

COASTAL MARSHES AND ESTUARIES — GOING — GOING — GONE ?

PAUL E. GIGUERE

Mr. Giguere is Associate Fishery Biologist, Department of Fish and Game, - The Resources Agency, State of California. The following talk was given by Mr. Giguere at a workshop on Southern California Shoreline Conservation, sponsored by the Angeles Chapter Conservation Committee of the Sierra Club, at Malaga Cove School, Palos Verdes Estates, November 2, 1968. The message is so timely and so urgent that we asked permission to bring it to an even wider audience. Our chapter of the Audubon Society has over one thousand members; if each one will READ AND ACT - who knows what we may accomplish?

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"WHAT IS AN ESTUARY?" Most of us are, by now, aware that an estuary is, or could be, a complex system of environmental and biological relationships. It's the birthplace and feedlot of many animals that float, burrow, swim, and soar.....but is that all? In our prejudiced way, when we think of estuaries we may think of the grebe, and the sandpiper, the Black Brant, and the Great Blue Heron -- but others have other thoughts. For instance:

An estuary is that place where the kids gather those crabs, and clams, and squirmy things that die on arrival and smell up the whole establishment. It's the take-off zone of those messy old gulls and splashy herons that foul up our patios on the eventide.

An estuary is a place where topography invites fiberglass flotillas, affluent society and profit,

.....

An estuary's midsection is the most economical and feasible alignment for a sea-coast highway. All we have to do is make an embankment! So, we cut the stinking swamp in half! The solution is simple! Just put a pipe under the fill. Later on, the freeway will, inevitably, require enlargement and new interchanges. So, what's a little more fill and longer pipe?

The alternate routes are horrible. The City Fathers would vehemently oppose invasion of that high-valuation, commercially-zoned parcel and it would be stupid to think of relocating those ranks of reciprocating oil pumps.

An estuary is a fortunate remnant of real estate we finally discover after discouraging the influx of industry for years. Suddenly, we find that it's an ideal place for an industrial park, provided our flood control project is approved. Our plans would then be attractive to money lenders. We would be sacrificing a "green belt" and an "open space" opportunity, we know. But, on the other hand, maybe we can compensate for its loss by using that "sanitary fill" in that "useless" canyon up yonder which can someday be a park... What in heck else can we do with it?

The estuary is the easiest place to forget when you build the flood control and water conservation dams upstream. There may later be some minor repercussions when beach sand replenishment becomes artificial and fresh and brackish water becomes foul. Future channelization, jetty, groin-field, and beach rehabilitation programs will take care of that! We can always dredge or even haul sand from ancient beach deposits inshore.

An estuary is a spot containing State tidelands, or maybe title to the lands has been transferred with or without encumbrances. Maybe the courts have never defined the extent of State and private ownership and, besides, prolonged and expensive litigation is pretty tough for a tiny and low-budgeted State Lands Division.

The estuary is that smelly, muddy place that cost the District \$30,000 last year in mosquito control, alone, and it's an ideal depository for trash, that once covered, could assess twenty thousand bucks, or more, per acre.

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An estuary is the place on the campus that, when properly drained and "controlled" (that means filled), makes an ideal place for automobiles and permits the use of surrounding knolls for architectural accomplishments that delight the educators -- except for a few crestfallen individuals in the Biology Department. But we can pacify them by buying a little old marsh outside the campus -- and besides, we can fill that in later. It's a dandy place for the stadium or overflow parking area we'll build in 1980. We can always buy another swamp somewhere else. Except by this time there won't be any more to buy.

The estuary is the only solution for our airport expansion program. It's pretty cheap land, and, maybe, we can even convince the State that it doesn't have any vested interest in it anyway! Birds can't institute court actions for vibrations, excessive decibels, and inky hydrocarbon fallout.

An estuary is the logical place to void cannery wastes, pulp mill effluents, and other unwanted products. After all, one of the "beneficial uses" of State water is the assimilation of wastes.

An estuary can be the ideal or only location for that thermal power plant; for that sewage disposal facility; and for that imaginative product of a regional planning board that finds the logical common artery for utilities, drainage control systems, highways, and, the economic benefits of a sliver of industrial edifices!

You see there are many definitions and ideas of estuaries, but don't laugh! For every example I've noted, there's an actual incident or scores of plans. We're swapping avocets for asphalt and replacing cattails with concrete faster than you may believe.

Here's one way it is working! There's a little estuary -- not entirely fictitious -- in Southern California that the owners prize and love. They have fine seashore property and the marshlands separate them from the railroad and freeway. They like the sound of whispering wings and the shriek of the Stilt. For many years they have maintained that marshy "back 40", enjoyed it, and made it available to the student and teacher. It happened to the citrus grower and truck farmer of Orange County. It's happening to the dairyman of southern Los Angeles County, and many others. Now -- it's happening to them. They're feeling the pressure of urbanization and the breath of the assessor. Their enjoyable buffer has become a tax burden. It's becoming more difficult for them to resist a bonanza. Each day is rosier for those who plan a marina. Each day, it becomes more difficult and costly for those hoping for acquisition of the lands as an ecological reserve or nature area.

