

SANTA CLARA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

April, 1950

THE FIELD TRIP TO ARROYO HONDO will be taken next Sunday, April 23, with Will Luick as leader. Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Johnson have invited the Society to visit their ranch near this magnificent canyon, back in the Mount Hamilton Range. To get there we shall drive up the Mount Hamilton Road to Kincaid Road, about a mile and a quarter beyond the Smith Creek Ranger Station, and then along the Kincaid Road to De Witt Portal's place, where we'll double up with the hardier drivers for the rest of the way, which may be a little rough but not bad. We are promised fine views, lots of wild flowers, and many kinds of birds. The meeting place for the trip will be in San Jose, not at the usual place but at the corner of E. Santa Clara Street and 35th Street (where Santa Clara St. becomes Alum Rock Ave.), at 7:30 a.m. Bring along a lunch.

THE LAST AUDUBON SCREEN TOUR for this season will be shown Thursday, April 27, at Montgomery Theatre, in the San Jose Civic Auditorium. At the evening performance, at eight o'clock, Mr. Alexander Sprunt will present "Our Living Earth," an all-color motion picture which is designed to show the meaning and importance of conservation. According to the Screen Tour prospectus, the film dramatically tells the story of how soil is formed; the erosive effect of rain drops; the building of a plant from sunlight, air, soil, and water; and the importance of animal life, food chains, and the role of predators in maintaining the balance of nature. Mr. Sprunt has been actively associated with the conservation work of the National Audubon Society for many years and is well qualified to present the case for conservation. We are promised an interesting, authoritative speaker.

For the matinee, which was planned primarily for school children, Mr. Sprunt will substitute "Outdoor Holiday." The matinee will be given the same day, at four o'clock in the afternoon, in the same theatre. Matinee tickets for school children will be 25 cents. For both matinee and evening performances the general admission tickets are 74 cents and the student tickets 50 cents. All three classes of tickets can be obtained at the door. Our matinees need advertising among teachers, parents of school children, and members of PTA's. Let's give this last matinee all the help we can.

Mr. Sprunt will show "Outdoor Holiday" at the matinee sponsored by the Palo Alto Garden Club, Friday afternoon at four o'clock, at the Palo Alto High School Auditorium.

NEW MEMBERS. The Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society welcomes as new members: Miss Laurel Jean Peterson, who often accompanies her father, Jim Peterson, on field trips; Mrs. Arline Kent Butler, San Carlos; Mrs. Howard P. Stevens, Los Altos; Mrs. George Hunter and Miss Eva Allen, Los Gatos; Mrs. Donald W. MacNair and Mrs. L. Thomason, San Jose; and Miss Dorothy A. Foster. The National Audubon Society sent us Miss Foster's name, with no address. Can some one supply it?

CALENDAR FOR MAY AND JUNE (details in coming notices)

- May 7, Sunday, early morning field trip to Alum Rock Park,
leader to be announced later
- May 8, Monday, regular meeting in Palo Alto,
Les Sleeper, program chairman
- May 13, Saturday, field trip to Felt Lake, near Stanford University,
Mrs. W. A. Hillebrand, leader
- May 21, Sunday, field trip to the Calaveras Reservoir country,
Al and Dorothy Wool, leaders
- May 27, Saturday, field trip to Aldercroft,
Mrs. Irving Snow
- June 12, Monday, picnic meeting in Alum Rock Park,
Al Wool, program chairman
- June 17 and 18, week-end field trip to Lake County,
Mrs. Anne Peterson, leader
- June 25, Sunday, field trip to egret heronry near Alviso,
Jim Peterson, leader
- July 1 and 2, week-end field trip to Monterey and Point Lobos,
Mrs. Grace Brubaker, leader

Agnes Prusman, Chairman
Field Trip Committee

MARCH 26th FIELD TRIP REPORT. The weather man was kind, as forty-two hardy souls, after two days of rain, ventured forth to observe the flora and fauna of the historically interesting New Almaden country. We were fortunate to have with us Mr. C.L. Carson, who as a boy had lived in New Almaden while his father was superintendent of the quicksilver mine. Through Mr. Carson's kind efforts we had permission to drive through gates onto private property, away from Sunday traffic.

