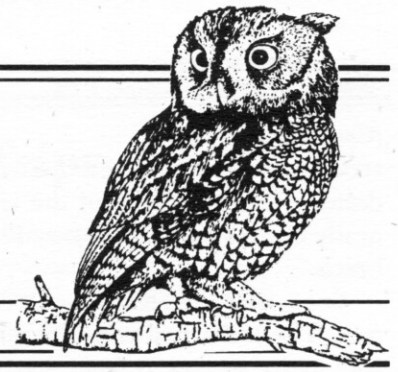


El Tecolote

Newsletter of the Santa Barbara Audubon Society, Inc.

Volume 40, Issue 5

April/May 2002



Perspective On Plovers

Fall/Winter ~ 2001/2002

By Jennifer Stroh

We've already entered mid-March with very few rainy days to indicate the winter season has ended. Though few, the storms that did pass through had a significant impact on the wildlife and habitats at Coal Oil Point Reserve, as well as our local population of the Western Snowy Plovers. The effects could be seen in the changes to the beach dimensions, slough direction, topography of the sand dunes, and debris along the shore. The roost location for the Western Snowy Plovers changed accordingly.

Throughout the winter, participants in the Snowy Plover Docent Program stayed very busy. The physical transformation of the beach often resulted in confusion for beach goers and therefore a dire need for more Plover Docent coverage. It was an exciting but nerve-racking season. For the first time at COPR, volunteers watched over plovers for a full winter. Their dedication enabled a productive wintering season for the plovers, which meant maximum resting and feeding with minimal disturbance. When comparing Fall 2000 (when no efforts were made for protection) with Fall 2001 (the erection of the fence and the docent coverage on the beach), the disturbance rates on plovers decreased by 90%.

In August 2001, the Snowy Plover Docent Program began with eight docents and has grown to 25. We acted as educational resources for beach users while ensuring the Reserve rules were respected. Docents were available to help people identify the plovers and teach them their biology and

natural history. They explained the dynamics of the beach and slough and clarified anything regarding the fences, signs, leash law, and trail closure. We were the links for public understanding; influencing people to voluntarily comply with rules and changes, while offering the maximum protection possible for the plovers.

Besides losing occasional signage and fencing to high tides and stormy weather, the confusion and chaos most often resulted from the sand berm being breached. The slough remained open to the ocean most of the winter season, disrupting the usual passage along the ocean's edge. Most

beach goers were pleasant and cooperative, and often thanked us for our time and efforts.

We offered a total of four docent trainings which greatly contributed to the growth and success of the program. Local support and cooperation was an obvious indication of the impact which we were making, but one of our largest victories was a ruling November 17th, 2001, by the California Coastal Commission. They voted in favor of three measures that were just as crucial for effective recovery: 1) the continuation of the exclu-

sure with roped boundaries, 2) the closure of the Delta trail – a Reserve trail, which was used infrequently and emptied into the plover roost, and 3) the continued placement of signs on the beach. Not only did the Commissioners fully support our management plan and Docent Program, they praised and commended us, encouraging that our program

(Continued on page 2)

Help SBAS protect the Snowy Plover!
Join the SBAS and the Environmental Defense Center for

Thank Goodness It's Friday!

Friday, April 12th, 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

906 Garden Street, Santa Barbara

\$10 at the door

Includes 2 drinks and hors d'oeuvres by Aldo's, Sojourner Cafe,

Our Daily Bread and Trader Joe's plus a drawing!

Live acoustic American roots music by

Vanessa Bryson and Dan Powel

Meet the Snowy Plover Docents

For more information please call EDC at 963-1622



(Continued from page 1)

serve as an example for other sites where the coexistence of plovers and humans deems necessary. Without the approval of the three measures it would have been nearly impossible for a Snowy Plover Docent to be an effective ambassador on the beach.

Soon after the New Year, 2002, two signs were posted at each side of the enclosure. The Delta trail was officially closed January 31, 2002 and began re-vegetation with native species. A fence erected to keep people from using the former Delta trail was funded by a grant from the Shoreline Preservation Fund, a UCSB foundation that also awarded funding for the Docent Program.

The events listed above have enabled the SPDP to evolve into a strong, stable organization. We have a diverse fun group of good people which I feel fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with. Our next training is scheduled for Saturday, April 6, 2002, and will welcome an even larger group.

