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SANTA CLARA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

November, 1949

NOVEMBER FIELD TRIP will be taken this coming Saturday, November 12, in the Palo Alto region. Les and Nell Sleeper will be the leaders. They are planning to bird on the Stanford University campus during the first part of the morning, and then to go shore-bird hunting, probably in the Dumbarton Bridge area. The meeting place will be the S. P. Depot in Palo Alto, and the time 8 o'clock. San Jose members who want transportation, meet at the usual corner, E. San Carlos and Fifth, at 7:15. Bring lunch if you want to bird in the afternoon.

THE FIRST AUDUBON SCREEN TOUR, "Canada West," will be presented by Mr. Bert Harwell next week Thursday evening, November 17, at 8 p.m. in the Montgomery Theatre, San Jose Civic Auditorium, at the corner of San Carlos and Market Streets. Season tickets as well as single admission tickets will be sold at the Civic Auditorium ticket office the night of the performance. Mrs. Fanny Zwaal will open the ticket office at 7:15. If you do not have a season ticket, please come to the ticket office early to prevent last minute crowding.

There will be a matinee Audubon Screen Tour at 4 o'clock the same day in the same theatre, planned especially for school children and their parents and teachers. In keeping with his matinee audience, Mr. Harwell will call his Screen Tour "Canada Venture" instead of "Canada West." Matinee tickets for school children will be twenty-five cents and will be for sale at the Auditorium ticket office the afternoon of the matinee, from 3 to 4 o'clock. Adults will be welcome at the matinee, at evening performance prices.

The Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society was very glad to learn that the Palo Alto Garden Club is sponsoring the series of Audubon Screen Tour matinees in Palo Alto this year. Their first matinee is scheduled for Friday, November 18, in Palo Alto High School Auditorium, at 4 o'clock. Mr. Harwell will present his "Canada Venture."

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OCTOBER 15 FIELD TRIP REPORT. The trip to Mt. Madonna County Park was patterned after the successful trip which Elsie Hoeck led to the same area just two years ago. Even the weather started out the same, with heavy morning fog. Two years ago the fog persisted until the park was reached and there was little temptation to stop and bird along the way. But this year the fog was breaking up by the time we had reached the Calero Reservoir, and the morning was beautiful as we drove through the Uvas Valley and up the mountains to the park by way of Hecker Pass. In the warm sunlight after the fog, birds were conspicuously active, and we soon abandoned our intention not to shorten our time in the park by stopping along the way.

A Say's phoebe, flycatching from tall dead weeds, stopped the caravan (fifteen members and five guests) not far beyond the stark-dry reservoir where the fields were brown. In the same field with the

graceful phoebe a very large flock of meadowlarks were feeding on the ground, and many goldfinches and house finches were clinging to weed stems to get the seeds. Continuing along McKean Road we counted five shrikes spaced along the telephone wires, and we noticed at least three sparrow hawks and one red-tailed hawk. We stopped again when we saw yellow-billed magpies sunning themselves in sycamores beside the Llagas Creek. There were many birds besides magpies at this stop. In the oaks were Nuttall's and acorn woodpeckers, white-breasted nuthatch, Hutton's vireo, plain titmouse, Western bluebird; along a fence and in the field, lark sparrow (some singing), Savannah sparrow, Oregon junco; and in the bushes by the creek, Bewick's wren, spotted towhee, and white-crowned sparrow.

What with stops to see birds and stops to enjoy the autumn coloring of orchard trees and grapevines, it was half past eleven before we reached Mt. Madonna Park. Although we were late, we still wanted to compare, as much as we could, the bird population in the park this trip with that of the trip two years ago, and so we walked over the same trails. In the ceanothus thicket across the road from the parking area, we "squeaked up" several fox sparrows—there must have been at least a dozen of them about us, just as there were two years ago—but we failed to get a hermit thrush. However the wren-tit, Bewick's wren, and spotted towhee were there. The nearby madrone trees showed no berries this year, which may account for our not seeing the varied thrushes and cedar waxwings which, with robins and band-tailed pigeons, were eating the berries in 1947. In the short time we spent in this interesting assemblage of chaparral shrubs, knobcone pines, and madrone trees, we listed California quail, Steller's and California jays, acorn woodpecker, flicker, purple finch, pine siskin, Arkansas goldfinch, and brown towhee; we missed the sharp-shinned hawk, the hairy and Nuttall's woodpeckers, the "four crows which flapped by," and the flock of bush-tits of two years ago. The only bird we could add to Miss Hoeck's list was a turkey vulture.

We ate lunch in a grove of redwoods and oaks, and then walked out the Valley View Road and back through the redwoods where the tanbark oaks were so enormous. In this general area we heard the thin, high-pitched notes of several creepers and the merry "ti-di, ti-di, ti-di" notes of a small flock of pygmy nuthatches. These two birds, along with chestnut-backed chickadee, Hutton's vireo, Audubon's warbler, Western bluebird, and Oregon junco, seemed to be in about the same numbers this trip as they were two years ago, but there was only one ruby-crowned kinglet against three in 1947, and no red-breasted nuthatch or horned owl. And finally, just before leaving the park, as we were summarizing the birds seen during the day, a red-tailed hawk was seen flying aloft, to match the one of October 19, 1947.

The following is our summary for Mt. Madonna Park: ^{turkey vulture, 1} red-tailed hawk, 1; Calif. quail, small flock; band-tailed pigeon, 3; red-shafted flicker, 1; acorn woodpecker, 2 or 3; Steller's jay, 2; Calif. jay, 4; chestnut-backed chickadee, 8+; pygmy nuthatch, small flock; wren-tit, 2; creeper, 4; Bewick's wren, 1; robin, 2; Western bluebird, 3; ruby-crowned kinglet, 1; Hutton's vireo, 2; Audubon's warbler, 3 or 4; purple finch, 2; pine siskin, 2; Arkansas goldfinch, 2; spotted towhee, 3; brown towhee, 1; Ore. junco, small flock; fox sparrow, 12+.

Emily Smith