mexico's programs have been supported with funding from the Commission for Environmental Cooperation of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Sites are selected using scientifically defensible quantitative criteria with the IBA central concept being one of conservation. The existing network of protected areas (e.g., national parks and refuges) are assessed first typically forming the backbone of the IBA network, with additional sites proposed to fill the gaps. Within the United States, the IBA program is part of the larger Partners in Flight Bird Conservation Strategy (the Flight Plan). The Conservation Strategy contains additional landscape and management-based approaches to bird conservation. Taken together, these approaches are designed to help ensure the conservation of all bird species.

In addition to conservation, the IBA program is geared to increasing public awareness of the natural wonders in each area and to increasing eco-tourism. With a uniform IBA program through out the world, people from afar can come visit our IBA areas and we can travel the world exploring other nations' IBA sites. Books and pamphlets are available that describe many of the IBA areas of Europe, the Middle East, and portions of the United States. Soon the remaining areas will be written up including the California IBA sites.

The South Goleta Coastal Ecosystems Important Bird Area spans the area from More Mesa, northwest to Lake Los Carneros, west to Bell Canyon beyond Sandpiper Golf Course, and south into the channel. This area qualifies as a Globally Important Bird Area because this site provides habitat for globally significant numbers of Black-bellied Plover, Sanderling, Western Gull, Forster's Tern, Pacific Loon, Brant's Cormorant, Brant, Surf Scoter, Red-necked Phalarope, Red Phalarope, and Bonaparte's Gull. Additionally, this area supports a continentally significant number of Common Loon, Western Snowy Plover, Sooty Shearwater

February Program

Wednesday: February 24 Nocturnally Active Insectivores (aka Bats)

with

Paul Collins

Doors open 7:30 p.m./program 8:00 p.m.
at the Santa Barbara Museum of
Natural History, Farrand Hall
Co-sponsored by the
Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History
Free

PAUL COLLINS IS ASSOCIATE CURATOR of the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History's Vertebrate Zoology section, holding his degrees in Zoology from UCSB. A top area bird expert and popular Audubon guest speaker, he has lately been investigating the amazing world of the one flying mammal whose life most closely parallels that of birds: the bat. Please join us for this fresh perspective on the birds we know and love and the bats around us.

and nationally significant numbers of Surf-bird. The majority of these species winter in small numbers within the South Goleta Coastal Ecosystem area and then pass through this area heading north to breed in very large numbers in the Spring.

In order to monitor this movement of birds through the area, the Santa Barbara Audubon Society is implementing a seabird-monitoring program. Volunteers will watch passing seabirds from Goleta Point, identify the birds to species, count them, and record the data. Classes on seabird identification and data collection are planned for early to mid-February for all interested people. Monitoring will begin in early March and run through late May. If you have an interest in birds, have a few free hours either early in the morning or in the evening and wish to assist, please call David Kisner at (805) 692-9792. The classes will be open to all who wish to attend. Website: www.elkhornslough.org.

Field Trips

VENTURA COUNTY GAME PRESERVE, OXNARD

1999 February 06, Saturday, 7:30 am

Virginia Rail, Merlin, Peregrine Falcon, American Bittern, White-faced Ibis, Yellow-headed Blackbird

Guy Tingos, 805/681-0026,

gtingos@west.net

Drivers may appreciate gas money. From the east take 101 north to Cabrillo Blvd. (left lane exit just past town of Montecito.) Take Cabrillo and turn right onto Los Patos Way and look for Andree Clark Bird Refuge parking on the left. From the west, take 101 south to Los Patos off ramp (after Milpas exit) and turn right into Bird Refuge parking. Carpool from here. If you want to meet us at the Game Preserve (private and normally off limits) take Hwy. 101 to Camarillo. Exit Las Posas and go south to Hueneme Rd and turn right. Go west and turn left on Casper Rd. About a mile after the left bend on Casper Rd turn right into the game preserve and park by the green bungalows by 8:15 am. Bring water and snack. Scopes useful. Trip over by noon.

ANDREE CLARK BIRD REFUGE

1999 February 20, Saturday

9:00 AM

waterfowl and winter song birds

Kathleen Whitney, 805/687-0842

From the east take 101 north to Cabrillo Blvd (left lane exit just past town of Montecito.) Take Cabrillo and turn right onto Los Patos Way and look for Bird Refuge parking on the left. From the west, take 101 south to Los Patos off ramp (after Milpas exit) and turn right into Bird Refuge parking. This outing is for kids, but all are welcome. We will supply binoculars for those who can't bring a pair. Trip lasts a couple of hours.

