

SANTA CLARA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

March 1951

THE FIELD TRIP ALONG THE ADOBE CREEK, announced in the February notice of meetings, will be taken this coming Saturday, March 17, with Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Nash as leaders. Through the efforts of Wil Luick the Nashes have permission to go onto the grounds of Adobe Creek Lodge. Hidden Villa Ranch, farther up the Adobe Creek, will be explored next, at the invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Duveneck. Meet at the S. F. Station in Los Altos at 8 a.m. Bring along a picnic lunch, and a cup and spoon if you will want hot coffee. For information about transportation, telephone Mrs. Lester Brubaker in San Jose; Miss Emily Smith in Los Gatos; or C. L. Sleeper in Menlo Park.

THE FIELD TRIP TO COYOTE RESERVOIR will be taken Sunday, April 1, with Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Wittgenstein as leaders. They are planning a leisurely hike along the edge of the lake, following the road to the dam. This is interesting country which promises good birding. Meet in Morgan Hill, at 8:30 a.m., at corner of Main Street and Highway 101, across the highway from the City Hall. (The City Hall is on your right soon after entering Morgan Hill from the north.) Bring picnic lunch. And again, Mrs. Brubaker, Miss Smith, and Les Sleeper will be glad to help about transportation.

TWO COMING FIELD TRIP DATES: April 8, to Pinto Lake in Santa Cruz Co., with Mrs. Beatrice Wise Nielsen; and April 14 and 15, to the Pinnacles National Monument, with Mrs. Irving Snow.

ORNITHOLOGY LECTURES. Dr. Sibley's fourth lecture, "Feathers, Molts, and Plumages," will be given in Palo Alto, in the Junior Museum, Monday evening, March 19, at eight o'clock. "Adaptations for Flight," will be the subject of the fifth lecture, which will be given both in San Jose and Redwood City—in San Jose on Wednesday, April 4, in Room 216 (not in 210, as first scheduled), Science Building, San Jose State College; and in Redwood City on Monday, April 9, in Room 26, Music Building, Sequoia High School. Eight o'clock is the meeting time at each place. The ten lectures were planned as a course but can be taken singly, for each one is a unit in itself. Each lecture deals with some one phase of bird life. Much of the material which Dr. Sibley is presenting, in non-technical language, is difficult for the amateur to get because it is scattered in many scientific publications.

BULLETIN ABOUT BIRDS. Have you a copy of "Birds" by Gayle Pickwell, which was published by San Jose State College, in the Western Nature Study Series? The Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society obtained enough copies of this bulletin so that every member could have one. If you have not picked up your copy at one of the meetings, send six cents in stamps for postage to the Corresponding Secretary, or ask her for your copy at any meeting—she usually has some with her. (The section on "Feathers," page 95, would be a good introduction to Dr. Sibley's next lecture.)

REPORT OF MOSS LANDING FIELD TRIP, FEBRUARY 10, 1951. In spite of drizzling rain and the weatherman's forecast of rain all day, nineteen bird enthusiasts started out very early from Santa Clara Valley to meet members of the Monterey Peninsula Audubon Society at Moss Landing at 8:30 a.m. When they arrived at the coast the sun was shining, and the entire day proved rainless and pleasant.

At the meeting place, near the mouth of Elkhorn Slough, the birders were greeted by a lone White Pelican—probably one of the seven which have been wintering on the slough. The presence of this magnificent bird, with its nine-foot wing spread, dwarfed all the other birds, including even the Brown Pelican. Fishing here in the quiet water were three species of loons, near enough together to make comparison easy; also four species of grebes and the three cormorants.

On the sandy edges of the slough, back of the sand dunes, Sanderlings, Red-backed Sandpipers, Western Sandpipers, and Least Sandpipers mingled together and gave the beginners every opportunity to learn to tell them apart. One of the prettiest sights of the day was a group of richly colored Cinnamon Teals and their brown mates, twenty-six in number, all swimming close together in a small pond in the marshy area.

Sixty-four species of birds were identified at Moss Landing before a halt was called for lunch on the dunes: Common Loon, Pacific Loon, Red-throated Loon, Horned Grebe, Eared Grebe, Western Grebe, Pied-billed Grebe, White Pelican, Brown Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, Brandt's Cormorant, Baird's Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, American Egret, Snowy Egret, Bl.-cr. Night Heron, Black Brant, Mallard, Gadwall, Pintail, Cinnamon Teal, Shoveller, Scaup Duck, White-winged Scoter, Surf Scoter, Ruddy Duck, Red-breasted Merganser, Red-tailed Hawk, Marsh Hawk, Duck Hawk, Sparrow Hawk, Coot, Snowy Plover, Killdeer, Black-bellied Plover, Long-billed Curlew, Hudsonian Curlew, Willet, Greater Yellow-legs, Least Sandpiper, Red-backed Sandpiper, Dowitcher, Western Sandpiper, Marbled Godwit, Sanderling, Avocet, Glaucous-winged Gull, Western Gull, Herring Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Short-billed Gull, Heermann's Gull (immature), Forster's Tern, Crow, Pipit, House Sparrow, Western Meadowlark, Red-winged Blackbird, Brewer's Blackbird, House Finch, Savannah Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, Song Sparrow.

