# El Tecolote

Newsletter of the Santa Barbara Audubon Society, Inc.
Volume 51, Issue 3 Dec. 2012—Jan. 2013

Celebrating 50 Years of Conservation and Advocacy

### In The Beginning: How the Christmas Bird Count Started

By Jared Dawson

"It is not many years ago that sportsmen were accustomed to meet on Christmas Day, 'choose sides,' and then, as representatives of the two bands resulting, hie them to the fields and woods on the cheerful mission of killing practically everything in fur or feathers that crossed their path...

Now BIRD-LORE proposes a new kind of Christmas side hunt, in the form of a Christmas bird-census, and we hope that all our readers ... will aid us ... by spending a portion of Christmas Day with the birds and sending a report of their 'hunt' to BIRD-LORE before they retire that night." ---BIRD-LORE MAGAZINE, 1900

Thus the first Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count (CBC) came about on December 25, 1900, when 27 localities reported a total of 89 species (there was just one California count, in Pacific Grove).

The first Santa Barbara count was due to the efforts of an out-of-town visitor, Anna Head, an educator from the Bay Area. On December 26, 1902, for the third count, in three and a quarter hours, Head found 32 species and 399 individuals.

It took the arrival of noted ornithologist and oologist William Leon Dawson, founder of what would become the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, to make our count an annual event. From 1910 through the following decade, Dawson, with a small number of friends, conduct-

ed annual Christmas counts and 'put us on the map' nationally for species diversity. From 76 species on the 11<sup>th</sup> count, Santa Barbara was the first to reach 100 on the next year's 12<sup>th</sup> count.

The standardized 15-mile diameter circles were not created until the 1920s, so this result is even more remarkable given that other counts could, as in Los Angeles, census areas over 30 miles apart. *BIRD-LORE* commented, "Santa Barbara California again appears to be the resort most fa-

vored by birds in the United States during the winter. Last year's census from this locality of 76 species ... is not 'in the running' with the remarkable list of 100 species observed this year.... Indeed, we doubt if so large a number of birds has heretofore been identified in North America on a single winter's day."

In 1914, there was a new national record. "Santa Barbara, with 108 species, breaks by five its wonderful record of 1912. It has no competitors. The great numbers of waterfowl seen there ...make mighty good reading," writes *BIRD-LO-RE*. We then placed second to Los Angeles for a few years until the 20<sup>th</sup> count, when we achieved a national high of 109 species. All of these local counts were done by a single birding party led by Dawson!

Santa Barbara did not report from 1940 through 1960. The founding of the Santa Barbara Audubon Society in 1963 helped restart our counts, and for the last fifty years we have maintained a continuous tradition of community-based citizen science, assisted immeasurably by Paul Lehman and Joan Lentz—outstanding compilers who led our efforts for many years.

How much has our CBC grown? Last year we had 214 participants, second only to Victoria, BC, in field observers. This is remarkable given the modest size of our population base compared to urban counts like Portland or Oakland. (The average turnout in mainland US and Canada is rough-

ly 30.) We can take pride as a community not only in the very high numbers of species found annually, but also in the quality of our bird science. We are all having a hand in helping to form a vital picture of wintering avian distribution throughout North America and increasingly in Central and South America.

Let's keep building on our traditions. For more information concerning the 113<sup>th</sup> count, to be held on January 5, 2013, go to www.casbbirdcount.org.



Christmas Bird Count, 2003. Photo: Roger Millikan

## Carpinteria's Christmas Bird Count Turns Four



Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
By Rob Denholtz

There was no CBC in Carpinteria before 2009. My motivation to organize the event evolved from my graduation from casual birder in upstate New York to serious birder after my retirement and move to Carpinteria. With the enthusiasm and support of local birding friends, and the opportunity to learn from pros like Joan Lentz and Fred Emerson, I became more involved in our hobby. After participating in the Santa Barbara and Cachuma CBCs, I decided that Carpinteria deserved its own count. After all, we have the sea, the coast, the plains, the mountains, and all kinds of fresh water habitats in the form of creeks, lakes, and reservoirs.

