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## Yahi Winter 2016/2017 Outings and Events

*Coordinated by Alan Mendoza*

[www.sierraclub.org/mother-lode/yahi/outings](http://www.sierraclub.org/mother-lode/yahi/outings)

## Rooftop Solar Power

*By Suzette Welch, Yahi ExCom Committee Member*

As a Sierra Club member, you certainly care about the environment and the threat of climate change. You might have thought about solar power for your house but don't know where to begin. In this article I hope to get you excited about the idea of rooftop solar, give you some websites to check out for information, and give you some contractor's names so that you can contact a local expert to help you.

Late in May 2016, California installed its 4,000th megawatt of rooftop solar. California now adds more than 1,000 MW annually and the latest state modelling assumes 18,000 MW of rooftop solar by 2030. Last Sunday California was consuming approximately 27,000 MW at 1:00 p.m.. The day the bulk of that demand is met with rooftop solar is coming faster than you might think. These milestones shows how people are making an impact in fighting climate change, and rooftop solar is becoming a credible alternative to fossil fuels.

“Rooftop by rooftop, solar power is becoming a positive force for cleaner energy, jobs and the environment, and California is leading the way” said Evan Gillespie, Director of the Sierra Club’s My Generation Campaign, in a news release.

**A Mother Jones Article Jan/Feb 2016 by Tim Jones stated that** “There are many good reasons to go solar, including the possibility to save money on your electric bill. Meanwhile, the more people who adopt solar panels, the more the price drops, as panel manufacturers and installers get more efficient. This is already happening, as the cost of solar has plummeted 73 percent since 2006. Industry insiders have a rule of thumb that every time production of panels doubles, solar prices drop 20 percent.



Then there's the powerful "Prius effect," wherein the conspicuous use of a green product like an electric vehicle or solar panels prompts neighbors to follow suit. That growing customer base can be a source of pressure on governors and state legislators to ramp up their climate ambitions. Politicians who see solar on their constituents' rooftops are "going to be encouraged to dream big," said Nathanael Greene, director of renewable-energy policy at the Natural Resources Defense Council. California, the country's leading solar state, recently boosted its renewable portfolio standards to one of the most ambitious in the country, requiring utilities to get half of their power from renewables by 2030. By 2045, Hawaiian utilities will get 100 percent of their energy from renewables, in accordance with a law passed last summer.

"The solar panels have the side effect of making many top climate change emitters – coal and natural gas power plants – obsolete," said Ray Pringle, Committee Member for the My Generation Campaign. "When you put one of these solar installations on your roof, you're not just saving money; you're helping our country get off the fossil fuels that cause climate disruption."

Considering the question of purchase over leasing here are some thoughts:

Ryan Willemsen, Founder and CEO of Solar to the People says "The best savings are pretty much always from a cash purchase, because you don't have the cost of the loan interest over time," Typing a San Diego address into their savings search engine, he found that even without incentives the average installation should pay for itself in 8 years. Over the course of 20 years, owners who pay cash for their systems save about \$26,780 over their typical utility bills. Even if they borrowed the money to pay for that system @ 5%, they would save \$20,180. "There are a lot of loan providers out there, and pretty low rates," said Willemsen.



#### Owning vs Leasing:

**In 2012 we paid \$21,141.00 for a 4.1 kilowatt system. This cost can be partially offset by tax incentives. The Federal government provides a 30% tax credit on total installation cost placed by 12/31/2019. To qualify you must own your own home and own your solar panels. After that the tax credit goes down through 2021. This means that you take off of the federal income tax that you owe up to 30% of what you spent for solar. If you owe less in taxes than this you can carry over the credit for one year. If you lease your solar panels the installation company gets the tax credit. There may still also be other local rebates from your city, county, or utility.**

#### Leasing makes sense if you:

- Are primarily interested in using electricity generated from renewable resources, rather than maximizing the financial benefits of installing a solar panel system;
- Want to avoid the responsibility of maintenance or repairs for a solar panel system;
- Are ineligible for federal or state investment tax credits resulting from your investment in a solar panel system; and/or
- Do not want to wait until the following year to receive the financial benefits of tax credits.

