

The Avocet

Vol. III No. 2

March-April 1956

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Your society currently is engaged in three conservation projects of great importance to this valley. All involve cooperation with other groups, interested as are we in the preservation and wise use of our natural resources.

With the Montalvo Association, we are continuing our efforts to develop that beautiful natural area as a wildlife sanctuary. We hope to post it in the near future, under the leadership of Miss Emily Smith and Mr. William Ouderkirk of our Conservation Committee.

In conjunction with many other conservation groups throughout the State, we are assisting with the re-examination of California's game laws, particularly as they pertain to the shooting of birds. We hope ultimately to help with a re-writing of those laws, to give long overdue justice and protection to our valuable predators, the hawks and owls. We are most grateful for the sound professional guidance we are receiving from Dr. L. Richard Mewaldt and Dr. William Graf of San Jose State College.

Finally, through recent Board action, we have joined with the National Audubon Society, the Golden Gate Audubon Society, the Sequoia Audubon Society, and the Sierra Club, in helping to set aside a wild-life reserve in San Francisco Bay. You may remember discussion of this matter over a year ago, at which time the Board decided against participation, because of problems of liability and uncertainty as to our pending incorporation. These matters now are resolved. Our Society is properly incorporated and a half million dollar liability insurance policy is carried by the National Society which covers all branch societies. The Board therefore deemed it proper to participate with the other Societies in this project.

Early in February, Dick Mewaldt and I represented our Society in an inspection tour of the new wildlife reservation, along with representatives of all other participating groups. Mr. John Baker, President of the National Audubon Society, led the trip, with members of the Golden Gate and Sequoia Audubon Societies serving as hosts.

The reserve areas seem excellent for their purpose---to provide a feeding and resting refuge for shorebirds, ducks, and tidal flat dwellers, in our area rapidly being converted to industrial and commercial uses. They are not ideal field trip areas because of difficulties of access, and the oozy nature of much of the terrain-----factors which improve their refuge value.

The refuge is in two parts, one near Redwood City, the other near the east end of Dumbarton Bridge. We visited Greco Island first, travelling by boat from the Redwood City Yacht Harbor. We were guests of the Mariners, a Senior Girl Scout group somewhat equivalent in program activities to the Sea Scouts. We cruised along the west shore of Greco Island, enjoying good views of loons, pelicans, gulls, cormorants and grebes. Some of us landed on the island and walked for about a half-mile along a plank catwalk maintained for servicing the power lines overhead. This obviously was clapper rail country---and a rail obliged



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

us early by bustling about almost under our feet.

We visited the east shore area in the afternoon, where we saw few birds because of the tidal conditions, but we were impressed by the excellent feeding grounds there for wading birds. The mud flats below high tide line are most extensive, providing a vast feeding area as the tide recedes. A number of us tramped to the edge of the mud through oozy footing, and looked far out after the receding tide. The birds had followed it too far for good observation, and we were not equipped to go further. In fact, as we surveyed our muddy trousers, we realized once more that this was the habitat of light-bodied, long-legged, splay-footed creatures---and that few of those characteristics fitted us. By common consent, we left the marsh and mudflats for the sandpipers, dowitchers, and their kin. As we slogged back toward high dry ground, we were rewarded by the unforgettable sight of a long line of avocets, winging swiftly over the marsh before us. As they came to the dyke where our cars were parked, they undulated gracefully over it and swept on into the distance-----signature by our namesake!

MARCH-APRIL CALENDAR

SPECIAL EVENTS

MARCH

Wednesday, March 7th-----Arbor Day.