For the morning portion of our field trip we are indebted to Mr. Paul Houret, who permitted us to hike over his cattle ranch, with its grassy fields, steep rocky slopes, and wooded ravines. The more strenuous members of our party followed Mr. Carson up the rocky slope where Rock Wrens, Horned Larks, Lark Sparrows, and Rufous-crowned Sparrows were singing; others explored a beautiful ravine with a stream flowing down it; and several just sat and watched the birds around them, especially a White-breasted Nuthatch bringing insect titbits to its mate who was busy inside a hole in a sycamore tree, probably incubating eggs. Our bird count at the end of this report will bear testimony to the abundance of bird life on this ranch.

Although the ground was rather wet underfoot, we were compensated by the array of wild flowers which were responding to the two days of welcome rain. Oh's and ah's could be heard on all sides as we passed through masses of Bird's-eye Gilia, California Poppy, Popcorn Flower, Cream Cups and many other spring wild flowers.

After eating our lunches around Mr. Houret's picnic tables beside the Alamitos Creek, we drove up Mine Hill to the now old New Almaden Mine, where Mr. P.S. Schneider kindly met us and answered our questions about the mine and how quicksilver is come by. Later he led us into the Map House where we were privileged to see rare old maps of the mining area and tomes of old records. And best of all were Mr. Schneider's stories of the old mining days and Mr. Carson's reminiscences.

As to the birds:

Turkey Vulture, 5; Red-tailed Hawk, 3; Sparrow Hawk, 1; California Quail, 3; Killdeer, 2; Mourning Dove, 3; Anna's Hummingbird, 2; Allen's Hummingbird, 2; Red-shafted Flicker, 20+; Acorn Woodpecker, 2; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Nuttall's Woodpecker, 1; Black Phoebe, 1; singing; Western Flycatcher, 4; Horned Lark, 5; Violet-green Swallow, 18; California Jay, 10; Crow, 3; Chestnut-backed Chickadee, flock of about 25; Plain Titmouse, 10, mostly in pairs, one bird carrying nesting material; Bush-tit, flock of 8, two new nests but no observed activity; White-breasted Nuthatch, 5, one nest; Wren-tit, 5; House Wren, pair, female looking for nest site; Bewick's Wren, 5; Rock Wren, 17; California Thrasher, 1; Robin, 7; Hermit Thrush, 1; Western Bluebird, 10, mostly in pairs; Western Gnatcatcher, 3; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 1; Hutton's Vireo, 3; Solitary Vireo, 1, singing; Warbling Vireo, 3, singing; Orange-crowned Warbler, 8 or 9, singing; Audubon's Warbler, about 20, in two flocks; English Sparrow, 10; Western Meadowlark, 8; Brewer's Blackbird, 9 pairs, feeding together on ground; Black-headed Grosbeak, 1 male, silent; Purple Finch, 8; House Finch, 13; Arkansas Goldfinch, a flock of about 20, feeding on seeds of Yellow Fiddleneck; Lawrence's Goldfinch, 2, in above flock of Arkansas Goldfinches; Spotted Towhee, 7; Brown Towhee, 10; Lark Sparrow, 2 pairs, and 8 or 9 others; Rufous-crowned Sparrow, 11, most of them singing; Oregon Junco, 40+, in two flocks; Chipping Sparrow, 1, silent; White-crowned Sparrow, 30+, in two flocks; Golden-crowned Sparrow, 12, together; Song Sparrow, 7.

Had enough?

Jo and Bill Ouderkirk

Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society, Branch of National Audubon Society

Monthly meetings second Monday, alternately in San Jose and Palo Alto

B. Neil Dickinson, Pres. - 554 Oak Park Way, Redwood City

Miss Emily Smith, Corr. Sec. - Rt. 1, Box 387, Los Gatos