

BULLETIN OF THE  
SANTA CLARA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

November 1951

WINTER BIRDS

According to the calendar winter begins in December---but some of our "winter" birds arrive as early as August! These first migrants are the waterfowl and the shorebirds while the smaller wintering land birds begin arriving in our region of mild winter climate in September. They come from the high altitudes of the Sierra Nevada and the Cascades and from the high latitudes of the north; regions of rigorous winter climates wherein insects are dormant and seeds are covered by deep snows.

The nomadic Cedar Waxwings are often the first to arrive but they are erratic and do not hold to as strict a timetable as do most other species. Golden-crowned Sparrows which breed in British Columbia and Alaska usually appear in the Santa Clara Valley by the third week in September (the 19th. this year). White-crowned Sparrows (subspecies pugevensis and gambelii) from Oregon, Washington, British Columbia and Alaska arrive about the same time (the 18th. this year). It is interesting that the White-crowns which breed in the Sierra Nevada (subspecies oriantha) mostly winter to the south and east of California, some going as far as central Mexico. The White-crowns which breed along the coast (subspecies nuttallii) are resident and do not migrate at all. Thus the winter flocks of White-crowned Sparrows in the Santa Clara Valley are almost certain to be composed of individuals which bred or were hatched the previous summer someplace between Oregon and Alaska.

Ruby-crowned Kinglets wintering with us come from the Sierra Nevada and the mountains of northern California and Oregon. Most of our winter visitant Hermit Thrushes breed in Alaska and British Columbia (subspecies nanus and guttata) and our Varied Thrushes come south from coastal breeding grounds between northwestern California and southern Alaska.

Audubon Warblers breed in the higher Coast Ranges, the Sierra Nevada, and north to central British Columbia and Alberta. Some individuals migrate as far south as Guatemala in the winter. The Townsend Warbler breeds from Washington to Alaska and winters from central California to Nicaragua.

The Oregon Juncos which breed in Santa Clara county (subspecies pinosus) also winter here but their numbers are augmented by the influx of their mountain kinfolk from northern California and the Sierra Nevada (subspecies thurberi), from Oregon and Washington (subspecies shufeldti), and a few from coastal British Columbia and Alaska (subspecies oreganus).

The Fox Sparrows which winter in the Santa Clara Valley come to us primarily from the vicinity of Yakutat Bay on the coast of Alaska (subspecies meruloides) and from Kodiak Island (subspecies insularis). A few come from the population which breeds in the region of the Kenai Peninsula, Alaska (subspecies sinuosa), and some make a relatively short migration from the Yolla Bolly Mountains in the northern Coast Ranges of California (subspecies brevicauda). There are several other subspecies which pass through en route to more southerly wintering areas. The Fox Sparrows which breed in the Sierra Nevada (subspecies megarhynchus) winter in southern California.

The Yellow-bellied (Red-breasted) Sapsuckers which winter with us breed from the Sierra Nevada and the Cascades north to Alaska and our wintering Water Pipits breed from the northern Cascades to northern Alaska.

Charles Sibley

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WANTED! A heading design for the Bulletin. Lend your talents to the cause. Submit ideas and sketches to the Editors so that a new heading may be prepared with which to start the New Year. Note the space--7x1 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches. Use wording as above.

## CALENDAR FOR NOVEMBER

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING will be held on the first Monday, November 5 (the Audubon Screen Tour had to be scheduled on the second Monday), in Room 210, Science Building, San Jose State College, at 8 o'clock. Miss Elsie Hoeck will tell about her two weeks at the Audubon Camp of California, stressing the teaching methods employed and the benefits derived from such a vacation. Mr. Homer Peterson will complete the program with two reels of his Nature films, mostly in color, of insects and spiders. Yes, there will be time for reports of seasonal observations at the beginning of the program. Please bring them in writing.

Grace Brubaker, Program Chairman

FIRST AUDUBON SCREEN TOUR for this season comes on Monday, November 12, at the Montgomery Theatre, San Jose Civic Auditorium, at 8 o'clock. Howard L. Orians, Naturalist-photographer of Milwaukee, will present "Lakelore," an all-color motion picture of Lake Michigan and its wild-life. Mr. Orians' studies of the waterfowl, particularly during the winter season, are considered among the finest ever made.

There will be a children's matinee at 2:30 the same day and in the same theatre. (Because November 12 is a holiday, the children's matinee can not be taken over by the schools, as was originally planned.) Mr. Orians will show the same film at the matinee, but his afternoon presentation will be planned especially for school children.

Season and single admission tickets will be on sale at the Auditorium Box Office at both performances. Matinee tickets for children will be 25 cents, but all others attending the matinee will be asked to pay the regular prices—general admission, 74 cents; college and adult education students, 50 cents. Season tickets will be good at either performance.

Wilbur Luick, Audubon Screen Tours Chairman

ALL-DAY FIELD TRIP TO LOS BANOS BIRD AND GAME REFUGE will be taken next Sunday, November 4, with Mr. and Mrs. Albert Wool as leaders. Meet in Los Banos for breakfast at 8 a.m., at Tiny's restaurant on Highway 152. If you do not want breakfast in Los Banos, be at Tiny's at 8:30, or at the Refuge entrance at 9. Bring lunch; also warm wraps, for it can be windy and cold on the Refuge. This is the trip to see myriads of ducks and geese, and perhaps a flock of Sandhill Cranes.

