

SANTA CLARA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

September 1951

SEPTEMBER WORK MEETING will be held on Monday evening, September 24, at 7:30 o'clock in Room 222, Science Building, San Jose State College. The Audubon Screen Tour folders are ready for mailing, which means hundreds of envelopes must be addressed and the folders "stuffed" into them. "Many hands make light work," and so please come and bring your pen, or your typewriter, and names of persons you think will be interested in the Screen Tours. We can exchange our summer bird observations while we work. There will be refreshments afterwards.

Grace Brubaker, Program Chairman

A MIDWEEK FIELD TRIP, an innovation this year, will be taken Wednesday morning, September 26, to Mrs. Marjorie Stevens' garden in Los Altos. A food tray, a bird bath, and a wooded creek bank alongside the garden, all promise good birding. These midweek morning trips, from 8:30 to 11 o'clock, are being planned especially for beginners. Meet at Mrs. Stevens' home, 503 W. Portola Ave., at 8:30 a.m. (Portola Ave. is off San Antonio Ave., about four blocks south from El Camino Real.)

AN ALL-DAY FIELD TRIP will be taken Saturday, September 29, to Crystal Springs Lake, Half Moon Bay and points south, at least as far as Pescadero Creek. There should be many opportunities for observing migrating shore birds and water birds; and on the way to the coast perhaps newly arriving winter-visitant land birds. Les Sleeper will lead trip. Meet at S. P. Station in Palo Alto at 8 a.m. Bring lunch.

FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE FOR NEXT FOUR MONTHS (details in coming notices)

- Oct. 10, Wednesday morning, to Aldercroft, in Santa Cruz Mts.  
Mr. and Mrs. Irving Snow
- Oct. 14, Sunday, to ridge between headwaters of Llagas and Uvas Creeks,  
near summit of Loma Prieta, Mrs. Mary Ellen Shore
- Oct. 20, Saturday, to San Martin and vicinity  
Mr. and Mrs. William Ouderkirk
- Nov. 4, Sunday, to Los Banos Bird and Game Refuge  
Mr. and Mrs. Albert Wool
- Nov. 7, Wednesday morning, to Stanford University Campus  
Mrs. Roberta Wright
- Nov. 17, Saturday, to Fremont Peak State Park  
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Anderson
- Dec. 1, to Hall's Valley and Smith Creek  
Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Prusman
- Dec. 12, Wednesday morning, to a garden in Los Gatos  
Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Prusman
- Dec. 30, Sunday, Christmas Bird Count  
Dr. Charles Sibley
- Jan. 16, Wednesday morning, to Alum Rock Park  
Mrs. Grace Brubaker
- Jan. 27, Sunday, to Castle Rock and the Summit Road, in Santa Cruz Mts.  
Mrs. Donna McBryan

Emily Smith and Les Sleeper, Field Trip Chairmen

REPORT OF FIELD TRIP TO DUMBARTON BRIDGE, August 25, 1951. A cover of high fog was welcome for it reduced the glare and made shorebird observation easy on the eyes. Several stops (illegal!) were made along the western approach to the Dumbarton bridge. Over 250 Double-crested (Farallon) Cormorants were counted flying in formation from south to north. The significance of this movement was not apparent although it was probably a local one involving passage between a roosting place and a feeding area. Bartholomew (Condor, 1943, pp. 3-18) studied the movements of cormorants on S.F. Bay near Berkeley but his article throws no light on the present problem. A Forster Tern was observed carrying a fish (feeding young ?) and many immature Forster Terns were seen.

Although the total numbers of migrants had not yet reached the fall maximum certain species were present in abundance. Estimates of the numbers of Pintails and Northern Phalaropes exceeded 5000 for each species. Most of these were on the east side of the bridge. Northern Phalaropes apparently congregate in far greater numbers on the salt ponds in the southern part of the Bay than at Bay Farm Island. In a recent article Storer (Condor, 1951, pp. 186-193) recorded a maximum of 63 (August 25, 1948) for the fall migration at Bay Farm Island and Mrs. Kelly (Gull, Sept. 1951) observed 100 on August 17, 1951.

