



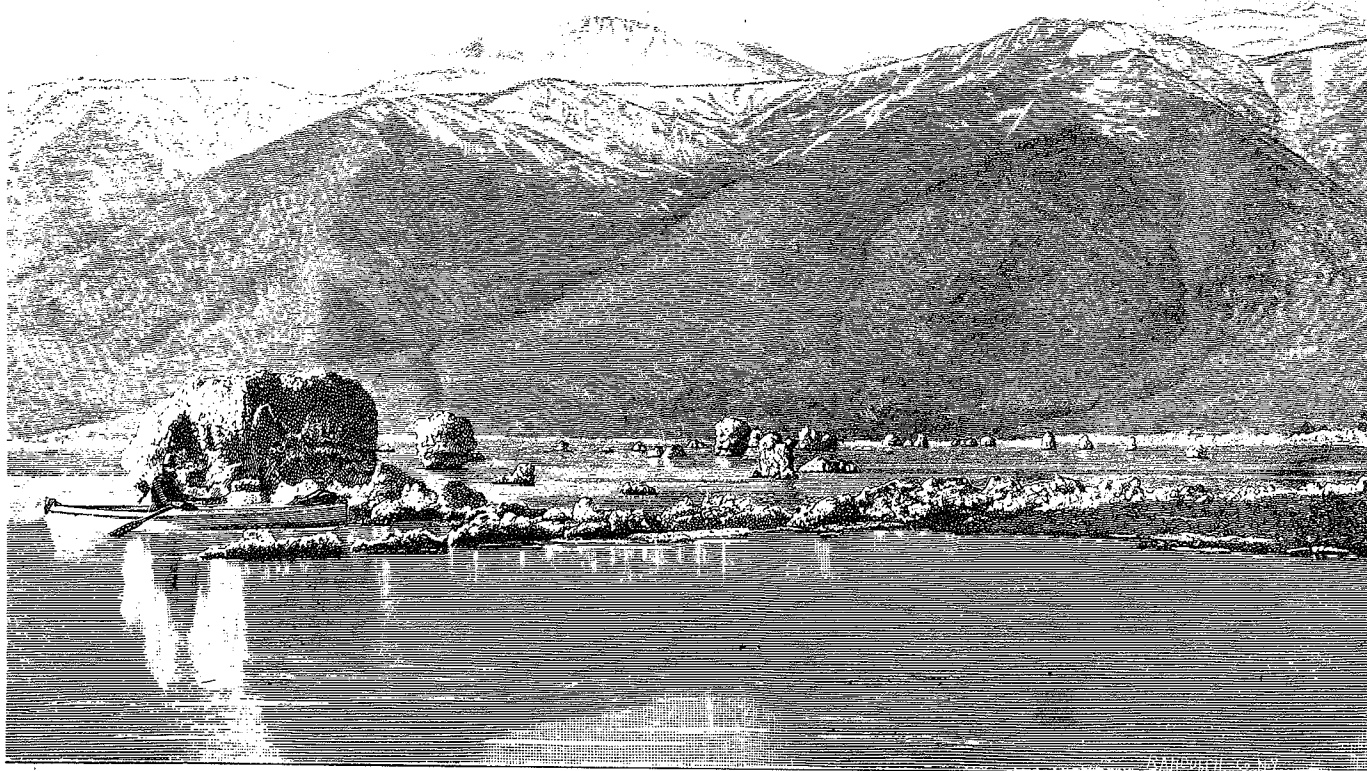
THE MONO LAKE COMMITTEE

Newsletter

Editors: *D.W. Taylor & D. Gaines*

VOL. 3, No. 2

FALL, 1980



" The tops of such tufa domes... are hollowed out as to form basins... and these depressions are filled with clear, fresh water... that overflows, fountain-like, into the surrounding alkaline water"

I.C. Russel, U.S. Geological Survey, 1883

Floating amongst the striking tufa on the northwest shore of a placid Mono Lake in the summer of 1883, Isreal Cook Russel would never have imagined the scene as it is today, the shore being a 'muck slogging mile' from where his rowboat once drifted.

Russel was one of the preeminent geologists of the 19th century, first with the Geologic Survey and later as a professor at Michigan. Many of his scientific works were concerned with the very special problems connected with water resources of the West

Today, Russel would most certainly be filled with indignation over the present situation of Mono Lake; its tributaries usurped, its brine concentration doubled, its vast wildlife threatened, its pristine airshed polluted with alkali dust.

Russel, far from being what might be called a 'preservationist', favored the wise use of water resources. WE do the same, but unelss we increase our efforts, the present *abuse* of Mono Lake will continue unabated.

The MONO LAKE COMMITTEE is a not-for-profit citizen's group.

OUR PURPOSE: To preserve the scenic, wild-life and scientific values of Mono and other Great Basin Lakes by limiting water diversions to levels that are not environmentally destructive, to further public interest in the natural history and preservation of these lakes, and to facilitate relevant research.



THE MONO LAKE COMMITTEE

P.O. Box 29, Lee Vining, California 93541 (714) 647-6386

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THE SECRETARY SPEAKS

A great summer! Over 500 people attended our free week-end field trips and over 18,000 visited our Lee Vining Information Center. "I never dreamt this was here," exclaimed one man, "I don't understand why this isn't a national park."

Mail keeps increasing. I now retrieve about 50 letters a day from our post office box. Anyone want to donate a wheelbarrow (and a sled for winter) to help me transport boxes of mail to and from the P.O.?

Volunteers helped me keep up with the subscriptions and renewals, so a few errors may have occurred. Drop me a note and they will be corrected.

MONO INFORMATION CENTER A BIG SUCCESS

The MLC Information Center in Lee Vining opened Memorial Day weekend, and kept regular (9 to 9) hours all summer. Each month about 6,000 visitors from all over the world viewed the Mono Lake displays, exhibits and slide programs.

At least part of our financial success at the "downtown" Lee Vining location can be attributed to our remodeling efforts. The usable interior space was doubled, and an art gallery featuring Mono Lake photographs was opened. *Artists! ... your work can be exhibited and sold on consignment, ... ask us!* A large selection of natural history books was also available for purchase. Income this summer was beyond our initial expectations-- over \$28,000 in sales and donations. About half of this went to pay our overhead... hence the net income going to help Mono Live came to about \$15,000! Hurrah!!!

The IC was staffed by an able cadre of volunteers and MLC staff. In addition to the million questions about Yosemite reservations, the staff managed to disburse Mono Lake Information to all who would listen. Special thanks to our dedicated and hard-working volunteers: Daphne and Brian Aurness, John Harris, Emily Hart, David Herbst, Mary Kelly, Betty Kenneday, Ann Matt, Suzie Morse, Erna Renoud, Marlys Richman, Scott Stine, George Stroud, Meryl Sundove, Chris Swarth, David Takemoto-Weerts and Stephanie Zeiler.

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Already this year about 60,000 acre-feet of Mono's lifeblood has been shunted to L.A.... where all of that water could have been readily supplied from any number of other sources. Must DWP, as Zeisl maintains, take more than they need to assure the right to an adequate supply when the reservoirs run low?

We think not. No one wants to deny anyone an adequate water supply. For instance, the "save Mono" legislation we supported last spring would have permitted the DWP to export all the water they required "during any period of extreme drought conditions," i.e., at times when additional water was truly needed.

DWP is sucking Mono down, not because of need, but because it is lucrative. Mono-Owens water costs one-third as much as that from other sources. Thus, even when water is plentiful, it still profits DWP to take as much as they can from Mono's tributaries. That is, so long as they don't have to pay for devastating the lake and the surrounding countryside.

Who profits at Mono's expense? During the last fiscal year, the DWP contributed \$44.4 million to the Los Angeles City reserve fund.² This multi-million dollar contribution, which should have properly been returned directly to consumers via lower rates, amounts to a hidden tax (in fact, the average L.A. resident pays about as much for water as his neighbors in other Southern California communities.... communities that spend much more on their water supplies). By "donating" profits directly to the city, DWP buys influence on the City Council. No wonder the DWP General Manager Louis Winnard receives over \$94,000 a year!³ No wonder the council voted down the Mono Lake Task Force Plan 11 to 0!

On June 11th, State Senator John Garamendi and MLC Chairperson David Gaines addressed the City Council on Mono Lake's plight and the Task Force Plan. The DWP ferried crib notes to their favorite councilmembers. It was all too clear who was pulling the strings, and our reception was sadly predictable.

On July 1st, after heavy lobbying by Los Angeles, the State Senate Agriculture and Water Resources Committee defeated Garamendi's resolution requesting the city to develop an acceptable plan to protect the Mono Lake environment. The City Council, parroting the DWP line, pretended the problem didn't exist at all. For example, they claimed that...

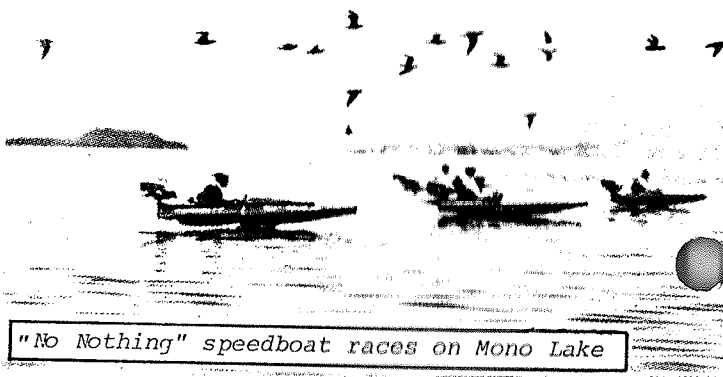
"There is no scientific evidence whatsoever that the use by the City of Los Angeles of Mono Lake water is highly detrimental to Mono Lake..."

"The fact of increasing salinity is a fact of Mono Lake's existence and the salinity would increase regardless of Los Angeles' diversions..."

"There is no evidence of a unique species of brine shrimp..."

"The reliction of the lake does not destroy its beauty..."

"Mono Lake has never sustained any water or lake-related recreation, no swimming! no boating! no water skiing! no fishing -- nothing..."



"No Nothing" speedboat races on Mono Lake

Too bad there's so little truth in these statements... we could turn our attention to other matters! Tragically they carry weight in Sacramento, where the credibility and clout of a powerful metropolis eclipse that of scientists and MLC'ers.

This year's legislative efforts are dead... but the battle on Mono's behalf has just begun. Fortunately Mother Nature's tears have granted the lake a one-year reprieve. There is still time to change the conscience of Los Angeles... and America. Gray Brechin compares the life-productive Mono Lake ecosystem, with its millions of birds, to a "concentration of vital energy shining like a sun in the vast space of the desert." May this energy give us strength to continue the long, hard fight ahead!


References

¹Quoted in Valley View, August 13, 1980


²Intake, October, 1979, p. 15

³Los Angeles Times

ON GOING RESEARCH



Researchers were very active in the Mono Basin this summer. The MLC Research Coordinator, Dean Taylor, has accumulated the store of scientific gossip below. Scientists with specific questions, or who are interested in beginning work at the lake, should contact Dr. Taylor so that their endeavors can be assisted.



MONO LAKE SYMPOSIUM HELD

Mono Lake researchers gathered at UC Davis on 25 June 1980 for the symposium - Mono Lake: Anticipating the Future - held in conjunction with the annual meetings of the Pacific Division, American Association for the Advancement of Science (see *Science* 209:1107) and the Western Section, Ecological Society of America. The nearly 125 persons in attendance heard a varied range of talks covering nearly all aspects of the Mono Lake environment; they also saw a battery of solemn, silent LADWP lawyers scribbling notes during each of the presentations! The Symposium served to bring together workers with research interests in the Mono Basin, and was considered a successful gathering by all in attendance. Copies of abstracts of the papers presented at the symposium are available from the MLC (send stamped, self-addressed envelope).