In December 2009, about 35 of us combed the area and compiled a list of 149 birds. In 2010, during three days of pouring rain, roughly 40 wet but undaunted souls found 143 species. (As they say, "Birds have to eat even if it's raining.") Last year, we hit the magic number of 150, thanks to the efforts of 60 participants. Our list included birds considered

rare by virtue of range and/or season. It included the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, the Red-breasted Grosbeak, Snow Goose, Cackling Goose, Surfbird, Costa's Hummingbird, and Black-and-White Warbler.

I'm encouraged by the growing interest in the Carpinteria CBC and encourage everyone to join us. We have a wide range of habitat that needs to be covered. Our circle runs from Fernald Point to Seacliff and from the Jameson Lake area to two miles offshore. There are new hot-spots waiting to be explored too: Lions Club (nesting Canyon Wrens this summer), Lake Jocelyn (White Ibis this fall), Carpinteria Creek (seems to turn up interesting new birds on every visit). We need more folks to explore the high country and would be delighted to have someone with knowledge of pelagic species to venture offshore.

There are approximately 160 wintering and resident birds regularly seen in and around Carpinteria. That sounds like a reasonable target for this year's CBC, which will take place on December 16<sup>th</sup>. Join us in achieving this goal by contacting me, Rob Denholtz, at 805-684-4060. Or email me at robdenholtz@ gmail.com.



Red-breasted Grosbeak

## Welcome\_

SBAS extends a warm welcome to our newest members.

We look forward to seeing you at our programs and field trips. Thanks for joining!

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Maria Barrows	Mr. Roger A. Freedman	Carrie Linden	Betty Shelton	
Sashikala Begur*	Paul Gannaway	Ellen MacFarlane	Leslie Siemon	
Susan Bridges	David L. Hamilton	Lael Foster Mohr	Ellen Taylor	
Lolly Champion	Judith Handelsman	Betsy Mooney	Ben Teton	
Claudia Chapman	Sandra Hunt	Michelle Parsons	Daniel Walker	
Alan L. Conn	R. P. Keller	Phyllis D. Prager	Alice Watkins	
Marguerite & Jim Downing	June Krejdovsky	David Rodson MD	Doug Yelmen*	
Anitra Ford*	Laurie S. Lauer	Carol Sawyer	*Chapter Only Membership	
Erica Franco	R. A. Lebewohz	Richard Scott		

The mission of the Santa Barbara Audubon Society is to help conserve and restore the earth's natural ecosystems and improve its biological diversity, principally in the Santa Barbara area, and to connect people with birds and nature through education, science-based projects and advocacy.

#### Christmas Bird Counts (CBC) in Santa Barbara County

Carpinteria: Sunday, Dec. 16th, 2012

Contact Rob Denholtz at 805-684-4060; or robdenholtz@yahoo.com/

Santa Maria/Guadalupe: Sunday, Dec. 23rd, 2012

Contact: 805-733-5501 or bima55@msn.com

Cachuma: Friday, Dec. 28th, 2012

Contact Mark Holmgren at maholmgren@yahoo.com

**Carrizo Plane (San Luis Obispo)**: Saturday, Dec. 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012 Contact Roger Zachary at 805-466-6222 or rzachary@charter.net

Santa Barbara CBC: Saturday, Jan. 5th, 2013

Register at http://www.casbbirdcount.org

For a list of CBC dates and locations throughout California, go to Nature Alley's website, at http://www.natureali.org/cbcs.htm



#### THANK YOU, SANTA BARBARA BANK & TRUST



Audubon wishes to express its appreciation to Santa Barbara Bank & Trust for supporting our work by hosting our annual "Thank-You" to donors

and committee members at the Carrillo-Hill Adobe. The Bank generously provided soft drinks, coffee, and a gracious welcome. Our guests enjoyed the lovely, historic setting. -----Thank you SBB&T!