Early in 1968 the Department began a statewide study of bays and estuaries with initial emphasis in southern California. Between Morro Bay in San Luis Obispo County and Imperial Beach in San Diego County, the Department considered 45 possible bay, estuary, and marsh areas for intensive investigation. These areas vary in size from 15 to

12,000 acres and are in various stages of going, going, gone.

Some of these, such as Port Hueneme, Los Angeles Harbor, and Lower Newport Bay are, of course, almost totally lost as far as wildlife is concerned. What better example is there of the total effect of urbanization on a marsh than the Marina Del Rey - Ballona Creek area of Los Angeles County where, at one time, there were over 7,000 acres of marsh type habitat. Today, only a remnant of the original marsh remains undeveloped. Lower Newport Bay is gone, and the Upper Bay is in jeopardy.

Goleta Slough in Santa Barbara County is another example of going today -- gone tomorrow. It is being squeezed out of existence by current or planned invasion by an airport, a highway, flood control features, utilities, and general development. Areas such as Point Mugu, Seal Beach, Santa Margarita Lagoon, and Imperial Beach are partially or completely on military bases. Even so, development of all sorts is threatening these lands. The remaining areas of Buena Vista Lagoon and Carpinteria Marsh (El Estero Lagoon) may be spared by current preservation efforts, but their status is precarious. The Anaheim Bay complex of marshes is extremely vulnerable. At least 20 different plans have been advanced for portions or all of this area. And so it goes, on and on.

What's the answer? That's the question Ray Nesbit of the Wildlife Conservation Board asked in the Oct., 1968 issue of OUTDOOR CALIFORNIA. I quote, "How do we answer the landowner along San Francisco Bay or one of the many beautiful and productive ocean lagoons when he says, 'Show me how fish and game will make me more money than subdividing, and I'll become a conservationist.' I know of only one answer -- be competitive -- have the funds, the program, the public interest, and the support to be able to acquire those lands and protect, forever, those resources!"

The concern of the Department of Fish & Game in bay and estuary problems is summarized in the California Fish and Wildlife Plan. We refer you to Vol. I (the Summary) and Vol. III, Part C for description and problems relating to specific major tideland areas of the State.

The Plan contains recommendations regarding estuarine lands. Some of these are:

1. All coastal bay and estuarine lands and water bottoms should be identified to determine ownership. The State should continue to set aside funds to acquire property and easements. Priorities for acquisition should be determined.
2. We should continue our cooperation with the Department of Defense to implement fish and wildlife plans on military lands. (We should say here, that within recent weeks, our Los Angeles office has been working with three major military facilities on implementation of agreements which include provisions for

the maintenance and/or re-establishment of wetland and estuarine areas. We have already completed, or are in the process of negotiating, agreements with many others.)

3. Upon the request of a State agency, State lands subject to disposal but important to fish and wildlife may now be held for two years, but the property must be purchased or leased within that time. This policy should be changed so that other State agencies could administer or manage these lands without the buying or leasing requirement.
4. All projects affecting bays and estuaries will be reviewed, and those projects should contain measures to protect or enhance fish and wildlife. There should be compensation for damages to fish and wildlife resources by such projects, as well... Universities and/or private contractors should be provided funds to investigate phases of habitat alteration which may have potentially dangerous prolonged effects.
5. To meet waterfowl needs, steps should be taken to obtain easements, leases, or other interests on privately owned wetlands to ensure their continuance. New wetlands should be expanded, and there should be an investigation of all sources of monetary assistance available for these measures. Efforts should be made to obtain surplus or waste water from State or other water projects to increase or maintain our wetlands.

We are already complying with some of these recommendations, and the various branches of our Department are developing coordinated plans leading to other objectives. Some of you may have already been asked to assist in these measures. It is certain that more will be requested in the future.

We're handicapped, though. We're conducting an inventory on one hand and "shooting from the hip" on the other, in efforts to stem the damage. Unfortunately, in some areas, we may be dodging bulldozers and scoopshovels during our inventory process. In Southern California, the Department has about five men available for our program, but other duties and programs prevent full-time attention to the bay and estuary problems. We're spread as thin as the peanut butter on a restaurant sandwich.

We all know there is an increasing stirring of a national conscience in regard to the welfare of our estuaries and other endangered environments. It's becoming manifest in many ways -- some subtle some philosophical, some legislative -- and there have been some accomplishments amid the many defeats.

"Game" and "Game Management" are terms which, here and there, are disappearing from use in names of State conservation agencies and their branches. Game management areas are becoming known as wildlife areas. The State of California has passed legislation relating to the procurement and management of ecological reserves; the Wildlife Conservation Board is now quietly negotiating the acquisition of certain estuarine lands; the Federal Government has passed an Estuarine Act (PL. 90-154), and my Department now has a section, "Special Wildlife Investigations", which is responsible for plans and activities relating to the preservation and protection of "non-game species." We're now engaged in an inventory of bay and estuarine habitats for the purpose of making recommendations that will enable the best means of protecting and maintaining these environments. But even while we're preparing our inventory forms, the warehouse is being raided.