- Want the solar company to own and maintain the solar power system.
- Solar leases are generally for 20 to 25 years, at which point you can renew your agreement or purchase the system outright.
- Even if you do lease there are savings between 10 percent and 30 percent off the prices you pay your utility for electricity, depending on your property and the incentives in your state

There is a real incentive for homeowners to install solar panels. A study by National Renewable Energy Labs found that homes with solar panels on average sold 20 percent faster than other homes, and for 17 percent more money than non-solar homes. And according to the Appraisal Journal, your home's value rises \$20,000 for every \$1,000 in reduced yearly electricity cost.

**Sierra Club has an app that will help you get started on home solar exploration. Go to <http://content.sierraclub.org/solar>.**

To get an estimate on costs you can go to the web site developed by the U.S. Dept. of Energy [www.solar-estimate.org](http://www.solar-estimate.org). and plug in your information.

*This estimate will tell you:*

- The size of system you need;
- The roof space you need;
- The incentives and tax credits you get;
- A ballpark cost based on industry averages;
- Pricing from local installers (if available);



You will get an instant ballpark estimate, a detailed estimate by email, and be contacted by one or more local installers who will verify the details of your estimate.

**Or if you prefer You may want to contact a local solar company. These contractors take a look at your property, get information on your current electricity bill and future needs so that they can give you specific information about how many panels you will need and good panel placement. It is a good idea to talk to several contractors to get their ideas and estimates. A few of local the companies are listed below:**

Sungevity is the company that is affiliated with the Sierra club. Just Google: Sierra Club Sungevity to get to the webpage where you put in contact information and they get in touch with you. Sungevity will donate a minimum of \$750 for every home that goes solar using their company and Sierra Club sends the money back to your local chapter. Unfortunately at this time we don't have any Yahi Group member or members who want to take on the Sungevity solar project which would enable Yahi Group to get the donation.

**WING SOLAR & WOOD ENERGY IN RED BLUFF. [WWW.WINGSOLAR.NET](http://WWW.WINGSOLAR.NET). 530-527-0557, 1-800-492-4061. THEY HAVE BEEN IN BUSINESS FOR 39 YEARS. THIS IS THE CONTRACTOR THAT WE USED. THEY WERE ON TIME, DID ALL OF THE LICENSING AND PAPER WORK, GAVE US A GOOD PRICE, AND WERE REALLY NICE PEOPLE TO DEAL WITH. THEY ALSO MADE A GOOD DESIGN PLAN FOR OUR PROPERTY SO THAT WE DIDN'T HAVE TO CUT DOWN ANY TREES.**



**URBAN DESIGN SOLAR HAS BEEN IN BUSINESS FOR 10 YEARS. THEY ARE LOCATED 2260 PARK AVE., CHICO 95928 530 809-1079. [WWW.URBANDESIGNSOLAR.COM](http://WWW.URBANDESIGNSOLAR.COM). IF YOU SAY THAT YOU WERE REFERRED BY THE YAHU GOUPI SIERRA CLUB THEY WILL DONATE \$250.00, OR MORE DEPENDING ON THE SIZE OF THE SYSTEM, TO THE CLUB.**

**INTEGRITY SOLAR [HTTPS://INTEGRITYCOMPLETE.COM](https://INTEGRITYCOMPLETE.COM) HAS BEEN IN BUSINESS FOR EIGHTEEN YEARS AT 2 LOCATIONS REDDING: 5213 INDUSTRIAL WAY, ANDERSON, CA. 96007 (530) 365-9100. CHICO: 4365 RAWLEIGH COURT UNIT C, CHICO, CA. 95973 (855) 368-7765.**



Sunpower By Alternative Energy Systems has been in business for twelve year. They are located at 13620 Hwy.99 N. Chico 95973 and in December will be opening a design center in the New Earth Shopping Center at East and Cohasset in Chico (530) 433-4027

[www.solarenergyforlife.com](http://www.solarenergyforlife.com).

If you say that you were referred by Yahi Group Sierra Club the club will get \$500.

GRID IS AN ORGANIZATION TO CONTACT IF YOU ARE A LOW-INCOME FAMILY. GRID Alternatives [www.grid solar.org](http://www.grid solar.org). 866 921-4696 GRID is a nonprofit organization providing no- to very-low-cost solar power for low-income families while providing hands-on installation experience for job seekers and community volunteers. They also administer California's two dedicated single-family low-income solar incentive programs, Single Family Affordable Solar Homes (SASH) (California Public Utilities Commission) and the [Low-Income Weatherization Program](#) - solar component (CA Dept. of Community Services and Development).