Charlie and Viola Anderson

REPORT OF ALUM ROCK FIELD TRIP, FEBRUARY 25, 1951. Linda Vista was the meeting place, and the fair-sized crowd which gathered there, lingered to watch a large flock of Cedar Waxwings fluttering back and forth between a television aerial and berry bushes, and between a tall fir and the same berry bushes. Woodpeckers and mockingbirds furnished other interest until rain sent the bird watchers into Alum Rock Park and the shelter of the pavilion. There the birds were quiet in the drizzling rain, but enough appeared in the surrounding trees and shrubs to keep every one looking. Hermit Thrush, Varied Thrush, and Red-breasted Sapsucker were the high points of this period. After the shower we made the circuit of the bird cages and deer pens, where juncos and Golden-crowned Sparrows were in good numbers, and followed trails by the creek until lunch hour took us back to the pavilion, just in time to avoid a second shower. When the sun came out again we walked up the road toward the falls. Four White-throated Swifts were in evidence, and two Golden Eagles were flying low enough to permit a good look. But the real show

was a skirmish between two Red-tailed Hawks and a Golden Eagle which had invaded the Red-tails' territory. The two hawks took turns diving at the eagle, and repeatedly the eagle was seen to turn over completely in order to present its talons to the attacking Red-tail.

After the trip was over three indefatigable members remained for a last look and added to the day's list a Pygmy Owl, which was being "mobbed" by a lone male Anna's Hummingbird. The birds listed on the trip were: Turkey Vulture, 6; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1; Red-tailed Hawk, 5; Golden Eagle, 2; Sparrow Hawk, pair; Cal. Quail, 5; Killdeer, 1; Pygmy Owl, 1; White-throated Swift, 4; Anna's Hummingbird, 4; Red-shafted Flicker, 2; Cal. Woodpecker, 5; Red-breasted Sapsucker, 1; Nuttall's Woodpecker, 2; Black Phoebe, 5; Steller's Jay, 8; Cal. Jay, 10; Am. Crow, 1; Chestnut-backed Chickadee, 10; Plain Titmouse, 4; Bushtit, 2; Wrentit, 2(singing); Bewick's Wren, 2(singing); Mockingbird, 4; Cal. Thrasher, 1(singing); Robin, 50±; Varied Thrush, 3; Hermit Thrush, 14; W. Bluebird, 2; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 3; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 10; Cedar Waxwing, 200± + 20; Cal. Shrike, pair; Hutton's Vireo, 2; Audubon's Warbler, 14; Townsend's Warbler, 1; W. Meadowlark, 2; Brewer's Blackbird, 40+; House Finch, 8; Pine Siskin, 19; Green-backed Goldfinch, 1; Spotted Towhee, 2(singing); Brown Towhee, 8; Ore. Junco, 100+; White-crowned Sparrow, 4; Golden-crowned Sparrow, 30; Song Sparrow, 6.

Members present were: Mrs. Ransom Davis; Mr. Curt Dietz; Dr. Friedlander; Mr. and Mrs. Goldsmith; Mr. and Mrs. Harwood; Mr. Henri Hill; Mr. and Mrs. Ouderkirk; Mrs. F. J. Perry; Jim Peterson; Mr. and Mrs. Prusman; Mr. Les Sleeper; Miss Emily Smith; Mr. and Mrs. Al Wool, and Susan and Julia; and Mr. and Mrs. Zwaal.

Jim Peterson

SOME BIRD OBSERVATIONS. Already many of the non-migratory birds which have been with us all winter are busy with nesting activities. Al and Dorothy Wool have a Brown Towhee's nest in the Bougainvillea by their front door. There were three eggs in the nest on March 8. On the same day, across the street from the Ouderkirks in Los Gatos, a pair of Bushtits were taking turns working inside a nest which looked finished on the outside. It hangs in an acacia tree and the outside is beaded with acacia flowers. While watching the Bushtits Mrs. Ouderkirk saw a Plain Titmouse carry away a bit of cotton which it had pulled out of one of the balls of cotton hanging on a screen door.

At my home near Los Gatos, a pair of California Jays were snapping twigs off trees, March 8, to build a nest in a shrubby live oak near the hedge where thrashers had already completed their nest. On March 12 a pair of Bewick's Wrens were busy carrying nesting material into a crack between two empty seed flats in the slat house; and the next morning a female Song Sparrow was picking up long lengths of dry Bermuda grass which trailed behind her as she flew to the hedge. Emily Smith.

SANTA CLARA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY, Branch of NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

Monthly Meetings Second Monday, Alternately in San Jose and Palo Alto

President -- Albert J. Wool - Rt. 3, Box 271A, Quimby Rd., San Jose
Corr. Sec. - Miss Eva Allen - 123 East Charles St., Los Gatos