



BULLETIN OF THE
SANTA CLARA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

February 1953

SCREEN TOURS

Change in the San Jose Audubon Screen Tours Location. The three remaining Screen Tours are being shifted to the Roosevelt Junior High School auditorium, due to the recent decision of the San Jose City Council authorizing a sharply increased rent schedule for Montgomery Theatre and other facilities in the San Jose Civic Auditorium. We were faced with a rent double what we were paying. Conversations with the Auditorium Manager made it clear no exceptions would be made. Because we cannot absorb the rent increase without putting into jeopardy the finances of the San Jose Audubon Screen Tours, this move from Montgomery Theatre to the Roosevelt Junior High School auditorium is necessary. We are trying to tell as many persons as possible about the change in location. Please help by telling those you know are attending the San Jose series.

The new location, on East Santa Clara Street at 19th. Street, is not as good as downtown, but the parking problem will be simpler. Also, there is direct bus connection to the school. The Roosevelt auditorium is larger--will seat several hundred more than the Montgomery Theatre--which gives us an opportunity to increase the attendance. You can help fill the auditorium if you take opportunity to talk about our Audubon Screen Tours. Personal recommendation is powerful sales talk.

Wilbur F. Luick, Audubon Screen Tours Chairman

San Jose's Next Audubon Screen Tour comes Friday, February 6, when Howard Cleaves presents "By Sky Crit to Glacier." It was Howard Cleaves who showed the remarkable "Midnight Movies in Animaland" three years ago. This year his all-color motion picture proves he can photograph animals as ably by day as by night. The new film pictures a father-and-son journey from New York City to the Badlands National Monument in South Dakota, and on to national parks in the Rocky Mountains--Grand Teton, Yellowstone, and Glacier. In Glacier they took a Wilderness Trail trip into the rugged high country around Kintla Lakes and Boulder Pass. During the journey the Cleaves' got action shots of moose, mountain goats, prong-horned antelopes, whistling marmots, a pine marten, and other animals, including Mormon crickets! The "sky crib" is an invention of the Cleaves' for sleeping out at night and will be demonstrated in the film.

The Screen Tour will be presented at 8:00 p.m. in the Roosevelt Junior High School auditorium, on East Santa Clara Street at 19th. Street. (Did you read the announcement above about the change in location?) The tickets are 85 cents (students 55 cents) and will be for sale at the Roosevelt auditorium the evening of the performance.

At the Matinee Audubon Screen Tour in Redwood City, Saturday afternoon, February 7, Howard Cleaves will show his full-length, all-color motion picture "Animals Unaware." The film gives the life history of the 17-year "locust"; studies of Ospreys on the Atlantic Coast, emphasizing their relationship to man; adventures in the marshy haunts of the Clapper Rail; and other wild animal stories. An amazing aspect of this wildlife film is that much of it was made on Staten Island, which is a part of New York City itself. The Screen Tour will be presented at 1:30 p.m. in the Sequoia Union High School auditorium. Single performance tickets are 75 cents for adults and 40 cents for students and children, and can be purchased at the door the afternoon of the performance.

FEBRUARY MEETING

Mr. Howard L. Cogswell, Assistant Professor of Zoology, Mills College, will speak on "Bird Habitats in California", illustrated with Kodachrome slides of birds and habitat types. Mr. Cogswell is known to many through his work at the Audubon Nature Camp at Norden. This is certain to be an entertaining and instructive program. Feb. 9, 8:00 p.m., Rm. 210, Science Building, San Jose State College.

Wednesday Morning Bird Trip on February 11 to Lagunita, Stanford campus, to see not only the ducks on Lagunita but also land birds around the "little lake." Meet at S. P. Station in Palo Alto at 8:45 a.m. or at parking place by the Lagunita boat house at 9:00.

Week-end Field Trip to Tomales Bay in Marine County, February 14 and 15. This trip was very much enjoyed when it was taken three years ago. The plan this year is to meet Saturday morning in Stinson Beach at the bus station at 11:00 a.m. (from Golden Gate Bridge, follow Highway 1 to Stinson Beach, about 15 miles, or go by way of Mill Valley). After a picnic lunch we shall go in caravan to Point Reyes Station, birding along the way. There are good if plain accommodations at the old Point Reyes Hotel for Saturday night. Make reservations as soon as possible (the address is Point Reyes Station, and the rates: double room with bath \$4.00, without \$3.00; single room with bath \$3.00, without \$2.00). Sunday morning Mr. and Mrs. Carlyle Sather will lead trip to Tomales Point, which includes a walk of about 2 miles, with the ocean on one side and the fiordlike Tomales Bay on the other. The Sathers took this trip with the Golden Gate Audubon Society in January and obtained the necessary permission for our group. They promise Harlequin Ducks and a long list of birds, as well as fine scenery and interesting geology. It can be windy out on the Point, and so bring your warmest wraps and plenty of them; also picnic lunches for both Saturday and Sunday. If you can come for Sunday only, be at Point Reyes Hotel by 9:00 a.m. For further information, phone Emily Smith, ELgato 4-2494.

