



California Condor Preservation Program

By JOHN C. BORNEMAN
CONDOR NATURALIST

In 1965 the National Audubon Society started a new program to help insure the survival of the California Condor. The program set up the position of Condor Warden. In the beginning the job was envisioned as one of patrolling the range of the condor. As the job developed, it became apparent that a program of education, public relations and research was needed if the future of the condor was to be safeguarded. As a result of the change in emphasis in the objectives of the job, the title was changed from Condor Warden to Condor Naturalist in 1968.

In 1965 the California Department of Fish and Game initiated the Annual Condor Survey. The purpose of this survey was three-fold: (1) to gather information on distribution and approximate numbers of condors as well as the age ratios of young birds to adults; (2) to get more public and agency personnel involved in the condor program, thereby stimulating interest in the condor; and (3) to make the general public aware of the condor and its plight.

In 1968 the DFG set up a Special Wildlife Problems section to deal with the problems of non-game species in California. This is a very big step forward in California and means that more effort can now be spent on the condor as funding can be worked out.

In 1966 The Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife assigned Mr. Fred Sibley to the task of gathering information on the biology of the condor and make recommendations as to what steps should be taken to perpetuate the condor. Fred is an indefatigable researcher and has already gathered much information that will be of help to the condor program as it progresses.

The U. S. Forest Service has the stewardship of the portion of the condor's range that includes nesting and roosting areas plus flyways and some feeding areas. It has worked to strengthen the protection of condor nests within as well as without the boundaries of the Sespe Condor Sanctuary. The establishment of the Mt. Pinos Observation Point has been an historic step in enabling the general public to see condors at relatively close range. In 1968 the Forest Service hired Mr. Dean Carrier as condor biologist to work out a Forest Service land use plan that will insure the effectiveness of protective measures regarding land use in areas of importance to condors. Mr. Carrier is presently involved in updating the present management plan for the Sespe Condor Sanctuary to help strengthen its implementation.

My own work as Condor Naturalist has consisted of giving condor programs, primarily in Kern and Ventura counties. These programs have been aimed at school children, service organizations, sportsman's groups and personnel of federal and state agencies.

March is the traditional Conservation and Wildlife month; and each March, the Los Angeles Audubon Society asks its members to contribute to our primary conservation effort, --the Condor Sanctuary Fund. In this article you may read of the splendid success of the drive to save the Condor; may we ask you to contribute again this year so that we may continue our gains in the effort to save this magnificent species?

During fire season, contact is made with the fire lookouts throughout the range of the condor to help make them aware of the birds and report sightings to their superiors. Calling on newspaper editors in some of the small communities in the condor range has resulted in feature articles on the condor which, in turn, have stimulated local residents to keep their eyes open for condors. This has helped us gather more information on the distribution of the condor.

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CONDOR.....continued.....

Assisting Fred Sibley in his research has been of great help to me in furthering my own knowledge of the bird. Periodic trips are made to the various Forest Districts to make contact with personnel and keep condors on their minds. These trips often result in the opportunity to present condor programs to local organizations.

If the condor program is to be successful, the people who are a part of that program need to be kept stimulated and encouraged. I think we have learned from past experience that complacency and apathy can be our greatest foes in the

conservation movement. This is especially true of the condor program.

The condor itself is in a dangerous position at best, but not in as bad shape as the Whooping Crane was at the beginning of the amazing program that has resulted in bringing the Whooping Crane population up to 50 birds in the wild. The pessimists said that the condors are doomed -- just as they said about the cranes. However, I don't know of any successful attempt to preserve a species of wildlife being the result of listening to the pessimists. If it can be done with the Whooping Cranes there is every reason to believe that the condor will also survive.

130 Man Survey Team Reports 52 Condors



The California condor is North America's largest land bird. It also is one of the continent's rarest birds.

Its population once numbered in the thousands and its range extended from the Columbia River in Washington into Baja California, but now there may be fewer than 100 left, and the species is precariously balanced on the brink of extinction.

Both the Department of Fish and Game and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service consider it a rare and endangered species.

To gather information about the number of condors remaining, to locate nesting and roosting areas and to alert the public to the need for action to preserve this rare bird, the Department of Fish and Game and others concerned with preserving this unique species organized and conducted the first annual condor survey in 1965.

By stationing observers at vantage points throughout the eight counties which constitute most of the remaining condor range, and by comparing their reports to eliminate duplicate sightings, the Condor Survey Committee determined that a minimum of 38 condors had been sighted.

The condor survey has been held each year since 1965; observers have become more skilled; better vantage points have been located; and evaluation procedures have been constantly improved.

In 1966 the survey recorded 51 condors; in 1967 the total was 46; and this year 52 positive sightings were reported.