Spring and the beginning of summer will be slightly unfamiliar ground for the Docent Program. It's the first breeding season for the SPDP since the successful fledge of the plover chick last June. During the next months we expect the number of plovers at Sand's to nearly diminish; they are currently decreasing about 5 - 10 individuals/day, in order to relocate at popular breeding sites and find a mate. When you venture out to Sand's, don't be discouraged by the low numbers of plovers. Pay close attention to the few that do remain year round. Notice the change in plumage, watch for breeding behavior, or just simply observe. There's a chance Fred (last year's chick) might continue the saga...

As the twilight clings tighter and the weather becomes dryer and hotter, recreation will increase at Sand's beach. For the overall recovery of the coastal population of the Western Snowy Plover, protection and education throughout the upcoming months at COPR are just as important as they are during the wintering months. New students and residents of Goleta, Isla Vista, and Santa Barbara will have the unique opportunity to share a sensitive habitat, while becoming conscious of the potential part they play in EITHER their decline or their recovery. If ever out there, respect the roost enclosure, read the signs, keep dogs leashed, and don't leave any trash behind. You can count on recognizing a friendly face, donning a Snowy Plover Docent T-shirt, set up with a sign and spotting scope to offer an up-close peak at these cute balls of fluff. Come August and September, wintering plover numbers will increase again, and we'll be ready to start another year with some experience behind us and a cooperative, conscious community surrounding us.

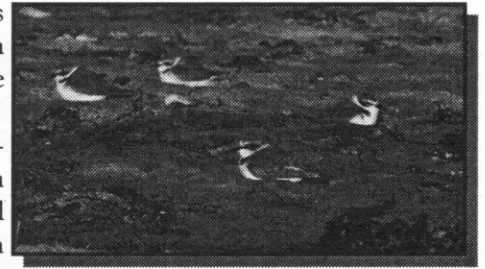


Photo by Elizabeth Price

Education News

By Catherine Graham

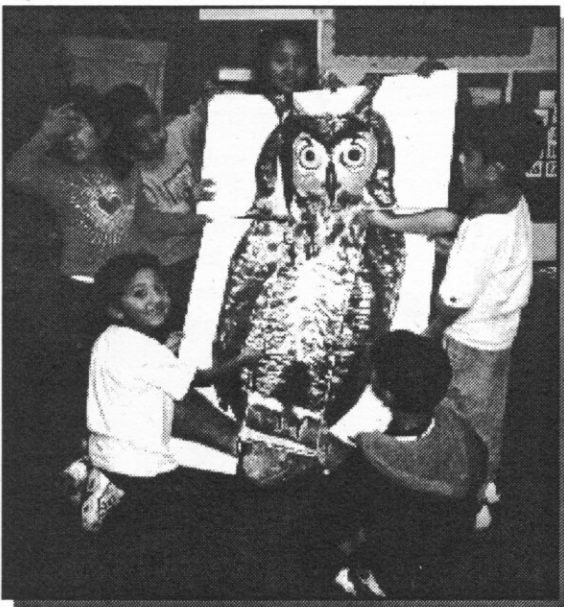


Photo by Catherine Graham

It's fun to do a big puzzle! Children from the After School Program at Adams School show how they put together a Great Horned Owl puzzle. This puzzle was brought for them to enjoy after **Gabriele Drozdowski** presented a program with Max, our own real live Great Horned Owl. Since Max is unable to live in the wild, he has become a species ambassador, visiting classrooms and other events.

Earth Day Volunteers Needed!

We are looking for volunteers to help out at the SBAS Earth Day booth. Earth Day is Sunday, April 21. Please call **Catherine Graham**, 682-3517, to decide which times work best for you. Thank you!

Santa Barbara Audubon Programs

All programs, unless otherwise noted, will take place at Farrand Hall, Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, Mission Canyon, Santa Barbara. Free on-site parking. All programs, unless otherwise noted, will begin at 7:30 p.m., doors open at 7:00 p.m., and are free to the public. SBAS members are encouraged to bring guests.

"Eggs in Another (Bird's) Basket"

Dr. Stephen Rothstein, Speaker
Wednesday, April 24th



SBAS is pleased to have **Dr. Rothstein** speak on cowbird behavior, song, parasitism and conservation of endangered species. **Dr. Rothstein** received the Brewster

Award for 2001, the highest honor given by the American Ornithologists' Union, for his "detailed and perceptive contributions to the fields of behavioral ecology, evolution, and conservation of birds."

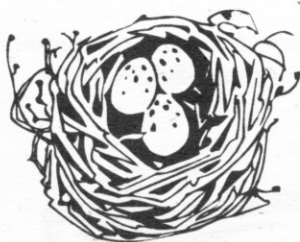
He has analyzed the role that Brown-headed Cowbird parasitism plays in population declines of songbirds, especially western species such as Bell's Vireos and Willow Flycatchers. The cowbird has developed a successful survival strategy of placing their eggs in the nests of other birds who raise the cowbird brood to the detriment of the foster birds' own offspring.