Thursday, March 8th, Audubon Screen Tour, at 8:00 p.m., at Morris Dailey Auditorium, San Jose State College. The fourth event in the 1955-1956 series will feature Dick Bird and his film, "Newfoundland," a photographic adventure refinding a "new found land"---Canada's newest province. Dick Bird of Regina, Saskatchewan, has been active in the field of motion picture production in many countries of the world since 1908. His wife, Ada, who is a naturalist in her own right and an expert wildlife photographer, will accompany him. Newfoundland has retained much of its old world charm and primitive simplicity. Along its rugged coast picturesque ports show the closely knit lives of the people and the sea. Bird islands abound with gulls, puffins, murrets, guillemots, terns, kittiwakes, auks, petrels. Fishermen ply their craft, take cod, jig for squid and round up a herd of pot-head whales. Streams of Newfoundland provide some of the world's best salmon and trout fishing. The colorful travelogue promises a refreshing visit to a rugged but smiling land of quaint charm and rich abundance. General admission and student single performance tickets will be on sale at the Morris Dailey Box Office the evening of the Tour.

APRIL

Monday, April 16th, Audubon Screen Tour, at 8:00 p.m., at Morris Dailey Auditorium, San Jose State College. The concluding event in the tenth annual series appropriately focuses on "Wings and Talons," a film dedicated to spreading knowledge of the value of predatory birds, filmed jointly by Dr. Harold M. Hill and his frequent field companion, Dr. Telford H. Work. Dr. Hill is a practicing physician in his home town of Redlands in our state; he has been president of the Audubon Society there. Since boyhood days Dr. Hill has been particularly interested in the birds of prey and waterfowl, having tagged hundreds of hawks and owls in the course of his field work. "Wings and Talons" is a fast moving adventure. Such birds as sparrow hawks, prairie falcons, great horned owls, barn owls, peregrine falcons, and America's national emblem, the bald eagle, are photographed at home and in stirring action. General admission and student single performance tickets will be on sale at the Morris Dailey Box Office the evening of the Tour.

MARCH-APRIL CALENDAR

SPECIAL EVENTS

APRIL

Week of April 22nd through April 28th-----Audubon Week.

Thursday, April 26th-----Audubon Day. The television show, "Mayor of the Town," starring Thomas Mitchell and presented to California audiences by the Richfield Oil Corporation, will salute the National Audubon Society and Audubon Day from San Francisco, KGO-TV (Channel 7), at 10:00 p.m. Thomas Mitchell will interview William N. Goodall, Pacific Coast Representative of the National Audubon Society, in the time customarily used by sponsors for their commercial advertising. "Mayor of the Town" series commenced on January 31st and is booked at various California television stations during a 32-week run. In the event you cannot view KGO-TV (Channel 7) at 10:00 p.m., on Thursdays, you can see the show from San Jose, KNTV (Channel 11), on Fridays, at 9:00 p.m. The Audubon Day program can be seen on Friday, April 27th. Richfield Oil Corporation has invited the representatives of many conservation groups and interests to appear with Thomas Mitchell during the 32-week series; commercial advertising time will be replaced with a public information interview. If you approve of this technique in the handling of telecasts, a note to Thomas Mitchell or Edward E. Waite of the Richfield Oil Corporation, through your television station, will let the sponsor know how you feel.

MEETINGS

MARCH

- Regular Meeting: The fourth Audubon Screen Tour of the season, Thursday, March 8th, will replace the scheduled meeting. Please refer to Special Events section for details.
- Board Meeting: Monday, March 12th. Secretary will notify Board members of the time and place of the meeting.

APRIL

- Regular Meeting: Monday, April 9th, at 8:00 p.m., at the Palo Alto Junior Museum. "Hawaii National Park" will be the subject of an illustrated verbal tour conducted by Richard Hartesveldt. Prior to joining the faculty at San Jose State College in 1953, Dick was a Ranger Naturalist with the National Park Service on the Hawaiian Islands, at Death Valley National Monument, and at Yosemite National Park.
- Board Meeting: Monday, April 9th, at 7:00 p.m., at the Palo Alto Junior Museum.

Dick Mewaldt
Chairman of the Program Comm.