MONO'S RADIONUCLIDES

H.J. Simpson (*Lamont-Doherty Geological Observatory*) et al. have been studying the concentration and distribution of Plutonium suspended in Mono's brine and lakebed sediments (see *Science* 207:1071-1072). Most of the fallout plutonium reaching the earth's surface was the result of atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons prior to 1962. At that time, of course, Mono's surface area was approximately one-third again as large as that of today. The radioactive fallout received in the early 60's has been concentrated, along with Mono's brine, by a decreasing lake volume. The present Pu concentration of Mono's water is about 20×10^{-12} Curies/m³, which is well below the Maximum Permissible Concentration of 5×10^{-6} Ci/m³ (²³⁹Pu is an alpha-emitter, and is thus relatively harmless in low concentrations unless taken internally). Swimming in Mono's water is thus not a significant health hazard due to the presence of this nuclide.

The significance of the Pu research at Mono Lake is that the activity of this fallout product is about two orders of magnitude higher in water column at Mono than in most freshwater lakes, where over 90% of all fallout products are usually sequestered in lakebottom sediments.

MONO'S GEOPHENOMENOLOGY

Geologically oriented research was not to be overshadowed by biology on the Mono Basin this summer. Scott Stine (*University of California, Berkeley*) is continuing his important work on the Holocene fluctuations of Mono Lake. Scott has been tracing Mono's recent (ca. 15,000 yr) history by studying the size, sequencing and emplacement of wave-cut terraces in the basin. There is some evidence to suggest that terraces which were previously thought to indicate that Mono's surface elevation may have lain at about the same absolute height as that of today should not be interpreted as being indicative of an Altithermal low stand. Negit and Paoha Islands, which are of much more recent origin than the Altithermal, displaced a large proportion of the total lake basin volume upon their formation, and thus a lake at climatic equilibrium would have a lower surface elevation prior to island formation, all other factors being equal. Scott has identified two major recent high stands of Mono Lake, at 6479' and 6456', corresponding to the Recess Peak (ca. 2300 yr B.P.) and Matthes (ca. 700 yr B.P.) ice advances, respectively. His future research will concentrate on establishing the chronology of Mono's many wanes and waxes.

Meanwhile, the bizarre and intricate formations found on Mono's shores in areas of volcanic ash deposition we know as Sand Tufa, have been described by Preston Cloud and Ken Lajoie (*U.S. Geological Survey*). These defluidization structures are essentially tufa cemented tubes that carried freshwater upwellings that centered in areas with fine ash and tephra deposits. The tops of many of the more intricate and massive sand tufa are truncated by deposits of caliche. Cloud and Lajoie feel that the fact that these defluidization structures formed below the sand surface in an aphotic environment effectively rules out any role of algal precipitation in tufa formation. They also feel that the majority of evidence is compelling in favor of the view that these sand tufa formations are of very recent origin - perhaps as recently as the previous century.

Bob Curry (*University of California, Santa Cruz*), working in the headwaters of the Walker River, has found more Late Pleistocene

(cf. Tertiary) and Early Pleistocene tills in the Dunderberg Peak area, just north of the present Mono Basin. Bob thinks he can demonstrate that both Virginia and Green creek drainages flowed in to the area of the present Mono Basin prior to ca. 700,000 yr B.P. As the Mono Basin dropped and the Sierra rose, the Bridgeport Basin also dropped, being formed by the same right-lateral pull-apart faulting. The old tills are warped and faulted and are cut by new headward incision of the Walker River drainage, 'stealing' some of Mono's potential watershed - except that the theft may predate the origin of Mono Lake.

Daniel Holmes (*University of California, Berkeley*) has been researching the history of Shaft #1 of the Mono Craters tunnel. The verticle shaft (7'x 20') was excavated to a depth of 895 feet, and water was encountered at 492 feet. Sometime in 1939, it is thought a break in the pipeline draining this shaft occurred, and a significant notch was cut in a nearby explosion crater in soft pumice. The break was probably sealed within ca. 36 hr, but nevertheless the notch cut remains a significant landform feature, and was readily visible from the old roadbed of Highway 395 near The Punchbowl just south of June Lake Junction. Dan would like to hear from anyone with information on this erosion event (send a card to Geography at UCB, 94708)

BRINE SHRIMP RESEARCH

Several projects were active this summer studying the life-history, physiology and demography of the Mono Brine Shrimp (*Artemia monica*). Gayle Dana, working with Sarene Bowen (*San Francisco State University*), investigated the hatching requirements of *A. monica* eggs. Gayle has found that *A. monica* eggs require a cold preincubation of about 45 days under anoxic conditions, uniquely adapting this organism to overwintering in a deep lake environment. Her work this summer was directed to the relationship between increasing lake salinity and hatching success. Yan-ling Liang, a visiting post-doctoral from the Peoples Republic of China with John Melack (*University of California, Santa Barbara*) repeated previous experiments on the effects of increasing salinity on the physiology, fecundity and survivorship of *A. monica*. His results essentially confirm the deleterious effects of concentrated Mono Lake water on this organism. Yan-ling ran two parallel experiments; one involving Mono Lake water concentrated by boiling, the other using

naturally evaporated lake water. Petra Lenz, also working with Melack's group, continued her studies on the demography of the Mono Lake shrimp population. This year's influx of streamflow brought with it considerable floating detritus, and the distribution of shrimp in the lake was somewhat different than in past, no-inflow years. Overall shrimp density remained similar to previous seasons.

AIR QUALITY & ALKALI DUST

Air quality in the Mono Basin this summer was decidedly better than in previous years. The exceptionally wet winter of '80, where an average of about 10" of precipitation fell in the Basin, was probably responsible for the amelioration of dust storms, accompanied by a rather calm summer (The sign did'nt blow off the Information Center even once!). On some areas of the Negit landbridge, an apparently algal crust developed due to the exceptionally wet conditions, and served to bind the substrate, at least until 13 September, when a dust transport event of severest magnitude occurred. John Boynton (*Duke University*) observed blowing dust on only about 10% of the days this summer at his cabin on the NE lakeshore, compared to greater than 30% of the days last season. Air quality monitoring continued in the Mono airshed this summer, with several sampling stations being maintained, including one in Lee Vining, by the Air Quality Group of the Crocker Nuclear Lab coordinated by John Barrone (*University of California, Davis*). The program is sponsored by the Great Basin Air Pollution Control District, headed by Charles Frixell.

The first attempts to evaluate potential impacts of alkali-dust on vegetation were begun this summer. Mary Ann Lee (*University of California, Los Angeles*) made an initial attempt to look for demographic changes in shrub vegetation in areas presently receiving quantities of dust fallout. Big Sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata tridentata*) stands just in the lee of Black Point, and in Alkali Valley, are showing increased mortality, and the typical vectors (ie. moths) are absent at these sites, suggesting dust impact. Dean Wm. Taylor (*University of California, Davis*) began a series of controlled, dose-response experiments designed to quantify the physiological effects of alkaline particulate fallout on plants. Dust samples were collected by vacuum from the Negit landbridge, and were passed through a 150 um seive, and were applied to plants at 5 dosage rates (0,10,100,1000,10000 mg/dm²/week). Both pot-grown seedlings and field grown plants were

tested. His preliminary data indicate, as expected, that some of the test species (non-halophytes such as Bitterbrush, *Purshia tridentata*) are much more susceptible to dust impact than others (halophytes, in general). *Purshia* seedlings began to show dust effects with as little as 400 mg/dm² - yellowing of older leaves and yellowing of the tips of new leaves. A lethal dose for half of the *Purshia* seedlings tested was about 30,000 mg/dm². More extensive experiments in the future will seek to discover the exact mode of action of alkali-dust, using expanded pot experiments and more detailed physiological monitoring.

ORNITHOLOGICALLY SPEAKING . . .



Bird research at Mono Lake was more active this summer than in previous years. This seasons California Gull breeding bird census was coordinated by David Winkler (*University of California, Berkeley*) along with Dennis Powers (*Santa Barbara Natural History Museum*). The data this year seem to indicate that the breeding population was 79% of its 1976 size (see article on p.16). There are compounding levels of statistical uncertainty in the census estimates, however. First, breeding adults are not counted directly, but their numbers are estimated from a chick/adult ratio applied to visual observation of number of chicks in a particular colony. The variance of this ratio with environmental factors between colonies and years is as yet unknown. Second, not all chicks in a colony can be seen in a visual census taken from the water, so the estimated number of chicks is augmented by an 'observability factor'. This factor was empirically estimated for only one islet, and was subjectively chosen for the remaining islets. Thus, the degree of confidence in the estimates arrived at by these techniques is unknown, and future census data will attempt to improve the precision of these estimates. (For a copy of this year's census report, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the MLC).

Dave Winkler's research on the breeding biology of the California Gull at Mono Lake continued to focus on parental reproductive investment by observing select sets of nests. He has found that the second egg of the two-egg clutch laid by the Mono gulls is smaller - whereas in some gull species, the first pair of eggs (of 3 egg clutches) is usually similarly sized - and this may indicate some environmental limit to clutch size of the Mono birds. He is also looking into the role of the sexes in partitioning nest duties, and has begun some preliminary work on salt regulation physiology.

Scott Cooper (*University of California, Santa Barbara*) has tried, mostly without success, to trap Eared Grebe individuals at Mono Lake this summer. He would like to study their diet and feeding biology, but the logistics of catching these swift divers makes such research difficult at best. Joe Jhel (*Hubbs Sea World, San Diego*) has begun working on the phalarope species visiting Mono Lake. He is interested in establishing the importance of Mono Lake to their migrations by studying their lengths of stay, rate of fat accumulation and patterns of molt. The 'Plover Patrol' consisting of Gary Page & Lynne Stenzel (*Point Reyes Bird Observatory*) assisted by Chris Swarth, continued their work on the breeding biology of the Snowy Plover at Mono Lake this summer (see article on p.8).

Other research going on this summer include David Herbst (*Oregon State University, Corvallis*) working on the invertebrate fauna of Mono Lake - particularly Brine Fly biology. His research has shown that the Mono Lake flies have a lower capacity for physiological acclimation to changes in the osmolarity of their native milieu as compared to flies from Abert Lake, Oregon.

The relationships between some of Mono's rare plants and their pollinators is being explored by Evan Sugden (*University of California, Davis*). He is working on many of the pumice flat endemics. Part of his research effort is looking at what happens when a stable plant-pollinator system is disrupted by the introduction of non-native pollen & nectar foragers, namely honey bees.

Other rare plant work was conducted in the basin this summer. Several additional populations of some of the rare species occurring in the Mono Lake environs were located: *Eriogonum ampulaceum* was seen along Rush Creek and at Kirkwood Spring in addition to the other known sites about springs around Mono Lake; *Eriogonum kearneyi kearneyi* is abundant on the Mono Basin sand dunes and in Alkali Valley, while *Astragalus pseudo-dianthus* was located in the former habitat. *Phacelia monoensis*, a plant from "white, 'clay'" soils in the Bodie Hills, was not relocated this season by Tim Messick (*Humboldt State University*), who is working on a local flora of the western portion of that range. If *P. monoensis* can not be found soon, it should be presumed extinct at the hands of poor grazing management by the Bureau of Land Management, as all known sites for this rare annual are heavily grazed by sheep.