## SANTA BARBARA'S FIRST BIRDATHON IS COMING!

In celebration of Santa Barbara Audubon's 50th Anniversary, we are having our first ever Birdathon in April 2013. This is a great chance to enjoy diverse birding events while raising money to support our chapter's important missions.

Here are some of the key details:

- \* Birdathon dates: April 20 28, 2013
- \* Invited expert birders will lead special field trips.
- \* Teams will be formed, with sponsors, for big days or morning trips.
- \* Birders will be sponsored by others on species counts.
- \* Other special events for beginning birders and kids will be held.!
- \* The goals are to raise money and encourage our more of the community to enjoy the gift of birding and the connection with nature it brings.

There will be many ways to participate and have fun. For more information, please check our website (www. santabarbaraaudubon.org) or see upcoming issues of El Tecolote.

## 50th Anniversary Trinkets

SANTA BARBARA AUDUBON celebrates its 50th Anniversary in 2013. To commemorate this milestone we have created **baseball caps (\$20)** and BPA-free **wa-**

ter bottles (\$5) with our logo. Be among the first to have these! Water bottles and baseball caps (pictured) will be for sale at Audubon programs at The Natural History Museum November 28 and December 5.

Or contact Dolores Pollock at 681-8661 or Development-1@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org.



El Tecolote is a free publication published 6 times a year by the Santa Barbara Audubon Society, Inc., 5679 Hollister Ave. Ste 5B Goleta Ca 93117

Members are invited to send announcements, letters, articles, photos and drawings for consideration to:
SBAS, Laura Domingo Newsletter Chair
5679 Hollister Avenue, Suite 5B
Goleta, CA 93117

or email: newsletter@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org Submissions deadline is the 10th of the month before publication.

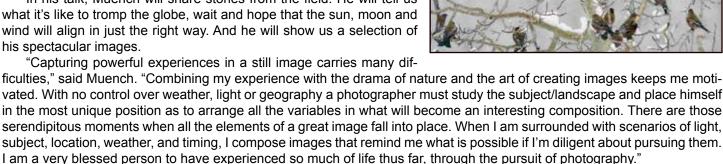
## Santa Barbara Audubon Programs

#### **Catching Nature's** Drama in a Lens

On Wednesday, December 5th, Marc Muench, a third generation landscape photographer, will share stories of his life behind the lens, weighing and balancing the natural elements to get the perfect shot. Muench has been a professional landscape and sports photographer for over 20 years. He graduated in 1989 from Pasadena Arts Center, and immediately began shooting images for publishers like Graphic Arts Center, Browntrout Publishers, and Time, Inc. His images have appeared in--and on the covers of--magazines like Time, National Geographic, Traveler, Outside, Sunset, Skiing, and Sierra Magazine. Muench is native Santa Barbaran. He was born here in 1966 and still calls the area home.

In his talk, Muench will share stories from the field. He will tell us what it's like to tromp the globe, wait and hope that the sun, moon and wind will align in just the right way. And he will show us a selection of his spectacular images.

ficulties," said Muench. "Combining my experience with the drama of nature and the art of creating images keeps me motivated. With no control over weather, light or geography a photographer must study the subject/landscape and place himself in the most unique position as to arrange all the variables in what will become an interesting composition. There are those serendipitous moments when all the elements of a great image fall into place. When I am surrounded with scenarios of light,





#### Tales from Alaska's Wildlands

On January 30, 2013, renowned nature photographer Ralph Clevenger will share his experiences photographing the landscapes and wildlife of Denali National Park and Southeast Alaska. Home to North America's tallest mountain, the scenery of Denali is punctuated by encounters with grizzly bears, moose, caribou, wolves, migrating birds, and wildflowers. In contrast, Southeast Alaska contains the greatest diversity of fish and bird habitats found along the entire Pacific Coast, with thousands of miles of islands, bays, and coves providing homes for a multiplicity of shorebirds, waterfowl and marine mammals.

In addition, Clevenger will talk about the photo gear he uses and share the secrets of weather dilemmas and other logistical problems this wilderness environment presents.