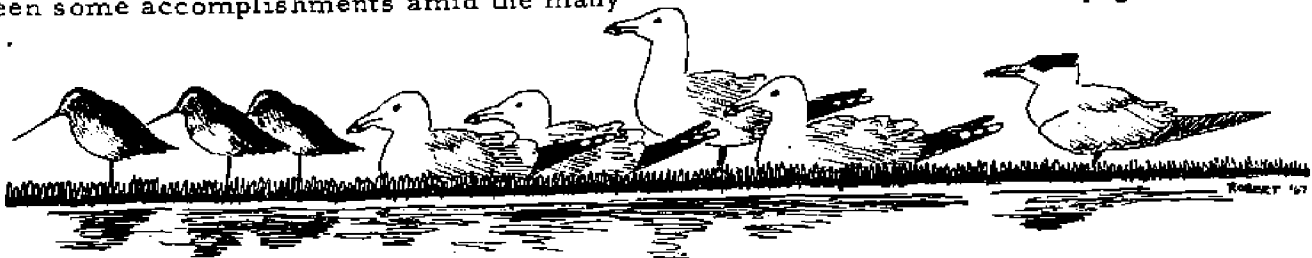
How can we help close the door? By mutual PARTICIPATION, PUBLICITY, AND VIGILANCE.

We should join forces. The problem should be attacked on a broad front. Many agencies, societies, and clubs are, individually, doing an excellent job, but we can't or don't always support each other too well! Many of us are completely involved in our own special interests. We're trying to find living space for the tule elk and to save the sea otter, the kit fox, the desert night lizard, and the peregrine falcon. We're concerned about redwoods, salmon, condors, and eagles. What we're really concerned about is the disastrous consequence of damage to and loss of a valuable heritage....period! We're concerned about the progressive loss of specialized and endangered habitat, species, and ecological conditions.

Publicity? Your membership dues, alone, go a long way in promoting publicity through your organizations' periodicals, education programs, and liaison with public media and legislators. But it isn't enough. Let's not avoid the prime question: "Where do we get the dollars for publicity and education that will help get legislative support, and dollars to save that marsh or estuary?"

Vigilance? I mean vigilance before, during, and after. If you value that little estuary in the area you "just know" will be in the way of a future highway project, let it be known! If we can't watch the whole State, maybe we can monitor our own back yards. For instance, how will the Division of Highways' plans for prospective freeway sections of U.S. 101-A affect tidal marshlands at Pt. Mugu? How can they turn that corner without affecting the marshlands? Look the next time you drive by! Don't wait until the engineers have spent

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NEW DIRECTIONS

Mr. David D. Baldwin
1901 W. Silver Lake Drive
Los Angeles, 90039

Mrs. Dorothy D. Bush
3631 W. 60th Street
Los Angeles, 90043

Mr. Alan Glasser
9705 Oak Pass Road
Beverly Hills, 90210

Mr. Harold Hafer
733 18th Street
Santa Monica, 90402

Mr. William W. Haynor
3730 So. McClintock #149
Los Angeles, 90007

Mrs. Grace C. Holdaway
25215 Oak Street #16
Lomata, 90717

Mrs. Colleen Mahan
3904 Berryman Avenue
Los Angeles, 90066

Mr. & Mrs. Ian McBeath
3355 Wood Terrace
Los Angeles, 90027

Miss Nusi McClellan
984 Hancock Avenue #3
Los Angeles, 90069

Miss Penelope E. Moline
640 No. Avenue 66
Los Angeles, 90042

Miss Stephanie Nordlinger
1266 Barry Avenue #6
Los Angeles, 90025

Mr. Alan F. Sandy
11750 Sunset Blvd. #113
Los Angeles, 90049

Mr. Russell Scalf
2145 Via Pacheco
Palos Verdes Estates, 90274

Miss Virginia A. Woodall
3742 Motor Avenue
Los Angeles, 90034

Mrs. Eleanor Young
5909 Dunrobin
Lakewood, 90713

TUCKER SANCTUARY NEWS

Effective Oct. 1 the Tucker Bird Sanctuary, which has been operated by the San Fernando Valley Audubon Society, will become the Tucker Wildlife Sanctuary, and will be under the auspices of the California State College, Fullerton Foundation. In addition to continuing our role as a public wildlife sanctuary, we are developing a research facility and a naturalist training program for teachers and college students. Our public hours will be:

Monday thru Friday - noon to 4 p. m.

Saturday and Sunday - 10 a. m. to 4 p. m.

We can accommodate school and civic groups in the mornings, 9 to 12, by reservation. And -- we are happy to add that the hummingbird lady, Mrs. Kenny, will continue to be part of our staff.

Lee B. Waian
Tucker Wildlife Sanctuary
CalState Fullerton



**UP TO DATE AT TUCKER
SANCTUARY**

by John Hopper

The October 1st transfer of deed and operation of the Tucker Sanctuary to the California State College at Fullerton Foundation has been delayed to permit a "Title Search" on the property and for the Foundation board to clarify the grant deed. If there are any modifications in the deed, further delay may be expected. The modifications would require approval by our Board of Directors. However, no real complications nor major changes are anticipated.

The future directors of the sanctuary have been putting in many hours becoming familiar with the operation and the facilities. Lee Waian, the future director, is receiving a Ph.D. in Ornithology from the University of California at Santa Barbara. John Allen, the associate director, is a professional botanist. Our executive committee members who have met these young men are very favorably impressed. They have ideas and plans that would delight the hearts of our membership. These two men display imagination, drive, and dedication accompanied by their own training and experience to continue and enhance the Tucker Sanctuary reputation acquired over the last twenty-five years.