Unless otherwise noted, field trips are free and reservations are not needed. If you would like a loaner pair of binoculars for a trip, call the leader.

WEB SITE FOR SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA AUDUBON
FIELD TRIPS

<http://socal.ca.audubon.org/trips.html>

1998 Christmas Bird count

(Continued from page 1)

Turkey Vultures with which it associates and generally causing great anxiety as to its whereabouts on the part of small birds and all sorts of bird watchers. Fortunately, the Zone-tailed Hawk cooperated nicely and was easy to spot as it circled over Cathedral Oaks Road.

Looking over the results, it appears that numbers of birds are down slightly from last year, probably due to the lack of recent rainfall. Ducks and waterbirds were in short supply.

The fact that only three species of birds showed up on the Count Period list--3 days before and 3 days after the Count--meant that our birders did a thorough job of canvassing the area. Only an American Bittern, a Rusty Blackbird (at the dump), and a Baltimore Oriole were seen for Count Period and not on Count Day.

Every year, during the long, arduous day of birding and afterwards at the countdown dinner, the tremendous spirit of cooperation and hard work on the part of Santa Barbara birders stands out. Our extraordinary community of bird aficionados, a few from out of town but most right here in our midst, outdid themselves this year.

And yes, our total of 211 species should be right up there with the top counts in the nation!

As of this writing, we are tied for third with Coastal Orange County, which also got 211, and right behind those ever-present Texas counts of Mad Island Marsh and Freeport, with 223 and 216 respectively.

Congratulations, Santa Barbara birders, and thank you for your phenomenal interest and support!



Calendar of Events

Saturday, February 6	Ventura County Game Preserve f.t.
Saturday, February 20	Andree Clark Bird Refuge f.t.
Wednesday, February 24	February Program: <i>Nocturnally Active Insectivores</i>

February Volunteer Restoration Opportunities

Join us at these Audubon, Urban Creeks Council, or joint projects for the two organizations. For more information, contact Darlene Chirman at 692-2008 or Stephanie Langsdorf at 962-0996. To participate in plantings at the new Greenwell Preserve in Summerland, contact David Hill at 565-3573. It's great fun, and you get to do something tangible to improve our creeks and wetlands.

DATE & TIME	PLACE	CONTACT
Sun, Feb 7, 8:30-12:30 (Rain: Feb 14)	Atascadero Creek Planting—near Goleta Beach	Darlene
Sat, Feb 13, 9:00-Noon	Cieneguitas Creek Planting—meet at Vieja Valley School Parking Lot	Stephanie
Sat, Feb 27, 9:00-Noon	San Jose Creek Planting—meet at Berkeley Footbridge	Darlene
Sun, Feb 28, 9:00- 12:30	Cieneguitas Creek Planting—meet at Vieja Valley School Parking Lot	Stephanie

Santa Barbara Audubon Society Officers & Committee Chairs 1998-99

OFFICERS		
President	- Everett King	569-2307
Vice-President	Darlene Chirman	692-2008
Secretary	Mary Wenzel	685-5601
Treasurer	Christine Walden	969-4256
COMMITTEE CHAIRS		
Conservation	Dave Wass	682-6962
Education	Jim Greaves	563-2905
Field Trips	Paul Keller	968-7804
Hospitality	Don & Florence Stivers	967-3690
Newsletter	Janet Eastman	964-1468
Membership	David Kisner	692-9792
Programs	Lee Moldaver	682-2120
Publicity	Sheila Golburgh Johnson	682-4618
At Large	Don & Florence Stivers	967-3690
	Kathleen Whitney	687-0842
BIRD REFUGE	Sally Walker	569-5388
RARE BIRDS	Karen Bridgers	964-1316
RARE BIRD ALERT	<i>Lists rare birds sighted recently.</i>	964-8240

Officers and Committee Chairs meet the second Thursday of the month. Members are welcome to attend. Please call the Audubon office to verify dates and times (805) 964-1468; FAX (805) 967-7718. Cover art by Daryl Harrison.