Yet another alternative is to go to <https://www.californiasolarstatistics.ca.gov>. This link will also help you find a local solar contractor.

So as you can see there are many reasons for you to go solar and now is a perfect time to get started. Once you get your own rooftop solar panels you may want to move on, as we did, to buying an electric vehicle. Our 4.1KW rooftop solar system provides enough power for our household needs plus powering our electric car. Even with the car we produce more power than we need per year.

If you are interested in exploring the ownership of an electric car go to Sierra Clubs app. - <https://content.sierraclub.org/evguide>.

Enjoy the power of the sun.

## Yahi Holiday Potluck December 16

By Suzette Welch

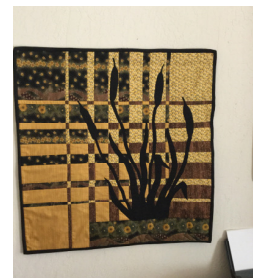


**Friday, December 16, 2016** will be the date for our annual Holiday Potluck. Once again it is to be held at Valley Oaks Village 1950 Wild Oak Lane, Chico, Ca. Party starts at 5:30 pm with dinner starting at 6:00 pm. Limited parking so please carpool. Bring your own beer and wine. There will be a \$5 charge for room rental and cleanup.

We will again have a raffle. The prizes are a beautiful quilt made by Annette Carey and a mosaic flower pot filled with garden supplies made by Celeste Garcia.

Our speaker for the evening will be David Samuels. David is a retired science teacher who has been a volunteer docent at numerous national parks and is an enthusiastic amateur astronomer. He will share pictures and stories of his travel in Vietnam earlier this year.

The annual Holiday Party is a good time to visit with old friends and meet some new people. So bring your favorite dish and plan to have a pleasant evening.



*Hand-Crafted Quilt  
by Annette Carey*

If you plan on attending, please notify Suzette Welch by e-mail [booksontape@rocketmail.com](mailto:booksontape@rocketmail.com) or phone 342-9214 stating number of people in your party and what you plan to bring.



This action-packed 5-day event celebrates the remarkable journey of millions of waterfowl and raptors along the Pacific Flyway that call the Northern Sacramento Valley their home during the winter months.

REGISTRATION BEGINS IN EARLY DECEMBER

Visit our website for information and registration. <http://www.snowgoosefestival.org/>

You can follow us on Facebook, too! <https://www.facebook.com/SnowGooseFestival/>

## Online Ballots for Yahi Executive Committee Elections

It is time to vote for people to represent you on the Executive Committee (ExCom) of the local Yahi Group of the Sierra Club. This year we have four candidates: Mary Kay Benson, Jane Coleman and Chris Nelson are new candidates. Suzette Welch is running for re-election.

**Yahi members will receive a link to their ballot in an e-mail from the Yahi Group.** Read the Candidates' Statements, and show your support by printing the ballot and voting. Please take a few minutes to participate in this important process.

### Candidate Statements

#### **Mary Kay Benson**

I have been an environmentalist for 36 years, worked in non-profits as an Admin Manager (last <http://www.openhand.org/about-us>). I am also retired and an artist. I volunteered for Bernie Sanders campaign, and Frack Free Butte County until we won Yes on E! Now I also volunteer for Protect CA Food, in a related state wide effort. We are trying to get CA Government and Water Boards to stop the practice of irrigating our food crops with oil wastewater, which our whole country eats and we export.

I was recruited by Dave Garcia. It would be an honor to serve Yahi Group Board. I also recruited Wendy LeMaster, a s/hero community organizer.

#### **Jane Coleman**

I would like to become a member of the Executive Board in order to further the general cause of the Sierra Club, as well as to help the local community become more informed and involved in environmental issues.

I have been a Sierra Club member since 1984, and have most recently been involved in the local anti-fracking campaign. Previously, I spent 20 years (off and on) fighting to keep the Bidwell Ranch property permanently protected as open space.

#### **Chris Nelson**

Chris Nelson is a local peace and justice activist. She is the author of [Veggie Voyagers; An Eco-Friendly, Low Budget Loop of North America's Wild Places Powered by Used Cooking Oil](#). She is actively involved with Chico350, KZFR, BEC as well as the Chico Peace and Justice Center. Her hobbies include canoeing, back country skiing and hiking as well as caring for the land where she lives.