Clevenger has pursued his passion for the natural world by specializing in location photography and video projects of eco-travel, environmental portraits, wildlife, and undersea subjects. He grew up on the coast of North Africa and began diving in the waters of the Mediterranean Sea at the age of 7 with his father. He went on to study zoology at San Diego State University and worked as a diver/biologist for the Scripps Institution of Oceanography in La Jolla, California before attending Brooks Institute of Photography. He holds a BS in zoology and a BA in photography and is the author of *Photographing Nature*, published by New Riders. Clevenger has traveled the world on assignment. His stock images are represented worldwide by Corbis Images. For anyone interested in traveling with Ralph, on participating in a photo workshop, visit his website at: www.ralphclevenger.com



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

## Santa Barbara Audubon Field Trips

Lake Cachuma Eagle Boat Cruise

Saturday, December 15, 2012

(9:45 check in time at boat dock) 10am - 12 noon

Trip Leader: Liz Gaspar, Park Naturalist

Target Birds: Bald Eagle, White Pelican, Grebes, Common Loon, Sea and water birds, Ducks,

Osprey, Great -tailed Grackle, Peregrine Falcon, etc.

Organization: Santa Barbara Audubon Society Cost: \$15 for the boat trip payable on the boat.

\$10 per car for entering the Lake Cachuma County Park

Limit: 35 people. You must email Jack Sanford birdsandtennis@hotmail.com to make a reserva-

tion on or before Tuesday Dec 11th. He will confirm your reservation.

Directions: Take Hwy 154 to Lake Cachuma County Park and park near the boat launching area and the Fishing and Tackle shop. To car pool (and it is a good idea since there is a \$10 entrance fee per car) meet at the 5 Points Shopping Center on the side of the Big 5 store at 9am. We should be back around 1 pm.

PS The Neal Taylor Nature Center has made some big improvements and worth a visit after the Eagle Cruise. Don't miss this great opportunity to get out on the lake with a Park Naturalist!

These trips are fun for both beginning and expert bird watchers. 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. Please contact Jack Sanford (805) 566-2191 or birdsandtennis@ hotmail.com for details or questions.



Reservations are required due to a limited number of vehicles allowed on the Ranch Target Birds: Song birds, ocean and pond water fowl, raptors and perhaps an owl or two Leader: Guy Tingos

Reservations are required. We are limited to 25 people (five vehicles). Please email Jack Sanford at birdsandtennis@hotmail.com) on or before Wednesday Jan 9th to reserve your place. Please let Jack know if you are willing to drive your vehicle and how many people it will hold. He must confirm your reservation by email.

Directions: Coming from the south take Hwy 101 to La Cumbre /State St off ramp. Turn right on State St and turn left into the Five Points Shopping Center. Coming from the north take Hwy 101 to the State Street off ramp. Turn left on State St. Turn right into the Five Points Shopping Center. We will meet and park on the side of the Big 5 Sporting Store at 7:00am. (\$8.00 gas money to drivers). We must car pool as we are limited to 5 vehicles. Bring water, snack or lunch and wear comfortable shoes. Binoculars and spotting scopes are useful.

Don't miss out on this opportunity to bird the private and unique Hollister Ranch.



Osprey

#### Field Trips/Bird Walks Do you have an idea?

We are always looking for suggestion for places to visit on our monthly field trips. If you have an idea and are not sure where or what to do next, or are interested in helping coordinate a field trip contact **Jack Sanford** (805) 566-2191. birdsandtennis@hotmail.com

#### Save this Date!

## Sandhill Crane Overnight Field Trip Saturday February 16th, and Sunday February 17th 2013

Jack Sanford will lead a birding field trip to Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park (Burrowing Owls), Pixley National Wildlife Refuge (Sandhill Cranes) and Kern National Wildlife Refuge (over 50 species nest here) plus Atwell Island Wetlands. All four locations are approximately 50 miles north of Bakersfield. It will be an overnight trip utilizing camping facilities or nearby motels. We will return Sunday evening. Please check the February/March issue of the E.T. for more information.

