

AUDUBON PUBLISHES "IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS OF CALIFORNIA"

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Pasadena, CA, Wednesday, March 10, 2004 - Audubon California is pleased to announce the release of "Important Bird Areas of California," the culmination of a three-year effort to identify and describe key areas around the state that are most important to birds. This landmark publication represents the combined effort of hundreds of advisors from throughout California, including resource agency officials, Audubon members, and field biologists, and helps set a course for continued conservation of these special places.

"Important Bird Areas of California" provides current data for roughly 150 sites throughout the state. Nearly 300 pages long, it features dozens of photos of selected Important Bird Areas (IBAs) and the sensitive bird species that rely on them. Information in the book was thoroughly reviewed and edited by a team of experts on California bird distribution.

With this initial documentation of its IBAs, California joins a worldwide effort, coordinated by BirdLife International in partnership with Audubon, to identify local concentrations of the world's most imperiled bird species, as well as sites that host exceptionally large aggregations of key groups of species during breeding, migration and/or winter. The book will be distributed to local landowners, government officials, biologists, planners, and conservationists to raise awareness about the important role each location plays in supporting productive bird populations. The goal is to help these leaders make sound land use and management decisions that protect our great natural heritage.

Over the next few years, Audubon California will identify partners associated with these Important Bird Areas, and with the help of its 51 local chapters, develop monitoring programs where appropriate and conservation strategies for each.

"By distributing this book widely, we hope to raise awareness about all of California's IBAs," said Dan Cooper, Director of Bird Conservation for Audubon California. "In particular we want to emphasize the more threatened sites - places that may be lost forever to birds and other wildlife unless immediate conservation action is taken."

Please contact Audubon California to obtain copies of Important Bird Areas of California. Books are currently available through Audubon California for \$19.99 + \$5.00 shipping and handling. Bulk rates are available. A limited number of books are also available for purchase at the Audubon Center in Debs Park.

Audubon is dedicated to protecting birds and other wildlife and the habitat that supports them. Our national network of community-based nature centers and chapters, scientific and educational programs, and advocacy on behalf of areas sustaining important bird populations, engage millions of people of all ages and backgrounds in positive conservation experiences.

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