Robert D. Mallette, wildlife biologist representing the Department of Fish and Game on the four-agency Condor Survey Coordinating Committee, points out that the total of 52 condors positively recorded during this year's survey does not represent the total condor population since this figure does not include birds which did not leave their nests or roosting places during the two-day



CALIFORNIA CONDOR

survey, nor does it include birds which were in the air but were not sighted by the observers.

In addition to Mallette and the Department of Fish and Game, other agencies and their representatives on the Survey Coordinating Committee are: The Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, Fred Sibley; the U. S. Forest Service, Ray Dalen; and the National Audubon Society, John Borneman.

Members of the Coordinating Committee agreed this year's survey results did not differ enough from previous survey totals to indicate any significant change in the total Condor population.

For a while it appeared that this year's survey scheduled for Oct. 16 and 17, would be washed out by a storm which threatened to make the dirt roads and trails to the remote observation points impassable. However, the rains did not arrive, and weather was nearly ideal for the two-day observation period.

The actual observation period was preceded by two training sessions. On August 30, observers met at the Mt. Pinos Condor Observation Point to watch and study the big birds. They also were briefed on the differences between condors and eagles, vultures, and hawks, so they would not confuse these birds with condors in reporting their observations.

Observers met again with members of the Coordinating Committee in Bakersfield Oct. 15 to see color slides of condors and other large birds which they might observe. They also were

by Frank Hubbard
Information Officer
California Department of Fish & Game

OUTDOOR CALIFORNIA -Jan. -Feb., 1969

briefed on the forms they would use to record their observations, and sector captains made sure everyone knew where he was supposed to go and had a way to get there.

On the evenings of October 16 and 17 the sector captains telephoned the evaluation committee in Bakersfield and reported that day's sightings. Each reported sighting included information about the number of condors seen, time of the sighting and direction of flight. If the birds were close enough, ages and such special features as missing feathers also were noted.

The Evaluation Committee, working under the direction of Fred Sibley, plotted each reported sighting on a large map; thus duplicate sightings of the same birds were noted and eliminated from the final total of confirmed observations of individual birds. The reporting procedure includes sufficient information to enable the committee to track some birds across miles of rugged countryside as they passed from one observer's view to another's.

Each day's observations were plotted separately, and the committee chose the largest total of the two days as the official result of the survey.

This year the second day of the survey produced the largest number of sightings — 183 separate observations. One hundred and thirty-one of these were eliminated by the evaluation committee as duplicates, leaving the final total of 52 confirmed reports of condors.

This year, 130 observers were stationed at 65 stations in the eight counties of Kern, Los Angeles, Ventura, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Fresno, Tulare and San Benito.

Results of the annual surveys, along with information from additional programs of the Department and other interested organizations, is being used to plan for the preservation and management of the few remaining members of the California condor population.



Audubon Activities

Jan. 25-26 - SALTON SEA - Some 22 people braved the Los Angeles weather (rain & floods) and took a chance on the Salton Sea trip. As it turned out, the rains ended essentially in the Banning area, and the roads were good at the south end of the Sea. All were treated to an excellent view of the Red-breasted Goose at Wister, which was worth the trip by itself, even though it may very well be an escapee. The goose was with the Snowies. Many wintering waterfowl were seen, including a number of Ross' Geese, thousands of Canada and Snow Geese; they put on a flight display for a few observers. Two Fulvous Tree Ducks were seen at Finney Lake; although uncommon in winter, they are readily seen in summer. A treat for many were our views of the Stilt Sandpipers (at least 10), and their flight patterns were easily observed and readily compared to the Dowitchers with which they associate. Many Abert's Towhees and a Palm Warbler were observed, along with the normal wintering birds.

Despite a bit of rain on Saturday, the road to the campground at Finney Lake was passable, and a number of people camped out under the stars; there were blue skies on Sunday. Approximately 78 species were recorded for the two days.

Bruce Broadbooks, Trip Leader

Feb. 8-9 - MORRO BAY - Despite a forecast of possible rain for Sunday, approximately thirty members and guests gathered at the foot of Morro Rock on our annual pilgrimage to Morro Bay. Except for some cloudiness at times on Sunday morning, however, the weather was sunny and warm for the season. We were able to study the resident pair of Peregrine Falcons both at rest and in flight, and the other specialty here, the Canyon Wren. In addition to the usual species seen here, no less than four Black-legged Kittiwakes were observed.

After birding in the vicinity of the Rock for an hour and a half, the party drove up to Cambria. Santa Rosa Creek and the lagoon at its mouth showed the ravages of last month's storm, and the best we could turn up here was a couple of Common Goldeneye drakes. We had lunch in a picnic area overlooking the beach just north of Cambria. On the way there, Dr. Johnson made a fast U-turn to get a better look at a Kingfisher perched by the road and got stuck in the mud on the shoulder; this gave Gil King a chance to use his brand-new-looking tow chain to pull him out.

