

The Stilt

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The Newsletter of the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory

California Fall Challenge – 1999

It doesn't take much encouragement to get SFBBO members and staff out of their offices and homes and into the field to go birding! Throw in a logistical challenge and a few good-natured "betcha's" and "oh yeah's", and we all race for the doors to defend our reputations and turf! Thank goodness for the annual Fall Challenge, that gives us the reason, the motivation, nay the excuse to go birding with a vengeance.

The Fall Challenge closed out a millenium of birding with an excellent showing from 15 teams, covering 12 counties. Through our sponsors we succeeded in raising nearly \$10,000 and having a blast while doing it.

Last spring, we updated the groundrules of the Challenge to better reflect the goals and whims of the crazy people who regularly participate. We definitely kept intact the basic Challenge: to find the highest percentage of a given county's total list (provided again so generously by John Sterling). Then we added a twist: an

equivalent prize would be awarded to the team finding the highest overall total within a county PERIOD, no calculations needed for this one, just the biggest number. Then we took another look at the lists and the ad hoc committee decided to simplify the game even further by making the totals be of ALL the species ever verifiably seen in the county. This admittedly, really changed the county playing field. Every county in California is geographically and hence ornithologically unique. A smaller total list may mean that a high percentage is the thing to shoot for. Or it may be better to bird a diverse county with a high total to get the most species. And it could be a chance to hit a record California Big Day for September or October. Each team has the challenge of not only picking their county, but the critical timing of their Big Day as well. This year's event ran from September 18 – October 16, 1999. A team might go early to nail fall migrants or go later in the window to pick up more wintering birds. And if scheming and mapping and planning and 23-hour stints are not the way you choose to go birding, there is always the third path, the



Make a wish! Teammates Ed Pandolfino and Cliff Hawley decide who gets to take home the Leica Scope (Cliff won). (Ed Pandolfino)



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California Fall Challenge Cont.

fundraising prize to pursue. And that is the real golden ring, the feat that earns the most respect and prestige among SFBBO insiders.

And the winners are:

Highest percentage of county list: Placer Migrant Miners in Placer County with 125 of 295 species for 42% of their county list. Several teams for gunning heavily to keep the San Mateo champs, the Rowdy-Stoneterners from making off with Grand Prize of the Leica Scope for 3 years running. Their most rabid competition came from within their own county, from Al Jaramillo's Intermediate Yellowlegs (not an icterid, Al??). But the rule change, the late fall migration among other demands of life tipped the field toward inland counties with smaller overall lists. Note that the #2 effort in this category was Luke Cole and Steve Glover in Kings County. Now if the Miners can just settle who exactly gets to keep the Leica....

Highest total within a county: Beasts of Birdin' in Marin County with 157 species (of 466 possible or 34%). Now one can see why we added this category. How can anyone ignore 157 species total? It's too awesome. The Rowdy-Stoneterners pulled down an impressive 151 species of 424 possible (36) to pull into 2nd place in this category. Looks like the coastal counties will continue to dominate in this category. We hope the Beasts enjoy their Field and Forest Pants from Big Pockets.

Highest fundraising total: It was close but Ed Pandolfino's Placer Migrant Miners barely eased past Janet Hanson's Santa Clara Vagrants, with over \$2,000 in sponsorship funds collected. Since most sponsors pledge an amount per species, each species The Miners picked up was worth about \$16! Now it doesn't matter if it is a starling or an eagle, they both ring up the same amount. For this truly admirable job, Ed and teammates were treated to a January pelagic trip with Shearwater Journeys. It must have been great, because Ed wrote:
"The pelagic trip was utterly overwhelming..... I not only got EIGHT new life birds, but I got long, excellent looks at every one except the Ancient Murrelet." Once again, the Vagrants just miss out in this category. We shall return!

Thanks to all our wonderful sponsors and hope to see YOU all in the county of your

choice next fall. Consider this a Challenge!