#### **Suzette Welch**

My name is Suzette Welch. I am asking for your vote again so that I can continue to be on Yahi ExCom.

My husband and I enjoy canoeing, walking, and biking especially vacationing by bike. I joined Sierra Club in 1969 and I have been on the Yahi ExCom for 6 years and co-chair for 4 of those years. I am very interested in working to decrease global warming, preserve fresh water, restore clean air and protect forests including those in urban areas.

# A Call to Activism Following the U.S. Presidential Election.

By Grace Maria Marvin, Yahi Group Conservation Chair

At statewide Sierra Club meetings, the weekend following the presidential election, participants heard the call --to those disturbed by Trump's political climate-- to speak out against bigotry and for our air, water, wildlife, and land. (I was participating in the the joint Sierra Club California and California Nevada Regional Conservation Committee meetings in San Luis Obispo.) Some of us pointed out that we S.C. members need, now more than ever, to listen better to our fellow human beings -- not just in our usual circles -- about their personal concerns. Numerous people have little hope of achieving enough economic success to care for personal health and other basic needs, with many experiencing attacks simply because they are not male, white, heterosexual or they do not 'look like Americans.' We need to help reach out to them not only for their sake, but also because we need them as allies seeking economic and environmental justice.

Kathryn Phillips, Director of Sierra Club-California, also did not stick to environmental issues at this meeting: she said she heard after the Trump victory, that wearing a “safety pin” is now becoming a sign to those who are fearful about their own security that the wearer is someone to whom they can safely turn for help. So, she asked us to consider wearing such pins. Immigrants and refugees are being threatened with deportation or getting harassed. And some activists are being treated with violence, such as members of the Standing Rock Indian tribe and other activists in North Dakota. (We were urged to help them out by sending tepees, sleeping bags, and warm clothes.)

Keynote speaker Aaron Mair, a striking, black New Yorker and president of the Sierra Club (Michael Brune is the Director), argued persuasively that the right white wing must not be permitted to keep trying to divide us against each other. Greater purchasing power makes many in the “middle class” *feel* that they are separated from lower classes, but Mair's social class analysis demonstrates that we all *share real economic problems* generated by wealthy right wing conservatives and their corporations. Thus, we progressives and the Sierra Club itself, need good allies. We must join together with the better labor unions such as the SEIU, as well as with the NAACP, and numerous grassroots efforts to show Trump's falsehood, that is, in making Blacks, Latinos, and other “diverse” groups the scapegoats for our country's problems. Together we will be stronger and, then, ever more assertive about what we want -- especially *clean* energy, soil, water, forest preservation, and jobs with living wages.

Such corporate right wing control helps explain why many of the disenfranchised suffer from polluted water and air -- problems that likely will be compounded by harmful federal policies ahead. For example, the new administration's denial of climate change will mean greater support of energy companies which will more freely engage in harmful polluting, drilling, and mining. It was pointed out, however, that we in California are very lucky compared to most states in the country, because of the pro -environmental learning of many of our state and regional bodies, but we must be ready to strongly defend such policies when it becomes necessary. For example, we need to strongly support current state and local legislation



that is combating climate change, protecting groundwater, and insisting on environmental justice, .e.g., preventing or alleviating environmental pollution especially evident in poor communities.

Correspondingly, the Water Committee to which I belong has as top priorities 1-preventing the Twin Tunnels and inappropriate dams, 2- ensuring good local SGMA (Sustainable Groundwater Management Act) policies, and 3- supporting more water flow of rivers to the Bay Delta. At the same time, we need to consider creating more “white papers” clearly explaining technical conservation issues to people in need of environmental changes. Other topics covered at these meetings included environmental problems with some Marijuana plantings, Population issues, Transportation , Coastal and Desert committees, and Stopping Clear Cutting.

[www.sierraclub.org/california/cnrcc/stop-clearcutting-ca](http://www.sierraclub.org/california/cnrcc/stop-clearcutting-ca)).