Wednesday Morning Bird Trip on February 25 to Villa Montalvo, near Saratoga, with Clyde and Agnes Prusman as leaders. The grounds are beautiful and there are many paths to explore for birds. These midweek bird trips are for beginners especially. Come and join us. Meet at main gate on Saratoga-Los Gatos Road at 8:30 a.m.

Bird-banding Demonstration on Sunday, March 1, at the home of Charles and Frances Sibley, 15880 Ravine Road, Los Gatos (about halfway between Los Gatos and Saratoga—see enclosed map). Come any time between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Bring lunch and plan to take bird walk in vicinity.

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CALENDAR DATES FOR MARCH (details in March Bulletin)

March 6, Friday, Screen Tour in San Jose; March 7, in Redwood City

March 9, Monday, regular March meeting in Palo Alto

March 11 and 25, Wednesday morning bird trips

March 21, Sunday, a trip to enjoy fruit tree blossoms as well as birds

March 28-31, California Audubon Convention at Asilomar, with "a fine balance of excellent field trips, films, and panel discussions

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THE NESTING SURVEY. Another nesting season has started! Anna Hummers, Bushtits, and English Sparrows are nest-building and others will soon begin. The file of nesting records is already of important proportions and becomes more valuable with each addition. Add your records to it. A sample blank is enclosed. Please send for more as you need them.

Charles Sibley

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NEW MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY is being prepared. Has your address been changed by the Santa Clara County Planning Commission? If in any way the address on your Bulletin envelope this month is not correct, please let Emily Smith know.

1952 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT was successfully conducted by Albert J. Wool, Jr. Wool prepared the following report and sent a copy to the National Audubon Society. It will appear in the April issue of "Audubon Field Notes," along with bird counts from all over the country.

San Jose, Calif. Same area as in 1951 (7½-mile radius centering at Capitol Ave. and Mabury Rd., and including Alviso, Calaveras Reservoir, Hall's Valley to Quimby Rd., Evergreen, and Santa Clara; salt marsh and mud flats 10%, fresh water marsh 10%, fresh water lake 10%, oak woodland 30%, deciduous orchard 20%, pasture and grassland 10%, city and suburbs 10%).—Dec. 28; 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Clear; temp. 50° to 56°; wind NW, 5-10 m.p.h.; ground wet from rain of day before; a 6.2 high tide at Alviso covered much of salt marsh and mud flat areas during time party was there. Twenty-one observers in 4 parties. Total party-hours, 32 (20 on foot, 12 by car); total party-miles, 184 (16 on foot, 168 by car).