~ Janet T. Hanson, Executive Director

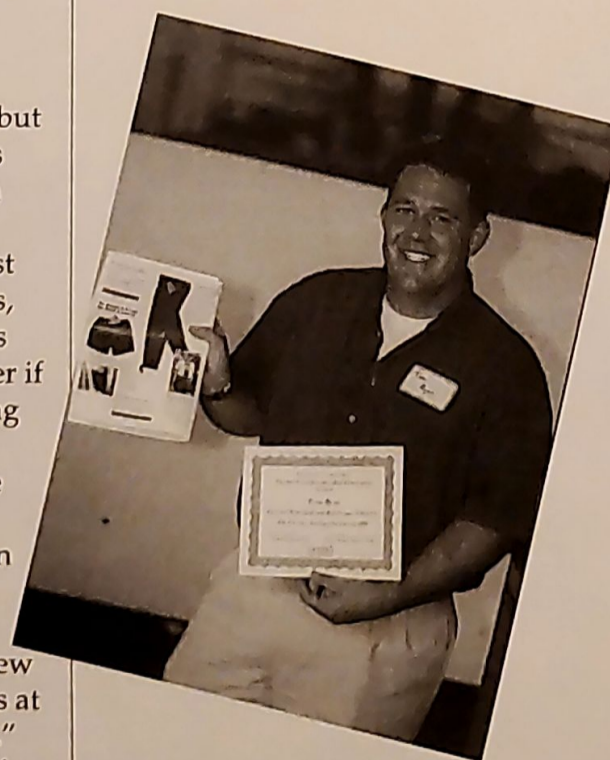
Special Thanks to Our Special Corporate Sponsors of the 1999 California Fall Challenge.

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Al Jaramillo and Luke Cole can only dream about what might have been. Luke is holding the new California Fall Challenge perpetual trophy. (Steve Dakin)



Tom Ryan and his team, the "Beasts of Birdin'", scored highest in overall total in Marin and were the happy recipients of Field Pants from Big Pockets, Birding Outdoor Wear. (Steve Dakin)

CFC 99 Results

Team Name County Species % of Total Members

Can't Find Our Way Home Stanislaus 85 of 284 30% Randy & Janet Little

City Flickers San Francisco (City) 73 of 364 20% Robin Smith/Harriet Gerson

Placer Migrant Miners Placer 125 of 295 42% Ed Pandolfino/Cliff Hawley

Beasts of Birdin' Marin 157 of 466 34% Ed/Tom Ryan/Greg Schrott

Thrush Flushers Monterey 110 of 472 23% Lou Young/Judie & Larry Manning/Charles Coston

Dan Guthrie & Judy Sugden Inyo 103 of 408 25% Dan Guthrie/Judy Sugden

The Vagrants Santa Clara 111 of 377 29% Janet Hanson/Grant Hoyt/Mike Mammoser/Dick Stovel

Scott Marin 32 of 466 7% Justin Scott

Rowdy Stone-terners San Mateo 151 of 424 36% Francis & John Toldi/Peter Metropulos

The Peregrinators Modoc 87 of 310 28% Doug Bell/John Trochet

Intermediate Yellowlegs San Mateo 148 of 424 35% Al Jaramillo/David Powell

Tuolbird Tuolomne 62 of 228 27% Albert Bergeron/Ken Brunges/Bob Schieferstein

The Jan and Carols Santa Clara 93 of 377 25% Jan Hintermeister/Carol Oda

Bob & Carol Yutzy Shasta 98 of 289 34% Bob & Carol Yutzy

Rural Rex Kings 106 of 278 38% Luke Cole/Steve Glover



California

FALL CHALLENGE

September 18 - October 16, 1999

And From The Front, A Tale of Birding Madness From CFC Veteran Luke Cole

Steve Glover and I took up the SFBBBO challenge in that birding backwater, Kings County, on Thursday, October 14. Our team, which I am calling, after the fact, the "Rural Rex" in honor of Kings County, learned two important things:

- 1) mid-October (or at least our day in mid-October) is a little late for migrants in Kings;
- 2) fill up with gas at the beginning of the day, whether or not you think you need it.

Stats:

Miles driven to get to County: 395 (205 by Luke, 180 by Steve)
 Hours of sleep before big day: 7 (3.5 each)
 Hours in the field: 13.3 (6:00 AM to 7:20 PM)
 Miles by car: 260
 Miles on foot: ~1
 Miles on dirt roads: ~65
 Observers: 2 (1.5 late in the afternoon as sleep deprivation kicked in)
 Calls to AAA: 1
 Hours spent sitting by the side of the road waiting for AAA: 1.25
 Gallons of gas delivered by AAA: ~4
 New day birds seen while waiting for AAA: 3
 Number of Swainson's Hawks seen at once: 85 (55 on ground, 30 in the air)
 Number of wren species: 5
 Number of shorebird species: 19
 Number of migrant passerines: 1

