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# THE GULL



## THE CHRISTMAS COUNTS

The GGAS-sponsored Christmas Bird Counts are in Oakland Sunday, Dec. 16 and San Francisco Thursday, Dec. 27 rain or shine. Everyone from rank beginning birder to seasoned veteran is needed either as a field observer or feeder watcher. And do plan to attend the countdown dinner at the end of the day.

### OAKLAND

Letters of invitation have been sent out to those who participated last year; if you wish to participate and did not receive a letter call Nancy Conzett (527-2593, Chris Swarth (849-2053) or the GGAS office (843-2222). Full details are in The GULL for October.

The dinner will be, as usual, at Trinity Methodist Church in Berkeley at the end of the day. For \$3.50, payable at the door, you will have a hearty meal, enjoy the company of fellow birders and be in on the tallying of the day's birds. Details of the dinner are in The GULL for November.

### SAN FRANCISCO

The second San Francisco Christmas Bird Count (Thursday, Dec. 27), a tradition revived last year, covers the northern peninsula from the Golden Gate south to San Bruno Ave. We need birders who can spend the entire day in the field. Feeder watchers are needed as well. But also, unique to the San Francisco Count, we have a number of downtown and neighborhood parks which may require only an hour of coverage. If you can give us that hour before work or on your lunch hour, please sign up for the count.

A special concern is presented by the exotic species found in San Francisco. The CBC is the ideal time to census our Canary-winged Parakeets and Amazon Parrots and other exotics. We need information on species, numbers, habitat and breeding status. If a flock of these, or other exotic species live in your neighborhood, please call Alan Hopkins.

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### COUNT WORKSHOP

Something new this year — a workshop, Dec. 4, conducted by Stephen Bailey and Kurt Campbell - will cover many areas concerning participation in a Christmas Count. **Highly recommended!** Details are in The GULL for November or you may phone the numbers listed above.

## FIELD TRIPS CALENDAR

**Saturday, December 1 — Corte Madera Marsh.** See November GULL for details.

**Sunday, December 2 — Briones Regional Park.** See November Gull for details.

**Saturday, December 8 — Bolinas Lagoon.** Meet at 8:30 a.m. along Hwy. 1 at the turnoff to Bolinas at the north end of the lagoon. (This is north of the town of Stinson Beach). Bring lunch, scopes, raingear and high boots suitable for wet conditions. We will bird Bolinas Lagoon, the Pine Gulch Creek area and the Duxbury Reef overlook. We may see as many as 80 species. Leader: Richard Ives (453-5426). (✓)

**Wednesday, December 12 — Mini-trip to Arrowhead Marsh, Oakland.** Meet at 11 a.m. at the marsh. Take Hwy. 17 to the Hegenberger Rd. exit, proceed to Doolittle, turn right onto Doolittle and go a short distance and turn right onto Swan. Turn left after about a block and follow the signs to the marsh. Park in the first parking lot on the left. We will look for Burrowing Owls and ducks. After lunch at high tide, we will look for rails. Rain cancels trip. Leaders: Delpha de Timofeev and Ruth Voss (525-8032).

**Wednesday, January 9 — Mini-trip to San Francisco Wildlife Refuge.** This trip is limited to two buses and one car, so please call to reserve a seat. From Hwy. 17 take Decoto exit toward the Dumbarton Bridge. Turn right onto Thornton Ave. and follow sign to refuge. This is an opportunity to have professionals give us a great tour. Bring lunch. Hard rain two days before January 9 cancels trip. Leader: Ruth Voss (525-8032).

**Saturday, January 12 — Stockton, Lodi and Thornton.** Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Stockton sewage ponds at the main gate. From the Bay Area take Hwy. 580 to Hwy. 4 (Charter Way) in Stockton. Go west on Hwy. 4 about 1.5 miles to the entrance to the sewage ponds. We will bird at the Stockton sewage ponds then caravan to the Lodi sewage ponds and to Thornton to look for cranes. Dress warmly and be prepared for rain. Bring lunch. Leader: David Yee (209-951-1526).

**Sunday, January 13 — Grizzley and Joice Islands Wildlife Area.** Take I-80 north to Fairfield. Take the Fairfield/Rio Vista (Hwy. 12 east) exit and go east (right) on West Texas St. for about one-half mile to the City Park. Meet at the parking lot on the right at 8:30 a.m. we will caravan from there to the refuge. We should see a variety of waterfowl, shorebirds, raptors and marshbirds. Bring lunch and scopes. Leader: Peter Allen. (✓)

**Saturday, January 19 — Carrizo Plain.** From the Bay Area drive south on Hwy. 101 to Paso Robles or south on I-5 to Kettleman City. Lodging is available in both places. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at Cholame on Hwy. 46, about 24 miles east of Paso Robles. Driving time is four and one-half to five hours so we suggest that you plan to arrive Friday evening. We will bird all day so you may wish to stay in the area Saturday night. Bring lunch, liquids, warm clothes and perhaps a spotting scope. This area is excellent for Sandhill Cranes, a wide variety of Raptors, Mountain Plover and Longspurs. Not only will we see birds but we will also discuss the geology of the area. The San Andreas Fault is an outstanding feature here.

Considering the length of the drive and the possibility of poor weather (high winds or snow), it is possible that this trip will be cancelled at the last minute. It will also be called off if there is no interest. It is therefore important that you notify Shirley Kelly (387-8290) if you plan to attend. Leave your name, number in your party and a phone number where you can be reached if the trip is cancelled. Leader: Eben McMillan. (✓)

**Sunday, January 20 — Lake Merced, San Francisco.** Meet at 9 a.m. at the south end of Sunset Blvd. in the Lake Merced Circle. This is a good time to see wintering grebes and ducks. If you take the #72 bus be sure to get off at Ocean Ave. because the next stop is Winston Drive about one-half mile away. Lunch is optional for this half-day trip. Leader: Aileen Pierson (587-4163).