John Harris (*University of California, Davis*) continued to study the foraging strategies of two sympatric species of the Dark Kangaroo Mouse (*Microdipodops megacephalus*) on the Mono Basin sand dunes. John has found these typically granivorous rodents to subsist almost entirely on insects at Mono, a situation which is rather unique. The dune communities in the Basin continue to prove of great biogeographic interest to Durham Guliani (*Big Pine Biological Station, CA*) who is working on the beetle fauna of Great Basin dune systems.

MONO BASIN RESEARCH GROUP TO INCORPORATE

An informal 'Mono Basin Research Group' (*MBRG*) has been actively studying the Mono Lake environment for the past five summers. Much of the information gathered by this group of scientists has been the basis for present concerns over the fate of the lake ecosystem under the present water diversion regime. Unfortunately, many of the objective, scientific goals of this research program have been compromised by political arguments, as evidenced by the recent failure of governmental agencies and the legislature to provide funding for the research program. So that an objective and distinct separation can be maintained between research and political action, the *MBRG* has begun incorporation proceedings.

The purposes of the *MBRG*, as summarized from their draft by-laws, are:

- 1): to promote interdisciplinary, scientific research on the Mono Basin environment and other Great Basin landscapes.
- 2): to facilitate free communication of research findings through peer-reviewed publication.
- 3): to provide interpretation and education to the general public through classes and seminars.

All researchers with interest in the above objectives are invited to participate actively in the *MBRG*, and are asked to submit a current curriculum vitae with a letter of intent to the *MBRG* address below. The *MBRG* is being incorporated as a non-profit, public benefit organization, and as such, will be able to accept tax-deductible contributions, which will go to further our understanding of the Mono Basin environment. For information on how you can become a supporting member of the group, please contact the Mono Basin Research Group at P.O. Box 66, Lee Vining, CA., 93541.

Join the Plover Patrol... Help Locate Color Banded Snowies



The Point Reyes Bird Observatory (PRBO) needs your help locating Snowy Plovers this winter... especially those marked with color bands.

On the coast, the numbers of this diminutive and delicate beach nesting shorebird have been declining; however, encouragingly large numbers have been discovered breeding at interior alkaline lakes. About 400 Snowy Plovers presently nest along the windswept shores of Mono Lake... 10% of the entire California population. It is our hope that some of these birds may eventually replenish the dwindling coastal populations. This could occur if interior birds, particularly juveniles, mix with coastal birds in the winter and remain on the coast to nest. To find out if this is happening, we need your help.

During our 1979 survey, we located about 2,500 plovers wintering along the coast; two had been color-banded at Mono Lake. A female that nested at Mono in 1978 and probably 1979 was found during mid-winter at Malibu Beach in Los Angeles County. A chick banded at Mono in 1978 was seen on a beach in San Luis Obispo County.

If you visit coastal beaches or the shores of interior lakes, please watch for color-banded Snowy Plovers. Or, better yet, volunteer to check a particular area on a monthly basis. We would like to know the number of banded and unbanded plovers you observe, and the color and arrangement of the bands. Juveniles from Mono Lake, for instance, have a single bi-colored white and red band on their lower left leg. Adults have coded arrangements of orange, red, green, blue, brown, yellow and white bands-- two each on each leg. The arrangements tell us the history of the bird-- its sex, where it nested and its nesting success.

All "plover patrol" volunteers will receive a beautiful black and white drawing of a Snowy Plover and a Sanderling created especially for this project by Keith Hansen. If interested, please contact: Gary Page, Point Reyes Bird Observatory, 4990 Shoreline Highway, Stinson Beach, CA 94970; [415] 868-1221.

The L.A. to Mono Bike-A-Thon fighting gravity & POLITICS

On Wednesday, August 27th, ten hardy bicylists filled bottles of water at the reflecting pool in front of DWP's downtown Los Angeles skyscraper, and headed for Mono Lake. For six days they cycled across mountains and desert, fighting gravity and politics to return the water to its natural destination--- Mono Lake.

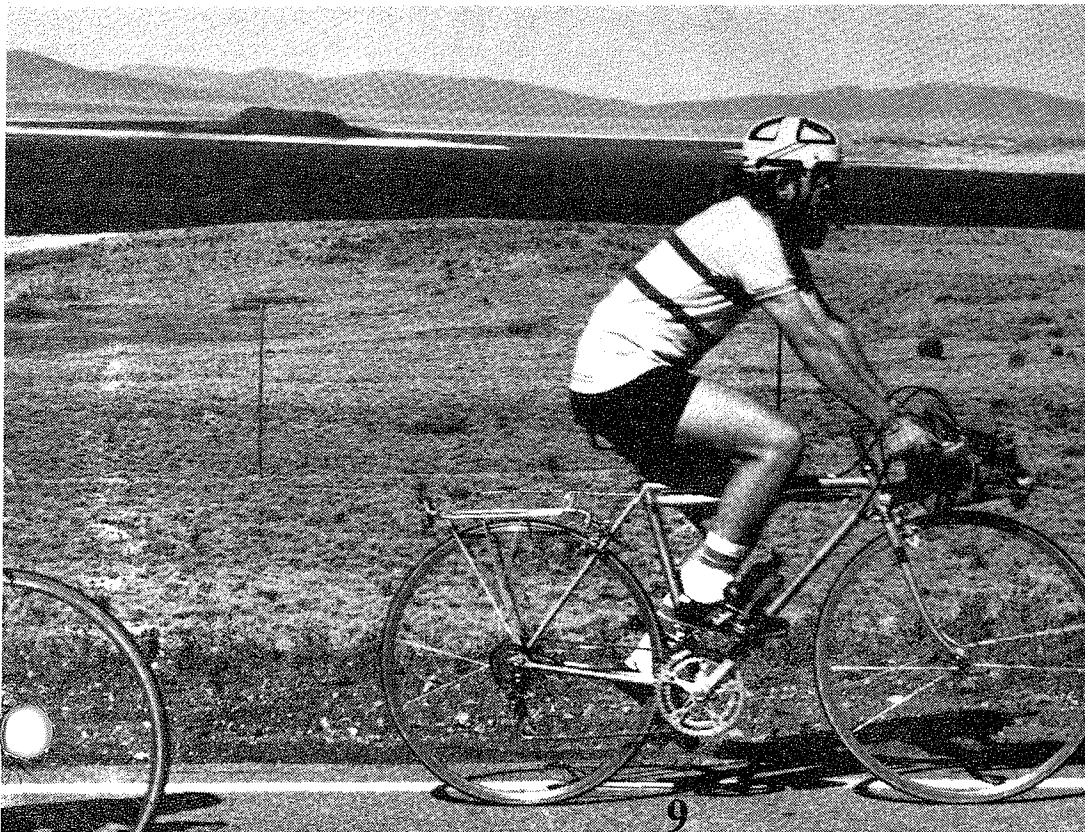
Among the cyclists was our hardworking secretary and board member Sally Judy. At one point a powerful whirlwind lifted her and her bicycle off the highway and set her gently down on the shoulder... the only near-mishap of the 350-mile journey. As she describes it, the trip was great publicity, a successful fundraiser, and fun:

"After a press conference ably organized by our summer Southern California Coordinator Linda Mearns, we headed for DWP headquarters in downtown L.A. Television, radio and newspaper media covered the filling of our vials and our departure from the watery moat in front of the DWP skyscraper (the building

looks like a giant stack of cafeteria trays). After cycling across the San Fernando Valley and the San Gabriel Mountains we landed at a Motel 6 in Palmdale at the edge of the Mojave Desert. The motel registration form required the make and model of my 'car,' so I entered 'Peugeot bicycle.'

"The next morning we were stopped in Lancaster for photographs and interviews by the local paper. At lunch the Mojave Desert Sun caught up with half of the riders at the local McDonalds; we epicureans were hiding out in Carls Jr. After an afternoon break in beautiful Red Rock Canyon, we reached Inyokern at dusk. We had intended to sleep on the grassy city park until the gas station man ("hey, I saw you on the 11 o'clock news last night!") warned us about the automatic night-time sprinklers. We had to be content with beds in the desert.

"The next day, after being interviewed and photographed by the Ridgecrest Independent, we cycled for hours past the dry, alkali-encrusted bed of Owens Lake. It would



Summer MLC volunteer David Takemoto-Weerts streaked from L A. to Mono Lake a full day ahead of the other riders - he had to go work in the Information Center ...

Thats dedication!

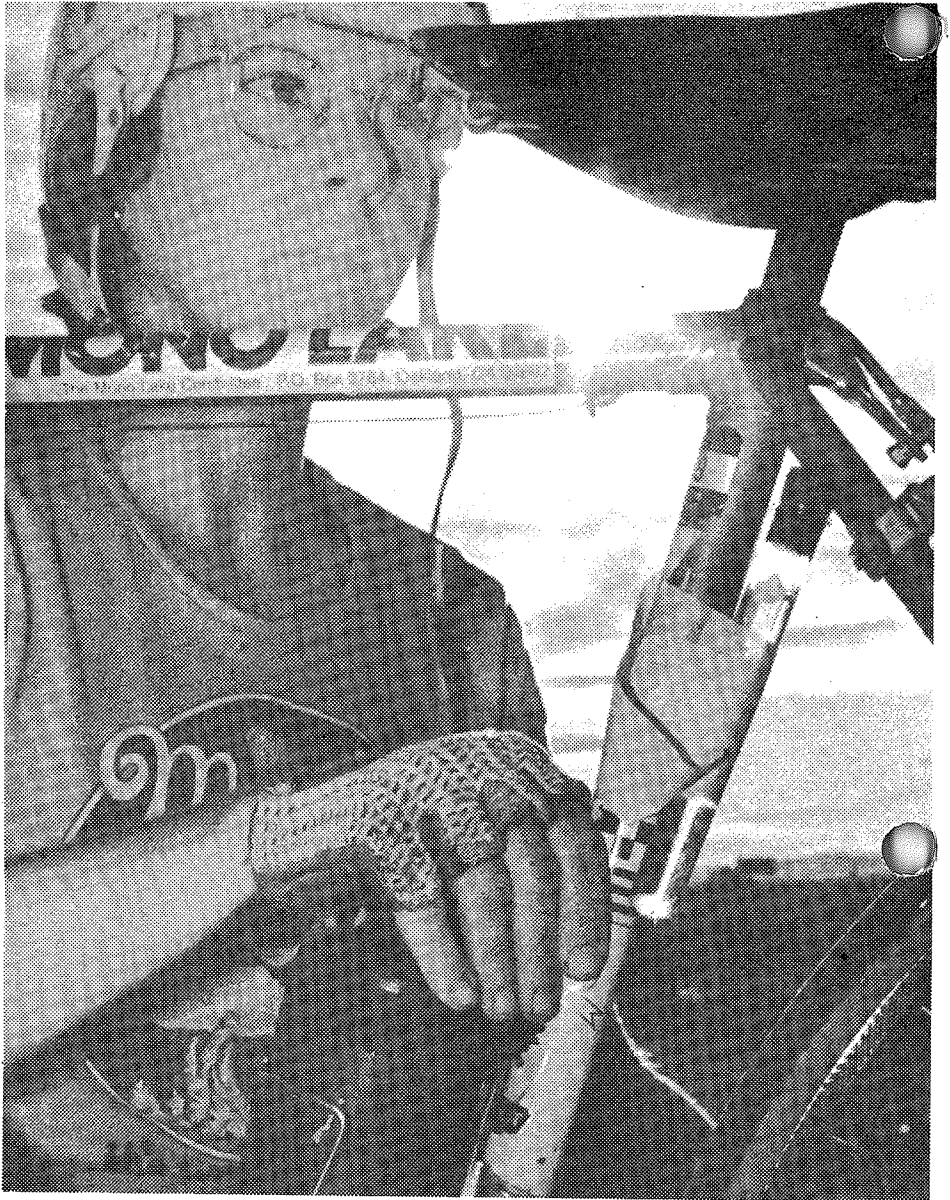
Photo: Jim Stroup

MLC Secretary Sally Judy peddled with a penchant. She had so many pledges riding with her that she refused to divulge the amount for fear that calamity might strike. Whoopee, she made it!