After lunch, part of the group preferred to head back to Morro Bay, while the rest drove a few miles up State Hiway #46 where the birding was good but not spectacular, and the countryside was very beautiful. We were back in Cambria by 4 o'clock in the hope of seeing wild Turkeys where a Mr. Shamel puts out feed for them. However, the Turkeys failed to appear.

Sunday morning we birded in the vicinity of the State Park, and mid-morning drove out to Montana de Oro State Park. Black Oystercatchers were seen here, of course, and two more Kittiwakes. Probably the best bird seen here was the White-tailed Kite.

After lunch at Spooner's Cove, the group broke up to head for home. Some of us, however, stopped for a while at Laguna Lake where we saw a few Ring-necked Ducks and an American Bittern to round out the trip. In all, 104 species of birds were seen on the trip, and a sea otter was seen at Cambria.

Bob Blackstone, Trip Leader

Feb. 11 - EVENING MEETING - Important business of the evening was the election of Don Adams as the member - at - large of the three-man nominating committee. President Laura Jenner reported on the January meeting of the Conservation Planning Council at which many of the major conservation issues in California were discussed. It was noted by Joann Leonard that H.R. 248 on Endangered Species is being reintroduced to Congress. Quite a large group had turned out to see the program Mary Schroeder presented on New Zealand. To complement the interesting slide program, Mary had set up a display table with books and pictures on the natural history of the region. Let's hope the Schroeder's forthcoming trip to Central America will produce an equally fine program.

The Sacramento Audubon Society extends an invitation to other chapters to join them on their annual trip to the Grasslands of western Merced County. For a weekend they enjoy the privilege of trespass over 47,000 acres of the Grasslands Water District and Los Banos Wildlife Area, and the San Luis National Wildlife Refuge. Meet at the Canal Farm Inn on Saturday, March 29, at 1:00 p.m.

Thunderbird Camp near Bishop, Calif., offers an outstanding program for the needs of children. The summer's program is based on the Audubon Camp of the West and is scaled to the children's level of ecological understanding. It is staffed by experts in their fields; it is owned & operated by the immediate past President of Sea & Sage Audubon, - Ken Tanksley. Write him for further information: 2769 Underwood Lane, Bishop, Ca93514

The Western Tanager



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SUGGESTIONS FOR THE TREATMENT OF OILED WATERFOWL¹

1. **Cleaning** - Clean birds immediately and quickly, removing as much oil as possible at this time. Handle the birds firmly, but gently.²

2. **Facilities** - Place birds in a dry roomy area not much warmer than 60°. Cover floor with four (4) inches of serval (crushed sugar cane). Add one heat lamp brooder for every eight birds in enclosure. Hot spot under heat lamp should be from 85-90°. Birds should be able to leave heat at will.

3. **Water** - Birds should have access to drinking water only for the first two weeks. Waterers should be covered with grates allowing birds to drink but not immerse. After two weeks shallow bath pans, or ramped swimming pools should be provided.

4. **Food**

Eider ducks - prefer Game-Bird Chow (pelleted form) and Trout Chow (Purina Developer). After a few months in captivity they will eat almost any type of game bird feed.

Scoters - First choice was Trout Chow (Purina Developer) Second Choice, soaked dog biscuit and chopped lettuce (very messy).

Scaup and Goldeneyes - 100% Trout Chow at first, then game bird chows and grains may be supplemented.

Dabbling Ducks - (Blacks, Mallards, Pintails, Teal, etc.) Game Bird chows, green feed, corn and other grains.

Provide grit and crushed oyster shells mixed with food for all types of waterfowl.

5. **Medications**

Symptoms - clouded or milky eyes, listlessness, lightness of body, lack of appetite.

Treatment - One 125 mg. capsule of terramycin administered every 12 hours until condition improves. (Watch droppings - could cause diarrhea)

Symptoms - dry legs and feet, lameness

Treatment - Use A and D Ointment (White Laboratories, Inc. Kenilworth, N.J.) until normal condition returns. This ointment also seemed to improve frost bitten areas of legs and feet.

¹These suggestions result from a study of sea-ducks, victims of a January 1968 oil slick off the Massachusetts coast. This study was conducted by Philip B. Stanton, biologist, Framingham State College, Framingham, Mass. 01701 Tel. 872-3501 ext. 57.

²The ducks were cleaned with Polycomplex A-11. Exclusive West Coast distributor, Hal Kasden and Company, Post Office Box 3186, Santa Barbara, California 93105. Tel. 805-967-4600. **

* Best litter for discouraging Aspergillosis (respiratory disorder)

** Our Society has no financial interest in this company. If you wish to obtain some of the Polycomplex A-11, you may get it from the Dept. of Fish & Game.