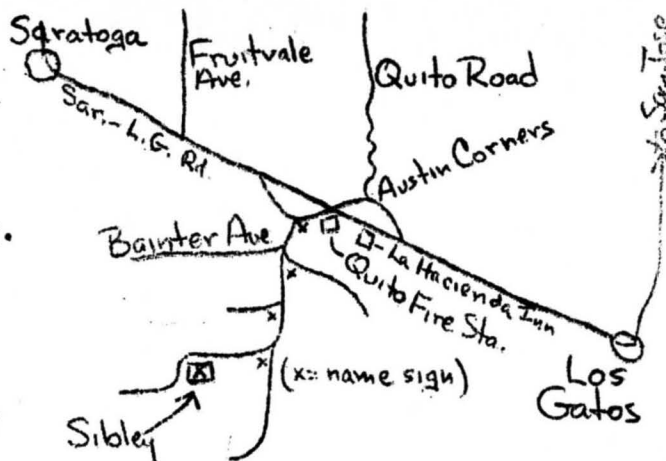
THE MIDWEEK BIRD TRIP will be taken Wednesday morning, November 7, to the Stanford campus, with Mrs. Roberta Wright as leader. Meet at the S. P. Station in Palo Alto at 8:30 a.m. These short, three-hour trips are planned especially for members who want to learn to identify birds.

ALL-DAY FIELD TRIP TO FREMONT PEAK STATE PARK will be taken Saturday, November 17, with Mr. and Mrs. Charles Anderson as leaders. Meet at junction of the San Juan road with Highway 101, about nine miles south from Gilroy on Highway 101. There is a restaurant at the junction. Bring lunch. There is a picnic area in the Park and fireplaces. Last year in November the Andersons saw Mountain Bluebirds on the Peak, and during the same month other observers found Clark Nutcrackers! Along the road up the mountain are Coulter Pines, interesting chaparral, and of course fine views.

BIRD-BANDING DEMONSTRATION on November 25, at home of Charles Sibley, Rt. 1, Box 241, Los Gatos. Come any time between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Over 5,000,000 birds have been banded in the U.S. since 1900. Much of our information concerning the routes of migration, longevity, plumage change, and dispersal of young birds has been obtained as the direct result or as a by-product of banding. One of the pleasures is that of seeing living birds at close range where minute details of structure are visible.

On November 25 the techniques of trapping and banding will be demonstrated. Come early and stay late. Bring a lunch if you wish. See the map for the route. If you can't find the way just 'phone ELgato 4-4429 for information. C.S.



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FIELD OBSERVATIONS. (Send your records to the Editors)

- Red-backed Sandpiper, October 21, Alviso, flock of 22. Emily Smith
- Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Oct. 19, Uvas Road. E.S.
- Say Phoebe, Oct. 15, east of San Martin. Mrs. Ouderkirk.
- Varied Thrush, Oct. 20, Loma Prieta Rd. S.C.V.A.S. trip.
- Hermit Thrush, Oct. 8, Los Gatos. C.S. Oct. 9-11, 14, 17, 18. Los Gatos area. E.S.  
Becoming common by Oct. 20.
- Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Sept. 23, Menlo Park. Mrs. R.Davis.  
Oct. 14, Loma Prieta (singing). E.S.
- Water Pipit, Oct. 7, Alviso (3 or 4); Oct. 20, Uvas Rd.; Oct. 21, Alviso (many). E.S.
- Audubon Warbler, Oct. 7,9,15,18, Los Gatos. E.S. Oct. 11, 13, San Jose. C.Zwaal.  
Becoming common by Oct. 20.
- Townsend Warbler, Oct. 22, near Los Gatos. M.E. Shore
- Golden-crowned Sparrow, arrived Sept. 19, Los Gatos. E.S. and C.S. Singing near  
Los Gatos, Oct. 6. F.Dieterich. Common by Oct. 11.
- White-crowned Sparrow, arrived San Jose, Sept. 18. G.Brubaker. Common by Oct. 10.
- Fox Sparrow, Oct. 14, Loma Prieta. S.C.V.A.S. trip.

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BIRD FEEDING

Though just now birds are more interested in water than in food put out by humans this condition will be reversed as soon as winter brings constant moisture; and then those among us who attract birds to our gardens begin to look for bird-tempting foods

At the top of the list are the costly sunflower seeds and walnut meats. Cracked grain will bring many species such as quail, juncos, towhees, "crowned" and song sparrows and others. I have found that doughnuts are relished by titmice and chickadees, as well as by many of the seed eaters. Suet may be fastened under a coarse screen as a constant attraction for jays, woodpeckers, chickadees, and wren-tits.

A special dainty may be made by putting suet, dry bread, and raisins through the food grinder. I use two loaves of bread to a pound of suet and a pound of raisins, but proportions may be varied to suit the materials at hand. If the consistency is not right at first, put it through the grinder a second time, then press it into small cakes which may be stored for weeks and fed to the birds as needed. This food seems to attract a maximum number of kinds of birds. Jim Peterson, who told me about it, has even seen Ruby-crowned Kinglets flutter around it when he had spread the mixture into the crevices of the bark of a tree.

Eva McRae

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