FIELD TRIPS

MARCH

Wednesday Morning, March 7th, to the Los Gatos area for a meadow and hillside trip with Miss Elspeth Rose and Mrs. Langford Smith. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the east end of Harding Avenue, Los Gatos, off San Jose Avenue (State Highway 17). Bring rubbers if there is dew on the grass or if it has recently rained.

Saturday, March 10th, to Moss Landing, with Viola and Charles Anderson as leaders. The Andersons inform that the Kite and the Short-eared Owl are back. Also, at this season of the year the Red-breasted Mergansers often display their courting antics. We hope to see many of our new friends from Santa Cruz (birders not birds).

MARCH-APRIL CALENDAR

FIELD TRIPS

MARCH

Saturday, March 10th, to Moss Landing, with Viola and Charles Anderson as leaders. (continued) Meet at the Construction Road at 9:00 a.m. Bring lunch.

Sunday, March 18th, to the beautiful Almaden Hills for a blossom trip with Mrs. William Addison. At the rate the orchards are disappearing in favor of new developments, this may be the last year we will see blossoms in this region. Our leader plans to guide us over little travelled roads into the heart of the blossom country. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the corner of San Jose-Los Gatos Road and Shannon Road. Bring lunch.

Wednesday Morning, March 21st, to the old and beautiful estate of the Convent of the Sacred Heart in Menlo Park, at San Mateo Drive and Valparaiso Avenue (near the home of Mrs. Ransom Davis), with Miss Mary Meehan and Mrs. Ransom Davis as leaders. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the entrance below the convent sign on Valparaiso Avenue.

Saturday, March 24th, to Mills College in Oakland, where our leader will be Dr. Howard Cogswell, member of the Golden Gate Audubon Society and former Audubon Camp instructor. Dr. Cogswell is well acquainted with the scenic paths of the wooded campus and knows where he can show us many interesting species. Those wishing to go in a caravan should plan to meet at 5th and East San Carlos Streets, San Jose, at 7:45 a.m. Dr. Cogswell will meet the group in front of the new Life Sciences Building at 9:30 a.m., and take us to lake and hill sites on the campus. Bring lunch. After lunch we will go to the top of Leona Ridge, about a mile from the campus, to see wildflowers, various swallows, and a view.

APRIL

Sunday, April 8th, to the Santa Cruz Hills with Mrs. Irving W. Snow as leader. Angelina will take us to Mrs. Shore's home; the trails on the Shore property will be cool and green. We can expect to see many warblers and other summer residents. Meet at 8:30 a.m. on Santa Cruz Highway (State Highway 17) at Black Road. Bring lunch.

Wednesday Morning, April 11th, to Alum Rock Park, with Mrs. Lester Brubaker, to see the returning spring birds. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the "lower" picnic grounds (outside the park proper), junction of Penitencia Creek Road and Alum Rock Park Road.

Saturday, April 14th, to Pinnacles National Monument, with Agnes and Clyde Prussman as leaders. This trip promises some of the best birding in April. Campers can go ahead in order to spend Friday night in the Monument. There are no overnight accommodations or restaurants in the Monument, but there are nice camping and picnic grounds. Bring your own equipment and provisions, including food. Meet at the Monument's Ranger Station at 9:30 a.m., Saturday morning. If you join the trip for Saturday only, bring lunch.

Saturday, April 21st, joint trip with the members of the Sequoia Audubon Society to Greco Island, the new bird sanctuary co-sponsored by our society. Mrs. Neil Dickinson (Oleta) has been the leader in arranging this trip. We are asked to meet at 8:45 a.m., at the Sea Scout Base in Belmont. Turn right off Bayshore Highway (U.S.101) at Belmont Overpass; turn left on Frontage Road and proceed to Sea Scout Base. We will leave from there by boat promptly at 9:00 a.m. A donation of 50¢ per person will be collected to help the Mariners defray their gasoline expenses. Bring lunch.