**Sunday, January 27 — Dillon Beach** Meet at 7:45 a.m. at the Larkspur Ferry Terminal, section H (just east of the Sir Francis Drake off-ramp from Hwy. 101). We will leave there promptly at 8 a.m. for the town of Tomales where we will stop by the Bank of America building on Hwy. 1 at 9 a.m. to meet the people from west Marin. From there we will continue to caravan to Lawson's Landing (entrance fee). Bring lunch, warm clothes, rain gear and scope if you have one. We may see three species of Loons, Red-necked Grebes, White Pelicans, Brants and Snowy Plovers. Golden Plovers are a possibility. Leader: Mary Louise Rosegay (386-1640). (✓)

**Saturday, February 2 — Palo Alto Baylands.** Take Highway 101 south to Palo Alto, exit at Embarcadero and drive east toward the yacht harbor and the Baylands Refuge until you reach the duck pond on the left just beyond the Palo Alto Airport. Meet

here at 9 a.m. Bring lunch, scopes and clothes appropriate for rain and mud. We should see waterfowl, rails and shorebirds. Leader: Dan Murphy (564-0074).

**Sunday, February 3 — Bay Park Refuge, Oakland.** Meet at 9 a.m. in the parking lot at the north end of Bay Park Refuge for a morning of leisurely birding. This trip is good for beginners. From Hwy. 17 take the Hegenberger Rd. exit, go right (north) on Edgewater Dr. for about one mile to the park. Bring a scope if you have one. Lunch is optional. We should see a variety of ducks, gulls and shorebirds. Leader: Dave Cornman (825-2106). (✓)

Carpooling arrangements can be made for trips marked (✓). Call Kate Partridge at 724-2116 and leave a message. She will contact you.

Trips marked with \$ go to parks or other sites which require an entrance fee.

Problems: If for any reason you have difficulty getting in touch with a field trip leader or need information regarding a trip, call Shirley Kelly (387-8290) or the GGAS office (843-2222).

—FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE

## OFFICE MANAGER HIRED

Mrs. Barbara Rivenes, Berkeley resident and 12 year member of GGAS, was selected from a number of well qualified applicants for the GGAS Office Manager position. She has recently received a degree from UC Berkeley in Environmental Studies, and was ready to go to work when she learned of the vacancy. Welcome!

## EXTENDED FIELD TRIPS

GGAS board of directors has selected Chris Carpenter, leader of several successful GGAS foreign tours, as extended field trip organizer. In announcing this choice they propose a

new extended field trips program of outstanding birding and natural history tours. The tours are designed to provide exciting and informative tours at reasonable prices. Full details will be available in *The GULL* for February. Tours scheduled for 1985 are:

**TEXAS SPRING MIGRATION**

Apr. 20 - May 4

**DEATH VALLEY WEEKEND**

May 24-27

**SOUTHEAST ARIZONA**

July 20-29

**SAN DIEGO PELAGIC**

Sept. 6-9

**KENYA**

Oct. 9-23

**SOUTHERN MEXICO**

Nov. 16 - Dec. 1

For further information and detailed trip brochures telephone Chris Carpenter at 847-6565 (days) or 376-6802 (evenings and week-ends) or the GGAS office.

## MISSION CREEK

**A HISTORY OF MISSION BAY** by Louise McCorkle-Adams has been received in a preprint copy. Prepared by the Mission Creek Conservancy under a grant from the San Francisco Foundation, it covers the pre-Columbian era, the settlement of the district and more recent events. It provides information about the natural habitat of the area.

This copy is available for review in the GGAS office; further information is available from the Conservancy at 621-6774.

Plans are being made for publication and distribution so that the information will be useful in influencing planning for the Mission Bay and Mission Creek area of San Francisco.

## OBSERVATIONS: Through October 30

### PROCELLARIIFORMES

Only occasional straggling Northern Fulmars had been in California waters for many months, so 75 off Monterey Oct. 20 (JM, AB, et al.) arrived in the preceding few days. Two Flesh-footed Shearwaters were found off Monterey on both Oct. 13 (AB, SFB, AH, et al.) and Oct. 20 (JM, AB, et al.). Another was in the middle of the Gulf of the Farallones Oct. 21 (BK, MW, et al.).

The irruption of Black-vented Shearwaters reached unprecedented proportions. This was consistently the most numerous shearwater along our coast this month. A concentration of 1100 was estimated by the tip of Point Reyes (LCB) and this species was abundant at the Cordell Banks the same day (MW, et al.). Hundreds remained off Point Reyes the following week (mob) and 1500 were passing along Point Reyes Beach Oct. 3 (LCB). In the Gulf of the Farallones the high number was 750 on Oct. 6 (BK, et al.). On Oct. 12 700 were seen from Bodega Head (GF), and 200 were by Duxbury Reef the following day (JW, et al.). Farther south, from the San Mateo County coast, a count of 2118 was obtained Oct. 9 (BS). In the same area Oct. 13 they passed at the rate of 180-200 per minute during a two-hour observation, but because they were circling back no total was obtained (PG). In the Monterey area numbers found by boat trips were relatively smaller (less than 200) until Oct. 20, when 3000-4000 were estimated, mostly over the north rim of the Monterey Bay submarine canyon (JM, AB, et al.).

Among the Monterey Bay storm-petrels the only highlights were a Wilson's Oct. 6 (GMcC, et al.) and two

Leasts Oct. 13 (AH, DLS). A Forked-tailed Storm-Petrel was over the continental shelf line west of SE Farallon Island Oct. 28 (BK, MW).

#### ANSERIFORMES

The Eurasian Wigeon back at Bolinas Lagoon Oct. 13 (JE) was the only one reported before the main November-December period of arrival. A male returned to Moss Landing in mid-October. An Oldsquaw was on Abbott's Lagoon Oct. 24 (DT).