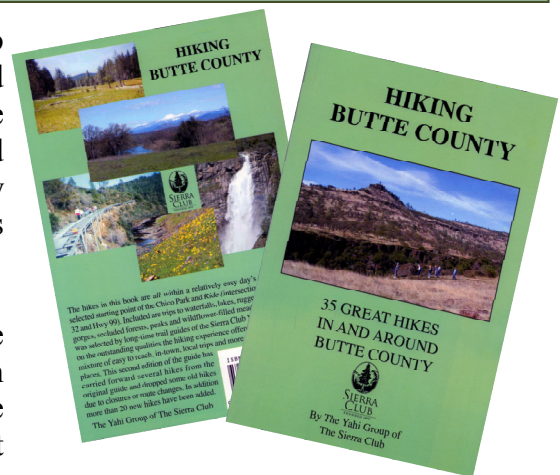
Two issues of special interest to you may be 1- work on local renewable energy projects via Community Choice Aggregation companies vs. for profit out-of-the-area energy corporations. (Contact Energy Climate Committee member Samuel Golding if you want to work on that: 415 -404-5283; [golding@communitychoicepartners.com](mailto:golding@communitychoicepartners.com)), 2- For wildlife and wildness issues, the north state Co-Chair is Anne Henny ( 510- 289-2294).

LET US ENJOY, EXPLORE AND PROTECT THIS PLANET EVEN BETTER, henceforth, BY WORKING with sympathetic people and organizations across this great state and country.

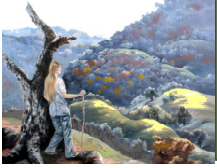
## Hiking Butte County

*Hiking Butte County* is a wonderful field guide to hikes in and around Butte County. It was assembled by the outings leaders in the Yahi Group under the direction of Alan Mendoza. In it you will find descriptions, directions, distances and difficulty information for 35 hikes. This is the only book of its type for this area.

You can purchase it for \$11.95 at Trailside Adventures in Paradise and in Chico at Mountain Sports and Lyons Books. Or you can order one directly from Alan for \$10 plus shipping. Contact Alan Mendoza, 891-8789 or [ajmendoza@prodigy.net](mailto:ajmendoza@prodigy.net).







River Watcher:

## The Long Journey

By Rex Burress

The end of October indicates that most of the waterfowl migrants have arrived in California marshes after making the long journey through the airways from the Far North.

A number of species tend to make long treks in quest of food or shelter. Many animals from lemmings to monarch butterflies to wildebeest to salmon make migratory journeys, but birds, especially ducks and geese, are the most obvious. How could you miss a hundred thousand snow geese drifting out of the sky to settle on the sanctuary waters of Gray Lodge or similar refuges in the Sacramento valley? To witness the wonder of flight and the arrival of waterfowl flocks is a sight to behold with amazement.

The annual coming of the migratory waterfowl was a thrilling sight that kept me hanging around a naturalist job at Oakland's Lake Merritt Wildlife Refuge for 32 years. "People are for the birds" applied to me as well as many other dedicated nature interpreters, defenders of wildlife, and outdoor advocates scattered around the country.

Oh glorious day to see feathered friends returning to welcoming waters for the winter, and even to Lake Merritt's refuge, regardless of being right in the middle of a metropolis. Ancestral instincts thousands of years old linger in their brains, and even though a stone city has been built around the lake, still they come, recognizing a refuge home that continues to welcome the arrival of scaup, canvasbacks, goldeneyes, ruddy ducks, coots, all joining the resident Canada geese, mallards, and kin.

At valley refuges, mostly dabbling ducks and snow goose migrants return to occupy the shallow marshes, although with winged birds, you never know what surprise species might appear, to the bird watcher's delight and the hunter's choice. Yes, some are hunted outside the refuges in a managed manner that adheres to "the harvest of the surplus is good conservation" policy.

The birds are free to choose their flyways, an action as mysterious as their navigation in the long journey to a distant destination.

One of my jobs at Lake Merritt was catching and banding ducks retrieved from a wire water trap between two of the refuge islands. The motive was to learn more about waterfowl travel and tendencies by attaching a numbered metal band to the leg, in hopes some finder will report recovery information. Two pintail ducks banded at Lake Merritt in the 1940's turned up in Siberia 20 years later!

I was happy to work at the oldest wildlife refuge in western America, established in 1870, as well as being the first banding station, started in 1926.

For me, the joy was in netting that wild bird that normally stayed at a distance out of gunshot range, and meeting it eye to eye. You could see the colorful, water repellent feathers closeup. You could sense its wild spirit and feel the heartbeats before releasing it to the wind, imaginatively taking part of me with it on long journey's to far away places with strange sounding names. Over perilous wilderness and through wolf and hawk and hunter's predatory recesses, the adventure into the great unknown calls for repetition, like autumn leaves over and over again, always old, always new. God bless the migratory birds!