## Friday Bird Walks

#### Santa Barbara Harbor

Friday, December 14, 2013. (8:30 - 10:30am)

Target Birds: Waterfowl, Shorebirds, Peregrine Falcon, Song Birds

Directions: We will meet on the sidewalk next to the Sea Landing Sport Fishing Building (301 W. Cabrillo Blvd). All birders should park on Bath Street or Mason Street (no time limit) or use the paid city parking lot.

We will bird the SB Harbor and Sterns Wharf area.



#### Arrovo Burro School Open Space

Friday, December 28, 2013 (8:30-10:30am)

Directions: From Hwy 101 from either direction: Take the Las Positas Road off ramp. Turn towards the ocean (away from the mountains). Turn right on Modoc Road. Turn left on Palermo Drive. Follow Palermo Drive all the way to the end and park. We will meet by the locked gate.



#### Coronado Dr. And Devereux Creek

Friday, January 11, 2013 (8:30-10:30am)

Target Birds: Raptors, songbirds plus Monarch Butterflies

Directions: From Hwy 101 take the Glen Annie/Storke Rd off ramp. Go south (towards the ocean) on Storke Rd to Hollister Ave. Turn right on Hollister Ave and proceed to Coronado Drive. Turn left on Coronado Dr and park at the end of the street.

#### San Marcos Foothills Preserve

Friday, January 25, 2013 (8:30- 10:30am)

Directions: Coming from the north on Hwy 101 take the State Street/Hwy 154 Off Ramp and proceed to Hwy 154. Take the Cathedral Oaks Rd exit and head north (left turn). Coming from the south on Hwy 101 take the Hwy 154 exit and proceed east on Hwy 154. Take the Cathedral Oaks Rd exit and head north (left turn). Turn right on Via Chaparral and right on Salvar Rd. Proceed across the bridge to nowhere and turn left. We will park and meet near the entrance.

#### Pt Mugu Naval Air Station (Field Trip/Bird Walk Combination)

Friday Dec 7, 2012

Target Birds: Water fowl, rails, egrets, shorebirds, ducks, Vermillion Flycatcher, raptors etc.

Trip Leader: Martin Ruane; email the following information to Jack Sanford: full name (last,first,middle), address, last four Social Security numbers, state driver's license #, DOB, citizenship. This information is required by the Navy for security clearance. Only 25 people will be allowed to enter the Naval Air Station therefore, reserve your place no later than Nov. 26th by emailing Sanford at birdsandtennis@hotmail.com and receive confirmation.

We will car pool (\$8.00 gas money to drivers) from the Andree Clark Bird Refuge at 7:00 am. Once you receive reservation confirmation, meet us at the base if you so desire. Directions: Take Hwy 101 to the Rice Ave off ramp. Head towards the ocean to Hwy 1. Take Hwy I south to Wood Rd. Turn off on Wood Road towards the Base and turn left at the stop sign. Meet at the main gate parking lot. You must be a US citizen, have a photo ID, and you will be asked to fill out a security form before entering the base. The Base Naturalist, Martin Ruane, will guide us around the base from 8:00 am -12 noon. Join us for this unique and rare opportunity. Thanks to Peggy Kearns for making the necessary arrangements to visit the Base. PS Note Jack Sanford's new email address.

Join us on the second and fourth Fridays of each month at 8:30-10:30am, except as otherwise noted. Please call Bird Walk leader Jack Sanford 566-2191 or email at birdsandtennis@hotmail.com if you are interested in leading a future bird walk to your favorite birding location or have any questions.