--PHAINOPEPLA, Nov., 1968
San Fernando Valley Audubon Society

Give a gift that will always live -- a contribution to the Patagonia-Sonoita Creek Sanctuary, an oasis of peace and beauty in the Arizona desert, where over 200 species of birds have been recorded. Make checks payable to:

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY
PATAGONIA-SONOITA CREEK SANCTUARY
P.O. BOX 4157
TUCSON
ARIZONA 85717

Contributions are deductible from taxable income. Please help us preserve the Sanctuary.



calendar

Miss Laura Jenner, *President*
 639 W. 32nd. Street
 Los Angeles 90007
 748-7510

HEADQUARTERS, LIBRARY AND NATURE MUSEUM LOCATED AT AUDUBON HOUSE
 PLUMMER PARK, 7377 SANTA MONICA BLVD., LOS ANGELES 90046 876-0202

Mrs. Abigail King, *Executive Secretary*
 700 Halliday Avenue
 Los Angeles 90049
 476-5121



December 1968

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- Dec. 5 THURSDAY - EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING - 8:00 p. m., Audubon House
- Dec. 10 TUESDAY - EVENING MEETING - 8:00 p. m., Great Hall, Plummer Park.
 "Costa Rica - A Naturalist's Paradise" will be presented by Dr. Charles L. Hogue, Senior Curator of Entomology at the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History. Refreshments will be served. Do your Christmas shopping before and after the program in the sales department at Audubon House.
- Dec. 14 SATURDAY - SUNDAY - FIELD TRIP - Carrizo Plains. Sandhill Cranes, 15 wintering hawks, Mountain Plovers and LeConte's Thrashers. Meet at 8:30 a. m. in Maricopa at the junction of State 166 and U.S. 399. Take Interstate 5 North from Los Angeles to State 166, south of Bakersfield. Those planning to stay at the California Valley Lodge should write or call for reservations: California Valley, Calif. 93453 - phone (805) 475-2272. Bring warm wraps! Sometimes it goes down to 16° in the morning!
- Leader: Jim Huffman 372-7124

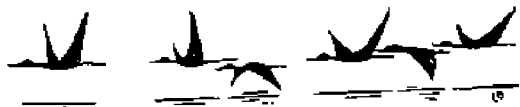


Audubon House will be closed Tuesday, December 24th through Thursday, December 26th, for staff holidays.

- Dec. 29 SUNDAY - ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT - See details elsewhere in Tanager.
 Chairman: Larry Sansone UP 0-6398
- Jan. 11 SATURDAY - FIELD TRIP - Lake Norco
- Jan. 14 TUESDAY - ANNUAL DINNER 7:00 p. m., Fox & Hounds Restaurant.
 See enclosed flyer for details and reservation blank.
- ALWAYS BRING lunch and binoculars on field trips
- PLEASE no pets, and no collecting of any kind
- EVERYONE WELCOME AT ALL ACTIVITIES

VOYAGE TO THE ENCHANTED ISLES

This is a one-hour color television special, which will be presented on the Columbia Broadcasting System, Jan. 22, 1969. Narrated in part by His Royal Highness, the Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Philip, the program will be shown at 7:30 EST. "The Enchanted Isles" are the Galapagos Islands -- a volcanic archipelago in the Pacific, 600 miles off the coast of Ecuador -- a world apart, where animals live without fear, untainted by the mistrust which civilization has bred into most of the earth's animals. Aside from its beauty, the film is an important natural history document.



Audubon Activities

Oct. 27 - GOLDEN WEST PONDS & NEWPORT BACK BAY - We encountered a heavy fog for our exploration of the Golden West Pond in Huntington Beach, one of the few fresh water swamps left in our area. Although we couldn't see far, the pond seemed remote and peaceful with the fog blotting out sights and sounds of the city, and grounding aircraft. - We made a slight detour on our way to the back bay in the hope of seeing a White-tailed Kite. There were none in evidence at the expected spot, but one flew directly over us at a stop nearer the bay.

By the time the group arrived at the bay, visibility had improved and our species list mounted rapidly to 66. Star of the day was a Parasitic Jaeger which coursed back and forth so we could see him from all angles, - then alighted on a plank and waited while we brought our lunches out on the dike and settled down to eat and watch. Two Louisiana Herons, a flock of Elegant Terns, an Osprey, - old friends to greet and new friends to meet, - all added up to a rewarding field trip. Dick Wilson, Leader