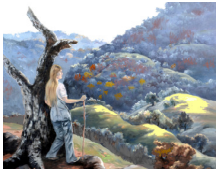
*To a Waterfowl –William Cullen Bryant*

*"Whither, 'midst falling dew,/While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,/Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue/Thy solitary way?"*

*Vainly the fowler's eye/Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,/As, darkly painted on the crimson sky,/Thy figure floats along.*

*All day thy wings have fanned,/At that far height, the cold, thin atmosphere,/Yet stoop not weary, to the welcome land,/Though the dark night is near.*

*Thou'rt gone! The abyss of heaven/Hath swallowed up thy form; yet on my heart/Deeply hath sunk the lesson thou hast given,/And shall not soon depart."*



**River Watcher:**

## **Rebounding Frogs**

*By Rex Burress*

While reading about Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frogs recovering from near extinction, it occurred to me how effective wildlife management can be when applied properly.

Most imbalances in nature are caused by social tinkering with wildlife habitats, and that affects the wild inhabitants that live there. It seems the frog downfall started when trout were stocked in Sierra lakes where *Rana muscosa* lives, and they were devoured by the hungry fish. Stocking fish there was stopped and the frogs rebounded. Pleasing sportsmen by introducing game species, even though fishermen and hunters provide funds for wildlife provisions, doesn't always work unless biologists keep close watch on wildlife populations.

One of the 21 true frog species in North America north of Mexico is the bullfrog, originally native east of the Rockies, but was introduced into western America during the early 1900's. Bullfrogs are quite common now in California, but are considered an invasive species because of their carnivorous predation on smaller native frogs; in fact, they will eat about any animal they can swallow. The big rumper, known for its bullhorn belting out of swampy haunts, is also a target for human leg-hunters. It's sad to say that there is a season to stalk frog's for their legs. Some food foragers consider frog legs delectable...at the expense of the beautiful upper body.

Kids especially, find frogs fascinating, and who hasn't been impressed with their leaping ability? Nature has many high-jumpers, including fleas, beach hoppers, grasshoppers, kangaroos, and kangaroo rats, but frogs are the greatest attraction. They are both loveable and scary. A harmless, leaping frog usually generates a variety of screams. A squirrel turned loose during church services is nothing compared with a big bullfrog ready to spring! Who would do such a thing; Tom Sawyer? To be smacked with a slimy blob propelled up to six feet is something to consider! Or you can just scream.

When I worked at Oakland Nature Center, we had a traveling show of animals we used in nature education, and once I had a giant bullfrog that I took along for classroom show and tell. I don't think 'sure-handed Rex' loss control, but the frog got loose in the schoolroom. Screams; I never saw anything like it! Panic led to panic and kids were standing on top of desks yelling their heads off, totally out of control...and loving it! No wonder the green monster was leaping around the room!

Harmless? Did I say harmless? Many frog species have poison glands that are able to secrete a toxin that can be an irritant, especially in toads. Being an amphibian means they must have a damp environment to keep their air-breathing/water absorbing skin moist. Down in South America there is a brightly colored poison-dart tree frog that has lethal toxins. Indians dip their arrows in the sticky substances to bring down a monkey immediately.

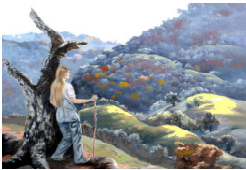
Some frogs have holding teeth, except toads have none, but I've never seen a frog bite someone. Even when the bullfrog is bellowing, they keep their mouth shut, depending on a ballooning throat pouch for amplification. But when they open to eat, a long sticky tongue is shot out to engulf the target.

Of course we know about the incredible metamorphic transformation from a watery tadpole to an adult frog. In an amazing sequence, a legless, algae-munching, gilled-larvae-polywog, advances to a tailless, moist-skinned amphibian with strong hind legs, carnivorous characteristics, and an adaptation to live on land. There are about 6, 679 species of frogs and toads in the world. Hallelujah!

*"The frog does not drink up the pond in which it lives."*

*--Indian Proverb*

*"Chico Teichert Pond lovers wear a button that says, "Save Teichert Ponds before I croak!," with a vibrant green and smiling frog called 'Froggie' perched on a log on the waters of a pond half healthy, half overrun with cattails and algae." --Ashiah Scharaga;Mercury-Register*



**River Watcher:**

## **The Coming of Conservation**

*By Rex Burress*

In reviewing a conservation article left at the Feather River Nature Center by member Susan Gilbert, it occurred to me that conserving America's natural resources was long in coming for the four centuries after Columbus's arrival in 1492.