Dr. Rothstein notes that "there are many shared aspects in the development of human speech and the whistles of songbirds. The various species of songbirds generally learn their whistles just like languages and dialects are learned by people."

For more information go to:

<http://cowbird.lscf.ucsb.edu/bibliography/bibliography.html>

Dr. Rothstein is a Professor of Zoology and Director, Museum of Systematics & Ecology, Department of Ecology, Evolution & Marine Biology at UCSB.



"The Condor Recovery Program"

Bronwyn Davey, Speaker
Wednesday, May 22nd

Come join us for an informative and lively presentation on the California Condor! **Bronwyn Davey**, a US Fish & Wildlife Service Public Information Officer at the Hopper Mountain National Wildlife Refuge, will present a fascinating look at the Condor Recovery Program and give us a southern California update. The largest bird in the U.S., the California condor was nearly extinct, with just 27 birds remaining, when the last few individuals were trapped for captive breeding in 1987.

There are now three active release sites in California—Lion Canyon, Machesna Wilderness Area and the Sespe Condor Sanctuary. A release site in Arizona was established in 1995 to establish two disjunct populations, a goal of the Recovery Plan.

The Hopper Mountain National Wildlife Refuge served as a traditional feeding area for the endangered California condor. Its 2,471 acres of grassland, chaparral, and coastal sage scrub are delectable habitat for the condor. There is a small, 350-acre area of intact California black walnut groves, some of the last remaining in southern California. The refuge habitat is primarily grasslands with some pinon pine-juniper community, scrub oak, and the Bitter Creek riparian habitat. This refuge protects the habitat of a variety of plants and animals as well as the California condor.

Kids will like this talk and the visuals! Share the enjoyment of finding out more about the condors with your child or grandchild at: www.dfg.ca.gov/kids/t&e4kids/condor.html



National Audubon Society Membership Application (new members only)

Includes membership in **National Audubon & Santa Barbara Audubon Society** (C13 7XCH) and subscriptions to **Audubon** magazine & **El Tecolote**, the SBAS newsletter

☐ \$20 Introductory Membership

☐ \$15 Senior (62+) or Student

Make check payable to:

National Audubon Society

Mail to:

Santa Barbara Audubon Society
5679 Hollister Ave., Suite 5B
Goleta, CA 93117

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State/Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____



Santa Barbara Audubon Field Trips

Everyone is welcome! These trips are fun for both beginning and expert bird lovers. Binoculars are useful for enjoyment of birds, but if you don't have a pair please call the trip leader and we'll lend you a spare. Trips are free unless noted.

Lake Los Carneros County Park Goleta

Saturday, April 13th, 5:00 p.m.

Target Birds: Spring songbirds

Karen Bridgers, 964-1316, kbridgers@msn.com

✍



Yellow-rumped Warbler
by Trevor Herriot

Take Los Carneros exit from 101 north on Los Carneros Rd to Stow House parking lot next to fire station. We will first bird Stow House then work our way towards the dam slowly circling the lake counterclockwise. Finish before sunset (7:30 p.m.).

During mid April many wintering songbirds are still in town and yet many neotropical migrants have arrived and are in full song. What better time to join **Karen** at her favorite birding patch?

Volunteers Needed!

Want to lead a bird walk? You don't need to be an expert; you only need a desire to share your enthusiasm about birds. For more information please contact **Paul Keller**, 968-7804, wrentit@verizon.net.

Christmas Bird Count Area, Rare Birds January 12th Trip Report By Paul Keller

We split up into two groups. **Mark Holmgren** took the first group to see the rare birds north of 101. I took the second to see the Worm-eating Warbler in the Pittosporum NW of the track just after 10 a.m. (sorry, Todd, just 10 minutes after you left). About half an hour later we were looking at the Clay-colored Sparrow in the eastern part of the open area in the Willowgrove housing development just N of Francisco Torres off Storke Rd. At 11:45 a.m. the Eastern Phoebe showed itself at its usual place across the street from the UPS entrance off Pine St east along the creek past the Blue Gums in the Honey Locust trees next to the trailer parking lot. That event ended the trip but four of us celebrated by treating ourselves to a Costco Polish sausage followed by a close up view of the Rusty Blackbird just yards from the Costco eating area.

Santa Cruz Island Channel Islands National Park

Saturday, May 4th, 7:00 a.m.
(arrive no later than 6:30 a.m.)
at SEA Landing, Santa Barbara)

Reservations Required!