MARCH-APRIL CALENDAR

FIELD TRIPS

APRIL

Wednesday Morning, April 25th, to Huddart Park, with Mrs. J.W.McBain and Mrs. M.R.Kirkwood as leaders. Remember the baby owl seen on our last visit here? More surprises may be in store for us. Meet at the S.P.Station in Palo Alto at 8:30 a.m. The entrance to the park is approximately half the distance to the summit on King's Mountain Road from Woodside.

Sunday, April 29th, to Black Mountain Ridge in the Mount Hamilton Range, with the owners of the property, Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Johnson, and Will Luick. Eleanor Johnson is editor of LOMA PRIETAN, publication of the Sierra Club chapter serving this area. The trek will take us to the mountain slopes above the Arroyo Hondo, where wild flowers can be seen in profusion. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the Smith Creek Ranger's Station. There is good birding at the meeting place. Leaders recommend that hikers double-up in cars at meeting place for drive to Ridge. Bring lunch. Dress for hiking. The hike will be more rugged than many scheduled.

Dorothy Smith and Manette Wittgenstein
Co-chairmen of Field Trip Committee

CLARK NUTCRACKER ERUPTION

Since the fall of 1955, Clark Nutcrackers have been encountered in California in several areas outside their normal range. Some have been seen in the vicinity of Mt. Hermon, in the Hamilton Range, and in the Monterey area. A coordinated effort is being made by ornithologists at the University of California to bring together all of these records. If you have encountered any Clark Nutcrackers, it will be most helpful if you will pass the record on to Dr. Dick Mewaldt, 4150 Golf Drive, San Jose 27, California. Please be certain to include in your report as much of the following information as possible:

1. Date and time of day
2. Exact location of observation, including town, or nearby town, county, etc.
3. Were the birds on the ground? In trees? What kind of trees?
4. If a sight record, what is the name or what are the names of the persons who can confirm the identification?
5. If a specimen record, what was its disposition?
6. Number of birds seen?
7. What were the birds doing? What were they eating?
8. Did you see them more than once? What other times?
9. Have you additional information?

DR. WILHELM FLUGGE RESIGNS

On behalf of the Board of Directors, President John Harville has accepted with regret the resignation from that Board of Dr. Wilhelm Flugge, effective Feb. 25, 1956.

SEASONAL OBSERVATIONS

In spite of rain or threat of rain almost every day during January, two Anna's Hummingbirds were observed collecting nesting material. January 8, near San Jose, Manette Wittgenstein saw a female pulling at a last year's goldfinch nest. Finally it flew off with a bit of fuzz in its bill. A week later, in Los Gatos, Gladys Record watched, between showers, a female pull lint from a clothesline and then streak away with it. Two days later an Anna's Hummingbird was again at the clothesline, presumably the same bird. It came several times for lint and each time it took off in the same direction it had taken when first observed. Neither of the observers could find where the hummingbirds went and so did not learn how far along they were

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SEASONAL OBSERVATIONS

in their nest-building, or whether they had yet started in earnest.

The Allen's Hummingbird, which also nests in our area, is a migratory bird, not an all-year-round resident like the Anna's Hummingbird. It is usually the first of our summer residents to arrive from the south, often during the first week of February, but there have been no reports so far (February 7). The next summer resident to look for is the Orange-crowned Warbler, whose buzzy little trill is sometimes heard before the end of February.

These sunny February days (today, February 7, makes eight nice days in a row, according to the San Jose Mercury weather forecaster) some of our resident birds are singing a little, occasionally quite vigorously and persistently. This morning a Plain Titmouse was "whistling its chant" while its mate, perched at the entrance to a bird box, poked its head into the opening several times and between inspections quivered its wings. Also today three California Thrashers were singing at each other, and there was a territorial song from Bewick Wren, Hutton's Vireo, Spotted Towhee and Song Sparrow.

Most of the following observations have to do with birds not commonly seen in our area---exciting but not as valuable as careful observations of the behavior of the birds we commonly see. It is surprising how much there is yet to be learned about the ways of many of our common birds.