## **Opportunities**

#### Volunteer Habitat Restoration

#### **ARROYO HONDO**

Contact: Sally Isaacson

Sunday December 2 9 am-12:30 pm Sunday January 6 9 am-12:30 pm

#### **COAL OIL POINT RESERVE**

Contact: Darlene Chirman

December I Coastal Poppy site 9 am-noon January 12 Site TBD 9 am-noon

#### SAN MARCOS FOOTHILLS:

Trail Enhancement—new Project

Darlene is biologist with Channel Islands Restoration

Contact: Dee Hamby

December 6 Antone Road entrance 9 am-1 pm

Audubon helps recruit volunteers for habitat restoration; come help to restore a creek or estuary while spending a morning in a beautiful bird habitat. We now have a new Audubon-managed project at Coal Oil Point Reserve as well. Contact Darlene Chirman at President@ SantaBarbaraAudubon.org or 455-3541. Contact the Land Trust for Arroyo Hondo Preserve: Volunteer Coordinator Sally Isaacson at 260-2252 or volunteer@sblandtrust.org. Contact Challel Islands Restoration for San Marcos Foothills or other project sites: Volunteer Coordinator Dee Hamby at Volunteer@cirweb.org.

#### SBAS Needs Your E-mail Address

To be added to the **SBAS** e-mail list, just send an e-mail message with the subject line, "Add + your name" to Membership@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org

The **SBAS** e-mail list will only be used for SBAS business and will not be sold or shared with any other group.

#### **Plover Project Docent Training**

Training takes place at the West Campus Conference Center at Coal Oil Point Reserve, from 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

**Training dates:** 

**Training Schedule:** 

Tour ...... 9-11 a.m.
Training ..... II a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Those interested should Contact: April Price. COPR Conservation Specialist at 893-3703 or copr.conservation@lifesci.ucsb.edu

#### Audubon Society Membership Application

#### Option 1: Local Chapter-only Membership

- Membership is for a FAMILY!
- Memberships initially received between October 1st and March 31st: Renewals Due December 31.
- Memberships initially received between April 1st and September 31st: Renewals Due June 30.
- ☐ This is my choice of membership!
- Cost: \$25 Annually.

Make check payable to: Santa Barbara Audubon Society

#### Option 2: National and Local Membership

Santa Barbara Code: C2ZC130Z

- ☐ This is my choice of membership!
- Please do NOT share my contact information.

**Introductory \$20** (NAS subsequent-yearly memberships are \$35/year.)

Make check payable to: National Audubon Society

For more information on these options please go to our website at: www.SantaBarbaraAudubon.org or call (805) 964-1468

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_

E-mail:
Amount Enclosed:

Mail to: Santa Barbara Audubon Society 5679 Hollister Ave, Suite 5B Goleta CA 93117 El Tecolote Santa Barbara Audubon Society, Inc. 5679 Hollister Avenue, Suite 5B Goleta, CA 93117

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Hospitality:	Teresa Fanucchi	705-3796	Hospitality@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org	
Science Adviso Birdathon	r Don Schroeder	403-2090	ScienceAdvisor@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org Birdathon@santabarbaraaudubon.org	
Rare Birds s Officers and Cl	hairs meet the 2nd Wedr	nesday of the	oups.yahoo.com/group/sbcobirding month. Members are welcomed to attend. 667-7718. Cover art by Daryl Harrison.	

#### Calendar of Events

Check our website for any changes or late additions to our Bird Walks, Field Trips or Programs:

#### http://www.SantaBarbaraAudubon.org

#### December

Dec.	ı	Restor	e Coal	Oil Point	: Coastai	Рорру

Dec. I Plover Project Docent Training

Dec. 2 Restore Arroyo Hondo

Dec. 6 San Marcos Foothills Trail Enhancement

Dec. 7 Pt. Mugu Naval Stat. Field trp/Brd Wlk

Dec. 14 Santa Barbara Harbor Bird Walk

Dec. 16 Carpinteria CBC

Dec. 15 Lake Cachuma Field Trip

Dec. 23 Santa Maria/Guadalupe CBC

Dec. 28 Cachuma CBC

Dec. 28 Arroyo Burro School Bird Walk

#### January

an	5	Santa	Barbara	CRC
an		Santa	Dai Dai a	

Jan. 6 Restore Arroyo Hondo

lan II Coronado Dr. Devereux Bird Walk

Jan 12 Restore Coal Oil Point Preserve

Jan. 12 Hollister Ranch Field Trip

Jan 12 Plover Docent Training

Jan. 25 San Marcos Foothills Bird Walk