(total, not species - 1 bird)

Number of first county records: 1 (Chukar)

Total species: 106

Species seen by all: 105 (Luke missed the pipit while talking on the cell phone to AAA)

We did a counter-clockwise circle around the county starting and ending in Kettleman City. The highlights of our day were one Stilt Sandpiper, rare migrant in Kings; 15 Chukar, for a first-county record of this introduced species; a flock of 85 Swainson's Hawks (55 counted on the ground, ~30 kettling) and a Red-breasted Sapsucker mewing at Burns Park. Other "good" shorebirds included 7 Sanderling and a Baird's Sandpiper. We had no migrant passerines to speak of (one Black-throated Gray Warbler was our "migration"), and lost more than an hour after running out of gas outside Corcoran, but managed to end up with 106 species for the day. As there was no previous October mark, this is the "new October record" (drum roll, please) for the underbirded Kings County.

While not racking up huge totals or particularly impressive birds, we had a great day in the field (except for the hour waiting for AAA to bring us some gas!) and expanded our understanding of Kings County's avifauna, which was our ambition.

Upcoming Classes and Field Trips

Monterey Bay

We will spend the day birding along the coast of the Monterey Bay, stopping at Elkhorn Slough, Moss Landing and Point Pinos. This trip will be dominated by waterfowl, shorebirds, seabirds. We will search for coastal specialties such as Red-necked Grebe, Black Scoter, Oldsquaw, Harliquin Duck, Black Oystercatcher, Wandering Tattler, Surfbird, Black Turnstone, and Black-legged Kittiwake. Group size limited. Participants provide their own food, transportation and lodging.

Date: March 18

Leader: Tom Ryan

Cost: Member \$50/Nonmembers \$65

Salton Sea and Morongo Valley

This new trip may unseat Morro Bay/Carrizo Plains as the highest species total for any SFBBBO trip. We will spend the weekend birding the Salton Sea and Morongo Valley at the height of the spring migration. At the Salton Sea we will search for shorebirds and waterfowl as well as specialties such as the Yellow-legged Gull and any rarities which may turn up. The Morongo Valley is known as one of the hottest migrant traps in southern California. Among the migrants we will also look for local specialties such as Gambel's Quail, Scott's Oriole, Vermillion Flycatcher, and Summer Tanager. Group size limited. Participants provide their own food, transportation and lodging.

Date: May 5-7

Leaders: Tom Ryan and Gjon Hazard

Cost: Member \$125/Nonmembers \$140

Wine, Wildflowers and Woodpeckers

In June, the Tahoe Sierras explode in a sudden profusion of wildflowers and bird-song. Dick Carlson has explored this area for the last decade. Join him at his Tahoe cabin, enjoy sweeping vistas of the lake, have a glass of wine and watch the Cassin's Finches, nuthatches and flying squirrels at the feeder. Explore for Black-backed and White-headed woodpeckers, Red-breasted and Williamson's sapsuckers, McGillivray's, Hermit and Nashville warblers that nest nearby. Group size limited, all meals and lodging included.

Date: June 3-5

Leader: Dick Carlson

Cost: \$350 per couple



Around the Bay and Beyond

In the Field

Summer Slough Surveys

This year's Avian Disease Prevention Program (ADPP) monitoring season was fortunately a much less eventful one than the previous year's. With only 15 sick, 17 injured and 25 dead, the number of animals we picked up was low even when compared to a typical monitoring season. After the 1998 outbreak, which effected over 1000 birds, it was a welcome relief! While thorough clean up of last year's outbreak probably contributed to this season's lower numbers, a much cooler summer undoubtedly played a part as well.

Two new biologists, Danielle LeFer and Cheryl Millett, were responsible for all of the boat trips during the 1999 ADPP monitoring season. After quickly learning how to launch and operate the outboard motor boats, both devoted a great effort towards assuring that this year's monitoring season ran smoothly. A heartfelt thanks is extended to both of them. We hope the year 2000 proves as uneventful as 1999.