#### FALCONIFORMES

Three more immature Broad-winged Hawks passed Pt. Diablo Sept. 28 (LCB, KFC), but there were none in October. A very late vagrant Swainson's Hawk flew over downtown Oakland October 27 (JL). Conversely, a Rough-legged Hawk at Briones Park Oct. 20 (CS) was rather early.

#### CHARADIIFORMES

A Solitary Sandpiper tarried at the Spalleta Ranch pond on Point Reyes Sept. 26-29 (LCB, NC, mob). Another Solitary Sandpiper visited Pine Gulch Creek Oct. 19 (BSt). The season's final Semipalmated Sandpiper was at the Salinas River Mouth Sept. 29 (RS, et al.). Two of the **Buff-breasted Sandpipers** at Salinas Sewage Ponds remained to Sept. 27, and a Sharp-tailed Sandpiper was also there that day (DS). Our fifth Sharp-tailed Sandpiper this fall spent Oct. 6-21 at the Watsonville Sewage Ponds, mostly inside the "thicket" of tomato seedlings (DG, SFB, mob).

A Long-tailed Jaeger flew through the Monterey Bay fog Oct. 6 (GMcC). South Polar Skuas have been scarce in Monterey waters this year, but one was over the continental shelf line west of SE Farallon Island Oct. 20 (BK, MW).

At Stockton Sewage Ponds, both the **Broad-billed Hummingbird** was an **Little Gull** returned for at least their

**seventh consecutive winter**. Their re-discovery dates were Oct. 20 and Oct. 26, respectively (both DY). They were still there Oct. 28 (AE). Single Franklin's Gulls were there Oct. 16 and 26-28 (DY, et al.). A landward Sabine's Gull was at Rodeo Lagoon Oct. 15 (PA, et al.).

Tufted Puffins are seldom seen from land except during the breeding season, so two at Point Reyes Lighthouse Oct. 3 (MLR) are noteworthy.

#### DOVE TO HUMMINGBIRD

A White-winged Dove frequented the area around the Point Reyes Willows Sept. 30 - Oct. 9 (LCB, SW, et al. NB). Eight Short-eared Owls at Hayward Shoreline Oct. 25 (BR) perhaps hints of an irruption of northern predators. On Oct. 2 a Chimney Swift visited SE Farallon Island with four Vaux's (P RBO). Northern California's second **Broad-billed Hummingbird** was an adult male defending a mallow patch Carmel River Mouth Sept. 29 - Oct. 1 (RS, et al.).

#### VAGRANT PASSERINES

Coastal vagrant weather generally went downhill throughout the month. Numbers of warblers and other vagrants were mostly quite low. The majority came during the end of September and the beginning of October, after which landbirds were really dull.

SE Farallon did receive a major wave of over 1700 landbirds on Oct. 2. Point Reyes Bird Observatory banded over 450 of them that day. All Farallon observations are by PRBO, and only arrival dates are reported for these.

The coincidence of relatively many vagrants, including eight of the Black-poll Warblers, on Oct. 6 probably represents not so much a wave day as the last Saturday with reasonable vagrant weather.

*Common Black-headed Gull and the*

## EASTERN WARBLERS

100 individuals of 18 species. The run-

The table of "eastern" warblers showing seasonal totals are thus 144 individuals (including Virginia's) follows my format of the past several years. It lists

Tennessee Warbler (total 8; 11 for this fall to date)		
2 SE Farallon	Oct. 2(2)	PRBO
3 Point Reyes	Sept. 28, Oct. 2, 3-6	mob
1 Moss Beach	Oct. 4	BS
1 Ft. Funston, S.F.	Oct. 6	RT
1 Middle Lake, G.G. Park	Oct. 14	RT
Virginia's Warbler (total 2)		
2 SE Farallon	Sept. 25, Oct. 8	PRBO
Chestnut-sided Warbler (total 10; 15 for fall)		
3 SE Farallon	Oct. 2(2), 5	PRBO
2 Point Reyes	Sept. 28 (2)	BDP, et al
3 Carmel River Mouth	Sept. 29; Oct. 6(2)-7	JMa, et al.; JD, BG, et al.
1 Little Sur River	Oct. 13	JML fide RJ
1 Moss Beach	Sept. 14 (late report)	BS
Magnolia Warbler (total 4; 6 for fall)		
2 SE Farallon	Oct. 2, 6	PRBO
1 Point Reyes Lighthouse	Oct. 3	DSe
1 Nunes & Road Forks Pool	Oct. 3, 4-7	MLR, WG, AG, RT, et al.
Cape May Warbler (total 1)		
1 Moss Beach	Sept. 27	BS
Black-throated Blue Warbler (total 4)		
2 SE Farallon	Oct. 2, 8	PRBO
1 Nunes Ranch	Sept. 28	BDP, et al.
1 Moss Beach	Oct. 4-5	BS
Blackburnian Warbler (total 2)		
1 SE Farallon	Oct. 3	PRBO
1 Fish Docks	Oct. 3	MLR, JWa, WG, et al.
Prairie Warbler (total 2; 7 for fall)		
2 SE Farallon	Oct. 2(2)	PRBO
Palm Warbler (total 20; 21 for fall)		
8 SE Farallon	Oct. 1, 2(7)	PRBO
5 Point Reyes	Oct. 2, 13, 14, 27(2)	mob
1 Daly City	Oct. 3	DB
1 Lincoln Park, S.F.	Oct. 6	AH
1 Pt. Pinos	Oct. 6	fide DR
1 Neary's Lagoon, Santa Cruz	Oct. 13-?	JMa
1 Doran, Bodega Bay	Oct. 20	BS
1 Corte Madera Marsh	Oct. 27	DT
1 Lake Merced, S.F.	Oct. 27	DM
Bay-breasted Warbler (total 2)		
1 SE Farallon	Oct. 2	PRBO
1 Nunes Ranch	Oct. 3-5	AG, WG, et al.
Blackpoll Warbler (total 19, 26 for fall)		
7 SE Farallon	Sept. 22, 25, Oct. 2(3), 8, 12	PRBO
4 Point Reyes	Sept. 28, Oct. 3-5, 6, 6-7	mob
1 Montara	Sept. 24	BS
1 North Lake, G.G. Park	Oct. 6	KY fide AH
2 Ft. Funston	Oct. 6	RT
2 Pt. Pinos	Oct. 6	fide DR