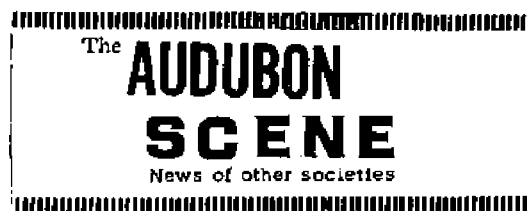
Nov. 9 - SANTA BARBARA, GOLETA, LAKE CACHUMA - Unexpected guests prevented Nelson Metcalf from leading the group, but he sent his able assistants Leslie C. Cook and Bob Shannon, both of Santa Barbara Audubon Society. There were several new members along: Dr. & Mrs. Gerald Maisel, Ethel Higman, and the guest of the Landstroms was Dick Spenser. Other birders also on several of our recent trips were Rusty Johnson and Richard Robinson. Welcome to our field trips! So - what did we see? First, the 100% perfect weather. From the ridge above Santa Barbara we could see Catalina Island. No kiddin'! The Channel Islands were a couple of blocks away. The birds close at hand at the Refuge were Scaups, Widgeons, Cormorants, Black-crowned Night Herons, and pesky hybrids of every description. At the Botanical Gardens above the Mission there were Canyon Wren, Hermit Thrush, Thrasher, Mockers, Jays, Kinglets, which quickly filled our columns. Then we drove over the San Marcos Pass to Lake Cachuma where Osprey, Egrets, both American & Snowy, Ring-necked Ducks, Pintails, Canvasbacks, Cinnamon Teal and more Cormorants, and Western Bluebirds added to our list. Jan Tarble's new scope had these pinpoint-like birds sitting in the palm of one's hand. Here we ate lunch. Then off to Goleta, where we saw White-tailed Kites, Greater Yellow-legs, Bonaparte's Gulls, half-dozen Elegant Terns, Hairy Woodpeckers. At 3:30 Mr. Cook had us back to our cars and the 37 members and friends added up 75 species to make a perfect day of it.

-- Otto Widmann



Nov. 12 - EVENING MEETING - On matters of immediate concern, there were several reports; Dick Wilson, Sanctuaries Chairman, stated that partly as a result of the Golden West Pond Committee's efforts, the city of Huntington Beach plans to preserve at least part of the pond in its natural state. President Laura Jenner urged everyone to continue trying to make the "powers that be" in charge of the development of Upper Newport Bay and Bolsa Chica Lagoon understand that it is of vital importance to preserve areas for our migrant birds. Mrs. Joan Leonard of the Sierra Club told of the imminent danger to the Harbor Park bird sanctuary, again from "development".

The program of the evening was pure enjoyment; Ruth Gordner's superlative slides were not only beautiful, but each series brought a greater understanding to the viewers of such diverse subjects as Monarch Butterflies, Bristlecone Pines, White Pelicans, and many more. Ruth's programs are always looked forward to with anticipation, and remembered with pleasure.



Your editor would like to share with you this delightful announcement of a field trip, in "The Sequoia", bulletin of the Sequoia Audubon Society, Hillsborough, Calif.:

If Wood Ducks, Mergansers, and all of their friends, interesting plant life, great scenery, and all the good vibrations from these things are your bag then I have the place for you. Groove the scene at Conn Dam and Lake Hennessy outside St. Helena. Join the gang at Rutherford at 8:30 a. m. on Nov. 30. Quickest way there is this - Highway 101 north to Highway 37 (Sonoma, Napa, and Vallejo) on to Highway 29. Stay with it and it will take you right to Rutherford. It takes two full hours, so plan an early start - we don't want to wait all day in Rutherford because there aren't any birds there, nor much of anything else. It's truly an all day trip so bring bread for your hungry bod. Water birds come here from all over since there is no hunting. They dig it and you will dig it too. It's the in place for the birds so don't miss it. This is where the action is - be there or be square.

Mark Zumsted, Leader



GOING, GOING, GONE...continued....
many years and many dollars leading to their selection of the most feasible route! We've made this mistake too often!

If you're opposed to development of a new marina or requests for variances in zoning, let your objections be known! Maybe, at best, you will just buy time, but that may be the time that will enable favorable agreements, easements, or even acquisition. Most of us are not opposed to highways, marinas, or other developments, per se. But we're often opposed to the sites selected for "improvements" or development.

Be vigilant after success, too. Acquisitions and dedications don't necessarily imply perpetual security. In recent times, public works have encroached upon or threatened natural reserves acquired by The Nature Conservancy. Another is planned for an estuarine area in San Diego County. Alertness and quick resistance is required.

Within the last two weeks, an aroused citizenry packed and overflowed a hearing hall and successfully stalled a permit for a major development in a lagoon in San Diego County. Now there is a little time to negotiate and even procure the lands as an ecological reserve. What did it? A united attack by spirited people who were, happily, concerned about their own backyard.

What I have tried to say, ladies and gentlemen, is this: "We would like to attend more christenings and less funerals!" We would like to participate in and attend the dedication of more and more estuarine lands to purposes aesthetic and ecological. Maybe this meeting can, some day, be responsible for a little gain here and a little saved there. If so, it has been well worth our time and discussion. For our marshes and estuaries -- let's make it "going, going to be saved!"

Not "going, going, gone!"

FOR YOUR GIVING.....

FOR YOUR RECEIVING.....

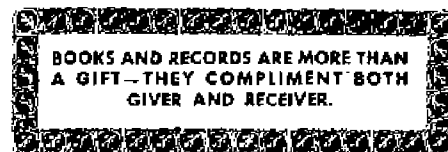
YOUR LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY SALES DEPARTMENT HAS STOCKED THE FOLLOWING BOOKS:

THE SHOREBIRDS OF NORTH AMERICA	\$22.50
BIRDS OF THE NORTHERN FOREST..... LANSDOWNE & LIVINGSTON	\$20.50
BIRDS OF THE EASTERN FOREST..... " "	\$20.50
WILD SANCTUARIES	ROBERT MURPHY..... \$22.50

and many others in every price range.

