

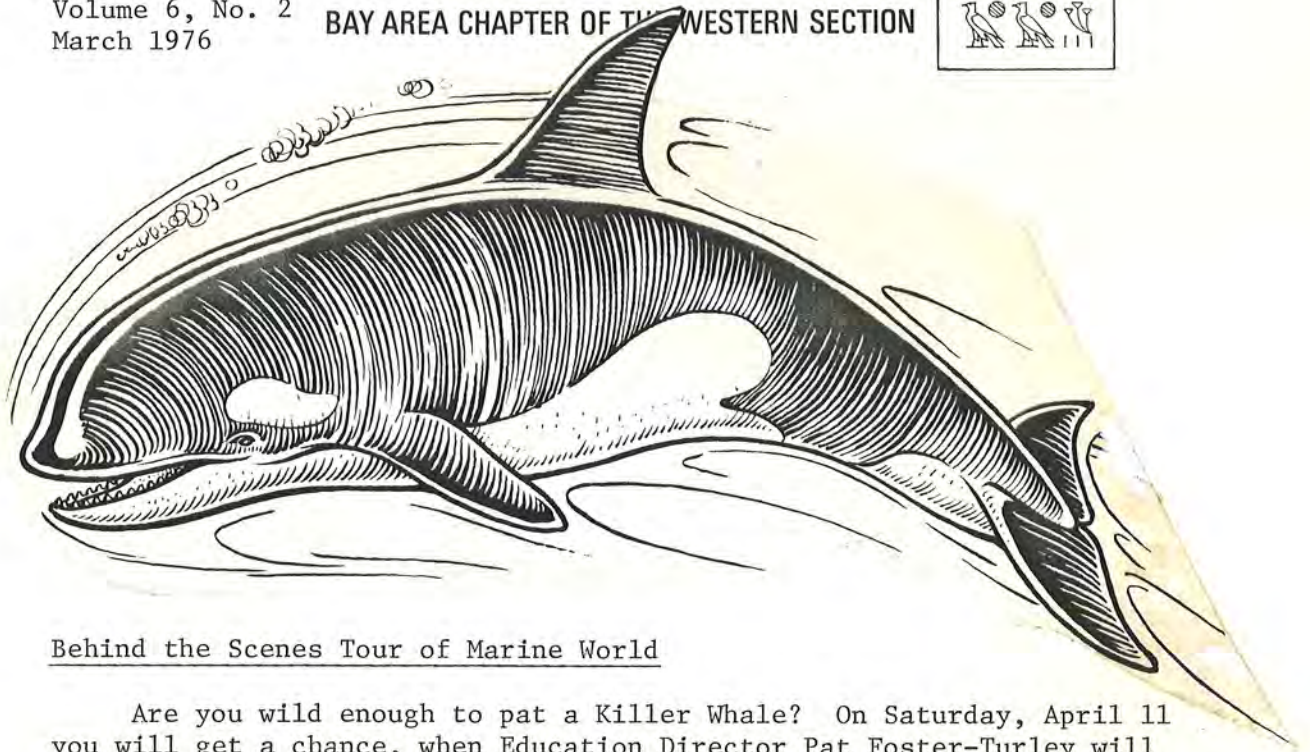
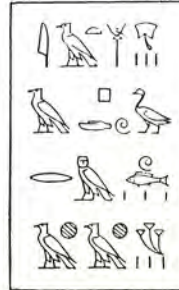
THE NIGHTHAWK

THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

FOUNDED 1937

THE NIGHTHAWK
Volume 6, No. 2
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BAY AREA CHAPTER OF THE WESTERN SECTION



Behind the Scenes Tour of Marine World

Are you wild enough to pat a Killer Whale? On Saturday, April 11 you will get a chance, when Education Director Pat Foster-Turley will take the Bay Area Chapter of TWS on a behind the scenes tour of Marine World.

We will interact with Pat's colony of Asian Small Clawed Otters, as well as have a chance to get up close to many of the other animals there. If you are not already familiar with Marine World, you will undoubtedly be impressed with the quality of the live exhibits and the scientific level of their educational work. The tour will be aimed at wildlife professionals. After the two hour tour, we will be at our leisure to enjoy the public shows and exhibits. We meet for the tour, at 9:45 AM outside the main gate of Marin World-Africa, U.S.A. in Redwood City. A special group admission rate of \$5.00 per person has been arranged, which is considerably below the public admissions fee.