~ Robin Dakin, Biologist

SFBBO Contributes To Conservation Initiatives

A report from Partners in Flight

A delegation from SFBBO participated in the Partners in Flight meeting in Big Sur on October 1, 1999. Partners in Flight is a cooperative project between government agencies and non-profit organizations developed to protect neo-tropical migrant song birds. The day was packed with presentations on riparian restoration projects and monitoring of riparian areas in California. Topics included questions like: Do birds respond to landscapes? avian habitat selection; and the processes that make riparian systems function. There was also an excellent presentation by funding organizations, describing some of the funding possibilities for this type of conservation work. The day underscored the importance of monitoring along with management

changes in order to determine management impacts on bird populations; and the importance of working in partnerships with other organizations in order to successfully complete conservation projects. We were also lucky enough to be distracted by two visiting California Condors perched on a tree outside the meeting room.

- Danielle LeFer, Biologist

A Report From the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan Meetings

Oct. 6-9, 1999, I attended the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan (USSCP) National Meeting at Bodega Bay, CA. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss preparation of the final drafts for this dramatic plan. The USSCP is being developed by a host of interested parties from all walks of life – academicians, researchers, land managers, private and government employees, agencies and organizations. They all have one thing in common – a desire to produce a document that will serve as a guide for directing conservation efforts for shorebirds on a continent-wide basis. Stephan Brown and Katherine Hickey, of Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences, welcomed conference attendees on the first day and introduced speakers who gave regional presentations. Given the scope of the area that the plan covers, it has been broken down into geographic regions to better tailor the plan to local needs and issues. For instance, the Great Basin is a multi-state region that is delineated as the Intermountain West in the plan, whereas a single state – California, comprises the South Pacific Region of the plan. Clearly, although shorebirds face the threat of habitat loss in nearly all regions of North America, there are important differences in the nature of the threats that the plan hopes to address. Thus, in California, breeding and wintering populations of shorebirds face habitat loss through increasing urbanization and agriculture, whereas shorebirds in the Intermountain West face threats from changing salinity regimens and water levels in Great Basin lakes. The second day of the conference was devoted to Working Groups. Rather than being organized "by region",



Senior Biologist, Doug Bell, reports at Annual Meeting. (Steve Dakin)

Working Groups are organized by topic and specialty – shorebird research, monitoring, management, education and outreach. The USSCP is establishing priorities in each of these. As daunting as this task may seem, tremendous progress has been made, thanks to the efforts of innumerable individuals. The final meetings of the conference were devoted to implementation of the USSCP, including establishing funding mechanisms and dovetailing with other shorebird and waterfowl initiatives, such as the many state, federal and private Joint-Ventures that have worked so well for increasing waterfowl populations and management on a regional basis. Field trips were scheduled for meeting participants to many locations around the Bay Area. SFBBO co-hosted a field trip with Nils Warnick of PRBO that focused on multiple species management in the salt ponds and marshes of south San Francisco Bay.

The USSCP is a living document that reflects our current state of knowledge. SFBBO has contributed reviews of portions of the document and will continue to work on its implementation, especially with the South Pacific Region's organizers, Gary Page and Dave Shuford (PRBO). The plan can be viewed on Manomet's website: www.manomet.org/USSCP/nabci.htm
~ Doug Bell, Ph.D., Senior Biologist

Santa Clara Basin Watershed Management Initiative

You may think creeks are complex ecological systems (and you would be right) but they are also complex political entities, especially so in the Santa Clara Basin. Our creeks pass through many jurisdictions on their way to the Bay. Their health and management concern all of us but for a variety of reasons.

The Watershed Management Initiative is collaborative effort of many "stakeholders", i.e. both public and private groups with vested interests in the watershed. Major players include the City of San Jose, the Santa Clara Valley Water District, and the U.S.E.P.A. but others at the table include local environmental advocates and manufacturing representatives. SFBBO was invited to attend and given financial support to do so by the City of San Jose, through their Watershed Grant Program.

The first step in protecting Santa Clara's creeks and wetlands is to assess their current health. Three watersheds were selected as representative: Upper Penitencia Creek, Guadalupe Rive and San Francisquito Creek. The baylands will also be addressed by the Wetlands Advisory Group (WAG), using the Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals report. SFBBO participated in the Goals process, and will carry on that commitment to baylands health through work with the WAG. For more information on the WMI, visit the web site at www.ci.san-jose.ca.us/esd/wmi.htm
~ Janet T. Hanson, Executive Director