1 Carmel River Mouth	Oct. 6	JD, BG, et al.
1 Lincoln Park, S.F.	Oct. 11	LE
Black-and-white Warbler (total 6; 10 for fall)		
1 SE Farallon	Oct. 2	PRBO
1 Road Forks & Nunes	Oct. 8	BDP
1 El Polin Spring, Presidio, S.F.	Sept. 27-28	MLR, et al.
1 Pt. Diablo	Oct. 6	CF
1 Carmel River Mouth	Oct. 13	JML fide RJ
1 Sanchez Adobe, Pacifica	Oct. 23	SS, MAD
American Redstart (total 9; 16 for fall)		
2 SE Farallon	Oct. 2(2)	PRBO
3 Point Reyes	Sept. 29-30, Oct. 2,6	mob
3 Carmel River Mouth	Sept. 29(2); Oct. 6	RS, et al; GMcC
1 Little Sur River Mouth	Oct. 13	JML fide RJ
Ovenbird (total 2)		
2 SE Farallon	Sept. 26, Oct. 3	PRBO
Northern Waterthrush (total 4; 6 for fall)		
2 SE Farallon	Oct. 2, 4	PRBO
1 Pine Creek Gulch	Sept. 29	BSt
1 Carmel River Mouth	Sept. 29-?	JMa, et al
Connecticut Warbler (total 1; 3 for fall)		
1 Fish Docks	Oct. 14	RA, DY, EM, DD, CD, et al.
Mourning Warbler (total 1; 4 for fall)		
1 Big Sur River Mouth	Oct. 5	JML, et al.
Canada Warbler (total 3; 4 for fall)		
1 SE Farallon	Oct. 3	PRBO
1 Point Reyes Willows	Oct. 4-7	MLR, mob
1 Carmel River Mouth	Oct. 6	JD, BG, et al.

#### OTHER EASTERN PASSERINES

Three Least Flycatchers were identified: at the Fish Docks Sept. 30 (GMcC, JM, mob), Moss Beach Oct. 3-4 (first for San Mateo Co. - BS) and Carmel River Mouth Oct. 6-7 (JD, BG, SFB, et al.). A Brown Thrasher appeared at Fort Ord in early mid-October (DR).

Road Forks Pool on Point Reyes had a Solitary Vireo of the eastern form Sept. 25 (KFC, NC, HG, et al.). Two or three Philadelphia Vireos were reported: Point Reyes Willows Oct. 3 (DE, et al.) and sightings at Carmel River Mouth Oct. 6-7 (JD, BG, SFB, et al.) and Oct. 21 (ES). The latter probably represented a new individual. A Red-eyed Vireo was at El Polin Spring, Presidio of San Francisco Sept. 27-28 (MLR, et al.).

Four Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were noted: SE Farallon Oct. 3, Pacifica Oct. 6(SS), Fish Docks Oct. 14 (JM,

et al.) and Berkeley Oct. 21 (TLC, ZC). A **Painted Bunting** on SE Farallon Sept. 27 was the second there in two weeks. Although I have included this very rare vagrant in the "southwestern" section of previous columns, it is more typical of the southcentral states, not breeding west of western Texas or eastern Chihuahua.

A female Rufous-sided Towhee of the **northeastern race** (unspotted, dark eye) was in Mountain View Cemetery, Oakland, Sept. 30 (MP). Although this should be expected as a California vagrant, I know of no prior sighting in the state.

Two Clay-colored Sparrows landed at SE Farallon with the Oct. 2 wave, and a third appeared on Oct. 4. The only one found at Point Reyes was at Spaletta Ranch Oct. 3 (DSe). At Carmel River Mouth, single Clay-coloreds Sept. 29 (RS, et al.) and Oct. 6-7 (JD,

BG, SFB, et al.) may have been the same bird.

From the prairies came yet more Lark Buntings. Singles found SE Farallon Sept. 21 and Oct. 2. Another at Hayward Shoreline Sept. 27-Oct 1 (BR, mob) led directly to the discovery of the period's rarest bird (Dusky Warbler, below). Perhaps another Lark Bunting was reported close by Oct. 18 (ER).

This season's earliest White-throated Sparrow was on schedule Oct. 2 on SE Farallon. It was Oct. 27 before the first Chestnut-collared Longspur was discovered, this one at the Spaletta Ranch longspur fields (KH, mob). Additional SE Farallon Bobolinks arrived Sept. 27, 30, and Oct. 3. One at Salinas Sewage Ponds Sept. 27-29 (DS, et al.) could have been a holdover from Sept. 23. The only rare oriole was an Orchard Oriole on SE Farallon Oct. 4.

#### GREAT BASIN AND SOUTHWEST

A Gray Flycatcher visited Fish Docks Oct. 1 (KFC, DEI). October produced three Tropical Kingbirds: Lincoln Park in San Francisco Oct. 5 (JMu, RH, AH), Carmel River Mouth Oct. 13 (JML fide RJ) and Lake Merced Oct. 27 (DM). Three Sage Thrashers examined SE Farallon, one on Oct. 2 plus two others the following day. A Phainopepla on Sept. 26 was almost unprecedented on the island.

