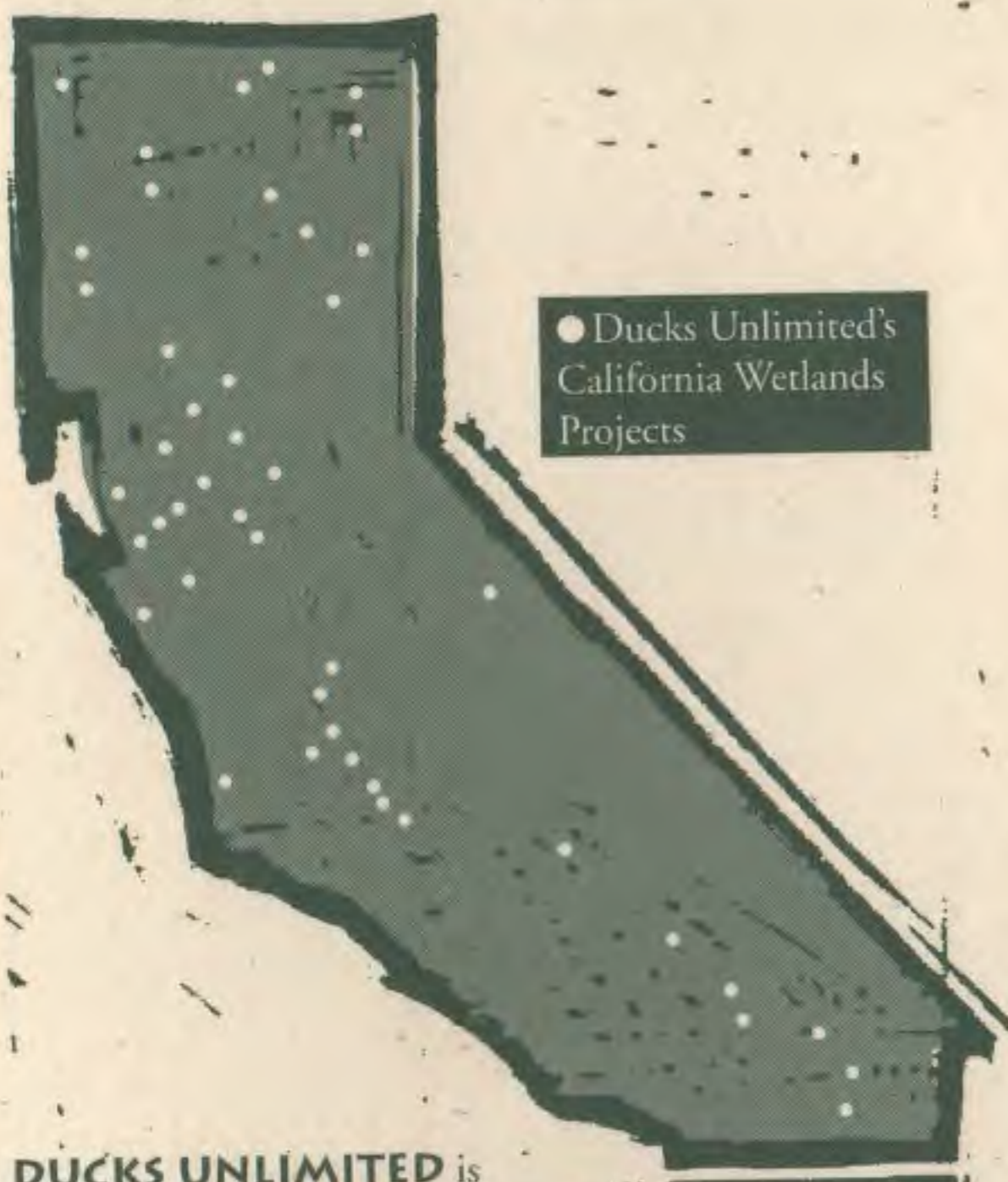


THE PACIFIC FLYWAY— CALIFORNIA'S RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE



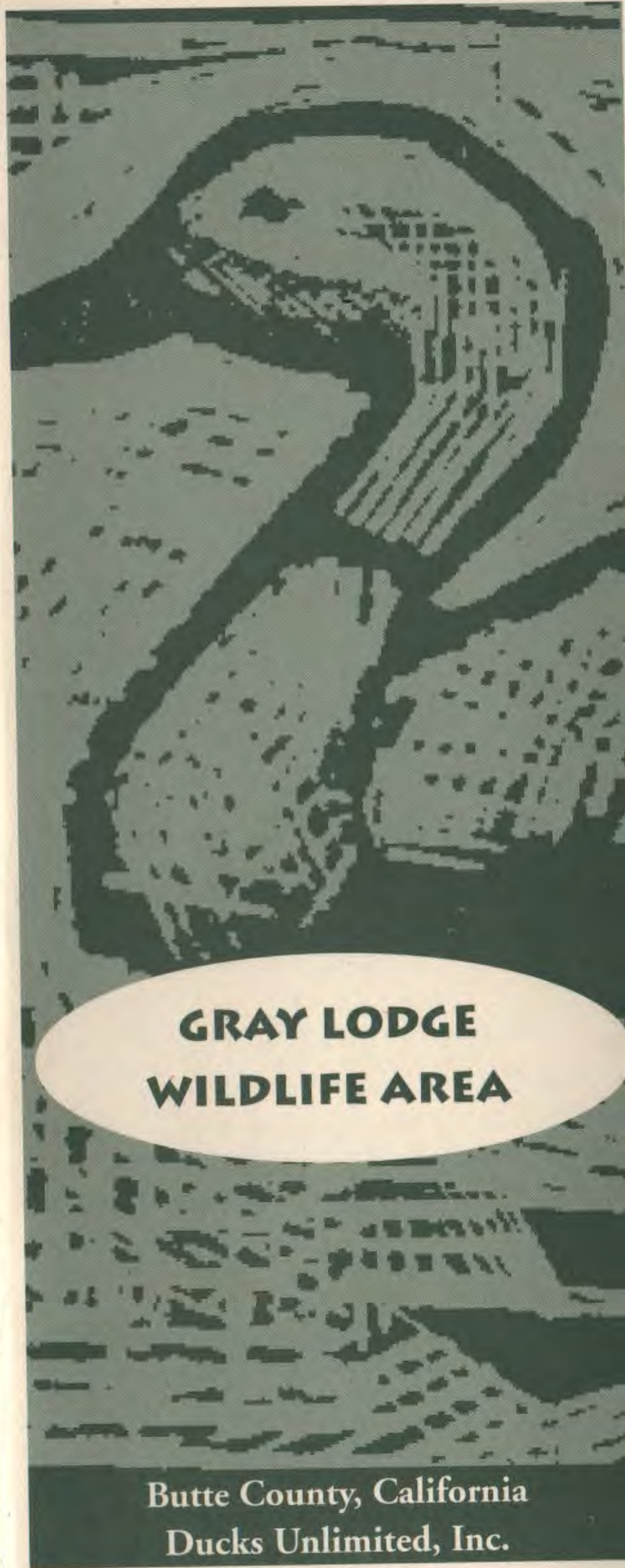
DUCKS UNLIMITED is an expert at taking care of wetlands. Since it was started in 1937, DU has raised \$819 million to protect and restore over 7 million acres of wetlands all across North America. Here in California, DU has projects to enhance the Pacific Flyway on over 100 wildlife preserves.

YOU CAN JOIN the Ducks Unlimited Junior Greenwings! For more information please call 916-363-8257.

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GRAY LODGE WILDLIFE AREA

Butte County, California
Ducks Unlimited, Inc.

WELCOME TO THE GRAY LODGE WILDLIFE AREA!



Every year, millions of ducks, geese and swans fly to California. They are leaving their nesting grounds in Canada, Alaska and other northern places, and flying south for winter habitat. Why do they come here?

Birds come here to avoid the winter freeze in the north, because there will be no food there. The mild winters farther south mean that they will find food and habitat here.

This mass flight of birds is called a "migration." Some birds migrate to California to spend winters and some migrate to spend summers. They need to rest and find food. So ducks and other migratory birds stop at a "wetland."



A wetland is a river, a swamp, a marsh or an area that remains covered with shallow water where many plants and animals live together. They all depend on each other for survival. These plants, insects, fish, frogs, snakes, mammals, birds and other creatures, along with the air, water, soil and rocks together are called an "ecosystem."

Birds have flown along the same routes for hundreds and hundreds of years. There are four great bird routes through the United States: the Central Flyway, the Mississippi Flyway, the Atlantic Flyway and our own migration route through California, the "Pacific Flyway."

The Pacific Flyway is like a highway in the sky for migrating birds. Eight to ten million waterfowl use the Pacific Flyway each year. Many of these birds that nest in Canada and the Arctic migrate through or spend the winter here in the Central Valley wetlands. They need wetlands to survive.



But Wetlands are Disappearing! That means ducks and other birds are disappearing, too! One hundred years ago, the Central Valley had 4-5 million acres in wetlands.

Now 95% of those wetlands are gone, as man finds other uses for the land. And when a wetland disappears, the ecosystem disappears too — so plants, animals, insects, fish and reptiles disappear along with the birds. Soon, if too much land and too many ecosystems disappear, some plants and animals are in danger of disappearing from the planet forever.



Plants and animals in danger of disappearing forever are called endangered species. The Gray Lodge Wildlife Area provides a safe home for threatened and endangered species such as the Swainson's hawk, giant garter snake, peregrine falcon, Valley elderberry longhorn beetle and the California hibiscus. If things don't change, they are all in danger of disappearing forever. Without wetlands, hundreds of other species will be lost, too.