Los Angeles Audubon Society



calendar

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

March 1969

Mrs. Abigail King, *Executive Secretary*
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476-5121



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- Mar. 6 THURSDAY - EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING - 8:00 p.m., Audubon House
- Mar. 8 SATURDAY - FIELD TRIP - Tujunga Wash-Hansen Dam. Meet at 8:30 a.m. on the north side of the Foothill Blvd. bridge over the Tujunga Wash in Sunland.
Bush Canyon, Griffith Park. 2 Franklin Lake W. Canyon Dr. to entrance
Leader: Warren Blazer - 272-8598 *meet at 8:30 - 9:00*
- Mar. 11 TUESDAY - EVENING MEETING - 8:00 p.m., Great Hall, Plummer Park.
VENEZUELA -- OLÉ! "What magnificent vegetation! . . . How brilliant the plumage of the birds . . ." This is the way Venezuela was described by the naturalist Alexander von Humboldt in 1799. Come to this program and see how Herb and Olga Clarke describe this beautiful country with slides taken on their March-April 1968 birding trip.
- Mar. 15 SATURDAY - SPECIAL FIELD TRIP - Upper Newport Bay. Rain cancelled the February tour as described in Sunset Magazine. The trip begins at 9:00 a.m. at the head of the bay near the intersection of Eastbluff and Back Bay drives; turn west onto Eastbluff from Jamboree Road. If you will be available to help with bird identification contact the Friends of Newport Bay at one of the following telephone numbers.

(714) 525-1371 or (714) 833-1348
- Mar. 22 SATURDAY - FIELD TRIP - Irvine Park and O'Neill Park. This trip is normally on a Sunday but due to the crowds we will go on Saturday. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the entrance to Irvine Park. Take the Santa Ana Freeway to Chapman Avenue and go east through Orange to Irvine Park. The leaders are from Orange County and know the area. Migration should be starting so it all should make for a good trip.

Leaders: Tom & Joe Heindel - (714) 897-5791
or 670-8210 (Bruce Broadbooks) evenings
- Apr. 12 SATURDAY - FIELD TRIP - CHANTRY FLATS

ALWAYS BRING lunch and binoculars on field trips

PLEASE no pets, and no collecting of any kind

EVERYONE WELCOME AT ALL ACTIVITIES

THE OWNER OF THE CIGARETTE LIGHTER WHICH WAS LEFT ON A TABLE
AT THE SOCIETY'S ANNUAL BANQUET AT THE "FOX & HOUNDS" MAY PICK
IT UP AT AUDUBON HOUSE AFTER PROPERLY IDENTIFYING IT.

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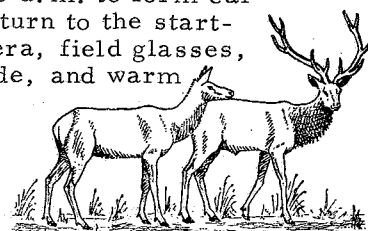
PETER ALDEN'S BOOK

The Director of the University of Arizona Press has announced that by March 3, 1969, copies of Peter Alden's long-awaited "Finding the Birds in Western Mexico: a Guide to the States of Sonora, Sinaloa and Nayarit" will be available. It is illustrated by John O'Neill and the price is \$7.50. The book may be obtained through the U. of A. Press, Tucson, Arizona

For interesting & exciting trips through Mexico contact Miss Catherine Noble, MEXICO-SOUTH TOURS, P.O. Box 824, Nogales, Arizona 85621

Section I, June 30 through July 23
Section II, July 28 through Aug. 16

The Committee for the Preservation of the Tule Elk will hold its annual Owens Valley Tule Elk observation field trip on Sunday, April 20, 1969, under the leadership of Roland C. Ross, Professor Emeritus of Nature Study, L. A. State College. All those who wish to participate in the event are cordially invited to meet in front of the Mary Austin Home, (State Historical Landmark) Independence, Calif., promptly a 8:30 a.m. to form car caravans which will return to the starting point at noon. Camera, field glasses, walking shoes, sunshade, and warm wraps are in order.



The AUDUBON SCENE

CAN WE SAVE TORREY PINES?

The State of California has appropriated \$900,000 toward the \$1,500,000 that is needed for the proposed extension of the Torrey Pines Reserve, BUT the balance must be raised locally by June, 1970. Furthermore, none of the State money will be released until a substantial portion of privately raised funds is on deposit. The proposed extension consists of 170 acres of privately owned land assessed at the 1 1/2 million dollar figure. It is a complete native ecological unit containing a grove of about 1500 healthy Torrey Pines with many seedlings growing up among them. Native shrubs and flowers provide abundant food and shelter for wild birds and animals. Snadstone cliffs and ravines, eroded by winds and rains, reveal eons of geological history. Sharp eyes can find sea fossils and evidence of prehistoric Indian occupation.