San Francisco's Lincoln Park held a Green-tailed Towhee Oct. 2 (DM). That day's wave brought single Brewer's Sparrows to both SE Farallon and Fish Docks (DE, JH). A Vesper Sparrow was near the Fish Docks Oct. 5 (MAD, JMS), and one was at Hayward Shoreline Oct. 2-4 (BR, JL).

Black-throated Sparrows continued to be seen on Point Reyes, with sightings at Chimney Rock Sept. 26 (BN), Lighthouse Sept. 29 (JG) and Nunes

Ranch Sept. 30 (CC, mob) and Oct. 13 (HG, JW). Only one more Black-throated Sparrow found SE Farallon on Sept. 29.

A Cassin's Sparrow strayed to SE Farallon Oct. 1. Although this sparrow is partly southwestern, it seems likely that our vagrants are more from the southern Great Plains.

Out of place under any of this month's headings are the coastally rare Yellow-breasted Chat at Fish Docks Oct. 5-6 (MAD, JMS, et al.) and Yellow-headed Blackbird at Nunes Sept. 28 (GMcC). Similarly, Lawrence's Goldfinches were counted at Point Reyes Lighthouse Sept. 27 (KFC and 6-7 were there the next day (BDP, et al.).

#### NORTHERN AND MONTANE

Caldecott Lane in Oakland was a strange place for an American Dipper Oct. 22 (MJM). A long-absent northern predator was the Northern Shrike at Palomarin Oct. 23 to this writing (PR BO GW, et al.). The season's first American Tree Sparrow was found at Road Forks Pool Oct. 21 (EG, et al.).

Single Lapland Longspurs appeared on SE Farallon Sept. 23, Oct. 1 and Oct. 5. On Pt Reyes, "Laps" were observed regularly at the Spaletta Ranch fields, where counts or estimates increased as follows: two on Sept. 29 (RJ, et al.), four on Sept. 30 (JM, mob), twelve on Oct. 9 (AG, WG), 15 Oct. 21 (EG, et al.), with about twelve still there Oct. 27-28 (JM, et al.). Also on Oct. 27, three were at Drakes Corners and one at Hall Ranch (JM, et al.), both sites near Spaletta. The next day twelve were estimated at Drakes Corners (AG, WG). Surely longspurs frequently move among these favored fields. Also on Point Reyes, four Laps flew over Fish Docks Oct. 14 (JM). Hayward Shoreline again hosts Lapland Longspurs, with four on Oct. 16 (BR) and three still present Oct. 28 (JM, et al.).



Small flocks of Red Crossbills continue to be reported in Marin County and Berkeley-Oakland Hills (mob). Peninsula reports are now added: seven to eight on Alpine Rd. above La Honda Oct. 13 (PG), 10-15 in Pacifica Oct. 26 (SS), and 30 at Montebello Open Space Reserve, Santa Clara Co., Oct. 27 (DSe). The only reported flock of Evening Grosbeaks was 20-40 along Willow Creek Rd. in Sonoma Co. Oct. 13 (RLeB, NC, KFC, RM).

### ASIAN VAGRANTS

Saving the best birds for last. . . Point Reyes' **Eurasian Skylark** was discovered back for its **seventh consecutive** year Oct. 27-28 at Drakes Corners (JM, et al.) A **Red-throated Pipit** at Salinas Sewage Ponds Sept. 29 (DR, HC) flew away before any other birders present could look at it.

The most intense birding excitement in our area this fall was caused by a warbler at Hayward Shoreline Sept. 28-29. It was discovered because its finder (JL) went to see the Lark Bunting found the previous day. Originally thought to be a Swainson's Warbler, it was indentified as a **Dusky Warbler** (JM, et al.). This diagnosis was confirmed by a concensus of the many California experts that gathered among the perhaps 200 birders that watched the warbler the next day. To the frustration of many more birders, it did not stay another night. This is the first record for Dusky Warbler on the North American mainland, but it was only the second for California! Previous occurences had all been on the Aleutians and Bering Sea islands of Alaska, except for one on SE Farallon Island Sept. 27 1980. Note that this fall's bird appeared only one calendar day later.

**Observers:** Ray Acker, Peter Allen, Stephen F. Bailey, Nora Bain, Alan Baldrige, Dennis Beall (DB), Laurence C. Binford, Don Brockhurst, Kurt

F. Campbell, Chris Carpenter, Herb Clarke, Terry L. Coddington, Zeo Coddington, Nancy Conzett, Mary Ann Danielson, Carol Deuel, Donna Dittman, Jon Dunn, Art Edwards, David Edwards (DE), Lee Elias, Doug Ellis (DEI), Jules Evans, Carter Faust, Gary Fellers, Douglas George, Albert Ghiorso, Wilma Ghiorso, Brad Goodheart, Phil Gordon (PG), Ed Greaves, Helen Green, Jeff Greenhouse, Peggy Gross, Kem Hainebach, John Hall, Robert Halsey, Alan Hopkins, Richard Jeffers, Tom Johnson, Bill Keener, Jeri M. Langham, Rick LeBaudour, John Luther, John Mariani (JMa), Guy McCaskie, Richard Merris, many observers (mob), Molly Jane Monheit, Joseph Morlan (JM), Elton Morrell, Dan Murphy, Janet Murphy (JMu), Bill Noble, Point Reyes Bird Observatory (Farallon report thanks to Jay Penniman), Benjamin D. Parmeter, Michael Perrone, Elsie Richie, Bob Richmond, Jean Richmond, Don Roberson, Mary Louise Rosegay, Will Russell, Barry Sauppe (BS), David Sedgin (DSe), Debra Love Shearwater, Dianne Sierra (DS), Scott Smithson, Jean Marie Spoelman, Richard Stallcup, Bob Stewart (BSt), Ellen Strauss, Chris Swarth, Ron Thorn, Dorothy Tobkin, Jeffrey Wall (JWa), George Wallace, Mike Webber, Jack Whetstone (JW), Summer Wilson, Keiko Yamane, David Yee.