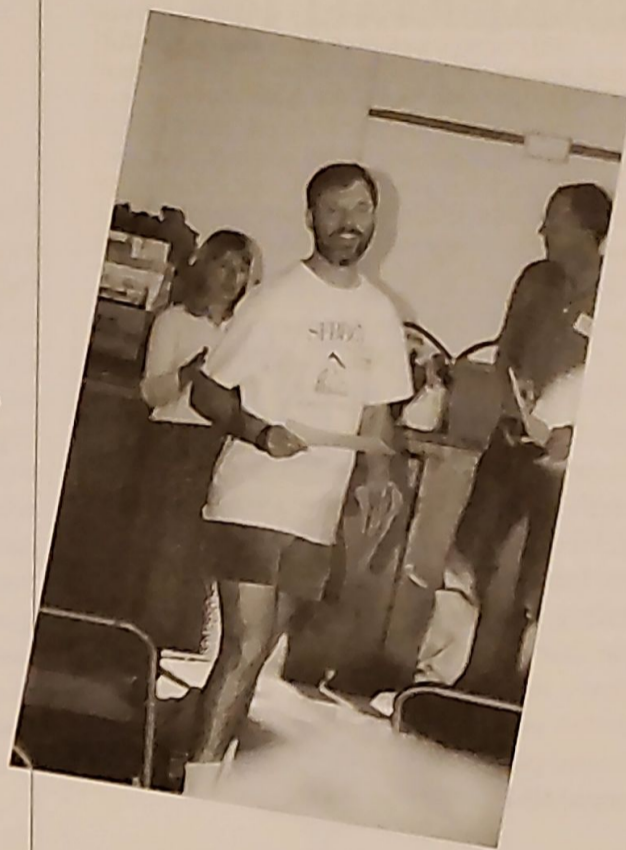
Membership Changes

The SFBBO Board of Directors, with staff input, have reached agreement on the fiscal year 2000 budget. We looked especially hard at fundraising income projections, which are one of the largest variables in our budget. Seeking a more predictable way to assure a positive yearly result led to a review of our member categories and dues structure in comparison to other, similar organizations. The Board has decided to simplify the structure and to adjust the yearly dues where SFBBO has been under- or over-priced.

The Board decided not to offer any new Life memberships but SFBBO will fully recognize existing Life Members. Corporate memberships will be on a separate schedule. The Family membership has been dropped because now SFBBO will offer membership discounts for events, trips, and classes to immediate members of each member's family. Other changes are: Student/Senior +\$5, Basic (was "Individual") +\$10, Sustaining +\$50, and Patron was \$2000.

The new categories and dues, effective for renewals after February 28, 2000, are:

Student/Senior	\$20
Basic	\$35
Associate	\$50
Contributing	\$100
Sustaining	\$250
Sponsor	\$500
Patron	\$1,000+



Ira Greenberg receives recognition as Volunteer of the Year. (Steve Dakin)

Annual Membership Meeting - Oct. 17, 1999

The Annual Meeting was called to order by President Richard Carlson. The slate of new Board Members was approved by the Membership. Board Member Jan Hintermeister explained the changes in the SFBBO Bylaws that the Membership was being asked to vote upon. Much discussion followed. It was then moved, seconded and passed to vote to accept the bylaws contingent upon review by an independent committee composed of four SFBBO members: Ginny Becchine, Howard Cogswell, Ph.D., (both past presidents of the Board), Doug Padley and Vicki Silvas-Young. The committee will finish their work by December 31, 1999.



The SFBBO Board of Directors, left to right: Lou Young, Gerry Ellis, Anne Moser, Jan Hintermeister, Dick Carlson, Robin Smith, George Oetzel (not shown: Scott Terrill, Ph.D. and David Ainley, Ph.D.) (Steve Dakin)

News from the Net

LANDBIRD BANDING REPORT FOR SUMMER/FALL 1999

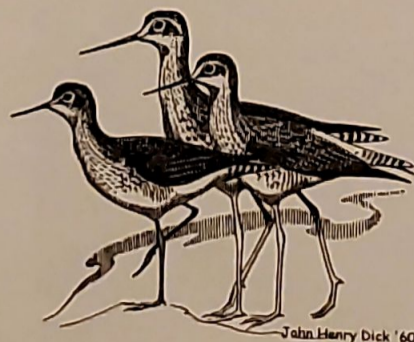
by Alvaro Jaramillo, Senior Biologist

First of all I should mention that now that the banding program from the Coyote Creek Riparian Station (CCRS) has joined SFBBO, it has been christened CCFS the Coyote Creek Field Station which both links to the past but also highlights the a new stage and bright future for land bird monitoring in the South Bay and Northern California. The CCFS data set is unique, it is one of the few long term constant effort mist-netting sites in California and the only one that is not on coast! Its an honorable legacy which we plan to continue, and further enrich by the production of several publications which are in preparation.