Horned Grebe, 2; Eared Grebe, 4; Pied-billed Grebe, 3; White Pelican, 240; Double-crested Cormorant, 3; Great Blue Heron, 5; American Egret, 3; Black-crowned Night Heron, 4; Canada Goose, 625; Mallard, 36; Pintail, 1; Green-winged Teal, 225; Shoveller, 31; Wood Duck, 10; Canvas-back, 8; Lesser Scaup, 1; Buffle-head, 1; Ruddy Duck, 27; American Merganser, 10; Turkey Vulture, 2; White-tailed Kite, 3; Red-tailed Hawk, 23; Golden Eagle, 1; Marsh Hawk, 2; Pigeon Hawk, 1; Sparrow Hawk, 35; California Quail, 164; Ring-necked Pheasant 3; Clapper Rail, 5; Virginia Rail, 4; American Coot, 1125; Killdeer, 45; Black-bellied Plover, 360; Wilson's Snipe, 3; Spotted Sandpiper, 2; Willet, 128; Greater Yellow-legs, 2; Red Knot, 7 (together in flock of Dowitchers, J.G.P); Least Sandpiper, 75; Red-backed Sandpiper, 125; Dowitcher, 49; Western Sandpiper, 53; unidentified small sandpipers, 2000 (est.); Marbled Godwit, 28; American Avocet, 336; Herring Gull, 53; California Gull, 23; Ring-billed Gull, 539; Short-billed Gull, 31; Bonaparte's Gull, 23; unidentified gulls on two city dumps, 2500 (est.); Band-tailed Pigeon, 68; Mourning Dove, 37; Screech Owl, 1; Burrowing Owl, 1; White-throated Swift, 6; Anna's Hummingbird, 8; Belted Kingfisher, 2; Red-shafted Flicker, 45; Acorn Woodpecker, 13; Yellow-bellied (Red-breasted) Sapsucker, 3; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 2; Nuttall's Woodpecker, 2; Black Phoebe, 13; Say's Phoebe, 6; Steller's Jay, 23; Scrub Jay, 49; Yellow-billed Magpie, 13; American Crow, 17; Chestnut-backed Chickadee, 12; Plain Titmouse, 23; Bushtit, 210; White-breasted Nuthatch, 6; Brown Creeper, 3; Wren-tit, 12; Bewick's Wren, 6; Long-billed Marsh Wren, 2; Mockingbird, 23; California Thrasher, 2; American Robin, 337; Varied Thrush, 6; Hermit Thrush, 17; Western Bluebird, 24; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 26; Water Pipit, 145; Cedar Waxwing, 35; Loggerhead Shrike, 28; Audubon's Warbler, 113; Yellowthroat, 1; House Sparrow, 111; Western Meadowlark, 789; Red-winged Blackbird, 19; Tricolored Blackbird, 1; Brewer's Blackbird, 1083; Purple Finch, 3; House Finch, 951; Pine Siskin, 49; American Goldfinch, 4; Lesser (Green-backed) Goldfinch, 736; Spotted Towhee, 16; Brown Towhee, 86; Savannah Sparrow, 31; Lark Sparrow, 22; Rufous-crowned Sparrow, 6; Oregon Junco, 90; White-crowned Sparrow, 334; Golden-crowned Sparrow, 220; Fox Sparrow, 3; and Song Sparrow, 46. Total, 108 species; about 15,372 individuals.

Frank Cantu, Helen Donaghey, Pat Donaghey and Pete Botsford, Florence Durfee, Alberta Edell, Esther Ollis, J. G. Peterson, Clyde and Agnes Prusman, C. L. and Nell Sleeper, Martha and Howard Sleeper, Emily Smith, Angelina Snow, Herbert and Manette Wittgenstein, A. J. Wool (compiler), and Fannie Zwaal.

A LETTER ABOUT A DIPPER AND SALMON from Lynn Robbins to the editors, dated January 18, 1953. Only the Dipper observation was intended for our Field Observations but we enjoyed the whole letter.

We have just spent a most rewarding day in Portola State Park in San Mateo County. Salamander-hunting was our purpose, but as usual anything that comes along is appreciated. It was misting this side of the hills and foggy over Skyline Boulevard. The park was delightfully deserted by humans, save for a nice ranger who told us to walk right through the camp ground and we would very likely see salamanders walking around. Sure enough, we found several *Triturus*, a couple probably first year animals, but no *Dicamptodon* or *Ensatina*. All the logs we turned over showed nothing except beetles and mouse droppings.

The damp woods were so lovely with the soft green of mosses that we kept walking up along Peters Creek. Mal said it seemed like a fine place for a Dipper, but I had just about given up hope of seeing any in the mountains around here. Finally we came to the end of the road where a bridge used to cross the creek, but now there is just a chasm. Suddenly Mal said, "Look, look, there he is! Get the glasses." But I was too absorbed just staring down onto the log across the creek, where indeed he was! By the time Mal shook me into unlimbering the glasses the Dipper had flown down stream. We tried to get down to the creek, but it was too steep and the water too deep for our boots, and so we started back down the road. After a few hundred yards, intuition prompted me to turn off into the huckleberry shrubs and work down to the creek. There we found a gravel bar and calm backwater. And there was the Dipper! We squatted down in the damp bushes, with rain drops trickling down our backs, and watched to our hearts content. The bird flew from one side to the other and onto a log in the middle, where we saw the water run silvery over its head as it went down to search beneath.