Santa Barbara
Audubon Society
5679 Hollister Avenue - 5B
Goleta, CA 93117

FEBRUARY 1999

Dated material — Please expedite

Non-profit org.
U.S. Postage PAID
Santa Barbara, CA
Permit Number 125



5679 HOLLISTER AVE
GOLETA CA 93117-3400

or current resident

In This Issue...

1998 Christmas Bird Count Results

FEB 99/2A/B

1998 SBAS CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT -- January 2, 1999

LOONS

3 Red-throated Loon
18 Pacific Loon
31 Common Loon

GREBES

144 Pied-billed Grebe
11 Horned Grebe
23 Eared Grebe
1111 Western Grebe
14 Clarks's Grebe

SHEARWATERS

Northern Fulmar
242 Black-vented Shearwater

PELICANS

535 Brown Pelican

CORMORANTS

366 Double-crested Cormorant
35 Brandt's Cormorant
2 Pelagic Cormorant

HERONS

X American Bittern
27 Great Blue Heron
27 Great Egret*
51 Snowy Egret
1 Cattle Egret
8 Green Heron
63 Black-crowned Night-Heron

SWANS, GEESE, & DUCKS

39 Canada Goose
8 Wood Duck
57 Green-winged Teal
569 Mallard
33 Northern Pintail
12 Blue-winged Teal*
115 Cinnamon Teal
45 Northern Shoveler
92 Gadwall
3 American Wigeon
201 Canvasback
24 Redhead
2 Ring-necked Duck
57 Greater Scaup*
92 Lesser Scaup
92 Surf Scoter
2 White-winged Scoter
68 Common Goldeneye
6 Bufflehead
15 Hooded Merganser
37 Common Merganser
251 Red-breasted Merganser
251 Ruddy Duck

NEW WORLD VULTURES

91 Turkey Vulture

HAWKS

1 Osprey*
29 White-tailed Kite
3 Northern Harrier
12 Sharp-shinned Hawk
27 Cooper's Hawk
63 Red-shouldered Hawk
109 Red-tailed Hawk
2 Golden Eagle

FALCONS

78 American Kestrel
4 Merlin

QUAIL

187 California Quail
Mountain Quail

RAILS & GALLINULES

10 Virginia Rail
18 Sora
Common Moorhen
1147 American Coot

PLOVERS

199 Black-bellied Plover
123 Snowy Plover
25 Semipalmated Plover
117 Killdeer

STILTS & AVOCETS

10 Black-necked Stilt
1 American Avocet

SANDPIPERS

11 Greater Yellowlegs
111 Willet
Wandering Tattler
8 Spotted Sandpiper
36 Whimbrel
Long-billed Curlew
36 Marbled Godwit
4 Ruddy Turnstone
30 Black Turnstone
451 Sanderling
1 Western Sandpiper
27 Least Sandpiper
2 Dunlin
60 Long-billed Dowitcher
10 Common Snipe
Red Phalarope*

JAEGERS, GULLS & TERNS

3 Pomarine Jaeger*
1 Parasitic Jaeger*
73 Bonaparte's Gull
676 Heermann's Gull
155 Mew Gull
752 Ring-billed Gull
640 California Gull
4 Herring Gull
1 Thayer's Gull*

646

Western Gull
7 Glaucous-winged Gull
Black-legged Kittiwake*
1 Caspian Tern*
64 Royal Tern
49 Forster's Tern
311 Black Skimmer*

AUKS & MURRES

Common Murre
Cassin's Auklet*
Rhinoceros Auklet*

PIGEONS

1001 Rock Dove
60 Band-tailed Pigeon
1 Spotted Dove
916 Mourning Dove
4 Common Ground-Dove

CUCKOOS

8 Greater Roadrunner

OWLS

4 Barn Owl
6 Western-Screech-Owl
23 Great Horned Owl
4 Northern Pygmy-Owl
1 Burrowing Owl*

SWIFTS

47 White-throated Swift

HUMMINGBIRDS

957 Anna's Hummingbird
1 Costa's Hummingbird*
Allen's Hummingbird*
3 Selasphorus sp.

KINGFISHERS

25 Belted Kingfisher

WOODPECKERS

615 Acorn Woodpecker
1 Red-naped Sapsucker*
11 Red-breasted Sapsucker
39 Nuttall's Woodpecker
55 Downey Woodpecker
23 Hairy Woodpecker
239 Northern Flicker (Red-shafted)
Northern Flicker
(Yellow-shafted)*