WE HAVE AUDUBON CHRISTMAS CARDS

Please come in and look our stock over.



GRACE NIXON, SALES CHAIRMAN

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE REQUESTS SIGHTINGS REPORT

White Pelicans from three different colonies have been banded by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in an effort to trace the effects of pesticides on fish eating birds. Pelicans were selected because they are conspicuous and easy to observe. Reports from birdwatchers who observe the birds as they move from the breeding grounds to winter habitat will contribute invaluable information to the project.

The Pelicans have been marked with wing tags of

different colors and symbols. Observers are asked to note the color, symbol, which wing, the total number of pelicans in the flock as well as the place, time, date, and any activity among the birds.

Seventy five birds have been marked from each of three colonies. Anaho, Pyramid Lake, Clear Lake, in Northeastern California; and Tule Lake. The White Pelican moves through the valley during November

Mr. James O. Kreth, P.O. Box C, Davis, is responsible for this research project for the Bureau of Sports Fisheries and Wildlife

In the realm of aesthetics, and in the realm of preservation of resting places for migratory birds, our role is clear regarding estuarine areas; but we should also stress to the decision-makers that there is an economic angle too. Here is an excerpt from Golden Gate Audubon Society's "GULL" for November, 1968:

"The Audubon Canyon Ranch 'Heron Tree' Sanctuary on Bolinas Lagoon has become one of the most popular natural wildlife attractions on the Pacific Coast, with 20,000 visitors this past spring. This indicates the potential for a tourist industry for West Marin if it is not destroyed by over-development of the lagoon, freeways, and urbanization."

May we call to the attention of our public servants that tourists of this type do not leave mountains of litter, - do not destroy; this, in contrast to some types of tourists who cost more than they bring in.

Upper Newport Bay, left as a natural wildlife habitat, would attract as many people as do Nature Sanctuaries in Florida which bring tourists (with cash) from all over the world.



southern california

BIRDS

By G. SHUMWAY SUFFEL

With "Christmas Counts" at the end of the month, December is a good time to brush up on identification of winter birds. If you have a favorite area, work it thoroughly in advance, - note the spots which flocks or individual birds prefer, - then arrange to cover this particular area on Count Day. Winter residents are surprisingly local, and follow fixed time patterns. The best example of this is that the Hepatic Tanager at the Hillcrest Golf Course has returned for the sixth winter. There seems no question that it is the same bird year after year, -- it arrives every evening from the same direction, at the same time, and roosts in the same tree. It was not there during the last weeks of October but was "chipping" in its favorite tree at 4:10 p.m. on the afternoon of Nov. 1st (Larry Sansone).

Hawks were on the move in October and early November. Redtails were everywhere, even soaring over downtown areas. An early Ferruginous Hawk was riding the updraft from the coastal cliffs north of Cambria on Oct. 6th. Prairie Falcons were widespread, but solitary, - on the Ridge Route, in the San Joaquin Valley, in Palos Verdes, and in coastal San Diego County. A single Peregrine and an adult Broad-winged Hawk were found by Shirley Wells in the San Pedro area on Nov. 6th. The Broadwing is particularly intriguing. Can it be the same bird that Jay Sheppard banded as an immature, in this area, last winter? While waiting for the Hepatic Tanager on the 3rd, Larry found a "seldom reported" Pigeon Hawk in a nearby tree. Ospreys have been reported more often than usual this fall, including one at Legg Lake in El Monte by Julia Dembrowsky. This bird was carrying a fish to a nearby telephone pole. It gives one a warm feeling to know that the Park Department supplied this great bird with a meal to speed it on, to more primitive habitat. This leaves the Rough-legged Hawk as the only expected hawk unreported by early November. We have had two reports of a large Falcon in downtown Los Angeles-- one in July by Ralph Mancke, and one in October by Jerry Johnson, who has seen the bird twice. Any further information would be of great interest.

Possibly the greatest disappointment in October was the failure to find Red-throated Pipits in the Tijuana River Valley (Tj.R.V.). These Asiatic wanderers have been seen here (and only here and in Alaska in North America) for three of the past five years. Conditions were right, but the Pipits went unobserved.

Locally, the best bird had to be a Kentucky Warbler (2nd Calif. record, and both in '68) studied by Dr. & Mrs. Nicholas Collias from their Sunday breakfast table in Van Nuys on Oct. 20th. Dr. Collias is in the Biology Dept. at UCLA, has taught ornithology in the past, and is familiar with this bird from his Eastern experience.-- A report from Sandy Wohlgemuth tells of six American Red-

starts at Tapia Park, Malibu Canyon, on Oct. 4th-- an exciting experience. Mike San Miguel found a Palm Warbler in Fish Canyon, near Azusa, on Nov. 5th for one of the few inland records of this tail-wagging warbler. The only Tropical Kingbird reported locally stayed at Cabrillo Beach for over a week in mid-October (Shirley Wells). While looking for the Kingbird on the 25th, Paul Steineck found an immature White-throated Sparrow (rare but regular in winter). Another White-throat was found by Ralph Mancke at the Arboretum on Nov. 4th, and a third was at Richard Milne's feeder in Palos Verdes on Nov. 10th. A Short-eared Owl was observed sweeping the marsh at Marina del Rey on the 16th (Jerry Johnson), and another was in Rolling Hills on Nov. 8th; while a large, earless owl (probably a Short-eared) was flying over the open ocean between Anacapa and Santa Cruz Islands on the 27th of October (Sea & Sage A.S.). Larry Sansone found two White-winged Doves near Pt. Fermin Park on the 17th, where only one had been seen previously (they are rare coastally).