The article, *The Green Giant*, by Jim Sterba, ( in the Wall Street Journal, of all places), reflected largely on the era of the Sierra Club and founder John Muir in 1892 and first executive director David Brower in 1952, but recounting the environmental history that led up to the present-day resource perils, is alarming. Where were the visionaries that could have changed the course of concern about the planet for the future?

The first couple hundred years after Plymouth Rock were especially appalling. It was "cut and dig baby, cut and dig," It was parallel with Sarah Palin's "dig baby,dig" attitude toward oil and the Alaskan frontier.

The European settlers looked upon the new world as a hideous wilderness "full of wild beasts and wild men" for them to conquer and use, and it mostly remained that way until the middle 1900's when environmental awareness became more pronounced. By then, most of the eastern forests had been cut a couple times, major dams built, roads established, and all of the country claimed for various projects. People like Theodore Roosevelt and John Muir started a park and refuge sense of saving resources, but conservation of the land was slow to come.

Enter David Brower, who spear-headed the Sierra Club and Friends of the Earth into formidable forces in defense of wildlife and habitat. Retaining park land had already been a challenging time with political forces gnawing away at any gains, as already Muir had lost the battle to save Hetch Hetchy valley from a dam IN Yosemite Park in 1913, a year after Brower was born, and a year before Muir died. Soon after Brower became Sierra Club's director in 1952, he was embroiled in opposing dams, especially in National Parks, as he believed, like Muir, that development in declared parks was off limits to private gain. Brower succeeded



in stopping two dams in the Grand Canyon, and two on the Green River, but lost in the building of Glen Canyon dam.

I met David Brower at an East Bay Regional Park District event once, where I displayed my painting of Joaquin Miller holding a shovel among the redwoods. We discussed the significance of the shovel that I contended was a symbol of Joaquin's love of trees and his planting of 75,000 trees in the barren Oakland Hills in 1886. Brower seemed pleased and withdrew his impression that the shovel suggested to him digging dams and disrupting the Earth. That was also the year that I met Roger Tory Peterson, famous bird artist, and Robert Bateman, renowned wildlife artist. A banner year of inspiration.

Some economists eager for profit, called preservation ideas of Brower as a case of local greed versus national need. To them, Brower's brand of conservationists seemed slanted toward "urban bird-watchers, the daffodil wing of nature lovers."

Say what you want, but it's the "little old ladies" with their binoculars and daffodils that have led many campaigns to save the environment. One of the most notable being the saving of the egrets when they were being slaughtered for the fancy breeding plumage "plumes" to decorate ladies hats in the late 1800's! Not all women believed in killing an egret for vanity. That movement led to the formation of the Audubon Society.

In 1988, Paul F. Covel, first municipal naturalist west of the Rockies who founded the Oakland Lake Merritt Naturalist Program, wrote a book, "Beacons Along a Naturalist's Trail" The book told about California naturalists and innovators in which he tells about 11 outstanding local environmental advocates not widely known but giants in their time and place. Five were women. Their stories deserve universal recognition for aiding in saving much of the bay and advocating nature on a par with Rachael Carson, although they "thought globally but acted locally."

It is with utmost appreciation that the nature community recognizes environmental leaders of the past and the contributions they made to our storehouse of nature knowledge.

*"A sense of history should be the most precious gift of science and of the arts." --Aldo Leopold*

*"Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts. There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature—the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after the winter." --Rachael Carson*

*The battle we have fought, and are still fighting, for the forests is a part of the eternal conflict between right and wrong, and we cannot expect to see the end of it. So we must count on watching and striving for these trees, and should always be glad to find anything so surely good and noble to strive for."--John Muir*

*We do not inherit the Earth from our fathers, we are borrowing it from our children."--David Brower*

# YAH! Club Information

## Executive Committee

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For submissions, comments, or inquiries, contact Louise Casey, 872-9159, [YAH!news@comcast.net](mailto:YAH!news@comcast.net). Please include name, phone number, and address with each submittal. Short, single-topic articles are preferred. Deadlines for proposed articles and letters to the editor: February 1, May 1, August 1, and November 1.

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# The Last Word



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