Since we will be going behind the scenes, only 25 persons can be accommodated. To reserve a place on the tour, please send a \$5.00 check made out to the Bay Area Chapter of TWS to Roger Harris, Forestry Department, University of California, Berkeley, CA. 94720. Also include a self-addressed and stamped envelope. In return, you will receive a confirmation of your reservation and directions to Marine World. If the tour has filled, your check will be returned. For further information, call Roger Harris evenings at (415) 388-5831.

SECTION NEWS

TWS Western Section Meeting

California Polytechnical University was the site for the 12th annual

Western Section Wildlife and Fisheries Meeting. The chapter was well represented, with approximately 25 participants attending the 3-day event. Discussions concerning the impact of the proposed MX missile system and the Sage brush Rebellion accented the wide array of technical presentations. Concurrent sessions on nongame research, wildlife planning, game management, wildlife techniques, marine mammals, fisheries and aquatic habitat management reflected the variety of interests represented by the group. Included among these were presentations by several chapter members. Bill Zielinski and Wayne Spencer presented the results of their work on pine marten at Sagehen Creek and Roger Harris delivered a talk on growth and development of pileated woodpeckers at Blodgett Research Forest. U.C. Berkeley was also represented by Don Mahoney who discussed primary productivity in northern California streams. Dan Airola and Marty Raphael, both with recent graduate degrees from Berkeley also made presentations.

A "Santa Maria Style" banquet was held Friday evening where guest speakers H. Wilshire and J. Nakata of USGS presented a multi-media slide show on "Effects of off-road vehicles on the desert." Photos entered in the Wildlife Photography contest were on display throughout the meeting and we are pleased to announce that Dr. Joe Hall, a chapter member and professor at San Francisco State University, won best of show with a magnificent print of a barnowl in flight.

Chapter members were afforded an opportunity to become better acquainted at a special breakfast on Saturday morning. We all thank Sandy Martin for her work at arranging this event.

Always quantitative, the Berkeley contingent went to great lengths to properly "sample" the San Luis Obispo night life as well. Despite the confounding results, the fact that everyone enjoyed themselves could not be contested on the grounds of "small sample size."

Proceedings of the meetings (after hours activities excluded) are being published, but the date of their availability is uncertain.

NEWSLETTER STAFF

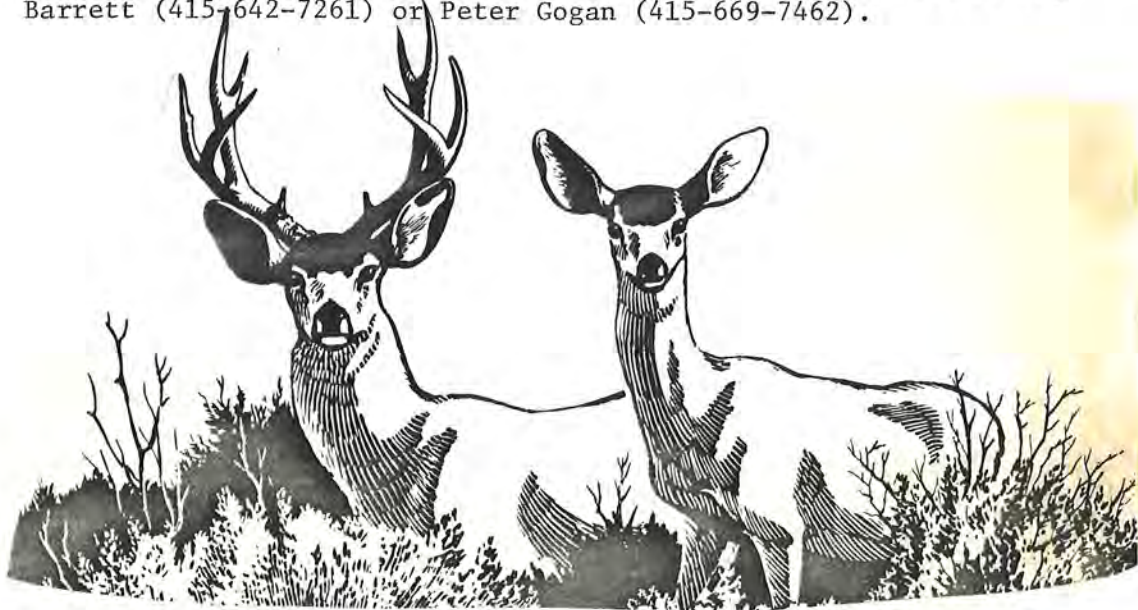
Editor Katherine Thomas
Staff Roger Harris