The Orange County coast and lagoons were well worked; L.A.A.S. saw a Parasitic Jaeger and two Louisiana Herons at Upper Newport Bay on the 27th, where only one Tri-colored was present in late September. Strangely enough, only one Louisiana was present at Imperial Beach marsh (Tj.R.V.) on Nov. 2nd where there were two in late September. Can you make something of that? Black Oystercatchers are seldom reported on the mainland coast (but still commonly on the islands) yet Paul Steineck found two of them at Dana Point, trying to land on the breakwater despite the weekend fishermen. White Pelicans appeared at a few of the larger fishing lakes, in late October; six were at Harbor Park, San Pedro, and about thirty at Lake Elsinore, where they will probably winter.

The San Diego area produced more than its share of good birds. This is due in large part to intensive coverage by an active group of ardent searchers, and to the banding stations of the Craigs and Coughrans, on Pt. Loma. In addition to the warblers reported last month, they had two, maybe three, Black-throated Blues, a Hooded, a Black-and-white, and an Ovenbird. Incidentally, the Lucy's Warbler found by L.A.A.S. in September was still there on Nov. 10th, and may winter. In the same area were a Baltimore Oriole, another, larger Ruff, four Tropical Kingbirds, a pair of Vermilion Flycatchers, four Cattle Egrets (there were 28 at the Salton Sea) and a Bright male Dickcissel. Jim Schlesinger found a Least Bittern at Buena Vista Lagoon after the L.A.A.S. trip in late September. They are very secretive and seldom reported along the coast.

Three Gray Flycatchers, always rare along the coast, were reported in late October - one at Marina del Rey, (Jerry Johnson), another at San Pedro (Shirley Wells), and the third in the Pt. Loma Cemetery. This Empidonax is the only one which occurs (even rarely) in winter locally, and fortunately is one which can be identified by a characteristic "phoebelike" dipping of its long tail. Another straggler was a Black-chinned Sparrow at Cottonwood Springs on Nov. 10th (John Atwood). These summer residents are normally gone by mid-September.

....continued on next page....

(As our readers know, we always present varying opinions on conservation subjects. Here is a comment on the letter from Beula Edmiston in the November, 1968 "Western Tanager".

To the Editor: Beula Edmiston's plea for the survival of the "wild horse" in the November "Tanager" evokes memories of earlier days -- the sight of a great black stallion looking down on me, curious but wary, from the "V" cut by a desert stream above a now-dry waterfall; and of a burro named "Angel" who won my heart on a two-weeks' pack trip in the Sierra. Only one who has been adopted by a burro, even for a short two weeks, can know their almost dog-like attachment to human beings. During this trip she was never tied and she never wandered. She was our alarm clock, -- a hot breath in our faces opened our eyes to see a great, wet, snuffling nose only a few inches above our faces. "It's time for breakfast, you sluggards, and save a pancake for me; then let's get on the trail."

One aspect of the article disturbs me tremendously, however, and this is the perversion of the "Endangered Species Law." I have not read this law but my understanding is that it was designed to preserve endangered species of wildlife. Whether "wild horses" are wildlife is a debatable question, and certainly their "endangered" status is only a matter of protection from man himself. They have survived through the years despite roundups, trapping, and shooting. Certainly if a sanctuary were created, as recommended, the only problem would be eventual overpopulation.

The inclusion of the burro is an even more serious issue. Burros are extremely adaptable creatures, -- they will thrive under conditions which would kill a horse or a steer. They exist in numbers in the desert mountains of the west, and are serious competitors to our not-so-thriving Bighorn Sheep. Even in our National Monuments "control" measures are necessary to prevent their monopolizing the areas where they coexist with Bighorns. ("The Bighorn of Death

BIRDS - The Sea & Sage A.S. pelagic trip to Santa Cruz Island on Oct. 27th was a pleasant surprise to the dozen or so L. A. A. S. members who were lucky enough to be present. The first surprise was three Black-legged Kittiwakes perched on the boat-house roof, and circling over the boat while it was still in the harbor. About half-way to the islands we began finding New Zealand Shearwaters in small numbers, then more and more until thirty or forty were in view at once. This is the first occurrence of these graceful shearwaters in such numbers in Southern California. Later, as we slowly approached a large raft of birds on the water, a large dark bird stood out from the Sooties and light bellied Shearwaters. It proved to be a Palefooted Shearwater -- rare wanderer from the S. W. Pacific.

If you're not too busy with Christmas Counts, try the golf courses, cemeteries, and parks inland; and along the coast, the harbors and piers for gulls, divers, and possibly an alcid or two.

