

SANTA CLARA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

November, 1947

THE NOVEMBER FIELD TRIP will be taken this coming Sunday, Nov. 16, to Searsville Lake and Jasper Ridge, west of Stanford University. Mr. Neil Dickinson will be the leader. He plans to go directly to Searsville Lake and bird there during the forenoon. The road from the Lake to Jasper Ridge is slippery in wet weather; but for those who like to hike, it is only a little more than a mile to the top of the Ridge. In that short distance the road passes through several different kinds of country, each of which may show, to some extent, different bird inhabitants. Meet in Palo Alto at the S. P. Depot at 8:15 a.m. Bring lunch. San Jose members desiring or able to provide transportation, meet at the corner of East San Carlos and Fifth Streets at 7:30.

THE SECOND SCREEN TOURS LECTURE will be given Monday evening, November 24, in the Montgomery Theatre in the San Jose Civic Auditorium at 8 o'clock. Mrs. Laurel Reynolds of Piedmont will talk on "Fun With Birds," illustrating her talk with colored motion pictures taken in California. Many of us know Mrs. Reynolds as a delightful speaker.

Because of this Screen Tours lecture there will be no regular November meeting, but there will be a meeting of the Board of Directors and Committee Chairmen Friday evening of next week, November 21, at 7:30 o'clock in Room 220 in the Science Building, San Jose State College. The meeting will be open to members of the Society. The Board hopes many members will attend.

OCTOBER FIELD TRIP REPORT. Fifteen Audubon Society members went on the field trip to Mt. Madonna Park, October 19, 1947. There was fog overhead as we drove south through the Uvas Valley, but when we entered the Park, at 10 o'clock, the sky had cleared and we had a beautiful day for birding. As we got out of the cars a horned owl took flight and disappeared among the redwood trees. The previous Sunday, when three of us were scouting this trip, we had a clear view of a horned owl roosting calmly in a redwood while screeching Steller jays mobbed it.

We walked out into an open area, just beyond the redwood grove, where there was a thicket of ceanothus, manzanita, and chaparral pea, with here and there knobcone pine and madrone. Here were both Steller and California jays, the latter apparently doing some "flycatching." A sharp-shinned hawk suddenly appeared and grabbed a California jay, tumbling to the ground with it, but the jay managed to escape uninjured. At various times acorn woodpeckers, a hairy woodpecker, a Nuttall woodpecker, and two or three red-shafted flickers crossed the clearing with pitching flight; also four crows flapped by. We heard the wheezy call-note of pine siskins and saw them flying overhead with goldfinchlike undulations. Two purple finches alighted on the top of a pine, and one

of them sang a little. In the brush were both spotted and brown towhees; a wren-tit came into good view and sang several times. A call-note, which suggested a junco's but was too loud, led us to the discovery of fox sparrows scratching in leaves on the ground. We saw at least twelve of these fine-looking birds and heard several of them sing briefly.

A little farther on, where the trees were closer together, we saw cedar waxwings and robins eating madrone berries; and in the same trees siskins and purple finches were busily feeding, but we were not sure they were eating the berries. In this same area we heard the call-notes of California quail, chestnut-backed chickadees, bush-tits, Bewick wren, ruby-crowned kinglet, Hutton vireo, and Audubon warbler; and we saw a hermit thrush, more fox sparrows, and a flock of Oregon juncos.

We ate our lunch on a knoll covered with very large madrones and tanbark oaks. Here we saw several band-tailed pigeons and at least two varied thrushes eating madrone berries. Again we heard ruby-crowned kinglet and Audubon warbler, and then the red-breasted nuthatch we had been listening for all morning. After lunch we went to the east side of the park for a view of the upper end of Santa Clara Valley. Out from the mountain side a red-tailed hawk was sailing and soaring, and as it wheeled in the sunlight the bright color of its tail was clearly visible. Two Western bluebirds were also very bright in the clear sunlight. Near here, walking through a redwood grove where there were lots of ferns, we heard chickadees, pigmy nuthatches, and a brown creeper.

By 3 o'clock we had driven down the Old Watsonville Road and had stopped at the bridge over the Little Arthur Creek for our tally. Of the thirty four species of birds seen within the Mt. Madonna Park, seven were winter visitants: red-breasted nuthatch, varied thrush, hermit thrush, ruby-crowned kinglet, cedar waxwing, Audubon warbler, and fox sparrow. The following is our complete tally: sharp-shinned hawk, 1; red-tailed hawk, 1; Calif. quail, call-note; band-tailed pigeon, 3 or 4; horned owl, 1; red-shafted flicker, 6; acorn woodpecker, 12; hairy woodpecker, 1; Nuttall woodpecker, 1; Steller jay, 6; Calif. jay, 12; crow, 4; chestnut-backed chickadee, 15+; bush-tit, small flock; red-breasted nuthatch, 1; pigmy nuthatch, small flock; wren-tit, 4 or 5 pairs; brown creeper, 3; Bewick wren, 1; robin, 2; varied thrush, 2; hermit thrush, 2; Western bluebird, 2; ruby-crowned kinglet, 3; cedar waxwing, 17; Hutton vireo, 2; Audubon warbler, 3; purple finch, 12; house finch, 6; pine siskin, 20+; green-backed Arkansas goldfinch, 2; spotted towhee, 2; brown towhee, 1; Oregon junco, 50+; fox sparrow, 20+

Elsie Hoeck