Treasurers Report:

Balance January 7, 1981	\$581.11
Dues Received	24.00
Expenses	<u>60.70</u>
Balance March 15, 1981	\$544.41

Saturday Field Trip to Point Reyes

If you are looking for a good excuse to get into the field on Saturday, April 4th, come join a group of University of California researchers who will be attempting to capture deer in a drive-netting operation at Tomales Point, Point Reyes National Seashore. Chapter member Peter Gogan is attempting to place radio-collars on 5 deer and he could use all the "drives" and "holders" he can get. Plan to meet Peter at the Seashore Headquarters parking lot at 9 am sharp. We will convoy from Headquarters to the work site. If the exercise is successful it should be a good opportunity to get "hands-on" experience with deer. Don't forget a lunch, camera, etc. Any questions call Reg Barrett (415-642-7261) or Peter Gogan (415-669-7462).



Weekend Field Trip to Tuolumne Meadows - July 17-19.

Let's get together this summer for some high country travel and learn about bear management in Yosemite at the same time. Mead and Tina Hargis, who have wrestled with more than their share of bears, have planned a recreational and educational weekend which include the following:

Fireside talk on bear management by a member of the park service resource staff.

An early morning trip to Mono Lake, Saturday morning.

A 5-mile overnight hike to a bear-infested area.

First-hand experience with various backcountry bear-proof food storage methods (counter-balancing, food cables, and ABS plastic tubes)

We will meet late Friday afternoon at the Tuolumne Meadows Ranger Station. Bring something to barbeque for dinner on Friday. Camping will be arranged in Tuolumne Meadows campground for Friday night, and a wilderness permit will be obtained for Saturday night. Bring your own backpacking gear and food.

We would like a rough indication of group size by May 15th. Call Mead and Tina evenings (525-3088). As the date approaches, someone will be handling car pooling arrangements. Hope you can join us!

Hands on Project

The Wildlife Professional Orientation, the B.A.C.'s hands on jobs project, has posted several volunteer jobs for students to gain field experience, 3 with Cal Fish and Game in the Woodland area, and one with the Forest Service Wildlife and Fisheries office in San Francisco. In addition a Point Reyes deer drive is planned for April 4.

If any of you professionals in the B.A.C. have a project that needs short term volunteer help, give us the details (type of activity, date, time, number of volunteers needed) and we'll post it for you. Write Paul Beier at the Bay Area Chapter, or call Greg Miller at 548-8421, Mark Dedon at 548-2903, or Paul at 658-3793.

THE HIGH CALL: AN APPEAL TO CLOSET CONSERVATIONISTS

"The high call" is the term used to characterize the most commonly heard vocalization of the pileated woodpecker. The bird gives it as its announcement call. For this reason and because I am studying pileated woodpeckers, "the high call" has been chosen as the title of the chapter president's column.

While the conservation movement may be likened to the proverbial hand that feeds wildlife professionals, the Bay Area Chapter of TWS has been unable to generate active interest in conservation issues.

This lack of enthusiasm is certainly not from lack of significant issues or access to decision makers. The chapter gets requests for us to participate on environmental advisory boards, become involved in critical battles such as Mono Lake, and to submit letters of comment to public agencies on their environmental activities.

In the past the chapter has been involved in the Suisun Marsh protection plan, the Angel Island deer herd, the Army Corps of Engineers EIR for a Dow Chemical plant in the Delta, the California State Board of Forestry's snags for wildlife policy and many other issues.