Cost: \$65.00

Target birds: Pink-footed Shearwater, Sooty Shearwater, Black Storm-Petrel, Red-necked Phalarope, Pomarine Jaeger, Pigeon Guillemot, Xantus' Murrelet, Cassin's Auklet, Allen's Hummingbird, Pacific-slope Flycatcher, Island Scrub-Jay

Paul Keller, 968-7804, wrentit@verizon.net

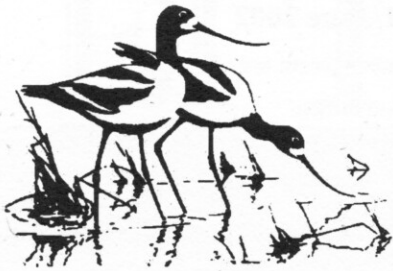
Brad Schram and Dave Compton will lead this all day trip to Santa Cruz Island. We will head directly across the channel to Prisoner's Harbor, looking for seabirds on the way. As we get within a few miles of Santa Cruz, we have a good chance for fleeting glimpses of Xantus' Murrelets. May is perhaps the best month for this bird. Many experienced murrelet watchers will bird from the bow and try to spot these birds before they flush and fly away.



In the unlikely event that surf conditions prevent a landing at Prisoner's Harbor we will remain in the harbor and try to spot jays from the boat. Otherwise the crew will land us ashore on dinghies. If you want to bring photographic gear ashore, you may want to pack it to protect from wetness. Most likely, though, you'll get on and off the island getting nothing wet but the soles of your shoes. As jays are easy to see, our time ashore will be limited giving us more time for seabirding on the return passage. We'll return to SEA Landing at about 5 p.m.

For more details or to make a reservation please call **Paul Keller**, 968-7804, or see the SBAS website: www.rain.org/~audubon/





Watershed Resource Center & Birds at the Beach

By Darlene Chirman

The Community Environmental Council manages the Watershed Resource Center (WRC) at Arroyo Burro Beach. Open since August 2001, the WRC educates school children and the general public in caring for our creeks and beaches to reduce pollution and protect native plants and wildlife. **SBAS** is represented on the Advisory Committee for the Center. You can learn more at their website: www.WatershedResourceCenter.org.

org.

The WRC has begun offering beach walks focused on geology, plants and beach clean up. **SBAS** would like to co-sponsor tours from the WRC, which can focus on birds at the estuary, the beach or the adjacent riparian area. This is a great way to introduce people to birding and would be suitable for families. We are looking for some bird walk leaders; you don't need to be an expert birder, just be willing to share your knowledge, what features and behaviors you use along with a field guide to identify birds, and your enthusiasm! If you would like to lead occasional birding trips at the WRC, or learn more about it, contact **Darlene Chirman**, 692-2008, **Paul Keller**, 968-7804, or **Amy Findlay**, Director of the WRC, 682-6113.

Arroyo Hondo Preserve

By Darlene Chirman

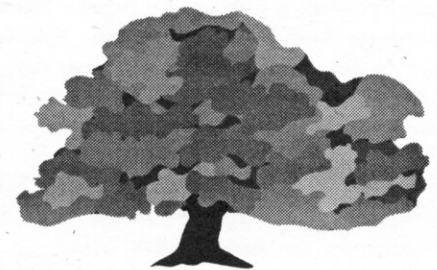


The Arroyo Hondo Preserve is now open to the public on the first and third weekend of each month. Call 567-1115 to reserve your space! Thanks to all who helped the Land Trust for Santa Barbara County to acquire this biologically rich property.

The Land Trust needs people who are interested in leading tours of the spectacular Arroyo Hondo Preserve. Volunteers will learn about the natural and cultural history of this picturesque canyon on the Gaviota Coast, 23 miles west of Santa Barbara. The first docent training sessions will start in May. Following the training, docents must commit to one year of service, leading a minimum of 1 tour a month. Tours of the Preserve are on Mondays, Wednesdays, and the third Sunday of each month.

For further information and an application contact **Jane Murray**, 684-4405, jane@murrays.com.

Volunteers are also needed to do habitat restoration and trail maintenance, on the first Sunday of each month. For these opportunities call 567-1115.



Volunteer Habitat Restoration Opportunities for April & May

Come out and make a positive contribution to improve our creeks and wetlands—great places to work with good company. For more information contact **SBAS** coordinator **Megan Snover**, 964-9986, megansnover@hotmail.com; or Coal Oil Point Reserve coordinator, **Cris Sandoval**, 893-5092; or Arroyo Hondo Reserve-Land Trust, 966-4520; or **Darlene Chirman**, 692-2008, dchirman@rain.org.