—STEPHEN F. BAILEY

Observations Editor

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(phone Northern California Rare  
Bird Alert 843-2211 to report  
observations.)

### THE BACK YARD BIRDER

My husband noted a bit of bird behavior he found interesting. While gardening he removed his watch and

set it on a table on the patio. As he went to retrieve it he surprised a Scrub Jay attempting to pick it up. He was lucky he happened by since these birds, like other members of the Crow Family, are attracted to shiny objects and bury them or hide them in the niches of trees.

The Crow Family is comprised of some of the largest (ravens) of all songbirds and are some of the most bold, active, noisy and aggressive of all birds. Many people consider them pests, which they can well be. Still, they have the highest degree of intelligence and are fascinating to observe. In captivity it has been shown that they can count up to 3 or 4, can solve puzzles, quickly learn to associate symbols and sounds with food, have astounding memories (such as remembering where they have stored food) and have a language of their own. These clever birds can also mimic other birds (the Stellar Jay "does" an excellent Red-tailed hawk) and animals and, in captivity, the human voice.

The Crow Family is believed to have originated in the north temperate and tropical areas of the Old World and to have spread from there to its present ranges in N. America and other parts of the world. Their fossils have been found in deposits laid down 12 million years ago in Colorado. No doubt their success is due to their intelligence combined with their omnivorous eating habits, which includes a diet of both plant and animal life, whether dead or alive. Crows have been observed carrying clams, mussels or sea urchins high into the air, then dropping them on rocks to crack them open for a meal. Indigestible seeds, bones, etc. are coughed up in a pellet.

Another member of the Crow Family is the Yellow-billed Magpie which is limited entirely to California. It is a strikingly beautiful, slightly iridescent, black and white bird with a very long tail. At Sunol Park magpies are abundant and quite tame, apparently happy to be living close to humans.

The most frequently asked question asked of me is how to prevent jays from scattering seed from back yard feeders. There are feeders made specifically for smaller species of birds, but it's very difficult to discourage a determined jay. I've trimmed the perches on my cylindrical feeder, thinking the jay would have no toe-hold. However, it needs only a tiny grip and flutters in midair until a few seeds have been dislodged. Other ground-feeding birds (quail, towhees, e.g.) take advantage of the bounty from above, so nothing is really wasted.

The next time you curse this group of raucous birds, try to remember their more interesting qualities.

— MEG PAULETICH

## BIRD SEED SALE

The first effort was a success. Seven and a half tons of bird seed was ordered and picked up at locations in Berkeley and San Francisco. The occasion was not unmarred, as delivery delays to our supplier made him two hours late in arriving at the Berkeley site. But the volunteers and seed buyers goodnaturedly worked out answers to the problems this created. Special thanks are due to the hard-working volunteers.

It was enough to inspire another effort, and for those of you who missed out or whose supply is running low, there is another sale planned. See pages 153 and 154.

## EDUCATION FUND — A NEW WRINKLE

GGAS will be receiving a donation from Jon Zablackis, director at large and past president, to initiate a new education fund. The purpose of the initial contribution is to allow the chapter to participate in the new Audubon youth program in the 1985-86 school year. Mr. Zablackis has pledged a further contribution of \$300 in 1985 in hope that other members of GGAS will make additional contributions to the fund to support the youth program and other educational projects the chapter should undertake in San Francisco and the East Bay. Any GGAS member interested should send contributions to the GGAS Education Fund, Room 204, 1550 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, CA 94709.

**Something to consider:** at UC Berkeley, where Mr. Zablackis works, employees may designate any 501c(3) organization in California as the recipient of the United Way contributions this year. It is through this medium that GGAS will receive the initial gift. If you are inclined to contribute you might consider the payroll deduction method through the United Way at your place of employment. (This method will not apply to all employers. If interested urge your employer to look into this so that you may have this option next year.)

## LEGISLATION SYMPOSIUM

Jan. 26 and 27 the Planning and Conservation League will sponsor a symposium at the Sacramento Inn, near Cal Expo, in Sacramento. Its purpose is to plan environmental legislation to be introduced early in the legislative session and to develop opposition to legislation that may be

harmful to the environment. Workshops will be held on such topics as water development, pesticides, toxic materials, wildlife, renewable resources, techniques in grass roots lobbying and other topics. The cost is \$50 per person and includes three meals.

Last year the PCL sponsored a similar event which was attended by people from environmental organizations, legislators and legislative staff, representatives of state agencies, and members of the Local Government Commission. The January meeting will be greatly expanded to include the general public. Even more of California's activists are expected to participate. Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley will be a featured speaker Saturday, Jan. 26.

GGAS and the other Bay Area Audubon Chapters are members of the League. The GGAS board has designated Art Feinstein as the chapter's representative. It also urges participation by members of the chapter. Please phone or write the PCL at 1228 N. St. Suite 33, Sacramento, CA 95814 or (916) 444-8726.

## BIRD PHOTOGRAPHERS

The Bay Area Bird Photographers was started one year ago under the sponsorship of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society and the City of Palo Alto. Its purposes are to exchange information, technical, aesthetic, etiquette, and the like, and to provide photo exhibits for the City of Palo Alto. Meetings are on the first Wednesday of the month, September through June, at 7:30 p.m. at the Lucy Evans Baylands Interpretive Center in Palo Alto. Meetings are open to the public, membership is \$12 a year. Members of GGAS interested in bird photography are especially invited to attend meetings. For information call Peter LaTourette at 961-2741 or 961-2821.

## CHRISTMAS COUNT (cont.)

To get information or to register for the count, phone Dan Murphy (564-0074) or Alan Hopkins (585-5669).