Emperor Goose. Two on the shore at Black Point near Santa Cruz, during January, was an exciting report from Adist Boylan and other bird watchers at Santa Cruz. Several of us went over on January 21 to see these rare visitors from Alaska. The two birds were feeding together on a rocky stretch of the shore which is covered at high tide. They were nibbling almost continuously at green seaweed, undisturbed by the observers on the bluff above them. Their plumage, silver-gray and black and white, is beautifully patterned, "like a pen-and-ink drawing," as Marion Goldsmith expressed it on a later visit. Many persons have been making the trip to see these geese, always in the same area and very tame, not taking wing unless closely approached. They were still there on February 6.

White-tailed Kite. One, Dec.31, south of San Jose at junction of King Road and Loupe Avenue, where one was seen on 1954 Christmas Bird Count (Emily Smith).

Red-breasted Sapsucker. One, Jan. 2, Alum Rock Park, feeding on pepper tree berries. (Error in Nov.-Dec. issue, p.32: Audubon painted the sapsucker getting wild cherries, not elderberries.)

Lewis' Woodpecker. One, spending the winter in San Mateo, "just across the street, in a woodsy area at the rear of an old mansion" (Bernice Kersell); another, Jan.21, among ponderosa pines on Ben Lomond Mountain, near Bonnie Doon (Emily Smith).

Clark's Nutcracker. One, Jan.8, in a stand of ponderosa pines at Mt. Hermon (Dick Mewaldt). The bird was feeding on the ground and was little disturbed by Dr. Mewaldt when he followed it about.

Townsend's Warbler. Six, Jan.23, feeding in a live oak (one seen catching what appeared to be an oak moth) in Los Gatos (Gladys Record). Ditto, Jan.18, on morning bird trip to Juliette Jones' home, halfway between Los Gatos and Saratoga.

Starling. At least one unwelcome newcomer to the Santa Clara Valley area detected in a flock of Redwinged and Tricolored blackbirds, Jan.29, on the Mt. Hamilton Road at Grand View (Charles and Fanny Zwaal and Emily Smith). Lynn Robbins reports that ten Starlings were seen recently in a flock of blackbirds on a dairy ranch between Palo Alto and Los Altos by Charles Wurster.

Robin and Cedar Waxwing. Fewer than usual in the Los Gatos area this winter (berried bushes not yet stripped of their fruit). Varied Thrush. Present this winter in more than usual numbers. (Emily Smith)

Red Crossbill. Six, Jan.8, in same stand of ponderosa pines at Mt. Hermon where the Clark's Nutcracker was seen (Dick Mewaldt).

Evening Grosbeak. A brightly colored male, Dec.28, in maple tree, Los Gatos (Gladys Goodwin).

SEASONAL OBSERVATIONS

White-throated Sparrow. One frequently seen during January at feed tray, Los Gatos (Gladys Record). One has also been visiting Juliette Jones' feed tray this winter, half way between Los Gatos and Saratoga.

Emily D. Smith
Seasonal Observations Editor

CURRENT IN THE PERIODICALS

Readers who are members of the National Audubon Society received from the Service Department in New York late in 1955 a brochure describing Devereux Butcher's book, "Seeing America's Wildlife In Our National Refuges." Manette Wittgenstein urges anyone who wishes to know about our extended system of National Wildlife Refuges to obtain the book. She writes that the author presents 41 of the most spectacular and interesting of these refuges; tells you how to get to them; what species of birds and mammals you may expect to see; where to stay overnight and what equipment to bring. Manette points out that the book was prepared under the auspices of the Defenders of Furbearers, by the Devin-Adair Company of New York. Price is \$5.00, and the book can be purchased at the Pacific Coast Office, 2426 Bancroft Way, Berkeley.