Valley" by Welles & Welles, 1961 - see "Competitors and Enemies", pp 177-78.). Can you imagine a situation in which the National Park Service was unable to preserve their herds of Bighorn Sheep, because they could not control the overpopulation of an "endangered species", the burro? Beside which, if by chance, the feral burro should be extirpated on any particular range, one pair of domesticated burros, released near a spring, will repopulate the area in a few years. After all, this is the way they got there in the first place.

Perhaps the most dangerous feature of H.R. 19789 is "legislating" animals onto the "endangered species" list. This should be done only after careful investigations are made by trained ecologists, and there many fine ones in government service. This legislation will undoubtedly receive its major support, -- and rightly so, -- from lovers of horses and of the "old west". Let us not weaken one of our most constructive conservation measures by using it politically for sentimental reasons.

Certainly there is enough public domain to set aside a "Wild Horse Sanctuary" where these magnificent animals can be assured survival on the open range; but do not handicap good wildlife management by putting horses and burros on the "endangered species" list.

Utopian as it may seem now, let us hope the day will never come when, with our native wildlife gone, we will be devoting our energies to getting the Starling and the English Sparrow on the list of "endangered species".

G. Shumway Suffel

Editor's Note: On this same subject, we are in receipt of a letter from the Western Regional Office; to quote from the letter, "It would appear as though we are caught on the horns of a dilemma, attempting to save an exotic." Enclosed was a copy of p. 5, Vol22, Oct. 11, 1968, #20 "Outdoors News Bulletin", from the Wildlife Management Institute. We shall post this on our Audubon House bulletin board, so that everyone may read, and decide for himself what the proper solution should be.

The Western Tanager



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
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CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Counts Published	
1. Texas	58
2. New York	49
3. California	45
4. Pennsylvania	42
5. Ohio	39
6. Wisconsin	33
7. Ontario	32
8. Florida	30
9. Illinois	30
10. Michigan	25

150 or More Species	
San Diego, Calif.	209
Cocoa, Fla.	195
Tornales Bay, Calif.	194
Drake's Bay, Calif.	183
Monterey Peninsula, Calif.	173
Freeport, Tex.	172
Coot Bay, Fla.	170
Santa Barbara, Calif.	165
Corpus Christi, Tex.	164
Orange County (central and coastal), Calif.	163

Morro Bay, Calif.	162
Oakland, Calif.	161
Fort Pierce, Fla.	159
West Palm Beach, Fla.	157
Cape Charles, Va.	155
Sapelo Island, Ga.	155
Wilmington, N. C.	154
Crystal Springs Reservoir, Calif.	152
Jacksonville, Fla.	152
South Brevard County, Fla.	150

Last year's Christmas Count -- the 68th -- created great excitement and enthusiasm across the continent. In spite of the \$1.00 individual participation fee necessitated by the ever-increasing cost of publication, a record-breaking 839 counts were published! And California produced 8 of the 12 lists in the country above 160 species.

You are cordially urged to participate in one or more of our local counts. Our official Los Angeles Count area includes all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle centered at the intersection of Pico Blvd. and La Cienega Ave.

Are you a beginning birder who doesn't know an alcid from a corvid?
Volunteer to accompany a group of experts, and keep the tally for them!

Are you able to cover only a few residential blocks around your home?
Volunteer! House Finches, Mockers, and Scrub Jays are important too!

Have you a favorite Count Area from past years?
State your preference on the blank below, and mail to the Count Chairman.

Are you a pretty good birder, but new to our area?
Please volunteer anyhow, and we'll put you to work!

The fee is \$1,- you will be sent the necessary blanks if you'll
phone or mail your name & address to the chairman or Audubon House.

The date: any time from midnight to midnight, Dec. 29, 1968.

Chairman: Larry Sansone III, 3128 Club Drive, Los Angeles, Ca 90064; Ph. UP 0-6398

Also: Palos Verdes Christmas Count, Monday, Dec. 23. Counters, - do your shopping early! Count dinner & compiling following at 6:00 p. m., 30443 La Vista Verde, San Pedro. Deadline for those wishing to attend dinner, Dec. 18. Contact Shirley Wells, 831-4281 at above address, or Grace Nixon, 271-2788. Let's see if we can get back in the top ten of the nation this year!

In addition: The Topanga Canyon area count will be held on Dec. 28. Please call Mrs. Joan Mills, 275-4821, or write her at 1500 San Ysidro Drive, Beverly Hills, Ca 90210, if you can participate.

Please clip & mail to: Larry Sansone III, 3128 Club Dr., L. A., Ca 90064



NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE _____

AREA PREFERENCE _____

Los Angeles Audubon Society

Annual Dinner

Russell



Wilson:

"Happiness
is 600
Birds"



596...
597...
598...
(SIGH)

**Gourmet
Menu:**

HOT & COLD
HORS D'OEUVRES
—
DOUBLE BONELESS
BREAST OF
CHICKEN
WITH WINE SAUCE
—

RUM PIE

SOCIAL HOUR
6:30

DINNER
7 P.M.

Reservations must
be in by Wednesday,
January 8, 1969...

Tuesday, January 14, 1969

Fox & Hounds Restaurant

2900 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, Calif.
\$ 5.50 per person

LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY
7377 SANTA MONICA BLVD., LOS ANGELES 90046, CALIF.

Please reserve _____ places for me at the Annual Dinner.

Enclosed is check for \$ _____.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

**send
in
now!**