The alternative to trails for study and recreation will be that the last remaining mainland groves in the native habitat will be obliterated by bulldozed cliffs, toppled trees, building pads, houses and streets.

This is an emergency appeal to help save a specila segment of the old California coast, too tragically little of which is still available for protection from the dollar and the exloiter. A dollar or two (or better yet, five or ten) to the fund will possibly turn the tide for an unusual piece of natural America. Address: Torrey Pines Asso., P.O. Box 104, La Jolla, Ca92037. Please help!

WANDERING TATTLER, Feb. 1969
Sea & Sage Audubon Society

Torrea californica is named for the pioneer botanist-chemist John Torrey (1796-1873) and is one of two species of *Torrea* in this country, the other being *T. taxifolia* which is found in Florida. They are survivors of a vanishing species, and at any time a natural or man-made disaster could extirpate the few remaining natural groves. Are we to be known as the uncaring generation?

A group of twelve dedicated birders celebrated New Year's Day by participating from dawn to dusk in the first annual Ramsey Canyon Christmas Count. 83 species were observed, and about 2500 individuals counted. Of special interest were Rivoli's Hummer, Winter Wren, and Painted Redstart.

VERMILION FLYCATCHER, Feb., 1969
Tucson Audubon Society

How do you estimate a flock of blackbirds forty feet across, twenty feet deep, and a half mile long? (The first one who says "Count their legs and divide by two" goes OUT!)

THE HOOT OWL, Jan. 1969
Stockton Audubon Society

The big event of the 1968 count was the return of the Robins in great numbers. They had started to recover last year but really swarmed over our area in December to strip the toyon and pyracantha bushes clean. Cedar Waxwings and Varied Thrushes were also unusually abundant. -- A count of 1000 Knots was made on a single long but narrow shell bar near Foster City. The Knots were resting in the company of approximately equal numbers of Godwits and Willets.

A proposal of extraordinary interest to Audubon members is gaining momentum and public support at an impressive rate. This is the proposal to establish a National Wildlife Refuge in South San Francisco Bay which has been ably sponsored by the South San Francisco Baylands Planning, Conservation and National Wildlife Refuge Committee (ad hoc) brought together by the Santa Clara Planning Department. Participating in the Committee are representatives of Alameda, San Mateo, and Santa Clara Counties, various federal, state, local agencies and service organizations, as well as privater citizens and conservation groups.

The areas proposed for acquisition are:

A. Greco and Bair Island, San Mateo County, 2,800 to 3,000 acres;

B. Coyote Hills southerly, west of Coyote Hills to south of Mowry Slough, Alameda County, 7,000 to 10,000 acres;

C. Alviso area, western portion Station Island (Drawbridge area), in Alameda and Santa Clara Counties, - 3,000 acres.

The Bureau of Sports Fisheries and Wildlife in the Department of the Interior recently completed a feasibility study for the refuge and supports it as a potential "showcase of the West".

THE SEQUOIA, Feb., 1969
Sequoia Audubon Society

The Fish & Wildlife Coordination Act of 1958 requires that the Bureau of Reclamation and the Army Corps of Engineers, when constructing dams, flood control projects and other like developments, must consult the River Basins section of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to ascertain their effect on wildlife. It also requires, where there are major losses to wildlife, that they mitigate for these losses.

The Bureau of Reclamation has accepted this law as it was meant and to a large extent has compensated for losses to wildlife. But the Army Corps of Engineers' interpretation is that they will have to compensate for wildlife only where it is economical to do so. This, in their interpretation, is almost never.

The Army Corps of Engineers is responsible for the channelizing of many of our rivers which converts them from natural streams lined with wildlife to cement-lined canals that have value only to transport water.

THE YELLOWBILL, Feb., 1969
Fresno Audubon Society

Report on the Oil Slick Disaster

By BETTY JENNER

If this issue of TANAGER should reach you late, it is because your editor has been trying hard to keep up with, and report to you, on the latest developments in the tragic occurrences on our beautiful coast. The Santa Barbara Audubon Society has been in the thick of the activity both in regard to saving wildlife, and initiating an immediate policy of prevention of future accidents. We can do no better than to print the report of Joy Parkinson, President of Santa Barbara Audubon Society, in the latest issue of EL TECOLOTE, the SBAS bulletin:

The past week has been so hectic that it has been impossible to find time to report to you earlier. I have received literally hundreds of telephone calls from people in Sacramento, Los Angeles and points between, all of them asking what they could do to help. This has been a heart-warming but tremendously exhausting experience.