Did you notice "How to Make Your Own Auto Litterbag" (p.14) in the January, 1956, SUNSET? Elsie Hoeck calls attention to SUNSET's coverage of the field trip potentiality of the San Andreas Valley Road in San Mateo County (pp.3-4), February, 1956, issue. In the same issue "Desert Clown . . . the Roadrunner" (p.12) is worth your reading time. SUNSET's "March Travel . . . in and beyond the West" (pp.3-4), March, 1956, describes our valley's Blossom Tours and lists wildflower areas. If you are a camera fan and enjoy "shooting" birds in your garden, see the feature article on this subject (pp.33-36) in the March, 1956, issue of SUNSET. "Rocks and Minerals of California," a recently published paper-bound book by Vinson Brown and David Allan, is reviewed (p.22) in the February, 1956, SUNSET.

Naturalist twins, Frank and John Craighead, who are photographers of hawks and owls, author "Wildlife Adventuring in Jackson Hole" (pp.1-36) in the January, 1956, issue of THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE. Before Emily and Betty Smith left on their extended trip in February, Emily read with interest Charles M. Brookfield's and Oliver Griswold's account, "An Exotic New Oriole Settles in Florida" (pp.260-264), published in the February, 1956, issue of THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE. Audubonites, eager for writings from the pen of Dr. Olin Sewall Pettingill, Jr., can feast on "People and Penguins of the Faraway Falklands" (pp.387-416) in the March, 1956, issue of THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE. All of Dr. Pettingill's photographs illustrating this article are reproduced through the courtesy of Walt Disney Productions, since they were taken while on assignment to obtain scenes for a new True Life Adventure film, "Islands of the Sea."

SPORTS ILLUSTRATED begins to rival THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE in the amount of space allotted to subjects dear to the hearts of Audubon members. Most of you, it is hoped, secured a copy of the January 16, 1956 issue of SPORTS ILLUSTRATED for "The Biggest Bird Watch," with its reproduction of the birds painted by Roger Tory Peterson, representing the birds he would seek most eagerly in different parts of the United States on a Christmas census. Newest feature of SPORTS ILLUSTRATED appeared in the February 20, 1956 issue, "Barnie's Beauties: Birds of the Everglades" (pp.28-38), by John O'Reilly, with color photographs by David Goodnow. As part of the same coverage, "Everglades Tours" (pp.39-40), by Horace Sutton, tells you how to find your favorite birds; how much it costs; how long it takes; how the Audubon Society can help you enjoy the experience.

The editor will appreciate your help in calling his attention to articles in the magazines and books which, in your opinion, would provide interesting and informative reading for our members. Accurate data, e.g. correct page references, will help in preparation of the report for publication.

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

HUNTING IN STATE PARKS

In a February 15th release William N. Goodall, Pacific Coast Representative of the National Audubon Society, has warned all members of the California Audubon Branches and Affiliates that a bill permitting hunting in our State Parks will very likely be introduced at the special session of the legislature in March. While this bill may mention only two parks specifically, Mr. Goodall points to the dangerous precedent of permitting any hunting. Once hunting is permitted at one State Park it will be difficult to prevent its extension. When the alarm is sounded from Berkeley, all members can help by contacting your elected representatives. The Pacific Coast Office will advise you concerning whom to contact and when.

"LASSIE" TELEVISION SHOW PROTESTED

Because many of you have children, or grandchildren, or nieces and nephews who regularly view the Sunday evening "Lassie" television show, you will be interested to learn that the National Audubon Society, through Vice-President Kenneth D. Morrison, has filed a protest of the January 29th show with the producer and sponsor. The program in question focused on birds of prey. The good conservation education was undone by the writer of the show by permitting the grandfather's mossback attitude which has been generally accepted until recent years, to prevail. Many of us who feel that more should be done in the area of conservation education welcome the action of Kenneth D. Morrison and the National Audubon Society. Each of us as a member of the National Audubon Society, and our Society as a Branch, has a responsibility to maintain a watchful eye and ear for conservation information that does not ring true. Our responsibility does not end with detection but continues with the need of constructive and persuasive action directed to the source or sources. Let us hope that the producer of the "Lassie" television show will not in the future espouse an out-of-date conservation point of view.