Descriptions and directions are on the **SBAS** website: www.rain.org/~audubon/

Date	Location	Contact
Sun, Apr 7, 9:30am-12:30	Arroyo Hondo Preserve—bring a lunch	Land Trust
Sat, Apr 13, 8:30am-noon	Coal Oil Point Reserve—call for site	Cris
Sat, Apr 20, 9:00am-noon	Tecolotito Creek—meet at Goleta Beach County Park parking lot	Megan
Sat, Apr 27, 8:30am-12:30	Goleta Slough—call for site	Megan
Sun, May 5, 9:30am-12:30	Arroyo Hondo Preserve—bring a lunch	Land Trust
Sat, May 11	Coal Oil Point Reserve—call for site and time	Cris
Sat, May 18, 8:30am-12:30	Goleta Slough—call for site	Megan
Sat, May 25, 8:30am-12:30	Tecolotito Creek—meet at Goleta Beach County Park parking lot	Megan

Calendar of Events

Apr 12	TGIF Celebration
Apr 13	Lake Los Carneros Field Trip
Apr 21	Earth Day
Apr 24	"Eggs in Another (Bird's) Basket"
May 4	Santa Cruz Island Field Trip
May 22	"Condor Recovery Program"

SBAS Board Openings

Have you been searching for a way to make a difference? Would you like to help our chapter educate our members and the public about birds and wildlife, and protecting their habitats? You are invited to serve on the **SBAS** Board for a one-year term beginning July 2002. There will likely be 3 openings, including Education and Publicity. Responsibilities include attending an evening meeting the second Wednesday of each month. Please contact **Sally Walker**, 569-5388, walker160@cox.net, or **Darlene Chirman**, 692-2008, dchirman@rain.org or other board members to learn more.

El Tecolote is published 6 times a year by the **Santa Barbara Audubon Society, Inc.** Non-member price for an annual subscription is \$15 per year. Please make checks payable to **SBAS**. Members are invited to send announcements, letters, articles, photos and drawings for consideration to:

SBAS, Bill and Elaine Uomini, Editors

5679 Hollister Avenue - Suite 5B

Goleta, CA 93117

or e-mail: tecolotesb@aol.com

Submission deadline is the 10th of the month.

SBAS July 2001/June 2002

(805) 964-1468, audubon@rain.org

www.rain.org/~audubon/

Officers

President	Darlene Chirman	692-2008	dchirman@rain.org
Vice President	Satie Airame	965-0895	satie.airame@noaa.gov
Secretary	Ginny Turner		vturmer@juno.com
Treasurer	Elizabeth Price	687-3966	earthpicts@home.com

Board Members/Chairs

Conservation	Dave Wass	682-6962	david.wass@gte.net
Education	Catherine Graham	682-1357	
Field Trips	Paul Keller	968-7804	wrentit@verizon.net
Membership Chair	Lee Moldaver	682-2120	audubon@rain.org
Newsletter	Bill & Elaine Uomini	964-9401	tecolotesb@aol.com
Programs	Sylvia Curtis	965-8814	sylviayc@yahoo.com
Publicity	Sheila Golburgh-Johnson	682-4618	chtodcl@gss.ucsb.edu
Science	Kendy Radasky	683-4176	kradasky@aol.com
At-Large-Outreach	Christine Cowles	568-5370	ccltsbc@silcom.com
At-Large-Outreach	Victoria Woodard-Harvey	965-6355	mwright@silcom.com
At-Large-Outreach	Anna Nicholas	681-9141	ripcityfilms@earthlink.net

Appointed Positions

Eyes In The Sky	Gabriele Drozdowski	898-0347	pelican7@cox
Hospitality	Don & Florence Stivers	967-3690	
Membership database	Patrick McNulty	967-9900	mcnulty@gte.net
Nominating Com.	Sally Walker	569-5388	walker160@cox.net
Rare Bird Alert	Recent rare bird sightings	964-8240	
Report Rare Bird	Karen Bridgers	964-1316	kbridgers@msn.com
Webmaster	Bobbie Offen	684-0160	bobbieo@earthlink.net

Officers and Chairs meet the 2nd Wednesday of the month. Members are welcome to attend.

Call SBAS office to verify dates and times. FAX: 967-7718. Cover art by Daryl Harrison.

El Tecolote

Santa Barbara Audubon Society, Inc.

5679 Hollister Avenue - Suite 5B

Goleta, CA 93117

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April 2002

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