(Photo: Rose Certini, courtesy of Ridgecrest Daily Independent)

be criminal to turn Mono Lake into another Owens! That night in Lone Pine, Lois Wilson and her husband cheerfully turned house and yard over to 10 tired cyclists. Thank you, Lois, and keep up your good work with the *Concerned Citizens of Owens Valley* (see p.14).

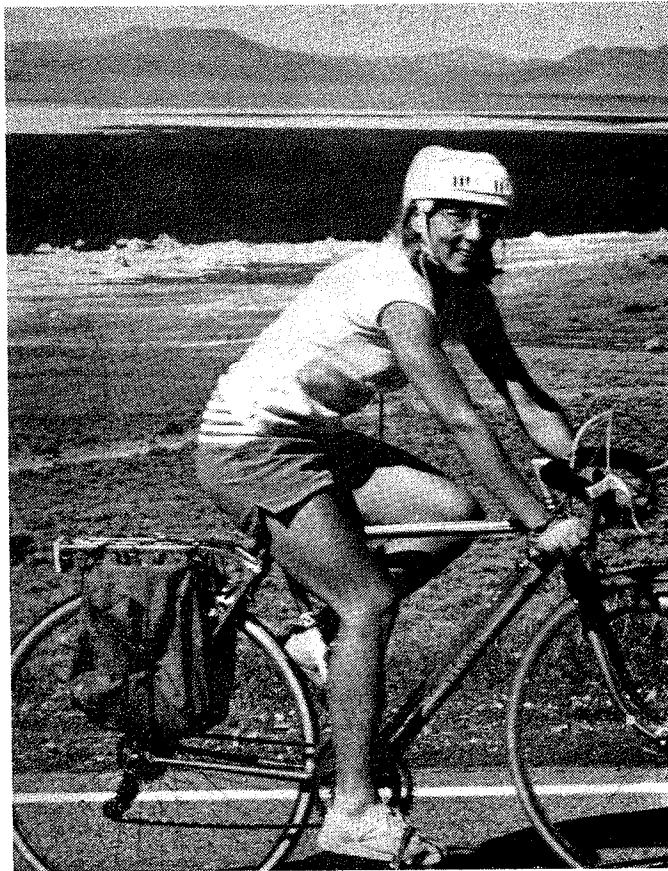
"On the forth morning we filled up with French Toast at Bobo's Bonanza and, trailed by a National Geographic photographer, headed north once again. At Independence we were interviewed by the Inyo-Mono News Service. After a comfortable night in Bishop on the lawn of the Epispcal Chruuch, we began the steep, 4,000-foot ascent to Mammoth Lakes. We passed the fifth night relaxing in the camping spaces donated by Camp High Sierra, a Los Angeles City camp.



"On Monday, Labor Day, with just 25 miles to go, we enjoyed a scrumptious breakfast provided by the managers of Camp High Sierra. At the Forest Service Ranger Station, our numbers were swelled by seven more bicylists for the final leg up to Mono Lake. The bucket brigaders gave us a walking ovation as we rode through Lee Vining and down to the lakeshore. There we removed the vials of L.A. water strapped to our bicycle frames and ceremoniously poured the contents into the lake. Photographs and watermelon, then back to work answering the MLC mail!"

The bike-a-thon raised about \$5,000 on Mono's behalf. Thanks to everyone who pledged support to our dedicated cyclists!

Many people helped make the bike-a-thon a success. The event was capably organized by David Heine, who we first met when he bicycled into Lee Vining last June. Heine's parents helped with the pre-trip organizing. Edith Gaines garnered many pledges from Mono County businesses. Father Christopher Kelley graciously invited the cyclists to spend the night at the Episcopalean Church in Bishop. Sue drove the "sag wagon" with gear and cold drinks up and down the highway for the six days of the journey. Last but hardly least we thank the cyclists themselves: Lael Forbes, Chuck Spenser, David Takemoto-Weerts, "Wrong Way" or "Flat Tire" Rick, Steve Duke, Diane Petty, Brad Duke, David Heine, Tony Rodriguez and Sally.



WE WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS APPRECIATION TO THE FOLLOWING MONO COUNTY BUSINESSES FOR SUPPORTING SALLY JUDY ON THE BIKE-A-THON:

In Lee Vining:

El Mono Motel	Nicely's Restaurant
Gateway Motel	Renee's Hairstyling
Kellogg's Arco	Tioga Lodge
Lee Vining Market	Warren's Motel
Mono Inn	Yosemite Trading Co.
	Best Western Motel

In June Lake:

Alpine Deli	Mountaineer Hardware
Big Rock Resort	Red Lyon
Fern Creek Lodge	Schat's Bakery
Four Season's Resort	Silver Lake Resort
June Lake Pines	Village Frosty Spot
June Lake Villager	Vista Motel

In Mammoth Lakes:

Booky Joint	High Mountain Trading
Dennee's	Sierra Floor Covering
Designs Unlimited	Swiss Cafe
Kittredges	The Outfitter
Gateway Hardware	Uphill Sports
	Woods Lodge

In Bishop:

Bike and Sport Shoppe	Sierra Hardware
Homestead Pottery	Sierra Sports Center
Joseph's Market	Spellbinder Books
Owens Valley Drug	Wheeler's Boot Repair

My gratitude to all my sponsors on the Bike-A-Thon;

John Alcorn, Alpine Deli, Peter Babcock, Mrs Ione Barber, Mr. and Mrs Allen Bartshe, David Baxter, Shirley Beedy, Sue Beereboom, Best Western Lakeview Motel, Big Rock Resort, Alsion Binder, Booky Joint, Andrea Bottini, Elain Bougiun, Gray Brechin, Mr. and Mrs. John M. Brenneis, John Brode, Jo Brownold, Evelyn and George Burger, Kathy Clark, Almo Cordone, Courtenay Dawson, Dennee's, Designs Unlimited, Irene Desonie, D.L. Dobbs, Don and Jan Dunn, Art Earle, El Mono Motel, Larry Eng, Esposito, Marie Ann Erickson, Fern Creek Lodge, Wm. Fiala, Alan Fong, Four Seasons Resort, Mr. and Mrs. Russell Fowler, Doris Fredenhall, Lloyd Fusby, Polak, Dick and May Belle Gaines, Patricia Gannon, Gateway Motel, Gateway Hardware, Phyllis H. Gardiner, Gary Gordon, Helen Green, Joyce Hall, Warren's Motel, Mary Hart, Del and Doris Haskell, High Mountain Trading, Samuel Hopkins, Jean Horn, Guy Horton, Dorothy Horton, Alice Q. Howard, Jim and Lucie Hupp, Mike Jacob, Mr. and Dr. Judy, June Lake Pines, June Lake Villager, Peter Judy, Bill Kelley, Father Kelley, Doug Kittredge's, Kellogg's Arco, E.H. Kendig, Jr., Mrs. D.W. Koehler, Jean Kovner, Rick and Grace de Laet, John Lambert, Peter Leaf, Lorraine Minx Lelouarn, Ron and Rose Lernberg, Lee Vining Market, Natasha Levine, Pat Levitz, Mary R. Lillis, Ed Littrell, Goldie Otters, Mr. and Mrs. Robert MacCallum, Sidney and Janice Margolis, Ann Matteson, Caroline R. Miller, Mono Inn, Laurie Montero, Rob Morris, Mountaineer Hardware, The Naturalist, Nicely's Restaurant, Red Nichols, Stephen Nicola, Frank Novak, Becky O'Connor, Cindy Okusako, The Outfitter, Barbara Oyer, Velinda Paranal, George Peyton, Nicola Place, Jerry Stuefloten, Bennie Rau, Elsie B. Roemer, Red Lyon, Renee's Hairstyling, Margaret Roberts, C. Robinson, Antonio Rossman, Julie Ross, David Rubenstein, Maggie Rubenstein, Karon Rule, Al Sattler, Schat's Bakery, Mrs. Lillian Schilbe, Robert Scudder, Dr. and Mrs. R.B. Sinclair, Sierra Floor Covering, Silver Lake Resort, Dolores Sefelstad, Judith Small, Gary E. Smith, Ken and Lynne Smith, Cathy Smith, Uphill Sports, Rich Stallcup, Donald Stites, Elaine Strong, Sheila Kojm and Louis Stuhl, Nathan Sweet, Jr., The Swiss Cafe, Tioga Lodge, Lynn Thomas, Village Frosty, Charles Walton, David Walworth, Stephen Warner, Sharon Whisler, Denny Wilcher, James D. Wilson, Woods Lodge, Yosemite Trading Company, Miriam Youngerman...and any last minute sponsors.

-- Sally --

Visiting Mono With the DWP: "Untouched Beauty..."!?!

"We visited Mono Lake," wrote Bernice Fields in the *Los Angeles Canyon Crier News* (May 26, 1980), "and heard of the care the Department of Water and Power is showing to the areas of nesting gulls, constructing fenced areas to protect them from marauders..." Fields, secretary of the Federation of Hillside and Canyon Associations, was one of many civic leaders and members of the Southern California media who participated on DWP tours of the Owens Valley and Mono Lake... all expenses paid.

"Beginning with a buffet breakfast," recounts Fields, "we were given... maps, special area itineraries and picture stories of the water and power areas, all written and produced by the Department of Water and Power." In the Owens Valley she and her fellow travelers "were told about the Owens Valley Ranch leases and the Tinnemaha Wildlife Viewpoint, helping us more to appreciate the untouched beauty of the valley which has carefully been preserved by its governors" (i.e., the DWP). Fields was impressed by the "clean air, clean water and seemingly untouched California beauty." "At no time," she concludes, "was our information slanted toward the department's views..."

How ironic! Obviously she didn't hear from the *Concerned Citizens of Owens Valley* (see p.14), or the *Mono Lake Committee*!

What you can do: If you live in Los Angeles, protest this misuse of your money! A few angry taxpayer letters to Mayor Bradley, councilmembers and the L.A. Times might just shake someone up. A request for the opportunity to present our views to DWP's tour groups has been ignored.

SALARY INCREASES FOR MLC AND DWP STAFFS

MLC staffers in Lee Vining have been working essentially gratis for most of the Committee's history. This month, we have increased salaries from \$200 to \$500 per month.

But, in Los Angeles the Department of Water and Power staff also received pay increases. The largest raise ---\$7,809--- went to the city's highest salaried official, DWP General Manager Louis Winnard. Lou will now receive \$94,607 for his dubious services to the citizenry.

In Los Angeles

How can we convince millions of Angelenos that Mono Lake is worth saving? Until we have more funds, our best hope is grass-roots, volunteer organizing.