The after-the-count dinner will be at the Club House at Stern Grove. (Drive in from the corner of 19th and Sloat to the parking lot.) The cost will be \$3.50, at the door; the meal will be catered by the same group that provided last year's meal in San Francisco and in Berkeley.

## JANUARY MEMBERS MEETING

HALA ARAJ, who has led a number of Caribbean nature trips, will present a program on birding Trinidad and Tabago. A long time member of Audubon and, a recent resident of Oakland, a new member of GGAS, we welcome her. The meeting will be in San Francisco on Thursday, Jan 10 at 7:30 p.m. at the Potrero Branch Public Library, 1616 20th Street.

By Muni bus the #48 will take you to the doorstep; #19 will bring you within three blocks. By car, take Potrero Ave. to 17th St., east to Connecticut and turn right to 20th St.

## BIRDING LIST

GGAS board member Nancy Conzett is the author of a new publication issued by the Sonoma County Regional Parks: *BIRDS OF BODEGA BAY*. The list is coded for abundance, time of year to expect to see species, and habitats. A limited number of copies are available at the office, or it is obtainable from Sonoma County Regional Parks.

## RAMBLERS GUIDE

*A Ramblers Guide to the Trails of Mt. Tamalpais and the Marin Headlands* has recently been published by GGAS Berkeley member Gerald Olmstead. In the tradition of European

hiking maps, it is drawn with shaded relief and printed in six colors. Trails are shown in red for easy reading. Available at Audubon Canyon Ranch, Richardson Bay Sanctuary and at leading book and hiking stores.

## BIRD CENSUS VOLUNTEERS

The San Pablo National Wildlife Refuge, our own adopted refuge, needs more volunteers. Roger Johnson, Refuge General Manager, wants to establish a continuing bird census of the reserve, as complete and constant as possible. If you can do bird counts on a regular weekly or bi-weekly basis at the Refuge please call Roger Johnson at 792-0222.

— ART FEINSTEIN,  
Conservation Chairman

## NATURE SOUNDS

The Nature Sounds Society and the National Audubon Society are co-sponsoring the presentation of "Vocalizations of North American Owls" given by Jon Winters, well known for his work on owls. He teaches at Santa Rosa Junior College and is a Research Assistant with PRBO. The talk will include general taxonomy, some information on the evolution of owls and identification of North American owls by their calls. This fourth general meeting of the Nature Sound Society will be on Sunday, Jan. 13, 1985 at 2 p.m. at the Audubon Richardson Bay Sanctuary. Anyone interested in natural sounds is welcome. For information phone the Oakland Museum Natural Sciences Dept. at 273-3884.

## ELEPHANT SEAL TIME AGAIN

The Mono Lake Committee will again sponsor bus trips from Berkeley to see the elephant seals on their breeding grounds at Ano Nuevo in

January and February. The dates and other details are not known at this writing, but please call Mildred Benet (526-1260) in December if you are interested. The trips have filled up early in the past, so don't delay in getting the information.

## WHAT THE BOARD DID

The Chapter board meets on the fourth Monday evening of each month except December and July. At its October meeting it:

named a nominating committee, authorized the president to sign a lease for a year on our office,

approved, with expenses, a delegate to the PCL legislative symposium,

approved a second bird seed sale, approved a resolution in support of the Sierra Club plan for Berkeley's waterfront, with a proviso about the Emeryville Crescent,

approved an agreement with Chris Carpenter on extended field trips,

approved a new committee to be responsible for the office space and operations,

approved a bonus of half a month's salary to Hillary Hulen in recognition of her contributions,

and heard with concern the resignation of Director Peter Allen, and the intention of several others to resign in May.

## NOMINATIONS ANYONE?

As required, President Dan Murphy named a nominating committee for 1985 and selected Jon Zablackis as chairman. Other members are Chris Swarth and Don Sanford. Their phone numbers may be found on the last page of this issue of the Gull. Members are urged to suggest names of suitable nominees to the committee by mail or by phone. Persons willing to serve may suggest their own names, of course.

## NEWS FROM THE RANCH

The Board of Directors of Audubon Canyon Ranch held their 23rd annual meeting on Oct. 13. The following officers were elected:

Flora Maclise, President  
(Madrone)

Rick Baird, 1st Vice President  
(Sequoia)

Thomas Price, 2nd Vice President  
(Marin)

Ed McElhaney, Treasurer  
(Sequoia)

Bebbie Ablin, Secretary  
(Marin)

Other Vice Presidents elected were

Nancy Barbour, Public Programs  
(Marin)

Cliff Conly, Properties  
(Marin)

Jane Ferguson, Education  
(Marin)

George Peyton, Legal  
(Golden Gate)

All committee heads and the staff reported on the year's activities. Of particular interest was the report of Ray Peterson, resident biologist, which covered many groups and events, being a speaker at the very successful Bolinas Symposium at Volunteer Canyon, working outdoors with persons from the San Francisco handicapped Center, participating in discussions about books on the environment, directing (with Skip Schwartz) the California Conservation Corp leaders' training program and preparing our public programs for this winter.

Dec. 1 will be a workday at the Bolinas Ranch. We will be planting native plants with the whole staff on hand; all interested persons are urged to join us.

## GIFTS AND BEQUESTS

For GGAS Gift of

In Memory of

Mrs. Margaret Williams Ruth Omatsu

For Audubon Canyon Ranch

In memory of

Richard Leinbach

A. Laurence and Hallie R. Curl

For GGAS

Margaret Langston

Mr. & Mrs. Duane A. Smith

For Rare Bird Alert

Frank & Jean Allen

Gilbert West

The Society welcomes gifts in general or gifts in honor or in memory of relatives and friends. Such gifts will be used as specified by the donor or, if unspecified, at the discretion of the GGAS Board of directors. This includes their use for general GGAS activities or for special programs of the Society including Audubon Canyon Ranch of which GGAS is a sponsor. Please send your gift in the form of a check made out to the Golden Gate Audubon Society, 1550 Shattuck Ave., #204, Berkeley, CA 94709. All gifts are tax deductible. The Society is also appreciative of any bequests. Such bequests should specify as recipient the Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. All gifts donations and bequests will be acknowledged in The Gull as well as personally on behalf of the Society by the Secretary.