On Thursday, Jan. 30 the SBAS Board of Directors met and voted to wire Secretary of the Interior Hickel and elected officials to stop all oil drilling in the Santa Barbara Channel. Then Friday, Jan. 31, I telephoned Roland Clement of NAS to inform him of the situation. On Saturday, Feb. 1, the SBAS in a press release called for the cessation of the use of chemicals to break up the oil slick in the Channel.

During the weekend and after, members assisted the State and Federal Wildlife officials in setting up the several bird treatment centers, giving advice, walking the beaches in search of oiled birds, and in some instances actually treating and feeding the birds brought in.

On Wednesday, Feb. 5, Mr. Fred Ross, Warden-Manager of the NAS's Richardson Bay Refuge near San Francisco, drove to Santa Barbara at the request of Charles Callison to give a first-hand report of the situation here to our parent organization. Mr. Ross spent Wednesday studying the Santa Barbara area and then on Thursday visited Anacapa Island by boat with John Borneman. They reported that the littoral zone is a complete loss. There were a few seals on the island and some gulls, but no sign of life in the intertidal zone. When talking with me later, Mr. Ross told me that he had already telephoned Dr. Stahr, NAS President, and would be sending a full report immediately.

The SBAS Board met Wednesday, Feb. 5 to discuss what action might be taken by our local branch. It was agreed that the present disaster demonstrates the utter lack of planning and the fact that the oil industry and government have not been sufficiently careful. We believe that all oil drilling in the Santa Barbara Channel should be permanently terminated.

If you have not already done so, let your legislators know your personal feelings regarding this disaster. -- Joy Parkinson, President

Mrs. Parkinson and others have truly worked to the point of exhaustion, and we want to express our gratitude to them for their devotion to our common cause. Many of the SBAS members who took part in their Christmas Count are going to do another count-- the sad one of finding out how many birds are to be found since the oil disaster.

Oiled birds may be found for a long time to come, even in our area; please report all birds, alive or dead, to the Dept. of Fish & Game so that accurate records may be kept. Take the live birds to them for treatment and care; take the dead birds to them for autopsy.

I have learned that the solution used for cleaning the birds is made with a vegetable oil base, and is much quicker than the old methods of baby oil, Fuller's earth, etc. This eliminates much of the shock mortality. The birds are put in an area where there is a heat lamp after cleaning, and are given vitamins and butter. As soon as they can feed themselves, they are fed fish. Of course the only way of saving birds now is to care for them up to a year, until their natural oils have returned. It is a start in learning how to save oiled birds; the percentage saved is up from about 5% to about 50% as of now, although many may die that seem healthy now. The solution was developed after the Torrey Canyon disaster just for the purpose of saving waterfowl, and my feeling is that we owe thanks to the researcher who worked on the problem.

Here are the percentages of species of birds treated: Western Grebes, 66%; Eared Grebes, 1.7%; other Grebes, .3%; Loons, 6%; Cormorants (Double-crested & Brandt's), 6%; Scoters, 15%; Ruddy Duck, 1%; Merganser, 1%; Murres, 2%; Gulls, 1%.

I have still more literature on how the birds are being taken care of, should anyone be interested in contacting me.

The cost of the solution itself is minimal, but the cost of the man-hours required for the care of the birds is considerable. We understand that Union Oil will pay these costs.

The solution, Polycomplex A-11, was developed in the laboratories of Guardian Chemical Corp. of Long Island City, N. Y., whose principal products are bases for cosmetics, germicides, etc. Polycomplex A-11 is considered the best product now available by no less an authority than Peter Scott, noted British authority on waterfowl.

Not claiming to speak for the Audubon Society, but as an interested citizen, your editor sees the present crisis on our coast as a basic difference of philosophy: too many of the powerful companies, and many politicians, follow the concept of subdue and conquer natural forces. On the other hand, we Auduboners, and all other conservation groups, including responsible hunters and fishermen, consider ourselves the realists; while we know that oil is necessary, we believe the total ethological concept of working

with natural forces should be followed.

(Incidentally, I will add this bit of information to all road builders, housing developers, flood control experts, and others who rule our environment: the Law of Gravity has not yet been repealed, nor is it likely to be.)

When I telephoned the local Department of Interior, Conservation Division, Oil & Gas Operations, on Feb. 3rd, I was assured that damage from the oil leak was minimal and that the flow of oil would be capped that very day. And why was it, I was asked, that a hundred men could die in a mine disaster and no one got excited, but let a few birds die and everyone starts calling up?

I fear the Department does not understand our tremendous concern for people and for "a few birds".