This summer Linda Mearns, working out of the tiny Westwood office we share with the League of Conservation Voters, continued distributing literature, organizing slide shows, contacting media, drumming up volunteers and coordinating with other environmental groups. A Mono Lake Committee was established at UCLA. We appeared on several radio programs. An L.A. oriented slide show emphasizing water conservation was developed.

At this point, it's hard to evaluate the success of our efforts. We are tossing tiny pebbles into a mammoth pool. If we throw enough of them, the ripple may eventually form waves.

Beginning this fall Tom Cassidy returns from Lee Vining to replace Linda Mearns as our full-time Southern California Coordinator. Linda returns to her former life as a UCLA graduate student, where we wish her the best. Please give Tom a call if you can lend a hand (213/427-8229).

Special thanks to Paul Sheldon and Robert Tucker for help with the slide programs, and to Jackie Dingfelder for bringing the Mono cause to UCLA.

MONO LAKE SLIDE PROGRAMS AVAILABLE

A Mono Lake slide program is now available for sale or loan. The 80 vivid color transparencies, assembled by David Gaines, convey the beauty and importance of the lake and the water conservation alternative to its destruction. A cassette tape commentary and script accompany the slides.

We would be pleased to loan the Mono Lake slide program to groups and schools for up to two weeks without charge. The program may also be purchased for \$100 (\$80 to schools and non-profit educational organizations).

In addition we would be delighted to come in person and present the program to groups of 30 more people... provided you contact us a couple of months in advance. To make arrangements, drop us a card or call us in Lee Vining or Los Angeles.

On The Legal Front

FLOATING IN LIMBO

Photo: Dennis Stueder



SIERRA CLUB FILES SUIT IN FEDERAL COURT

Last year, acting on behalf of the Sierra Club, Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund attorney Larry Silver petitioned the Secretary of Interior and the City of Los Angeles. The Club's petition alleged that the Secretary of Interior, through the BLM, has a duty to prevent further degradation of the environmental quality of Mono Lake and the surrounding lands. The petition further alleged that the United States has water rights which the Secretary has a duty to assert in order to protect the lake.

The United States failed to respond to SCLDF's petition, and the situation at the lake worsened as Los Angeles continued its diversions. Thus, in April, Silver filed a lawsuit in Federal District Court in Sacramento. The suit asks the court to order the Secretary of Interior to assert the federal government's rights to sufficient amounts of the Mono Basin water to stabilize and maintain Mono Lake at an environmentally acceptable elevation. The complaint asserts that the Secretary should take such action to protect the natural resources of the lake, especially its rich and varied birdlife, for future generations.

AUDUBON LAWSUIT DELAYED BY JURISDICTIONAL DISPUTE

Eighteen months have passed since National Audubon, Los Angeles Audubon, Friends of the Earth and the Mono Lake Committee filed suit against the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power in Mono County Superior Court. The case was transferred to Alpine County in July of 1979. In January, 1980 DWP was allowed to file cross-complaints against 117 parties, thwarting hopes for an early trial. The parties consist of in-basin water rights claimants, such as the June Lake and Lee Vining Public Utility Districts and numerous private

parties, whose consumptive use has an insignificant impact on the Mono Basin environment (less than 3% of the average DWP export).

As most of the Mono Lake watershed is public land, the United States was among the 117 parties named in the DWP cross-complaint. As a result, the federal government succeeded in having the case transferred to the United States District Court in Sacramento. DWP, in turn, filed a motion to return the proceedings to Alpine County Superior Court. On June 17th, U. S. District Judge Lawrence R. Karlton denied this motion. He noted, however, that if DWP were to dismiss its causes of action against the United States, "a serious question may arise as to this court retaining jurisdiction."

That's precisely what has happened. DWP has filed motions to dismiss the causes of action implementing the federal government and to remand the litigation back to the state courts. Our attorneys have submitted detailed memoranda in opposition to DWP's renewed motion to remand, and have filed motions to (1) amend the complaint to include a cause of action against DWP for violation of the federal common law of nuisance, and (2) separate the trial of the original complaint from the cross complaint and set a trial date in early November of this year. By so doing, we hope to keep the case in federal court and go to trial as soon as possible.

As of press time, we are still awaiting the court's decision on these matters.

STATE FILES SUIT OVER LAKEBED OWNERSHIP

The California State Lands Commission has filed suit against the federal government to quiet title to lakebottom land exposed by the shrinkage of Mono Lake. Claims to these "relicted lands" have been advanced by both parties.

DWP Pumping Dessicating Owens Valley

Last month we received the following letter from the Concerned Citizens of Owens Valley. This spectacular valley lies to the south of the Mono Basin and just to the east of Mt. Whitney and the lofty crest of the Sierra Nevada. Early in this century Los Angeles purchased most of the valley land to secure the right to take and export water. Farmland was turned into desert and a large lake into alkali dust. "This was a beautiful valley," wrote Will Rogers in 1930, "but Los Angeles had to have more water for its Chamber of Commerce to drink more toasts to its growth, more water to dilute its orange juice... so now this is the valley of desolation." Half a century later, the destruction continues... ed.

Dear Fellow Californian:

Owens Valley is in trouble. Although we have made a valiant effort to solve our problems, we find we cannot accomplish it alone. We need the understanding and support of others. A brief outline of our situation follows.

Because Owens Valley is in the rain shadow of the Sierra Nevada, which rises abruptly 10,000 feet above the valley floor, annual precipitation is extremely low. It is only five to seven inches in normal years.

Unlike the native vegetation throughout most of California, that in the Owens Valley is not supported by rainfall. It must reach groundwater to survive.

Historically, the Owens Valley groundwater basin has been fed by snow water from the Sierra. The Los Angeles Aqueduct, however, captures the Owens River and most other surface flow and carries it to Los Angeles. A matter of controversy now is how much groundwater, in addition to surface water, should L.A. be allowed to pump from beneath the valley.

It was not until the second aqueduct was finished and functioning early in the 1970's that the people of Owens Valley became truly alarmed. Naively they had accepted promises that the second aqueduct was to take only excess water. The shock came when people realized that the DWP considered any water beyond minimum uses in Owens Valley "excess." Any slough or moist place indicated a waste of water, and native vegetation was to be destroyed because it used water which should be flowing down the aqueduct.

As a result, vast areas are dead or dying mostly due to the lowering of the groundwater table as a result of pumping. The native plants will not be replaced. There is not enough rainfall to support any groundcover. With the plants go the animal life dependent on them. Ever widening areas are becoming ugly gray expanses of dead shrubs. These in time will become barrens of unstabilized soil subject to being carried by the frequent high winds. Our beautiful Owens Valley is being destroyed, not for need, but for arrogance and greed.

Because the people of the valley dared to resist the pumping, Los Angeles, who owns the water systems, installed meters in the communities of Lone Pine, Independence, Big Pine and Laws. This was done in spite of the fact that our conservation rate during the drought exceeded that of Los Angeles. It was expected the metered rates would exceed the previous flat rate of \$8.40 per month. When conservative consumers were faced with summer bills of up to \$100 per month, however, resentment turned to outrage. Helpless residents are now letting lawns, trees and shrubs die because they cannot afford to water them. Small vegetable gardens, which had been a way of life here, are now luxuri

An effort to have our rate structure placed under the jurisdiction of the Public Utilities Commission has failed, due to the powerful opposition of Southern California legislators. Our efforts to purchase the town water systems are hampered by Los Angeles' refusal to assure adequate water rights. The people of Owens Valley are caught in a helpless position, completely lacking the political weight necessary to obtain justice. This is the place of water origin, and yet we are allowed only a dying valley and must pay exorbitant rates for essential uses. Is this not a state of emergency?!

This letter of information is in response to numerous requests. If you care, please write to your assemblyman and other legislators. Let them know that you want a fair deal for Owens Valley. We would be very grateful.

CONCERNED CITIZENS OF OWENS VALLEY

P.O. Box 617 Lone Pine 93545
P.O. Box 487 Independence 93526
P.O. Box 304 Big Pine 93513

Contributions to help support
our work are greatly appreciated.

BLM Acts to Protect Tufa (Now How About Mono Lake?)

In late August the Bureau of Land Management decided to bar vehicles from the south tufa grove "because the tufa formations were suffering undue visitor degradation." The road into the tufa formations was closed about one-fourth mile from the lake, and a parking area was established at the nearby geothermal well test site. From there it is an easy stroll to the lake and the tufa.

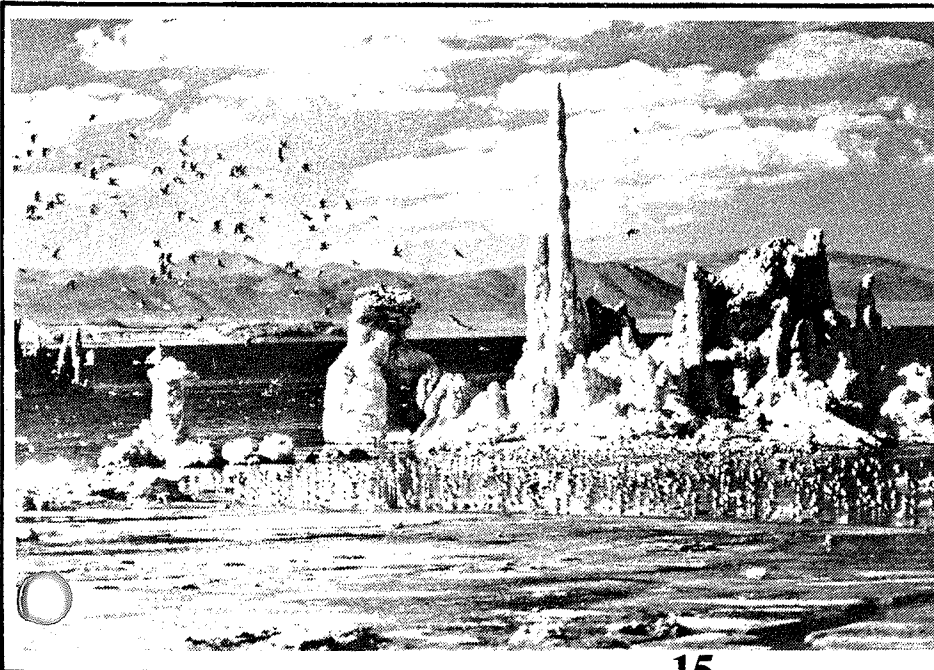
The following open letter from Bishop Area Manager James S. Morrison was addressed to "Mono Lake Recreationists" (that's us!):

"We have observed an unprecedented increase of recreation use in this area this past summer. The intensity of use has created numerous impacts to the tufa formations. The area accessible to vehicular traffic has received much use and impacts as evidenced by felled tufa formations, campfire rings made from tufa deposits, char-stained tufa resulting from campfires, loss of vegetation due to site compaction, etc. The unique, highly scenic and sensitive nature of these geological phenomena warranted a temporary closure. We ask your cooperation in helping us protect the area from further damage by complying with our closure measures as well as respecting the delicate nature of these unique formations.

"In the near future, we will be conducting an inventory and subsequent analysis of the area to determine what permanent management measures are required. We would like your input and comments about the area. Please feel free to write our office, and we will keep you informed regarding the status of our progress. Thank you for your patience and compliance during this temporary period of the closure..."