## COOPER SOCIETY

The next monthly meeting, on Monday, December 3, will feature Steve Granholm, speaking on "The Effects of Forest Fires on Birds in Yosemite National Park." Dr. Granholm, co-author of "Discovering Sierra Birds" (to be published in 1985), conducted this research from 1976 to 1978.

Dr. Ned Johnson of the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology at Berkeley will be the speaker at the January 7, 1985 meeting.

Both the December and January seminars will meet in Room 2503 Life Sciences Building, UC Berkeley, at 8

p.m. and will be preceded at 7:45 p.m. by a brief business meeting of the Northern California Chapter of the Cooper Ornithological Society. Everyone interested in birds is encouraged to attend.

## GGAS BIRD SEED SALE AGAIN

By now it may be apparent how quickly your November bird seed supply is disappearing. Not to worry! If you order by Jan. 14 you can pick up a new supply on Feb. 2.

We will be offering, again, the Premium Volkman mix, our own GGAS mix, black oil sunflower seed and niger. All proceeds will go to support our Conservation Committee's program. You can help to insure the continued presence of the birds you enjoy.

Because this issue of The GULL is a combined December-January number, you will have no other notice of this sale.

### ORDERING INSTRUCTIONS

To take advantage of the favorable prices (up some from Nov. sale prices) and to benefit GGAS programs you must order and prepay by Jan. 14. Seed orders will be available for pick-up at a distribution point in Berkeley and one in San Francisco. Confirmation of your order and location of the distribution point will be sent you by Jan. 30.

Cancellations of orders cannot be accepted after Jan. 14 and orders received after that date will have to be returned.

Send the order form (with tax calculated, please), your check and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to BIRD SEED, GGAS, Room 204, 1550 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, CA 94709.

**GGAS BIRD SEED SALE**

Here is another chance to order your supply of seed for the season. Persons ordering seed will be notified by mail of the pick-up point address before Jan. 30.

ORDER AND PRE-PAY BY JAN. 14  
 PICK UP ON SATURDAY, FEB. 2

**VOLKMAN WILD BIRD SEED**—Premium mix composed of white and red millet and sudan grass screenings.  
 20 lbs. \$ 8.75  
 50 lbs. 18.50

**GGAS SPECIAL WILD BIRD SEED MIX**—Top quality mix specially blended for Bay Area birds composed of white and red millet, black oil sunflower seed, milo and rape seed.  
 20 lbs. \$ 6.25  
 50 lbs. 12.00

**BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER SEED**—High in oil content and nutritive value, but smaller than the striped variety.  
 10 lbs. \$ 8.25  
 25 lbs. 20.50

**NIGER (THISTLE SEED)**—This minute seed is rich in nourishing oil and will attract goldfinches, but not larger birds or squirrels, nor will it sprout in your yard.  
 5 lbs. \$ 8.00

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

CITY ..... ZIP .....

TELEPHONE (DAY) ..... (EVENING) .....

Please indicate the location at which you prefer to pick up your order:  
 San Francisco     Berkeley

ITEM	WEIGHT	QUANTITY	COST	TOTAL
VOLKMAN WILD BIRD SEED	20 lbs.		8.75	
	50 lbs.		18.50	
GGAS SPECIAL WILD BIRD SEED	20 lbs.		6.25	
	50 lbs.		12.00	
BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER SEED	10 lbs.		8.25	
	25 lbs.		20.50	
NIGER (THISTLE SEED)	5 lbs.		8.00	
Field Guide to the Birds of North America (Nat. Geographic .....			\$16.95	
ADD 6.5% TAX .....				
CONTRIBUTION TO GGAS .....				
TOTAL .....				

BE SURE TO INCLUDE YOUR CHECK.

— SECOND CLASS MATTER



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- Second Vice President, Shirley Kelly (387-8290)\*
- Recording Secretary, Nicola Selph (526-6631)\*
- Corresponding Secretary, Ruth Dement (527-7923)\*
- Treasurer, Ross Jennings (235-4986)\*

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- At Large: Nancy Konzett (527-2593)\*  
Jon Zablackis (642-9121, days)\*

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- Field Trips, Shirley Kelly (387-8290)\*
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- Librarian, Christine Jones (929-0327)
- Office Manager, Barbara Rivenes (843-2222)
- \*Members of the Board of Directors

GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY REPRESENTATIVES ON THE  
AUDUBON CANYON RANCH BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- |                        |               |
|------------------------|---------------|
| Dan Murphy, ex officio | Bruce Howard  |
| Bob Conrath            | Jon Zablackis |
| Nicki Spillane         |               |

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA RARE BIRD ALERT (recorded) 843-2211

Mail for all individuals listed above should be sent to GGAS office.

Send address changes to office promptly; Post office does not forward *THE GULL*. Monthly meetings: second Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint membership — local and national \$30 per year (individual); \$38 (family); includes *AUDUBON* Magazine and *THE GULL*; to join, make checks payable to National Audubon Society and send to GGAS office to avoid delay in receiving *THE GULL*. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon office. Subscriptions to *THE GULL* separately \$8 per year; single issues \$1. High school and college student membership \$18 per year. Senior citizen individual \$21, senior citizen family \$23. Associate Membership in Golden Gate Audubon Society, \$10 per year.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. was established January 25, 1917, and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948.

**The *Gull* deadline is the first of the month for the following month.**