Other chapters such as Humboldt have drafted letters of comment on the Northcoast Scenic Rivers Bill, BLM's California Desert Plan, and

on two of the Six Rivers National Forest timber sales. The Nevada chapter has distributed a position statement on the Sagebrush Rebellion which has met with largely favorable response.

Perhaps our listlessness over conservation is symptomatic of a larger and indeed growing schism between wildlife "professionals" on one hand and "conservationists" on the other. Not entirely without cause, TWS is associated with the former.

Thus "technocrats" and "managers" are posed against "protectionists" on the California Condor recovery plan, and again on the local issue of managing the Angel Island deer herd. To belabor the obvious, the conservation community all too often finds itself caught in internecine strife, instead of unified advocacy over what are surely our common ultimate objectives.

Counterposing professionalism to advocacy incorrectly presents our choices of action. The two are not antithetical.

Professionals are members of the public, albeit a more expert strata of the populace. Professional knowledge is not license to be aloof from worldly concerns. On the contrary, as a highly informed segment of a largely uninformed and often misinformed public, we have a professional responsibility to be active in conservation issues.

Not only do we have a responsibility to be conservationists, it is also in our self interest to be so. If we do not advocate support of conservation issues, how can we expect the general public to support those very same issues with their taxes and voluntary contributions? R.H.

EDITORIAL

The Taming of Angel Island

An open hearing considering management plans for the Angel Island deer herd was held March 14 at Fort Mason. Although most present acknowledged that there was a problem, a great deal of controversy was generated over what would be considered acceptable solutions.

Dale R. McCullough, TWS member and professor in the College of Natural Resources at University of California, Berkeley, outlined alternate management plans with their various ramifications. Leaving the population entirely alone would result in continued habitat destruction with precipitous population cycling. Feeding the existing deer would only forestall the day of reckoning. Controlled hunting by park personnel would most easily and effectively reduce population levels to suitable numbers. This option, preferred by Dr. McCullough and Fish and Game, had met with such opposition previously from the public and special interest groups that it was not considered a viable alternative. Translocation would require finding appropriate available habitat and would be

an expensive continuing operation unless all the deer were removed at one time. The final proposal and the one Dr. McCullough supports in lieu of shooting, entails employing predator control.

After one year of study to get baseline data on the existing herd, a small number (tentatively six) of neutered and radio-collared coyotes would be placed on the island. By culling the weak and sick animals the coyotes could not only reduce the population but the remaining herd would be more vigorous. The whole operation would be carefully monitored to assess its effectiveness and to prevent possible problems.

After the talk the floor was opened for comment. Only 4 of the 27 speakers commenting on the predator control proposal were in favor of it. The primary objections centered around the inhumanity of allowing coyotes to kill and eat deer and the possible negative impact on visitors viewing nature in action.

The public reaction was emotional and did not seem to take into consideration the factual presentation of Dr. McCullough. Translocation to some pastoral site or sterilization were the favored alternatives but wholesale shooting of the entire herd was still preferred over the introduction of coyotes.

However, deer cannot simply be moved to some more pristine environment. Blacktail deer habitat in most of California is at or over its carrying capacity. Introducing undersized, undernourished, heavily parasitized deer into a strange environment with its own complement of predators is to ensure a low survival rate. Sterilization will be a costly difficult process and one that will have to be maintained to be effective.

I am amazed at the temerity of individuals who would have an entire herd of animals shot rather than to allow them to exist as they always have in a natural predator prey relationship. These people want nature to be "nice." The fact that nature is a harsh but fair taskmaster offends their sensibilities. One envisions an environment where all wild animals are caged separately to protect them from their savage natures, protected by people who assume they know best.

A chance to experiment with a natural form of prey control will therefore not be allowed to take place. Overpopulation of deer species due to extirpation of native predators from those habitats is a problem that is occurring across the country. There is no guarantee that predator introduction on Angel Island would be successful. But the information garnered from such experimentation would be invaluable in developing management plans in other areas. Not allowing such experimentation to take place because people are offended by natural processes is the real tragedy of this situation. K.T.