Later, directly below us on the gravel bar it picked up a berry and took it to the water to be washed before eating. It did this twice and then flew upstream. We could see a little pile of berries on the bar. They looked like Madrone berries, only more yellowish, but the trees overhead were Tanbark Oak and California Laurel. We were so curious we considered trying to get down, but the bank still seemed too steep. Then suddenly in the stream I saw a great, tired salmon. I say it was 2 ft., Mal says $2\frac{1}{2}$. As we watched, another appeared and they were swept into the shallows and turned on their sides. That was enough, I must go down to see those great fish. So I scrambled and fell down to the creek bed, where I unsuccessfully tried to catch a salmon. There was life in the old fellows yet and they veered away, leaving me with water in my boots. Then I went over to inspect the Dipper's "berries." They were salmon eggs, with a dead salmon lying nearby. Afterwards, on our way out, the ranger told us they had opened a dead salmon to see if it had spawned—undoubtedly this was the same one.

FIELD OBSERVATIONS

ALLEN HUMMINGBIRD. The migration of this species may have been speeded up a bit by the unusual warm weather of the past two weeks. The first record was January 25 near Cupertino and again on Jan. 27 (Lucia De Wolf). Lina Snow saw the first in Aldercroft on Jan. 28 in the "pendulum" display and on Jan. 31 Les Sleeper saw one at Crystal Springs Lake and Charles Sibley saw one near Los Gatos.

SIGNS OF SPRING AMONG THE RESIDENTS:-----

ANNA HUMMINGBIRD actively collecting cotton from dry flower stalks of garden anemone Jan. 22-28, and carrying it across the road out of sight. Near Los Gatos, Emily Smith.
SCRUB JAY -- Lynn Robbins saw a jay fly down and pick up a stick which it dropped when a car came by. Los Altos, Jan. 5.

PLAIN TITMOUSE. Much singing and courtship display by male, Feb. 1, Charles Sibley.

BUSH TIT. Pair foraging together, Jan. 24 and 27 near Los Gatos. E.S.

CALIFORNIA THRASHER. Two banded birds which were paired last year have been seen together (perched together in same tree; coming to tray for food, female following the male) with increasing frequency. Courtship behavior (vigorous posturing by the female) seen on Dec. 31 and frequently since. Near Los Gatos. Emily Smith.

HUTTON VIREO. Vigorous song on part of male in oak. Female came into oak giving soft call notes and followed male when he left tree. Jan. 27, near Los Gatos. E.S.

SONG SPARROW. The banded bird which was defending territory Jan. 5 (see Jan. Bull.) had a mate Jan. 9. Birds frequently seen foraging but have not seen active courtship behavior. Banded female even permits male to feed with her on the feeding tray. (That didn't happen with the two banded birds which occupied this territory last year.) E.S.

WINTER VISITANTS:-----

So far we have not had local reports of Evening Grosbeaks, Red Crossbills, or Townsend Solitaires. Has anyone seen any of these species??

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH. Still present near Los Gatos, Jan. 16. E.S. One heard near Crystal Springs Reservoir, Jan. 31. E.S.

GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET. Flock of about 12 near Los Altos, Jan. 19. E.S. About same number at Pilarcitos Lake (near Crystal Springs Reservoir) Jan. 24, and also on Jan. 31. Roberta Wright.

OTHER OBSERVATIONS:-----

WHISTLING SWAN. Jan. 1, 2 on mud flats along Bayshore Highway, (near San Mateo?) reported by Dr. Malcolm Miller.

BAND-TAILED PIGEON. Jan. 11, 5 or 6 flocks of perhaps 2000 birds in oaks near Woodside. David L. Samuels.

MOURNING DOVE. Jan. 19, flock of 11 near Cupertino. E.S.

HOUSE FINCHES and GREEN-BACKED GOLDFINCHES. Jan. 10, very large mixed flock of 200-300 birds feeding and flying together. Goldfinches on star thistle and House Finches on the ground below the thistles. Jo Ouder Kirk.

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SANTA CLARA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY, Branch of NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

- President --- Dr. H.B. Humphrey, 715 Fremont Ave., Mountain View
- Corr. Sec. -- Miss Eva Allen, P.O. Box 772, Los Gatos
- Treasurer --- Mrs. Eva McRae, San Jose State College, San Jose 14
- Editor ----- Dr. Charles G. Sibley, 15880 Ravine Road, Los Gatos
- Assoc. Ed. -- Miss Emily Smith, 19651 Glen Una Drive, Los Gatos

Meetings are held on the second Monday of each month (except July and August) alternately in San Jose and Palo Alto. Guests are welcome.