

SANTA CLARA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

April, 1950

THE FIRST FIELD TRIP SCHEDULED FOR APRIL will be taken next Saturday, April 8, to salt ponds and marshes between Dumbarton Bridge and Alvarado to look for shore birds which have begun their spring migration northward, and for the other interesting birds which frequent these places. Les and Nell Sleeper have taken over the leadership for this trip and may include other places in their plans. The meeting place will be the Palo Alto S. P. Station, at 8 p.m. Bring along a lunch.

THE REGULAR APRIL MEETING will be held in San Jose the following Monday, April 10, at 7:45 p.m. in Room 210, Science Building, San Jose State College. The first part of the program will be given over to seasonal bird observations. (Which winter visitant birds are you still seeing? Are the Hermit Thrush, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and Audubon's Warbler singing a little before they leave for the north? Have you noticed Western Flycatcher, House Wren, or other spring arrivals already nest-building?)

Mr. Albert J. Wool will be our speaker and will show some of his color motion pictures of birds—"Bird Sketches," he calls them, "chiefly of birds of prey, but also of some interesting sparrows, including the Sharp-tailed Sparrow" which was such an exciting find last year.

A FIELD TRIP TO THE PINNACLES NATIONAL MONUMENT will be taken the weekend of April 15 and 16, with Agnes and Clyde Prusman as leaders. The trip will be an overnight camping trip, each one bringing his own food and equipment. In the Monument there are good public camp grounds, with fireplaces, tables and benches, piped water, and restrooms. For those who can come early, there will be a Saturday afternoon walk, starting at 2 o'clock from the Ranger Station. The Sunday walk will start from the same place at 8 o'clock in the morning, in case there are members who want to join the party on Sunday. The mileage from San Jose to the Pinnacles is about 85 miles.

REPORT OF MARCH 11 FIELD TRIP TO JASPER RIDGE. Jasper Ridge, which is two or three miles west of the Stanford University Campus, is roughly three miles long and a mile across, with a northwest-southeast trend. Its north and northeast slopes rise steeply above San Francisquito Creek and are well wooded. Los Trancos Creek bounds it on the east, and the Corte Madera skirts its southwest slopes. Dense chaparral covers all the slopes which face the midday and afternoon sun; and where the top of the ridge, three hundred feet above the creeks, is broad and level, there are groves of oaks. Years ago the Corte Madera Creek was dammed, just above its confluence with the San Francisquito Creek, to form Searsville Lake, against a steep west slope of the ridge. At the shallow upper end of the lake are cat-tail marshes and willow thickets, and to the west a grassy hill with a few oaks and some planted conifers; also picnic tables and other resort features. With all this diversity, this area offers homes to meet the needs of many different kinds of birds.

The day of the field trip was clear, after some rain during the night, with a chill north wind, which blew too briskly for the comfort of the some thirty bird observers. It was a disappointment that Curt Dietz,

who was to lead the trip, could not be with us; but he sent us a sketch to show the route he had planned to take. From the entrance gate it led us along the edge of the shallow upper lake and past cat-tail marshes and willows; then we climbed a hill overlooking cottonwoods beside the Corte Madera Creek, where Mr. Dietz knew Great Blue Herons were nesting. We counted ten bulky, twiggy nests, well up in two or three of the still leafless cottonwoods; and in two of the nests herons were sitting with every appearance of incubating. Returning to the road, we followed it up chaparral-covered slopes to the oak groves on the summit. In places among the live oaks we found charming companies of the Indian Warrior, and sometimes both Anna's and Allen's Hummingbirds hovering before the rich-red flowers and probing into them for food. Mrs. Hillebrand's quick eye caught an Anna as she buzzed to her tiny nest in an oak and settled down to incubate. Farther on, in a grove of "white oaks," we followed a sapsucker from tree to tree until satisfied that the black and white markings on the red head were sufficiently clear to make it a Red-naped Sapsucker, although there was no black between the red of the throat and the yellowish under parts. In the afternoon the trail led us down to the Corte Madera Creek, below the dam, and over the hill on the west side of the lake to our starting point. Just before reaching the gate the last stragglers saw the second rare bird for the day: a Slate-colored Junco in a flock of about thirty Oregon Juncos.

During our brief, much enjoyed exploration of this area which we are hoping Stanford University will somehow manage to maintain as a wildlife refuge, we listed the following birds: Pied-billed Grebe, 4 or 5; Great Blue Heron, 10; Mallard, 20 $\frac{1}{2}$; Ring-necked Duck, perhaps 100 which flew out in groups as we approached, about 9 a.m., and did not return; Ruddy Duck, 2 males in bright breeding plumage and 3 dull-colored birds; Turkey Vulture, 2 together; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1; Red-tailed Hawk, 2 together; Marsh Hawk, 1; Sparrow Hawk, 1; Calif. Quail, small covey; American Coot, 30 $\frac{1}{2}$ mostly in pairs, some displaying two white patches under tail; Killdeer, 2 trilling; Wilson's Snipe, 2; Ring-billed Gull, 1; Mourning Dove, 5 together; White-throated Swift, 3; Anna's Hummingbird, 5 or 6; Allen's Hummingbird, 2; Red-shafted Flicker, 4 (2 apparently paired); Acorn Woodpecker, 6; Red-naped Sapsucker, 1 (female?); Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 1; Black Phoebe, 2 singing; Violet-green Swallow, 6; Tree Swallow, 3; Calif. Jay, 4 or 5; Chestnut-backed Chickadee, 4; Plain Titmouse, 3 or 4 singing; Bush-tit, small flock; White-breasted Nuthatch, two together and 2 or 3 others; Wren-tit, 3 or 4 singing; Bewick's Wren, 5 or 6 singing; Long-billed Marsh Wren, 1 singing vociferously; Calif. Thrasher, 2 singing; Robin, only one; Hermit Thrush, 1; Western Bluebird, 2 or 3 pairs; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 2; Cedar Waxwing, small flock; Hutton's Vireo, 2 or 3 singing; Orange-crowned Warbler, 3 or 4 singing; Audubon's Warbler, one gaudy male singing and several other less conspicuous birds; Western Meadowlark, 2 or 3 singing; Redwinged Blackbird, large flock, males displaying their scarlet "epaulets"; Calif. Purple Finch, 2 or 3 singing; House Finch, several singing; Pine Siskin, small flock; Ark. Goldfinch, one pair and others feeding with juncos; Spotted Towhee, 3; Brown Towhee, 4; Slate-colored Junco, 1; Ore. Junco, 3 flocks; White-crowned Sparrow, large flock; Golden-crowned Sparrow, 3; Fox Sparrow, 2; Song Sparrow, one pair. Emily Smith

Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society, Branch of National Audubon Society

B. Neil Dickinson, Pres. - 554 Oak Park Way, Redwood City
Miss Emily Smith, Corr. Sec. - Rt. 1, Box 387, Los Gatos