We applaud BLM for taking these steps to protect the tufa formations, but wish they would take vigorous steps to protect Mono Lake as well! Please let them know how you feel and that you want to be kept informed. Address correspondence to: James S. Morrison, Area Manager
Bureau of Land Management
873 No. Main St., Suite #201
Bishop, CA 93514

And please send a copy or additional letter to: Cecil D. Andrus
Secretary, Department of the Interior
Interior Bldg.
C St. between 18th and 19th N.W.
Washington, DC 20240
They're the folks who could really help save Mono Lake.



To many casual visitors, Mono Lake is represented by it's diverse tufa formations.

But tufa deposits are only a small part of an integrated landscape, and to fully protect any one part, the whole system must be preserved.

(Our full color poster at left, photographed by Tim Snyder and with words by Gray Brechin, is still available ... see last page)

Gull Estimates Revised Upwards Situation Remains Precarious

An estimated 40,000 California Gulls nested at Mono Lake in 1980, compared to about 51,000 in 1976, 1977 and 1978, and about 21,000 in 1979. These figures, which are higher than previous estimates, derive from a new analysis of census data by University of California biologist David Winkler.

Mono Lake supports about 95% of the state's nesting population of California Gulls. Until 1979, the majority nested on Negit Island. The emergence of a landbridge, however, allowed mainland predators to rout the island's 33,000 nesting gulls. An attempt by the California Department of Fish and Game to entice gulls back to Negit by erecting a half-mile long predator-proof fence failed, and only four birds attempted to nest on the "island" this year.

Fortunately two-thirds of Negit's gulls apparently crowded onto other islets in the lake, where more birds were nesting than we previously thought. The revised estimates indicate that the 1979 abandonment of the Negit colony resulted in a 41% reduction in Mono's nesting population. This year the population has recovered to 79% of its former size.

But the future of the gulls remains precarious. Twain and Java Islands, where 40% of the birds nested in 1980, will be connected to the mainland by next year if diversions continue. Moreover the increasing salinity of the lakewater, which has already doubled since diversions began, threatens the survival of all of Mono's birds as well as the lake's highly productive ecosystem.

The revised gull population estimates were made possible by Winkler's detailed field observations this summer. His census methods may be summarized as follows:

- (1) On the small islets, such as Twain and Java, chicks are counted from a passing boat. This "raw" chick count is increased by an "observability factor" to account for the fact that many chicks cannot be seen. The number of breeding adults is calculated by multiplying the estimated number of chicks by the ratio of adults to chicks.
- (2) On Negit Island, the estimated number of chicks is derived by censusing subplots and multiplying densities by the total area of the colonies. The total number of adults is obtained by multiplying this product by the ratio of adults to chicks.

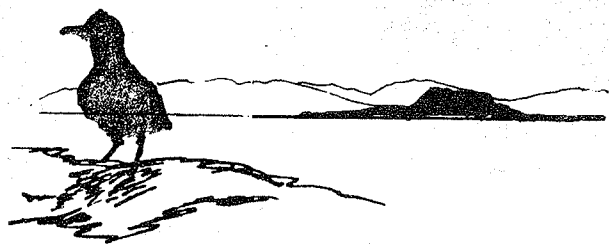
Winkler's research revealed that the adult-chick ratio used previously was too high, and that the observability factors were too low. On Negit, therefore, where the census method did not rely on an observability factor, the estimate of the 1976-78 nesting population was reduced. On the islets, however, the increase in the observability factors exceeded the reduction in the adult to chick ratio; hence the estimates were increased. Overall, more gulls were, and are, nesting at Mono Lake than previously thought.

REVISED CENSUS TOTALS FOR MONO LAKE CALIFORNIA GULLS

Island	Raw Chicks	Observability Factor	Total Adults
1976-1978			
Negit	23,042	---	33,180
Twain	2,264	3.0	9,780
Little Tahiti	488	2.86	2,010
Pancake	626	1.5	1,352
Little Norway	290	3.5	1,464
Steamboat	287	3.0	1,240
Java	282	3.0	1,218
Spot	110	2.0	317
Tie	96	2.0	276
Krakatoa	61	3.0	264
Hat	22	2.0	63
		GRAND TOTAL	51,162

1979			
Negit	0	---	0
Twain	1,995	3.0	8,618
Little Tahiti	703	2.86	2,895
Pancake	0	1.5	0
Little Norway	119	3.5	600
Steamboat	104	3.0	449
Java	288	3.0	1,244
Spot	240	2.0	691
Tie	168	2.0	484
Krakatoa	77	3.0	333
Hat	38	2.0	109
La Paz	85	2.0	245
Geographic	32	1.5	69
Muir	18	1.5	39
Paoha Islets	2,395	1.5	5,173
		GRAND TOTAL	20,949

1980			
Negit	3	---	4
Twain	3,225	3.0	13,932
Little Tahiti	1,650	2.86	6,795
Pancake	0	1.5	0
Little Norway	200	3.5	1,008
Steamboat	320	3.0	1,382
Java	600	3.0	2,592
Spot	300	2.0	864
Tie	270	2.0	778
Krakatoa	60	3.0	259
Hat	65	2.0	187
La Paz	90	2.0	259
Geographic	60	1.5	130
Muir	90	1.5	194
Saddle	10	2.0	29
Paoha Islets	5,465	1.5	11,804
		GRAND TOTAL	40,217



MONO LAKE COMMITTEE INCOME AND EXPENSES, JUNE THROUGH AUGUST, 1980

Expenses	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	% of TOTAL
Office Supplies, Postage	430.98	1,719.13	1,303.83	7.8
Telephone	249.52	220.54	262.54	1.6
Resale Merchandise	735.19	7,352.74	6,299.30	32.7
Information Center, Booths	374.54	218.82	174.69	1.7
Payroll	2,350.69	1,862.23	2,627.33	15.5
Travel Expenses	355.80	1,645.58	613.37	5.9
Printing, Graphics	13.31	250.00	4,737.69	11.3
Taxes, Licenses	219.71	844.82	268.28	3.0
Research and Grants	108.91	598.50	-0-	1.6
Los Angeles Office	168.36	1,081.59	996.12	5.1
Loan Repayment	-0-	1,000.00	4,803.44	13.2
Totals	5,006.71	16,793.95	22,086.15	
Income				
Information Center, Booths	4,858.65	10,886.18	12,131.73	66.7
Memberships, Donations	3,197.83	3,694.92	6,992.35	33.3
Totals	8,056.48	14,581.10	19,124.08	

COPIES OF AUDUBON ARTICLE NEEDED

The September issue of Audubon featured an excellent, in-depth article on Mono Lake by Peter Steinhart, *The City and the Inland Sea*. We can put this article to work convincing legislators and public servants that Mono is worth saving. But we need more copies! If you are a monomaniacal Auduboner, please consider donating your copy of Peter's article to the cause. Just snip it out of the magazine and send it to us in Lee Vining. Your sacrifice will help Mono live!

WE NEED HELP! ...

We can save Mono Lake... but not alone. We need the active help and leadership of many other groups. If you are a member of any of the following organizations, please urge them to get more involved in making Mono an issue of national concern:

The Cousteau Society, Jacques-Yves Cousteau, President, 777 Third Ave., New York, NY 10017

Defenders of Wildlife, Jocelyn A. Alexander, President, 1244 19th St. NW, Washington, DC 20036

Friends of the Earth, 124 Spear St., San Francisco, CA 94105

National Audubon Society, Russell W. Peterson, President, 950 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022

Sierra Club, Joe Fontaine, President, 530 Bush Street, San Francisco, CA 94108

National Wildlife Federation, Dr. F. R. Srieggin, President, 1412 16th St., NW, Washington, DC 20036

And please contact any other public interest groups to which you belong (including church groups, garden clubs, etc.). THANK YOU!

This issues 'Chrysotham- noid Tufa Award' (cf. Golden Fleece) goes to our friends at the LADWP who wrote

Mono Lake has never sustained any water or lake-related recreation"

Maybe this dock was another Hollywood film set at Mono?

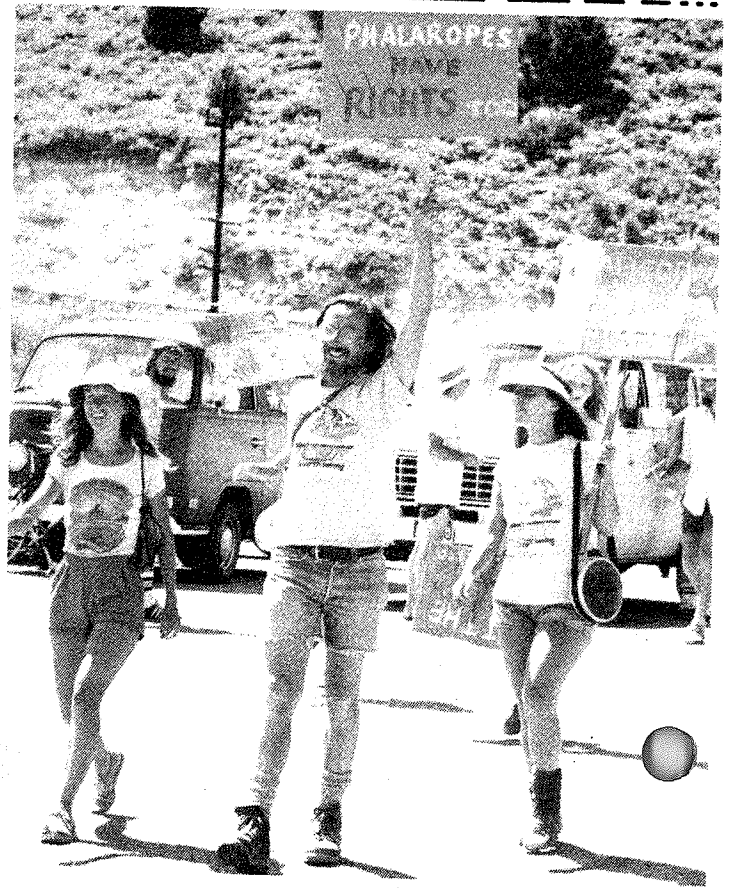


Mono Bucket Walk Hikes Our Spirits

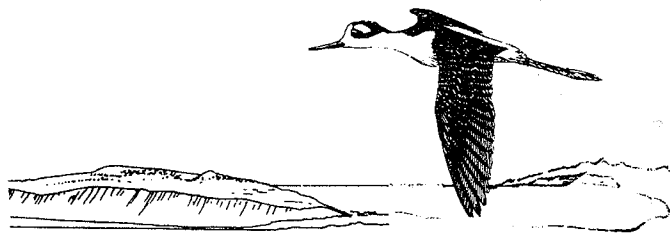
A jubilant crowd of nearly 200 Monophiles arrived in Lee Vining on Labor Day to participate in our 2nd annual Mono Lake Bucket Walk. Although the crowd was somewhat smaller than last year's - partly due to less efficient publicity and organization on our part, enthusiasm ran high. Lee Vining Creek ran high also, as the marchers "stole" water from the stream into the tunnel intake that would otherwise be relegated to an unnatural destination. Marchers streamed from the DWP diversion to Sneeker Flat carrying signs and banners en route. More than one tour bus was confronted with the slogan, "Eat Brine Shrimp, 1,000,000 Grebes Can't Be Wrong". At the rehydration spot marchers gathered to add their crucibles of the life giving fluid to Mono's brine, and to pose for magazine photographs. The high-energy point of the day occurred when the Los Angeles to Mono Lake Bike-A-Thon participants came wizzing down the hill, six days on the road, to join the walkers in ceremonial rehydration.