Here at the Gray Lodge Wildlife Area, the California Department of Fish and Game and Ducks Unlimited have joined together as partners to protect and restore 8,400 acres of wildlife

habitat. This effort has led to the enhancement and restoration of ecosystems and has provided homes for endangered species and for migratory birds, and it means that hundreds of plant and animal species are being conserved here.



There are two hundred different species of birds that live or visit the wildlife area during their migration along the Pacific Flyway.

THEY FALL INTO 3 DIFFERENT GROUPS:

1. WINTER VISITORS — These are birds that use the wildlife area in winter and migrate away in summer. They include the green-headed drake mallard (a “drake” is a male duck), the northern shoveler with its flattened, spoonlike bill, the white-bellied American wigeon, the greenwing teal, the gadwall, the northern pintail, the all-white tundra swan, Aleutian Canada goose, Ross’ goose and snow goose. Other seasonal waterbirds at the Gray Lodge Wildlife Area during the winter include the sandhill crane, long-billed dowitcher, American white pelican, whimbrel, and black-bellied plover.

2. RESIDENT BIRDS — — These birds live at the wildlife area all year long. Some examples are the white-faced ibis, American avocet, black-necked stilt, killdeer, Nuttall’s woodpecker, ash-throated flycatcher and tricolored blackbird.

3. SUMMER VISITORS — There are also birds that live at the wildlife area in summer and migrate away in winter. Some of them migrate up from Mexico and Latin America. Examples of summer visitors are the endangered peregrine falcon, western tanager, common yellowthroat and Wilson’s warbler.

IT'S MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

Protecting a wetland ecosystem is called “conservation.” We need conservation to prevent the destruction and neglect of the natural world. Endangered species are the measure of the health of an ecosystem; when the ecosystem is functioning well it supports species and keeps them prosperous. When ecosystems are lost, species become endangered. Ducks Unlimited is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to conserving wetlands for waterfowl and other wildlife. Here at Gray Lodge hundreds of kinds of birds and other species are being conserved in a wetland ecosystem. Your visit to the Gray Lodge Wildlife Area is helping to save ducks, geese, the peregrine falcon, the greater sandhill crane, the yellow-billed cuckoo, California hibiscus and hundreds of other kinds of plants and animals that live here. We hope that you’ll continue to learn about conservation, ecosystems and the natural world, and that you can be a friend of the ducks, too!



OTHER PLANTS AND CRITTERS AT THE GRAY LODGE WILDLIFE AREA

A healthy ecosystem supports *plant and animal diversity* — many species of plants and animals living together. Diversity makes the ecosystem stronger and better able to recover from dramatic events (for example, forest fires or diseases). A diverse plant and animal population means a healthier ecosystem and a healthier world.

FLORA — Flora was the Roman goddess of flowers, and her name has come to refer to all plants that live in an ecosystem. There are three main types of plants:



NON-FLOWERING PLANTS — These plants get food from other dead plants and animals. They include fungi, lichens, liverworts, mosses, ferns and horsetails.



FLOWERING PLANTS — These plants reproduce by making flowers. You will find hundreds of flowering plants at the Gray Lodge Wildlife Area, including round stemmed bullrushes, cattails, grasses, wild rose, elderberry, poison oak (sumac), sweet peas, morning glory and California poppy.



TREES — Trees are flowering plants, too, but their woody trunks make them unique. Examples of trees at the Gray Lodge Wildlife Area are the Oregon ash, Fremont's cottonwood, box elder and willow.

FAUNA — Fauna was the sister of Faunus, the Roman god of animals, and now her name refers to all the animals that live in an ecosystem. Here are some of the animals, in addition to birds, that live at the Gray Lodge Wildlife Area.



MAMMALS — River otter, muskrat and beaver live in the waters of the wildlife area, and raccoon, black-tailed deer, opossum, jackrabbits, coyotes, skunks, mice, rats and the gray fox live nearby.



REPTILES — The giant garter snake, a threatened species, lives here, as well as the western pond turtle, southern alligator lizard, the common kingsnake, racer snakes and gopher snakes.



AMPHIBIANS — The Pacific tree frog is common at the Gray Lodge Wildlife Area. Other amphibians are the California tiger salamander, California newt, western spadefoot toad and bullfrog.



INSECTS — All insects have three pairs of legs! At Gray Lodge there are dragonflies, butterflies, grasshoppers, field crickets, earwigs, water striders, leafhoppers, aphids, mealybugs, mosquitoes, moths, beetles, honey bees, ladybugs, bumble bees, ants, yellowjackets and lots more.



FISH — Striped bass, white catfish, crappie, black bass and carp are living in the waters of the Gray Lodge Wildlife Area.