WELCOME DEPARTMENT

A friendly welcome, and congratulations, are extended to the newest California Branch of the National Audubon Society-----the Sea and Sage Audubon Society of Orange County! THE WANDERING TATLER, its newsletter, has already been received.

Another exchange bulletin, ALTACAL AUDUBON NEWSLETTER, has been added to the growing list of publications received by the Publications Committee.

SAN JOSEAN TO BE INSTRUCTOR AT AUDUBON CAMP OF CALIFORNIA

President John Harville has announced that Mr. Carl Miescke, graduate of San Jose State College and teacher at Herbert Hoover Junior High School in the San Jose Unified School District, has been selected as an instructor on the teaching staff at Audubon Camp of California. Mr. William N. Goodall is Camp Director. Other staff members include Dr. James E. Crouch and Dr. Andrew Olson from San Diego State College, Miss Edith Curry from San Diego, and Mr. Arnold Small from Los Angeles. Watch for further announcements concerning Audubon Camp!

BUTANO

LOMA PRIETAN, bulletin of the local chapter of the Sierra Club, has published information in its February, 1956, issue to the effect that "acquisition of Butano has been given very high priority on the proposed budget prepared by the State Park Commission." All persons interested in conservation and recreation will rejoice when Butano's acquisition as a future state park has been assured.

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

1956 WILDLIFE WEEK-----MARCH 18-24

Theme of this year's observance is "Save Endangered Wildlife," reports THE ALERT, a cooperative inter-club publication of the Conservation Information Service. Animals of the United States which face extinction over vast portions of their ranges include the grizzly bear, Everglade kite, whooping crane, Eskimo curlew, ivory billed woodpecker, Key deer, California condor, Montana grayling, trumpeter swan, Atwater prairie chicken, lake sturgeon, bighorn sheep, lake trout of the Great Lakes and others.

A recent report from J.R.Pemberton, whose hobby is study of the California condor, indicates that the bird faces extinction. In 1939, the condor population was 40 of the giant birds, nesting in remote Hopper canyon between Fillmore and Piru in Ventura County. Now there are only 39 condors, with no more than three pairs of the birds found nesting in any recent year. They breed normally only once in four years, and may live to be 100 years of age. The condor, says Pemberton in THE ALERT, has no living enemies except man.

HAWK AND OWL CAMPAIGN PROGRESS REPORT

Before the end of 1955 the campaign to promote revision of California's protection laws for hawks and owls broadened to include plans to revise the California Fish and Game Code pertaining to birds and mammals. The California Department of Fish and Game suggested the expansion of objectives during a conference with Audubon representatives in December, 1955.

On February 16th, in Sacramento, representatives of organizations in California interested in conservation legislation met, at the invitation of the California Department of Fish and Game, to discuss their common legislative objectives and problems. The representatives formed the Committee on Legal Classification of Birds and Mammals, and selected Dr. Tracy I. Storer, Department of Zoology, University of California at Davis, to be chairman. It was agreed that proposed changes in the Code would be limited to Sections 1174, 1175, 1176, 1176.5, 1177, 1178, 1182, 1183, 1230, 1232, 1250, 1310, and any other related sections of the Code dealing with various species of birds and mammals and their status as predators, game, non-game, etc., and the conditions under which they may be taken.

The Committee on Legal Classification of Birds and Mammals will meet again early in April. In the meantime, the Conservation Co-chairmen of our Society, and the conservation chairmen of the other Branches and Affiliates, have been requested to study the California Fish and Game Code sections being examined, and to recommend proposed revisions not later than March 10th. A committee to be selected by Mr. William N. Goodall, Pacific Coast Representative, will synthesize the recommendations submitted from the California Branches and Affiliates prior to the April meeting.