Next year's Bucket Walk (assuming one is required!) may take a different tack. The suggestion is to reciprocate LADWP's generosity and reverse the flow. We may carry Mono Lake water uphill and add it to the aqueduct. Give 'em a taste of their own medicine!

A final cheer goes out to Fiona Wilson, who was probably the most intrepid of the Bucket Walkers - she went the 4 mile distance with her leg in a cast!!!!



Hold it high! Mono Bucket-Walkers arrive at the rehydration spot - Sneeker Flat
Photo by Laurie Jorden, courtesy Lakes District Review.



N Cal Coord's Ask... HELP!

We need your help in Northern California. Become a Mono-sprite and help by: distributing MLC literature, setting up slide shows for community groups, helping with fund raising and finding new members.

During November, we are planning on conducting a series of community strategy meetings in the Bay Area. We will be focusing on how the MLC can become more effective in the

dissemination of information and the raising of funds in the future. Please share your ideas with us by attending one of the informal meetings that will be held in your local area, a schedule of which will be sent to all northern California members.

Also, during the holiday season, we will be having MLC booths at many of the Fall and Christmas fairs that will be held throughout the Bay Area. Besides giving out literature and informational updates on the lake, we will be selling the ML T-shirts, posters, postcards, bumperstickers and the new "Share Water With Mono Lake Color and Learn Book."

You can help! Let us know of the festivals and fairs that will be held in your area. And YES, we will need volunteer at the MLC booth.

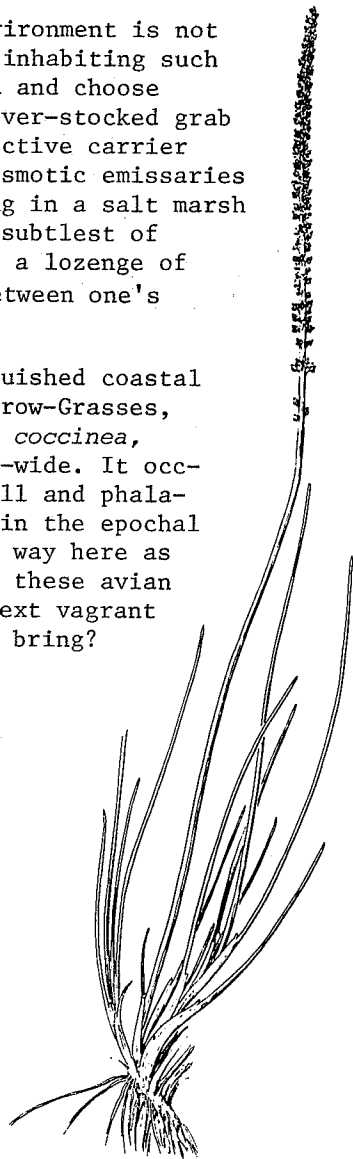
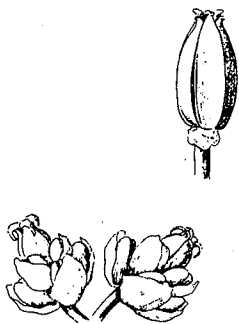
A closing thought from Loren Eiseley, "There is magic on this planet, it is contained in water."

The MONO BASIN Naturalist *by* Kutzabe

is only fitting that most inland sea should also have salt marshes of sorts. Surrounding Mono Lake where there is the appropriate mix of waters - not too salty, not too fresh, we have our own version of parallelism in landscapes. Mono's salt marshes lack the subshrubs of their coastal relatives, the 'pickelweeds' - our only suffruticose plant being the insufferably named Greesewood (*Sarcobatus vermiculatus*). In thick stands its spinescent branches certainly impede bipedal travel, and the only thing greasy about its nature is one's desire to slide through it unscathed.

Living in a wet saline environment is not without problems. Plants inhabiting such sites must be able to pick and choose needed nutrients from an over-stocked grab bag. They do so with selective carrier enzymes in their roots - osmotic emissaries to a hostel mileau. Dining in a salt marsh would be like tasting the subtlest of quiche or hollandaise with a lozenge of salt permanently lodged between one's gums!

Two of Mono's most distinguished coastal representatives are the Arrow-Grasses, *Triglochin maritima* and *T. coccinea*, *maritima* being truly world-wide. It occupies the full range of gull and phalarope wanderers. Sometime in the epochal past it doubtless made its way here as a preened seed from one of these avian visitors. What will the next vagrant from shores of arctic seas bring?



Triglochin maritima

From: Intermountain Flora
Drawing: Jennie R. Janesh

LEE VINING WEATHER, 1980

	A ¹	M	J	J	A	S ²
Temp°F						
Hi	61.4	65.4	78.1	91.8	86.8	77.7
Lo	31.3	33.9	38.1	50.1	46.0	41.2
X	33.9	49.6	58.4	70.9	66.4	59.3
Ppt."						
Total	1.47	.62	0	.10	.03	0
% snow	100%	21%	0	0	0	0

n=15 *2n=25*

JAEGERS AT MONO LAKE?!

This summer, and in the past few years, sightings of jaegers at Mono Lake indicate that small numbers of these birds probably take a regular inland route during their fall movements south. This route eventually reaches the Great Basin where some birds make their way to Mono's alkaline shore.

Jaegers are falcon-like seabirds that nest on the tundra in sub-arctic and arctic North America. Following the breeding season they fly south where they are most commonly seen in our coastal waters from early August through May. The three different species - the Pomarine, Parasitic and Long-tailed - differ in size and (with adults) in the length of their central tail feathers. Expert fliers, these piratical birds make their living by harrassing and chasing other seabirds, especially gulls and terns, which are forced to disgorge the fish they've captured. The regurgitated fish is deftly scooped up by the swift jaeger often before it reached the water. Jaegers must find Mono Lake a surprising place because all they get from Mono's gulls are partially digested brine shrimp!

Parasitic Jaegers are the most frequently spotted species with 6 records between 1963 and 1979. This fall, however, eclipsed all others with the sighting of one adult and three birds in immature plumage. This summer also marked the first record for the Long-tailed Jaeger at Mono Lake with two different sightings. On August 10, an adult flew down to the northeast shore where it landed in shallow water, fully expecting to slake its thirst after a long flight across the dry desert. One swallow was enough, for after several violent head shakes in response to Mono's bitter taste, it continued south across the lake and out of sight. Again in late August, an immature Long-tailed flew along the shore of Mono Lake County Park. Perhaps it's just a matter of time before the Pomarine Jaeger turns up too.

Chris Swarth.

ACCOLADES

This summer's holiday week-ends were busy times for us. Over the 4th of July, Don and Jan Dunn, Petra Lenz and Gayle Dana helped us staff a booth at the Mammoth Lakes Gold Rush Days, while John Harris and friends hawked literature and T-shirts at the Bridgeport festivities. The dog days of August found us at Bishop's Tri-County Fair, where we talked to thousands of people about Mono's plight. We could never have weathered that four-day stint without the help of Joanne Kerbavaz, Jeannine Koshear, Pat Marti, Elenor Riddell, Margaret James, Jan Jacobs, Flora Nash, Maryanna Kornbrush, Laura Lutz, Ellen Hardebeck, Larry Wylie, Donna Lake, Dolores Seilstad, Bonny Hollis and Meryl Sundove. Over the Labor Day week-end Emily Hart, Chris Swarth and Mort and Edith Gaines put in long hours at the Arts and Crafts Fair in Mammoth. All of these endeavors raised funds and won new friends for the Mono Lake cause. Our thanks to everyone who helped!

Gull cheers to Phyllis Weber and Michael Ross for arranging a benefit concert at the Tuolumne Meadows Lodge in July... and to musicians Randy Wilson, Dinah Hills and Art Baggett for coming to play.

Richard Newberry planted the seed that grew into our *Share Water With Mono Lake Color-And-Learn Book*, and nurtured it to fruition. Michael Ross and Becky Shearin donated their artistic gifts, and Lynn Marsh completed the design and lay-out.

Ace photographer Michael Dressler has donated over a hundred stunning color transparencies to our collection... several of which have been reproduced in our new deluxe post-cards.

Our "art gallery" is now graced with a marvellous, intriguing water color donated by Mavis Hess Chaney, entitled *Cry Dance for Mono Lake*.

On a more prosaic level, we are now the proud but befuddled owners of a behemoth cash register... thanks to Steve Johnson and Friends of the Earth. Once we figure out how it works, it will save us days of brain-numbing work adding up receipts and donations. Bob Schotz of Woods Lodge at Lake George (near Mammoth) donated a gas stove for our Information Center "apartment." And, just when we were despairing of getting our wood supply in before the snow, John Mace of Lee Vining loaned us the use of his 3/4-ton pick-up!

WILDERNESS PRESS

Wilderness Press has generously donated all profits from our sales of their excellent and popular guidebooks to the MLC. Hooray!



Wilderness Press

2440 bancroft way • berkeley, california 94704

OUR HEARTFELT THANKS to The Nature Company for hosting two September benefits for the National Audubon Society's Mono Lake Fund. This money will be used to help finance the Audubon/Mono Lake Committee/Friends of the Earth lawsuit.

1999 El Dorado
Berkeley, Calif. 94707
(415) 524-6336

COULD ANYONE DONATE????

Our Lee Vining office is in need of filing cabinets, folding chairs, office chairs, shelving materials and a wheelbarrow. A large rug in the Information Center would help fend off the winter's cold. If you can donate any of the above, please give us a call and we'll arrange transportation.

MLC OFFICE MOVED AND EXPANDED

The MLC office has been expanded and moved to the newly remodeled IC. The Gaines residence can again revert to a home! The IC and office will be open all winter, so stop by. An efficient wood-burning stove has been purchased to keep our typing fingers warm and nimble, and, hopefully, the few sacrificial Jeffrey Pines we will burn will help insure an alkali-dust free future for their congeners.

RENEWAL REMINDER

Please remember, MLC membership renewal is by the honor system. We simply do not have time to send out renewal notices. An easy routine is to send us whatever contribution you can afford at the end of each year. Tha

WITH THE JONES: RENEW AND GET YOUR NAME IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER LIKE THESE PEOPLE!!!!

REGULAR MEMBER: Kenya and David Anderson, Natasha Antovich, Martin and Lorene Atrops, Lisa Bagnatori, Ione Morrison Barber, Doris and Allen Bartshe, David Baxter, Barbara Beausoleil-Zelwer, Barbara Bedayn, Carol and Joan Beierle, Elizabeth Burridge, Amy Cochran, Dorothy Corsetino, Joe Cox, Jeff Craeger, Steve Cunha, Jean Dale, Dennis, Jean Durick, Art Earle, Jim Eaton, Mark Edwards, Carolyn Elsen, Joan Cole Eppen, Alice Fries, Fullis, Fern Furneaux, Fanesh Fix-It Shop, Evelyn Gayman, William Ghtorsa, John Graganski, Dennis Hackenberger, S. Hechtel, Herbert Heidinger, Freddi and James Getler, Louise Hill, Patricia Holland, Susan Hosie, Beatrice Howitt, Sue Imada, Blake Ingraham, Charles and Judith Jerde, Anita Jones, Dr. Henry Juneman, Ann Kadyk, Lasa Kadyk, Katherine Karikka, Chris Kearn, Robert Kettenbach, Agnes Konberg, Gary Kraght, Russel Law, Elizabeth Linscott, Steve Lipshie, Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert Longtin, Chuck Loomis, Linda Lovejoy, Anne Manolis, Michael and Anna Martyn, Gloria Markowitz, Betty Matson, Tim McLaughlin, Ann Mendershausen, Meyers, Charlene Modena, C. Moren, Mt. Shasta Audubon Society, Anne C. Mudge, Adriana Mulder, Jan Nachlinger, Nichole Nedeff, Mrs. C.R. Ricewonger, Martha Nicolls, Larry Oglesby, Rochelle Oldfield, Marc Ordman, Courtenay Owens, Mrs. S. Logan Owens, Ray and Velinda Paranal, Virginia Peterson, Richard Pough, Donna Pozzi, Nancy Price-Robinson, Mr. and Mrs. John Pruyn, Arlene Reveal, Russell Robinson, Mr. and Mrs. Wilson Roessler, Julie Ross, Lee Sales, Fred Sandrock, William T. Schneider, Richard Schwabe, Dave Smart, C.G. Spies, Dale Steele and Laurie and their unborn child, James Strachan, Meryl Sundove, Mel Tanner, Carmen Terry, Randy Thomas, Alan and Andi Tice, Bob and Miriam Toren, Carole Lynn Tunley, David Vollmer, Linda Wade, Genieve Walter, Tanis Walters, Otto Walther, Patsy Warner, Janet Westbrook, Cornelius Wormer, Miriam Youngerman, Dr. and Mrs. Zappala.