TYRANT FLYCATCHERS

325 Black Phoebe.
68 Say's Phoebe
2 Tropical Kingbird*
25 Cassin's Kingbird*

LARKS

Horned Lark

SWALLOWS

Violet-green Swallow*

JAYS & CROWS

7 Steller's Jay*
697 Scrub Jay
1910 American Crow
4 Common Raven

CHICKADEES & TITMICE

2 Mountain Chickadee
315 Plain Titmouse

BUSHTITS

1618 Bushtit

NUTHATCHES

29 Red-breasted Nuthatch
21 White-breasted Nuthatch

CREEPERS

6 Brown Creeper

WRENS

3 Rock Wren
13 Canyon Wren
134 Bewick's Wren
71 House Wren
11 Winter Wren
31 Marsh Wren

DIPPERS

American Dipper

OLD WORLD WARBLERS & THRUSHES

17 Golden-crowned Kinglet
944 Ruby-crowned Kinglet
98 Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
77 Western Bluebird
Townsend's Solitaire
295 Hermit Thrush
766 American Robin
1 Varied Thrush
215 Wrentit

THRASHERS

155 Northern Mockingbird
59 California Thrasher

WAGTAILS & PIPITS

159 American Pipit

WAXWINGS

548 Cedar Waxwings

SILKY FLYCATCHERS

6 Phainopepla

SHRIKES

13 Loggerhead Shrike

STARLINGS

936 European Starling

VIREOS

72 Hutton's Vireo

WOOD WARBLERS, TANAGERS & SPARROWS

162 Orange-crowned Warbler
2 Nashville Warbler*
1 Yellow-Warbler*
3224 Yellow-rumped Warbler (Audubon's)
152 Yellow-rumped Warbler (Myrtle)
7 Black-throated Gray Warbler*
170 Townsend's Warbler
Hermit Warbler*
1 Palm Warbler*
2 Black-and-white Warbler*
277 Common Yellowthroat
5 Wilson's Warbler*
1 Summer Tanager*
7 Western Tanager*
Rose-breasted Grosbeak*
Black-headed Grosbeak*
170 Rufous-sided Towhee
628 California Towhee
7 Rufous-crowned Sparrow
8 Chipping Sparrow
49 Lark Sparrow
3 Sage Sparrow*
471 Savannah Sparrow
38 Fox Sparrow
259 Song Sparrow
89 Lincoln's Sparrow
4 Swamp Sparrow*
8 White-throated Sparrow*
549 Golden-crowned Sparrow
1901 White-crowned Sparrow
544 Dark-eyed Junco (Oregon)
1 Dark-eyed Junco (Slate-colored)
Dark-eyed Junco (Gray-headed)*

BLACKBIRDS & ORIOLES

183 Red-winged Blackbird
7 Tricolored Blackbird
239 Western Meadowlark
144 Brewer's Blackbird
45 Brown-headed Cowbird
Orchard Oriole*
Hooded Oriole*
7 Northern Oriole (Bullock's)*
X Northern Oriole (Baltimore)*
Scott's Oriole*

FINCHES

97 Purple Finch
1824 House Finch
145 Pine Siskin
149 Lesser Goldfinch
Lawrence's Goldfinch
192 American Goldfinch

OLD WORLD SPARROWS

151 House Sparrow

ADDITIONAL SPECIES

3 Greater White-fronted Goose
1 Snow Goose
3 Ross's Goose
1 Brant
2 Oldsquaw
1 Bald Eagle
1 Zone-tailed hawk
2 Peregrine Falcon
38 Wild Turkey
1 Short-eared Owl
2 Common Poorwill
1 Broad-billed Hummingbird
1 Broad-tailed Hummingbird
1 Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
7 Tree Swallow
8 Barn Swallow
4 Yellow-billed Magpie
1 Cassin's Vireo
1 Tennessee Warbler
3 American Redstart
1 Clay-colored Sparrow
7 Vesper Sparrow
1 Grasshopper Sparrow
17 Great-tailed Grackle
X Rusty Blackbird

GRAND TOTAL 211 Species

*Rare - requires written description

X = Seen in Count Period (3 days before and 3 days after Count Day) but not on Count Day



Osprey