

# The Avocet

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## Point Reyes National Seashore Park

Californians know by experience how hard it is today to find a place to turn off the road to picnic or camp for the night. With privately owned land fenced and posted, people must go to national parks, state parks, national forests, or private parks. These are becoming so crowded that at times there are lines of cars waiting to get in.

An encouraging report of the greatest importance is the recently completed "Pacific Coast Recreation Area Survey" - privately financed and issued by the National Park Service. It finds 74 western shoreline areas that have desirable recreational, scientific, or cultural characteristics. Five of the sites were considered to be of such value that they should become National Parks, while the balance were recommended as state or county park projects.

Point Reyes Peninsula is being given highest priority as a future National Park. Senator Clair Engle introduced a bill this summer authorizing the Secretary of the Interior to proceed with acquisition. Selected by the National Park Service as the area combining the largest collection of scenic, recreation, and biologic interests, Point Reyes contains an array of natural characteristics essential to a park of this type: 45 miles of ocean shore with heavy surf and steep rocky cliffs; rugged headlands jutting into the sea; quiet, sheltered Drake's Bay; Drake's Estero, its gleaming three-mile sand spit a home for thousands of shore birds; nine fresh-water lakes fed by sparkling springs and mountain streams furnish watering places for hundreds of deer, raccoons, coyotes, foxes, rabbits, quail; sunning on the beaches lie seals, sea lions, sea elephants. So profuse is the wildlife that the Park Service reports, "The abundant flora and fauna.....would justify every...effort toward protection and preservation permanently as a public duty".

---Charles Pottol, Christian  
Science Monitor, Sept. 8, 1959

### Coming Events at a Glance

Sunday,	Oct. 11	9:00 a.m.	Henry Cowell State Park
Wednesday,	Oct. 14	8:30 a.m.	Stevens Creek County Park
Sunday,	Oct. 25	9:00 a.m.	Santa Cruz
Tuesday,	Oct. 27	8:00 p.m.	Screen Tour, San Jose
Wednesday,	Oct. 28	8:30 a.m.	Stanford University Campus



OCTOBER CALENDAR

Regular Meeting: None in October, since you have two Screen Tours to attend! For November, Dr. Woodward and Admiral Williams are planning an unusual film on Florida wildlife.

Screen Tour:

Tuesday, October 27 at 8:00 p.m. Morris Dailey Auditorium, San Jose State College, Emerson Scott presents "Rocky Mountain Rambles" to Colorado's peaks and plains for color motion pictures of some of nature's most vivid phenomena: bighorn sheep on flower-carpeted slopes ... herds of lordly elk in summer pastures ... ptarmigan and dusky grouse ... bison and antelope. A stimulating experience of armchair adventure with Emerson Scott of Caro, Michigan. An effortless way of rambling up and down mountains to one's heart's content! Tickets are available at the door.

Field Trips:

Sunday, October 11, to Henry Cowell State Park on Highway 9 near Felton. Meet at the park parking lot at 9:00 a.m. Bring lunch. Leaders: Charles and Fanny Zwaal (CY 2-2060).

Wednesday Morning, October 14, to Stevens Creek County Park. Black-headed Grosbeaks and other summer resident birds, whose singing we enjoyed on the field trip to this park last April, are now on their way south. On this trip we will look for winter visitants now arriving from the north. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at parking area by Stevens Creek Reservoir. Leader: Dr. Evelyn Case (CH 3-2467).

Sunday, October 25, to Santa Cruz. Meet at the Lyndon Hotel, Los Gatos, at 9:00 a.m. Bring lunch. Leaders: Herbert and Manette Wittgenstein (EL 4-9420).

Wednesday Morning, October 28, to Stanford University campus. Birding can be good in secluded areas bordered by busy thoroughfares. Enter the campus on Galves St. at Embarcadero Rd. and drive past the stadium. Turn right at first intersection (Campus Drive) and park in eucalyptus grove on right side of road, near first stop sign. Meet at 8:30 a.m. Leader: Mr. Curt Dietz. For any more information call DA 2-1209.

---Emmanuel Taylor,  
Field Trip Chairman

IMPORTANT NOTE: Children are always welcome on our field trips!  
Some of our younger members have been uncertain on this point.