We are banding three days a week now, with the help of our extremely dedicated and highly skilled volunteer banders. The data is flowing in, and it would not be possible without the efforts and hard work of the banders and I would like to thank them for this! But this is not to say that the banders don't get their own rewards while banding. Apart from the conservation value of the data they gather, sometimes rare or unusual species are caught and these always quicken the heart rate of folks at the station. During the summer, we were treated to an unusual visit by a California Thrasher on June 13. This species is common in parts of the county, but not at the station. In fact it is only the second one banded there, the last was netted in May 19, 1985! As is usually the case, the fall is our best time for encountering oddities and rarities. The Empidonax flycatchers always pose an identification problem, but things are a little more straight forward when you have it in the hand. This close scrutiny allowed us to detect a migrant Dusky Flycatcher on September 12. Wonderfully exciting was a Magnolia Warbler, an eastern vagrant, banded on October 6. This pretty warbler is the first of its species to be observed at CCFS, and only one of a handful of county records. A Chipping Sparrow banded on October 9 was only the 12 caught at the station. The banders present on October 17 had a smorgasbord of nice birds, including only our third banding record of Palm

Warbler (of the Western subspecies) and a nice Common Poorwill. The previous two Palm Warblers were caught in November, so this is the earliest by far. This is the 9th Common Poorwill banded on site, all have occurred in the time window between late September and late October. The Black-throated Gray Warbler is another species which is common in the county, but which can be quite scarce at the station. Two have been banded already this fall, which is a good showing if you consider that in the last 9 years we have banded only 13. What is curious is that of the 34 that have been banded in total at CCFS, 18 of them occurred in 1989!

So far so good, and the fall migration is not over yet. We have cumulatively banded 1210 birds this year thus far, 833 of them since August 1. The species count stands at 56 and its likely to grow by a few more. Most importantly we have begun to see old friends coming back for the winter with their bands proudly communicating that they like this place and that its a darned good site to hang out when not breeding. These returning birds (mainly sparrows) are wonderful to see, and each time we catch one that has a band on we learn a little bit more about what that individual is up to. By understanding the behavior and movements of the individual, we paint a picture of the population and before you know it we may have the information we need to help these species maintain a healthy population. That is the goal.



Our thanks to these supporters of the Observatory . . .

Contributions

Our special thanks to these Contributors (August, September, October, November, December):

Leon Abrams, Jean Alexander, Deborah Ayres, Ph.D., Joyce Bartlett, Liz Bathgate, Ginny Becchine, Floyd Carley, Richard and Pat Carlson, Richard Casserley, Doug and Gail Cheeseman, Irene Contreras, Charles & Joan Coston, Gordon & Carolyn Davidson, Arthur & Helen Dawson, M. M. Dieckmann, Cliff Drowley, Margaret Diane Dube, Don and Margaret Emery, Arleen Feng, Leslie Flint, Christina Garcia & Marcelino Madrigal, Harriet Gerson, Wally & Lois Goldfrank, Marie Gordon, Jean Halford, Denise and David Hamilton, Dolores Hansen, Jay & Janet Hanson, Hugh B. Harvey, Cliff Hawley, Walter & Katharine Hays, Claudia & Scott Hein, Carl Hendrickson, Jan Hintermeister & Carol Oda, Susan and Ronald Holmes, Dorothy Hunt, Deborah Jamison, James Jeffers Terry Pfeiffer, Patricia and Gerald Johnson, Michael Kraus, Amy and Mark Krawiec, Elka Lange, Danielle LeFer, Rosalie Lefkowitz, Lifescan, Randy and Janet Little, Darl and Mary Little, Dr. Robert Lowen, Peter Metropulos, Fran Mewaldt, Robert & Dorothy Moore, T. Charles Moore, Anne Moser, Trish Mulvey, Phil & Vi Nisonger, George and Marti Oetzel, Donna Olsen, Ed Pandolfino, Margaret Panton, Ben Pless, Patricia Polentz, Jennifer Pruitt, Armin Ramel, John Ranlett, E. H. Renzel, Jr., Michael Rogers, Annamaria Rosengreen, Tom Ryan, April & Mark Sapsford, Jessie Schilling, W. Juergen Schrenk, Justin Scott, Elaine Senf, Kristin & Mark Shields, Chris Shoemaker, Martin and Barbara Sidor, Richard Smart & Marilee Mifflin, Robin Smith, Jean-Marie Spoelman, Jane Starbird, Karlene & Terry Stoker, Bracey and Richard Tiede, Francis Toldi, John Toldi, Ruth & Gene Troetschler, Lynne Trulio, Ann Verdi, Alan and Sandra Walther, Estelle & Joseph Weiss, Henry Weston, Jr., Anna Wilcox, Carol Wolf, Des & Cathy Wytmans, Lou and Jean Young

Congratulations!

