

## SANTA CLARA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

May 1951

AUDUBON SCREEN TOUR, in case you forgot, comes Friday evening, April 27. The Hadleys present "America the Beautiful," Montgomery Theatre, 8 p.m.

THE MAY MEETING IN PALO ALTO will be held on May Day (Tuesday, May 1) instead of on the usual second Monday of the month. The meeting will be in the Junior Museum, Community Center on Middlefield Road, at 8 p.m. Mrs. E. P. Hunt, President of the Palo Alto Garden Club, will talk on "Wild Flowers and Birds of Sierra Nevada," illustrating her talk with colored film. There will be a little time before Mrs. Hunt's talk for members to report their seasonal bird observations. (Please bring your observations in writing, for our files.) Guests are always very welcome at our meetings.

AN IMPROMPTU FIELD TRIP will be taken this coming Sunday, April 29, to the top of the 3000-foot mountain just south of Los Gatos. Frances Dietrich, who owns a cabin up there, has invited us to come see mountain lilac and bush lupine in fine flower, and perhaps also see the pretty Bell's Sparrow. Meet at Green's Alma Store in Alma at 8 a.m. From there we will take the Alma Soda Springs Rd. to the mountain top—seven miles of unpaved road but not bad. Bring lunch and cup and spoon for coffee.

A FIELD TRIP TO SALT MARSHES AND SALT PONDS will be taken Sunday, May 6. Charles Sibley, as leader, is planning to visit the Leslie Salt ponds at Alviso; then drive along Los Esteros Rd. to Zanker Rd., stopping at good birding spots; thence to east end of Dumbarton Bridge, by way of Milpitas; across the bridge; and back to San Jose by Bayshore Highway. Meet at the Alviso Grammar School at 8 a.m. Bring lunch. San Jose members wanting transportation meet at San Carlos and Fifth at 7:40 a.m., Palo Alto members at S. P. Station in Palo Alto at 7:30.

THE FIELD TRIP TO MISSION RIDGE and Al and Dorothy Wool's ranch will be taken Sunday, May 13. Al is sure to have hawk and owl nests spotted for us to see, and will know where to find the many interesting birds which make Mission Ridge their home. Meet in Milpitas at 8 a.m., on Calaveras Road at its junction with the main highway (Highway 17). Bring lunch. Members wanting transportation meet in San Jose at N.E. corner of Santa Clara and 13th at 7:30; or at Palo Alto S. P. Station at same time.

ORNITHOLOGY LECTURES. "Ornithologists and Ornithological Literature" will be the subject of Dr. Sibley's seventh lecture, in San Jose next Wednesday, May 2; and in Redwood City the following Monday, May 7. The meeting in San Jose will be held in Room 216, Science Building, San Jose State College; and in Redwood City in Room 26, Music Building, Sequoia High School—both meetings at 8 p.m. The eighth lecture, "Classification of Birds," will be given in Palo Alto, in the Junior Museum, on Monday, May 14, again at 8 p.m.

A SEASONAL NOTE. Since early in April the White-crowned Sparrows have been leaving us for their nesting grounds to the north. A flock which wintered in my garden was gone on the 12th, but Eva Allen had a few White-crowns still coming to her feed tray on the 23rd. By the time White-crowned Sparrows leave, the first-year birds have replaced their brown and tan crown stripes for the black and white of adult birds. Immature Golden-crowned Sparrows also undergo a prenuptial molt and acquire a golden crown before they reach their summer homes in British

Columbia and Alaska. The Golden-crowned Sparrows usually linger in California a little longer than do the White-crowned, Emily Smith.

REPORT OF COYOTE DAM FIELD TRIP, April 1, 1951. In spite of April Fools' Day and a yard-long rattlesnake the trip was quite successful. The sun was just right and the two miles between Coyote Lake Resort and the dam not too long. At the start of the walk Les Sleeper spotted a brilliant Bullock's Oriole, the only oriole seen during the day. Other birds already back from their wintering grounds and singing along our path were House Wren, Warbling Vireo, Orange-crowned Warbler, Chipping Sparrow. Out on the lake, not too disturbed by noisy speedboats, was a small group of water birds which Charles Sibley's 'scope showed to be one female and six male scaups, a Western Grebe, and a Pied-billed Grebe.

At the dam we witnessed a territorial dispute between three male Anna's Hummingbirds. Number I performed power dives over Number II, the latter sitting tight on top of a bush. Suddenly Number I interrupted his dives, to chase away Number III, which we had not previously noticed. Looking down on the dry spillway for any bird that might be there, Fanny Zwaal discovered a pair of Rock Wrens busily furnishing their new apartment in a drift log. They were carrying sticks into a hole on the underside of the log, which was arched up over the ground. The birds would alight on the ground and fly up to the entrance, and if the sticks were too long they would enter sideways. Nearby a Canyon Wren occasionally sang his thrilling song but did not come into view.

Just as the last of the party started back to the cars Viola Anderson saw a Say's Phoebe carry something in its bill down behind a shed. Back of the shed, which was close to a dirt bank, we found a beautifully fashioned nest in a circular recess in the wall of the shed, close to the low eaves. A mirror held over the nest showed one white egg. (On April 22 a Say's Phoebe flushed from this same nest and the mirror showed three eggs and one newly hatched nestling.—Emily Smith.)

Birds seen: 1 W. Grebe, 1 Pied-billed Grebe, 7 Scaups, 5 Turkey Vultures, 1 Red-tailed Hawk, 1 Sparrow Hawk, pair of Calif. Quails, 5 Killdeers, 2 Band-tailed Pigeons, 2 Mourning Doves, 3 Anna's Hummingbirds, 1 Kingfisher, 4 Red-shafted Flickers, 6 Acorn Woodpeckers, 1 Downy Woodpecker, 2 Nuttall's Woodpeckers, 1 W. Kingbird, 3 pairs of Black Phoebes, 1 Say's Phoebe, 4 W. Flycatchers, 12 Violet-green Swallows, 2 Tree Swallows, 2 Rough-winged Swallows, 6 Steller's Jays, 10 Scrub Jays, 1 Yellow-billed Magpie, 15 Crows, 1 Chestnut-backed Chickadee, 6 Plain Titmice, 6 Bush-tits, 2 White-breasted Nuthatches, 2 House Wrens, 3 Bewick's Wrens, 2 Rock Wrens, 1 Canyon Wren, 1 Robin, 1 Hermit Thrush, 30 W. Bluebirds, 2 W. Gnatcatchers, 2 Ruby-crowned Kinglets, 5 Hutton's Vireos, 6 Warbling Vireos, 8 Orange-crowned Warblers, 10 Audubon's Warblers, 12 W. Meadowlarks, 1 Bullock's Oriole, 20 Brewer's Blackbirds, 1 Purple Finch, 20 House Finches, 4 Green-backed Goldfinches, 4 Spotted Towhees, 5 Brown Towhees, 2 Rufous-crowned Sparrows, 15 Ore. Juncos, 1 Chipping Sparrow, 4 White-crowned Sparrow, 6 Golden-crowned Sparrows, 2 Song Sparrows.

Manette Wittgenstein

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SANTA CLARA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY, Branch of NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

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