The shorebirds were in various stages of the post-nuptial molt. Many phalaropes were still in partial breeding plumage, others in the drab winter dress. Black-bellied Plover were seen in seemingly full nuptial plumage and in various stages of the molt. The Eared Grebes still carried the nuptial head plumes.

Species observed near Dumbarton Bridge and the KGO transmitter as follows:  
Eared Grebe, 3; Pied-billed Grebe, 3; White Pelican, 200; Double-crested Cormorant, 250; Great Blue Heron, 5; Common (American) Egret, 25; Snowy Egret, 4; Black-crowned Night Heron, 20; Pintail, 5000; Black-bellied Plover, 5; Long-billed Curlew, 20; Marbled Godwit, 15; Willet, 20; Ruddy Turnstone, 1; Black Turnstone, 6; Western Sandpiper, 60; Least Sandpiper, 150; Avocet, 40; Northern Phalarope, 5000; Ring-billed Gull, 75; Short-billed Gull, 7; California Gull, 200; Western Gull, 3; Caspian Tern, 3; Forster Tern, 100; Barn Swallow, 15; Loggerhead Shrike, 2; Western Meadowlark, 1; Brewer Blackbird, 50; Savannah Sparrow, 1; Song Sparrow, 10.

At Mrs. Hill's home near Alvarado the group had lunch and added a Ruddy Duck to the list of water birds. A few cars returned home via the Los Esteros road near Alviso where the following were observed: Killdeer, 6; Semipalmated Plover, 20; Marbled Godwit, 4; Greater Yellow-legs, 10; Willet, 12; Short-billed (?) Dowitcher, 10; Western Sandpiper, 400; Avocet 30; Ring-billed Gull, 400.

Charles Sibley

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The fall migration of land birds is less noticeable than the spring migration because the males are not singing and the departure is more gradual. There are however, more individual birds present because of the crop of immatures. Many interesting records are obtained during the fall migration. Most of these are for species which nest north of California but whose normal migration routes take them east of the Sierra Nevada or Rocky Mountains. All of the six California records for the Tennessee Warbler are fall records (Sept. 19-Oct. 14) and most of these for the Black and White Warbler are for Sept. and October. The Red-eyed Vireo has been taken twice in early October and there are three October records for the Magnolia Warbler. Most such stragglers will seek water---watch bird baths and other open water for them.

This is also the time to watch for the arrival of our usual wintering species such as Varied and Hermit thrushes, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Pipit, Audubon and Townsend warblers, and White-crowned, Golden-crowned, and Fox sparrows. Send your earliest dates for wintering species to the editors before the next issue of the bulletin.

C.S.

Have you heard California Thrashers, Mockingbirds, and Wren-tits singing a good deal lately? Following the quiet of the molting period these species are now re-establishing territorial boundaries and hence singing is prominent once more. Few species of birds maintain winter territories but most of those which do so are fall singers. At this time of year both male and female Mockingbirds sing since both sexes hold individual winter territories.

Keep a record of the species which you hear singing in the fall. Send your records to the editors before the next issue of the bulletin.

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RECENT LITERATURE. Just off the press (Sept. 14, 1951) is a paper of interest to students of bird distribution. Dr. Alden H. Miller has prepared, "An Analysis of the Distribution of the Birds of California" as a follow-up on the monumental, "Distribution of the Birds of California" which he co-authored with the late Joseph Grinnell.

The "Analysis" is an attempt to draw generalizations concerning bird distribution in the state. Three types of analysis are presented; Life Zones, Ecologic Formations (mainly plant formations), and Faunal Groups. This is not a "popular" paper but it contains much of interest to all bird students in this state. Most of the lists are given in common names.

The volume is paper bound and is available from the University of California Press, Berkeley 4, California. Price \$1.50. It is volume 50, No. 6, pp. 531-634, University of California Publications in Zoology.

"The Distribution of the Birds of California" by Grinnell and Miller was published in 1944 by the Cooper Ornithological Club as Pacific Coast Avifauna No. 27. It is available from the Club addressed to the Dept. of Zoology, Univ. of California at Los Angeles, Los Angeles 24, Calif. Price \$7.50 paper bound, 608 pages.

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Meetings are held on the second Monday of each month, alternately in San Jose and Palo Alto. Guests are always welcome.