Congratulations to Robbin, Steve and Weston Dakin who welcomed Garrett Daniel into their family on December 21, 1999, 6 lbs. 4 oz.

Memberships

We welcome the following new and returning members of the SFBBO (August, September, October, November, December):

Leon Abrams, David Ainley, Jean Alexander, Peter Allen, Linda Allen, R. Jay Andree, Gary Anwyl, Charles Bacon and Cynthia Dusel-Bacon, John Baker, Steve and Viki Baker, Jean Barrett, Doug Bell, Al Bergeron, George Bing, Edith Black, Dusty and Penny Bleher, Debra Bowen, Susan Brain, Bob and Barbara Brandriff, Beverly Brock, Bob and Irene Brown, Ken Brunges, Juliette Bryson, Sharon Buckner, Joelle Buffa, David Burnham, Helen Caires, Roy Cameron, Floyd Carley, Barbara Carlson, Roy Carlson, Mary Elizabeth Casanova, Richard Casserley, Ted Chandik, Doug and Gail Cheeseman, Bill and Jean Clark, Robert Clement, Howard Cogswell, Ph.D., Nicholas Coiro, Luke Cole, Jack Cole, David M. Cook, Susan and Robert Cossins, Charles and Joan Coston, Cecilia Craig, Richard Croll, Maryann Danielson, William Danielson, Gordon and Carolyn Davidson, Jay Davis, Margaret De Staebler, Julia Denney, Nancy DeStefanis, M. M. Dieckmann, Sibyl Diver, Ray Dondero, Margaret Diane Dube, Craige and Jan Edgerton, Robert Elliott, Gerry Ellis, Lorrie and Ron Emery, Arleen Feng, William and Stephanie Ferguson, George Finger, Teresa Fogarty, Dave and Susie Formenti, Lee Franks, Debbie Frantz, Edward Fryer, Lillian Fujii, Marilyn Gallaway, Gray Gallogly, Harriet Gerson, Gordon and Ann Getty, Keith and Phyllis Gish, Steve Glover, Wally and Lois Goldfrank, Quentin Goodrich, Shirley Gordon, Phil and Pat Gordon, Laura Gould and Severo Ornstein, Paul and Helen Green, Ira Greenberg, Marsha and Ralph Guggenheim, Ed Gustafson, Dan Guthrie Judy Sugden, P. Hand, Dolores Hansen, Ralph and Terry Hart Lee, John Hastings, Cliff Hawley, Nancy Hay, Walter and

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Elaine Harding - *University of California, Santa Cruz*
Paul Jones - *Environmental Protection Agency*
John Kelly - *Audubon Canyon Ranch, Cypress Grove Preserve*
Peter Metropulos - *Subregional Editor, American Birds*
Bob Richmond - *Hayward Regional Shoreline*
Steven Rottenborn, Ph.D. - *H. T. Harvey and Associates*
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Newsletter Editor

Susie Formenti

The Bird Observatory is located at 1290 Hope St. in Alviso. The office is open weekdays and some weekends, but specific hours vary with our field schedule. Before stopping in, call 408/946-6548 and check when we will be available. The Board meetings are open to the membership. Call the Observatory office for dates and times.

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SFBBO

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The San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory is a non-profit (501-C-3) corporation. All memberships and contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Annual memberships are as follows:

Student/Senior	\$20
Basic	\$35
Associate	\$50
Contributing	\$100
Sustaining	\$250
Sponsor	\$500
Patron	\$1,000+

The Future of Banding at Coyote Creek

Ensuring the Continuance of the Landbird Program

With the resumption of banding in November 99, we then began a program to ensure its continuance well into the future. The Santa Clara Valley Water District has provided written approval for SFBBO's facilities at the site and continues to work closely with our staff on management of the waterbird pond, revegetation issues and toward our mutual goal of analysis of the 10-year data set that A. Jaramillo is currently at work on. The City of San Jose has participated in two site visits, and provided funding for portions of the program through their Watershed Grant Program.