It will be the function of Dr. Storer's committee to help reach an agreement among the respective organizations' recommendations before the legislature convenes in January, 1957. Thus, the hawk and owl campaign pushes on to new horizons!

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FIELD TRIP REPORTS

1956

Wednesday morning, January 4, 1956, to Mrs. Ransome Davis' garden, Menlo Park. A few of the group, undaunted by the overcast weather were rewarded by very interesting birding. Miss Mundy was able to approach a pair of wren-tits, who were not in the least shy. The Audubon warblers were more abundant than usual in that area and western bluebirds, a rarity ~~there~~, were also seen. The following birds were found in the garden and neighboring area: Anna's Hummingbird, Red Shafted Flicker, Acorn woodpecker, Red-headed sapsucker, Scrub Jay, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Plain titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch ("tooting" two or three times) Red-breasted nuthatch (heard only), Wren-tit (pair--one singing), California Thrasher, Robin, Varied Thrush (heard only), Western Bluebird, Audubon Warbler, Townsend's Warbler (heard only), Purple Finch, Pine Siskin, American Goldfinch (feeding on redwood seeds), House Finch, Greenbacked Goldfinch (feeding on birch seeds), Red-eyed Towhee, Brown Towhee, white-crowned Sparrow (singing), Golden-crowned Sparrow, Song Sparrow

Marjorie S. Davis

Wednesday morning, January 18, 1956, to Mrs. Arthur Jones' garden on West Heights Road, Los Gatos. Four members of the group met at the Art Center on Austin Way, Los Gatos and birded up to the top of West Heights Road. Mrs. Jones' garden provided the rare treat of seeing the white-throated sparrow on the toyon bush beside the feeder and the fox sparrow at the bird-bath. The list of birds seen are as follows: Small flocks of quail, Anna's Hummingbird, Red-Shafted Flicker with call notes, Steller's Jay, Scrub Jay, Chestnut-backed Chickadees-5-taking turns at suet, Plain Titmouse (2), Bushtits, flocks in eucalyptus trees, White-breasted Nuthatch (1), Wren-tit (pair singing), Bewick's Wren (4), singing, California Thrasher (2) singing, Robins (flock of 38, Varied Thrush (several) Hermit Thrush with call note, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Cedar Waxwings (flock of 16), Hutton's Vireo (2), singing; Audubon's Warbler (2 or 3), Townsend's Warbler (6) in live oak, one seen catching an oak moth, Purple Finch (3) one singing, one eating Toyon berries, House Finch (2), ? towhee (4), Brown Towhee (2), Oregon Juncoes (4), one singing "whisper song", Golden-crowned sparrow, several, one song heard, white-throated sparrow (fine view), Fox Sparrow (1).

Dorothy L Smith

Wednesday morning, February 8th, to the Stanford University campus, with Mrs. H.B. Humphrey. The day was bright and sunny. The fifteen who met for bird study in the Stanford Arboretum were soon busy, for the birds were plentiful and easy to see.

Without walking very far, the following birds were seen in the vicinity of the mausoleum: varied thrush, robin, brown towhee, hermit thrush, scrub jay, Oregon junco, bushtit, chickadee, titmouse, brown creeper, nuthatch, Bewick wren, purple finch, sapsucker (probably red naped), band-tailed pigeon (1) sitting on the top of a dead eucalyptus tree; red-shafted flicker, spotted towhee, golden-crowned sparrow, Anna's hummingbird, Hutton's vireo, house finch, downy woodpecker, acorn woodpecker, thrasher, Townsend's warbler, wren-tit and fox sparrow.

After these birds were seen, a short trip was taken to the far side of Lake Lagunitas. Here we saw ruddy ducks, a few canvasbacks, ring-necked ducks, a single Bufflehead, a pair of pied-billed grebes, a number of coots, killdeer, meadowlark and a shrike.

It was declared a very successful and satisfactory trip.

Alice a Humphrey