The head of the oil company involved is quoted as saying something similar. While we sympathise with him in trying to solve the crisis, we must assure him that our concern is not only for "a few birds".

Our new Secretary of the Interior is quoted as saying (about us conservationists) "I didn't know so many people gave a damn." One wonders in what insulated office he has been spending his life. We trust that he means what he says now; that he will work with conservationists.

At this writing, Feb. 18th, the situation is still changing from day to day. The most recent pronouncement is that the government can't afford to pay back the money from leases, bonuses, and royalties to the oil companies involved; that it would cost one billion dollars to stop drilling in the ocean. --First, it is not established that there is all that much oil out there! Second, it's a bit late to find out these facts; why didn't they listen to the people of Santa Barbara before the leases were granted? --In the same newspaper we read that the oil is still seeping out, with no insurance that it will ever stop.

Credit should be given to the courageous men who worked at capping the wild well in the ocean. People who flew over the site say that it was a terrifying combination of gas and oil.

To coin a phrase, let's show that we give a damn about conservation for conservation's sake.

If you want to get involved in a practical way:

Write to GET OIL OUT (GOO) Committee of Santa Barbara, Studio G, El Presidio, Santa Barbara, Calif.

Make contributions to:
National Audubon Society
Rachel Carson Fund
Wales R. Holbrook, Treasurer
444 Pimiento Lane
Santa Barbara, Ca 93103

The latter fund supports the Environmental Defence Fund.

The future is what we are all concerned with now. If there is any qualified person with facts to support a case in opposition to what we have printed here, we will be glad to publish what he has to say, and you may draw your own conclusions.

NEW CONSERVATION DIRECTORY

The National Wildlife Federation has just published its 1969 Conservation Directory, the 14th edition. It contains more than 1,000 entries and some 5,000 names.

If your group doesn't usually get a copy, it's well worth sending for one—\$1.50 to: Conservation Directory, National Wildlife Federation, 1412 16th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

Listings include federal agencies concerned with conservation; international, national, regional and interstate organizations and commissions, plus state government agencies and citizens' groups.

SHUM SUFFEL SPEAKS OUT ON THE POLLUTION PROBLEM

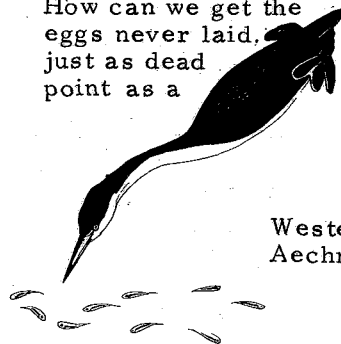
The recent disaster in the Santa Barbara Channel has evoked the sympathy and shock, even anger, of conservationists and non-conservationists throughout the world. The death-dealing coatings of oil on beaches, boats, birds, and sealife are all-too-visible effects of inexcusable, man caused pollution. They are there, before our eyes, for everyone to see; and we demand remedial action. Unquestionably, controls will be set up by the government to minimize a repetition of this situation. We are learning and have learned from the "Torrey Canyon" disaster that chemical detergents are a last resort, not a first line of defense against floating oil. Mechanical means, such as absorbent straw and huge vacuum "sea sweepers" are much safer.


Chemicals simply change visible pollution into a far more insidious invisible pollution. Oil by its very nature stays on the surface and coats everything it comes in contact with. Oil after treatment with certain chemicals is soluble in water and disappears from the surface; we can't see it any more, but it is probably an even more destructive killer of sea life.

It is hard to find a brighter side to such a tragic situation, but if there is one, it is that more people have been made conscious of pollution, because of its obvious visible nature. If these newly conservation-conscious people can be made aware of the invisible pollution caused by man-made chemicals (detergents, insecticides, etc.) which kill, not so obviously but even more effectively by slow poisoning and by sterility as well as by contact, -then our cause will gain strength. This poisoning caused by our use of the oceans as "the ultimate cesspool" is world-wide; the falcons in the Arctic, the petrels in Bermuda, and the penguins in Antarctica, all have DDT in their muscle tissue. How can we get the message across that eggs never laid, babies never born, are just as dead from a population standpoint as a cormorant or a sea lion coated with oil?

By G. SHUMWAY SUFFEL

Western Grebe
Aechmophorus occidentalis





SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA BIRDS

By G. SHUMWAY SUFFEL

Spring migration can be compared to a drag-race: in March we're spinning our wheels, - lots of noise but not very much action; by April we're accelerating fast, then in May we pass the finish line at top speed and "break" to a shuddering stop in early June. But even while we're "spinning our wheels" in anticipation, a great deal is happening in the bird world. Our resident species and the earliest migrants (Hummers & Swallows) are into their nesting cycle, and the winter birds are leaving - first the geese, then the northern gulls, divers and ducks, and later the land birds.