Some scientific facts regarding the site, from our Senior Biologist Alvaro Jaramillo:

- It has the most number of bird species in the county.
- It is the most diverse site in the county with regards to birds.
- It is the only non-coastal site in California that has been monitored for more than a decade [and a unique volunteer-only banding effort].
- It is the only urban site in the region where long term effects of riparian restoration on wildlife have been measured.
- It is the South Bay stronghold for the Saltmarsh Yellowthroat, a bird endemic to the San Francisco Bay.

We have encouraged the City to consider permitting a nomination of the site as an Important Bird Area, a non-regulatory recognition awarded by Audubon California. A recent indicator of the health of our relationships came

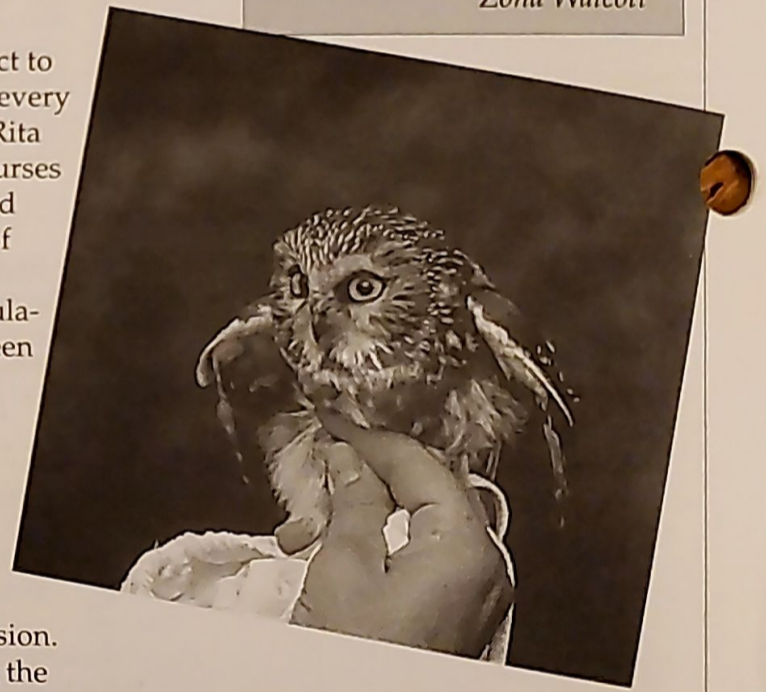
about in our combined responses to the proposed Bay Trail route. The original plan called for the Trail to pass through the Water Pollution Control Plant site on the levee, directly past the banding trailer, but now that has been amended: the current plan is for the Trail to proceed down the east bank of Coyote Creek. Proposed PG&E towers present another risk to the site; the City has encouraged the utility company to investigate underground cables. Access for birding by individuals and groups is permissible; call the Observatory office for more information.

It is our great fortune to have Rita Colwell among our veteran banders. A Master Permitholder in her own right, Rita is also a member of the North American Banding Council, and has contributed to the development of a North American Bander's Study Guide, a huge project to compile and organize the materials every bander should have as a reference. Rita has offered two bander refresher courses to the CCFS banders, which included classroom and field sessions. Two of our banders have successfully been certified by the NABC: our congratulations to Vicki Silvas-Young and Arleen Feng.

Staff biologist Danielle LeFer has taken on the day-to-day management of the station. She plans to post a scheduling calendar to the SFBBO web site to enable banders to easily check the most current version. Danielle and Al are also re-working the CCFS banding manual, to coordinate its materials with the NABC Study Guide. This milestone precedes the resumption of a training program for new banders.

Our congratulations to the Veteran Banders who have attended Rita's Bander Refresher Workshops:

Joyce Bartlett
Irene Beardsley
Bill Bilobran
Joella Buffa
Les Chibana
Maryann Danielson
Gerry Ellis
Lee Franks
Christina Garcia
Tom Goodier
Helen Green
Karen Hoyt
Susan Sandstrom
Kristin Shields
Marty Sidor
Jerry Towner
Vicki Trabold
Zona Walcott



Northern Saw-whet Owl, netted, banded and released during the first bander refresher course field day, November 6, 1999. (courtesy of Les Chibana)

SFBBO

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