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PATRONS: Herbert Cantelow, Richard and Madelyn Falcetano, Hal and Anne Foster, Harry Hill, John Thomas Howell, William Mendoza, Margaret Molarski, George Stroud, Peter Van Der Naillen, James D. Wilson

MONOPHILES: Cherry Franklin, Mt. Diablo Audubon Society, Mary Pfeiffer

MONOMANIACS: Palm Stout

DOUBLE-SCOOP MONOMANIAC: Richard Newberry

Gull and coyote, by Becky Shearin. From our newly printed *Share Water With Mono Lake Color-And-Learn Book* (see p.23).



HELP US SPREAD THE WORD AND RAISE NEEDED FUNDS!
THIS YEAR, FOR CHRISTMAS, GIVE YOUR FRIENDS
(AND YOURSELF) MONO LAKE POSTERS, T-SHIRTS,
CALENDARS, COLOR-AND-LEARN BOOKS, POSTCARD SETS
AND MLC MEMBERSHIPS!

POSTER

Tim Snyder's striking 15" by 22" color photograph of a flock of phalaropes swooping among tufa towers is one of the most spectacular we have ever seen. An eloquent soliloquy by Gray Brechin complements the image. Suitable for framing. \$3.77.

T-SHIRTS

These high-quality T-shirts are silk-screened with Becky Shearin's evocative and colorful design. \$5.50 (kids), \$6.50 (mens) and \$7.50 (womens).

POSTCARDS

Our new set of six 5" by 7" deluxe color postcards are spectacular! The quality of the printing is outstanding, and the photos are the finest we have ever seen. The scenes include owls on tufa, gull and chick, tufa reflections and lake vistas. A brief text explains Mono's plight. Ideal for Christmas cards and notes to friends. Set of six scenes \$3.00.

Our inexpensive 4" by 6" postcards are of better than average quality. Scenes include gull chick, avocet, tufa moonrise, canoeist, swimmers and winter sunrise. Set of nine scenes \$1.50.

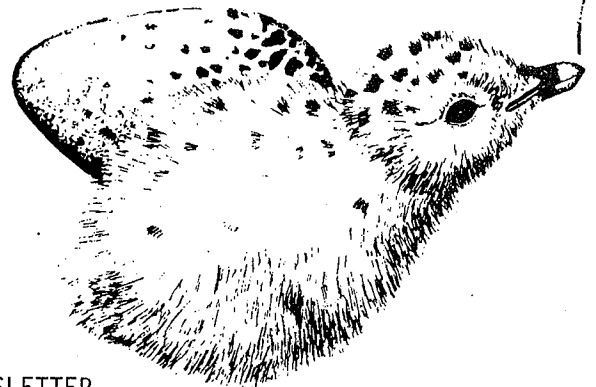
TO ORDER, PLEASE USE THE FORM ON THE BACK OF THIS NEWSLETTER.

CALENDARS

The Mono Lake Calendar for 1981

The Last Wildlands Calendar for 1981, published by Friends of the Earth, features 14 of Joe Holmes' stunning 11" by 13" color photographs of the Mono Lake country, including two of our favorite lake. "We hope," writes David Brower, "that the people who enjoy this calendar in 1981 will help to insure that Mono's ecosystems are in the best of health when the calendar is usable again in 1987, 1998, 2009, 2015, 2026 and so on, by the 6-11-11 year formula that makes calendars recyclable." You'll want to recycle this artistic masterpiece. \$5.95.

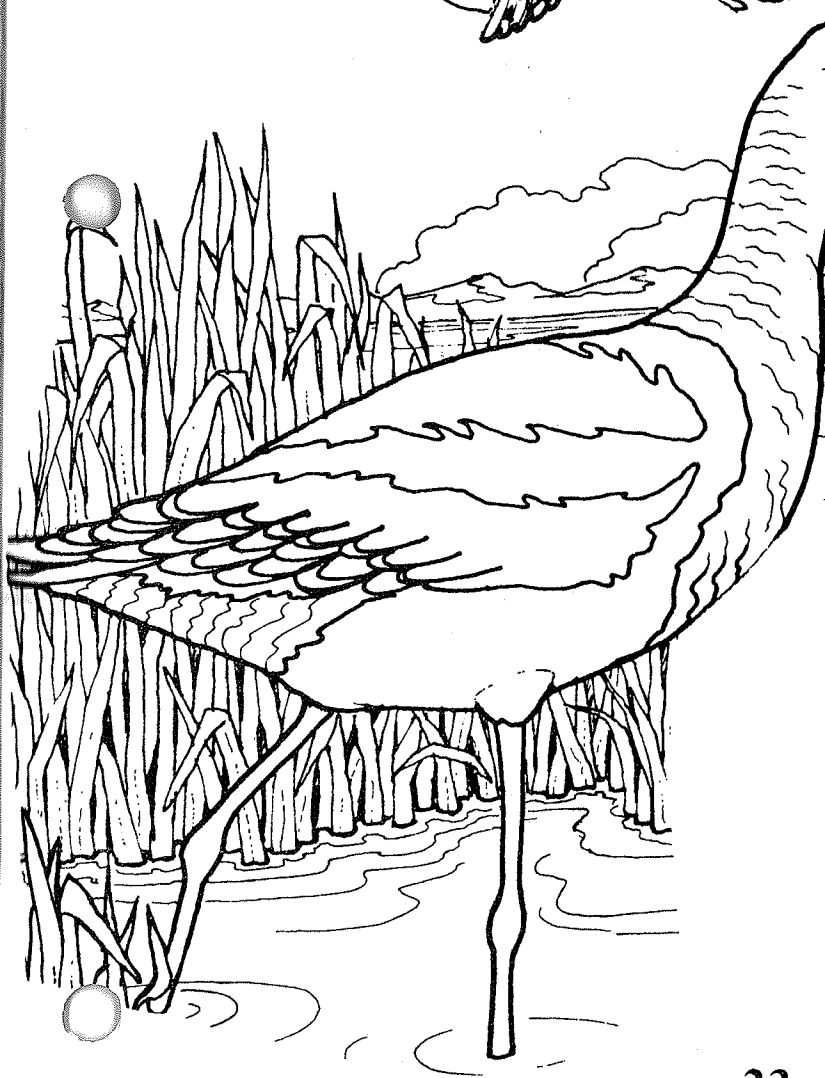
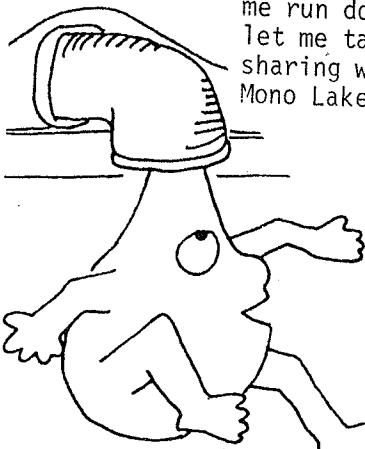
Order early to help save Mono Lake!



Monophiles who are also salesmen: you can help the Mono Lake Committee raise needed funds by selling Mono Lake items to merchants in your area, or by featuring them in your business. We will furnish a wholesale price list upon request, and will even consider a small commission for volunteers who are willing to serve as distributors.

The Share Water With MONO LAKE Color and Learn Book

Hello! Before you let
me run down the drain,
let me talk to you about
sharing water (and saving
Mono Lake)...



*An ecological story and coloring
book for children and adults of
all ages...*

*By Michael Ross, Becky Shearin
and David Gaines*

*A water droplet that was diverted
to a distant metropolis tells
the story of Mono Lake's plight.
Beautiful drawings and a spirited
text explain water cycles,
food webs and other ecological
concepts in a manner every child
will understand and enjoy. Ways
we all can reduce our water
consumption are clearly and
entertainingly presented.*

*The ideal gift... and proceeds
benefit the Mono Lake Committee.*

*\$3.95 postpaid (California
residents add 24¢ sales tax).
Please use the order form on
the back of this newsletter.*

Join us!

MONO LAKE NEEDS YOUR HELP!

I want to help Mono Lake live on.

Here is my contribution for:

- \$10 regular membership
- \$5 "I can't afford more" membership
- \$25 sponsor \$50 patron
- \$100 monophile \$500 monomaniac
- I cannot afford to contribute, but keep me informed.
- I am willing to write letters.
- I am already a member; this is a renewal or additional contribution.
- Please change my address (fill in our **coupon**). My old zip code is _____.
- I'm interested in promoting local publicity

Please fill out this coupon and send to:

MONO LAKE COMMITTEE
 PO Box 29
 Lee Vining, CA 93541

Make checks payable to: The Mono Lake Committee
 Contributions are NOT tax-deductible.

name _____
 address _____
 city _____ state _____ zip _____

YES!, I want to make a **TAX-DEDUCTIBLE** donation to the Mono Lake cause...

These funds will support non-lobbying expenses, in particular, education, research and the Mono Lake lawsuit.

Please make checks payable to:
 NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY,
 FRIEND OF THE EARTH, or
 MONO LAKE RESEARCH GROUP
 (research support only)

Order Early For Christmas... And Help Buy The Lake In The New Year

Please send:
 QUANTITY _____

- _____ Mono Lake Posters @ \$4.00 each
- _____ Mono Lake Color-and-Learn Books @ \$3.50 each
- _____ Mono Country Calendars @ \$5.95 each
- _____ Mens T-Shirts (blue or beige; S, M, L, XL) @ \$6.50 each
- _____ Womens T-Shirts (blue or beige; S, M, L) @ \$7.50 each
- _____ Childrens T-Shirts (blue or beige; S, M, L) @ \$6.50 each
- _____ Deluxe Postcards, Set of 6 Scenes @ \$3.00 each
- _____ Inexpensive Postcards, Set of 9 Scenes @ \$1.50 each
- _____ Ecological Study of Mono Lake (the 185-page technical report resulting from the 1976 National Science Foundation grant; includes update) @ \$7.00 each
- _____ Ecological Study Update alone @ \$.50 each

SUBTOTAL _____
 6% SALES TAX _____
(Ca. residents only)
 SHIPPING AND HANDLING _____
(please add 15%)

TOTAL ENCLOSED

Make checks payable to
 The Mono Lake Committee

THE MONO LAKE COMMITTEE
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 us prevent wasted postage funds.

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