So, as we wait impatiently for the spring migration, we can change the figure of speech and say that rare birds add spice to an otherwise routine meal. In early February, the rare waterfowl mentioned last month were still present; in addition, a fine male Common Teal had joined the Falcated Teal at Upper Newport Bay. The status of these birds is still a question, but Jerry Johnson's inquiries revealed that they were not escapees from Busch Gardens or from Marineland. Further inquiries are being made locally. Not quite so close to home were the Yellow-billed Loons. No, that's not a mistake - it should be plural; in fact, more than a couple, - a few. Last winter we had the first definite records from the Pacific Coast of the "Lower 48"; one in Washington and two in Tomales Bay, north of San Francisco. This winter one was found near the Coronado Islands, just south of San Diego, in Mexico; and four were seen in Monterey Bay in January. Have they just begun to stray so far south, or have we overlooked them until now? The latter seems more probable, and they should be looked for locally. They will probably be with Common Loons, and are not too difficult to distinguish - they are slightly larger, chunkier, and less contrasty; the bill shape (except in juveniles) is distinctive, but not necessarily the bill color. While you are looking for Yellow-billed Loons, keep an eye out for Oldsquaws. We have had no reports of this species this winter. Shirley Wells and her mother, Alice Fries, found two female Hooded Mergansers at Bolsa Chica on Feb. 7th, but only one was there the next day. This is the most likely place to see these handsome little ducks.

The best spot, - maybe the only sure spot, for Bald Eagles is Lake Matthews. Jim Schlesinger reported four adults there at the turn of the year. This is about normal, although usually more than half are immatures. The Bradleys also found an immature Bald Eagle feeding on ground squirrels with an immature Golden Eagle in the fields north of Newport Bay on Feb. 8th. Paul Steineck reported a Lesser Yellowlegs (uncommon coastally in winter), and Jon Dunn missed the Falcated Teal, but reported seven Golden Plovers at Upper Newport Bay on Feb. 3rd.

Landbirds also provided much of interest in January. Certainly the rarest of these was a Tree

Sparrow found by Jon Atwood on the 30th and by Jan Tarble the next day at the Arcadia Arboretum in a large flock of Chipping Sparrows. It was studied by many Auduboners during its brief four-day stay. Also at the Arboretum there were several "2nd-hand" reports of a Swamp Sparrow. Reports of Orioles are fewer than usual this winter but Julia Dembrowsky had a fine male Hooded Oriole at her Alhambra feeder in mid-January; and the male Orchard Oriole remained at a San Diego feeder until February. Julia also writes that the Vermilion Flycatchers are wintering at Legg Lake near the northern fence. Bohemian Waxwings were still in the area, but were not easy to find if you were looking for them. Alice Fries had a single bird in her San Clemente garden, while Arnold Small found a "pure" flock of 31 Bohemians in West Los Angeles on the 27th. The Kings spent New Year's Day in Tapia Park and were rewarded with a Lapland Longspur and a Wilson's Warbler - not a bad way to start the year. Varied Thrushes are being found sparingly with the latest on Feb. 1st at the Arboretum. Shirley Wells' bird is still at Averill Park in San Pedro. Three Lewis' Woodpeckers seen by Paul Hessler at Hidden Valley in the Malibu Mts. were the only ones reported locally, but there were six or more at Furnace Creek Ranch in Death Valley, where they are regular in winter. Most amazing were a hundred Vaux's Swifts found by Alice Fries near Vista in late January. They were still there on Feb. 9th (Ralph Mancke). A few (more than two) Vaux's Swifts were seen flying with Tree and Cliff Swallows at the south end of the Salton Sea on Feb. 12th. Vaux's Swifts are not known to winter here, and do not usually arrive in the spring until April, so these are probably early migrants. A Palm Warbler found by Shirley Wells near the sewage plant on Terminal Island is apparently wintering. Kim Garrett found another rare wintering warbler at Chantry Flats, a Black-throated Gray. The second Broad-winged Hawk of the winter was an immature found south of San Diego in January. This is the third winter that Broadwings have been found in Southern California, vs. none before December, 1966. Is this a range extension or did we just fail to identify them previously?

In March, the coast and the desert offer good birding opportunities. Arnold Small recommends combining a Salton Sea trip with one to the lower Colorado River. The "River" is a major migration route from Mexico to the Great Basin- Rocky Mountain region, and the best place in California to find Arizona birds. Arnold found two Bronzed Cowbirds near the cattle pens north of Winterhaven. Waterfowl and Swallows should be on the move, and there is always the possibility of the rarer birds, - Boobies, Least Grebes, or even an Anhinga (one record). Don't neglect your favorite local spots, - migration is just beginning and birders should be on the move too.

