

SANTA CLARA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

February, 1949

THE REGULAR FEBRUARY MEETING will be held next Monday evening, Feb. 14, at 7:45 o'clock in Room 210, Natural Science Building, San Jose State College. Reports of seasonal bird observations will be part of the program. (Are robins, varied thrushes, and hermit thrushes unusually common this winter in your neighborhood? Have you seen Bohemian waxwings or other rare visitors from the far north? Do any birds seem to be having trouble finding food these cold days? Have you heard any resident birds singing persistently the last two or three weeks, or seen any signs of nesting?) Please bring bird observations in writing, giving date and place of observation, for our files.

Because it will not be possible for Mr. McLean to attend this meeting, Mr. Albert Wool has agreed to show again the color film which he showed at the Palo Alto meeting in December. San Jose members who were not present at that meeting will now have an opportunity to see his motion pictures of condors in flight and going to roost. The film also contains fine shots of nesting rufous-crowned sparrows and of other birds on the Wools' ranch. Since the December meeting Mr. Wool has added to his film shots which he took on the January field trip to Alviso.

After the regular meeting there will be a short business meeting to vote on the question whether the Society will sponsor the Audubon Screen Tours next year; and also on the question whether the Society will provide a scholarship for some teacher or youth leader to attend the Audubon Nature Camp in California this coming summer.

THE FEBRUARY FIELD TRIP will be taken the following Saturday, February 19, in the Palo Alto region. Mrs. W.A. Hillebrand and Miss Hortense Berry are planning a leisurely all-day trip, which will include the Stanford University Campus and Searsville Lake. The meeting place will be the S. P. Depot in Palo Alto, at 8 a.m. Bring a picnic lunch. San Jose members who can take passengers and those who want transportation, meet at the corner of East San Carlos and Fifth Streets at 7:15 a.m.

B. Neil Dickinson, Pres. - 1135 Crane St., Menlo Park
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NOVEMBER 30 FIELD TRIP REPORT. The morning was clear and promising as eleven members and nine guests of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society left Palo Alto at 8 o'clock, with Anno Nuevo Point as their objective. The first stop, at the southeast end of Crystal Springs Reservoir, to see the geese and other waterfowl which find refuge there, was apparently going to be a disappointment, for the lakes were blanketed by morning fog. But luckily the fog began to thin and soon it was gone, and there on the lake below us were hundreds of birds resting on the water and along the shore. Mr. Hill's telescope and the spotting scope, which Lester Brubaker had brought, were set up beside the road, and every one had excellent views of nine species of ducks, eared and pied-billed grebes, a cormorant, herons, and even a few shore birds. Before long two flocks of Canada geese on the wing gave us the thrill we had wanted. In one flock two sizes of geese were seen, indicating the presence of a subspecies, probably the lesser Canada goose.

Because this first stop consumed more time than the leader anticipated, no more stops were made until the coast was reached. On the beach at Pescadero Lagoon sanderlings were running out behind retreating waves, snatching bits of food from the sand as they ran, and then, turning just in time, scooting back ahead of the incoming waves. On this same beach we found the remains of two oceanic birds, a Pacific fulmar and a sooty shearwater, which had recently been washed ashore and were still in good condition. The heads and feet were removed, so that they could be used later to check our field identification against skins in the San Jose State College collection.

Pigeon Point proved somewhat of a disappointment, although we had a fine view of a female white-winged scoter feeding in the surf just below our look-out point. By the time we reached Anno Nuevo Point a north wind was blowing strong. As we walked out onto the sand dunes, which offer a striking contrast to the rugged coast north and south, we were surprised to see a white-tailed kite perched on the top of a stunted willow. After a belated lunch on the lee side of a big dune, we were ready for more birding. The embayment on the south side of the Point, where the sea was less rough, contained many gulls, cormorants, pelicans, scoters and grebes. Several sea lions exhibited unusual curiosity in our activities and investigated us from close range, perhaps adding us to their "life list." On the way back to our cars we found good birding in a small orchard by a farm house. Here a full-plumaged red-breasted sapsucker was by all odds the most accomodating bird of the day. It permitted a ten minute observation by the entire group from a distance of ten to fifteen feet, while it went about its business of boring holes.

It was now half past three and time to disband. We checked the birds we had seen, totalling them at 59, and agreed it had been a very enjoyable day. Following are the birds we checked: eared grebe, Western grebe, pied-billed grebe, brown pelican, double-crested cormorant, Brandt's cormorant, great blue heron, American egret, Canada goose, mallard, baldpate, pintail, green-winged teal, shoveller, ring-necked duck, canvas-back, scaup duck, white-winged scoter, surf scoter, ruddy duck, American merganser, turkey vulture, white-tailed kite, red-tailed hawk, marsh hawk, coot, killdeer, black-bellied plover, black turnstone, greater yellow-legs, dowitcher, sanderling, Western gull, Cal. gull, ring-billed gull, Heermann's gull, red-shafted flicker, acorn woodpecker, red-breasted sapsucker, downy woodpecker, black phoebe, Cal. jay, plain titmouse, bush-tit, Bewick's wren, robin, hermit thrush, ruby-crowned kinglet, American pipit, Audubon's warbler, yellow-throat, Western meadowlark, house finch, pine siskin, American goldfinch, Ark. goldfinch, Ore. junco, white-crowned sparrow, golden-crowned sparrow.

Jim Rigby