--- J.T.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new and reinstated members:

Mr. and Mrs. R. A. Tanner	729 Citron Ave., Sunnyvale
Mr. Claude Flock	21411 Columbus Ave., Cupertino
Mrs. Selby McCreery	Box 105, Mt. Hamilton Rd., San Jose
Miss Lucy Evans	1440 California Avenue, Palo Alto
Mr. Everett Eaton	541 Hilbar Lane, Palo Alto
Miss Isabel S. Borquist	355 Patten Ave., San Jose 28
Dr. Joseph E. Welsh	1111 University Dr., Menlo Park

---Mrs. Irving Snow,  
Membership Chairman

Photographers' Paradise

Our new and resourceful program chairmen, Dr. Woodward and Adm. Williams, have discovered among our own members enough professional and near-professional photographers to delight us for some five or six more meetings. The first all-color photography evening (Sept. 14) revealed a wide choice of outdoor subjects and a high degree of technical skill. A few notes I took (in the dark!) will indicate the variety:

- 1) Lynn Robbins - native California shrubs and wildflowers.
- 2) Al Wood - nesting rufous-crowned sparrows; young great-horned owls; a king snake swallowing a gopher snake entire; all manner of other snakes and reptiles; baby turkey vultures.
- 3) Mark Massey: astonishing pictures of nesting water ouzels in King's Canyon National Park; North Carolina red-bud.
- 4) Frank Goraj: "4 corners" area; Canyon de Chelly; brilliant sand dunes and cloud formations; osprey nest at Yellowstone; beaver workings.
- 5) Dr. Woodward: two superb slides of nesting hummingbirds (one an Allen's?)

Two parting touches - refreshments and a live young screech owl to have and hold - made this initial meeting of the year an outstanding success.

---J.T.

The Sierra Club Summer Clean-up

The Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society was represented on the Sierra Club Clean-up Outing to the Sabrina Lake Basin by Lynn Robbins. The group of 37, from age 4 to near 60, were busy for a week cleaning the 10,000ft. altitude area surrounding 6 beautiful mountain lakes on the east side of the Sierra up from Bishop (Dingleberry, Midnight, Moonlight, Hungry Packer, Topsy Turvy and Blue Lakes). You may have seen newspaper reports of the collection of 5000 lbs. of cans and bottles.

However, can picking did not prevent hearing the notes of Mountain Chickadees and the derisive calls of Clark Nutcrackers. An

occasional late song announced the presence of White-crowned Sparrows. A day of leisure was spent climbing almost to the top of Mt. Haeckel; perhaps the high point of the day was the sight of a Golden Eagle soaring around the peak the climbers labored so hard to reach. The Grey-crowned Rosy Finches were seen only at the highest altitudes this dry year whereas last year they were abundant at 10,000 ft. First glimpses of scampering pikas were enjoyed by many of the hikers.

I strongly recommend the trip for that feeling of really doing something for conservation and also for an excellent opportunity to visit a beautiful area with congenial companions. Let me urge all naturalists to follow the new recommended rules of camping etiquette: "You CAN take it with you". If you take cans and bottles into the back country, bring them back out with you.

---Lynn Robbins  
482 University Ave.  
Los Altos (8/31)

#### NOTES FROM AFIELD

Time to catch up with a summer's accumulation of field notes. In order to keep a uniformity to these and future notes, I will usually omit records from distant areas unless they are results of a scheduled field trip or there is some special reason for including them. I hope no one will be offended.

Lawrence's Goldfinches turned up in at least one part of our area this summer. Harriet Mundy reports seeing two on August 3 at Westridge in Portola Valley, and again on several later occasions. A flock of 300 White Pelicans was seen by Les Sleeper on September 12 at the east end of Dumbarton Bridge. They were busily herding small fish into shallow water. On September 11 at Alviso Tom Harvey watched a flock of 200 blackbirds, probably Brewer's, harassing a Cooper's Hawk, a blackbird actually striking the hawk several times.

Catherine Lintott of Los Gatos reports having had a crippled Golden-crowned Sparrow around her place from July 20 to mid-August. It would stay on the ground much of the time and was able to fly into low bushes only. Now she has the earliest migrant Golden-crown to be reported. A single bird appeared at her home on September 17 and again on the 19th.

Evelyn Case, Emily Smith and others saw an estimated two to two and a half million shearwaters at Santa Cruz on August 18. Bob Wood reports a Red-shouldered (Red-bellied) Hawk sitting on a telephone wire along Alpine Road in Portola Valley several times in early September.

The field trip to Portola Park on August 12, led by Virginia Bothwell, had a Dipper as its chief attraction. Band-tailed Pigeon and Swainson's Hawk were also seen in the park; Pygmy Nuthatch and Crow were seen enroute to the park along Skyline Boulevard. On an earlier trip to Portola Park on August 9, Mrs. Bothwell reports seeing a Purple Martin.

Emily Smith of Saratoga contributes the following notes: Etta Smith found nests with eggs of Snowy Plover and Avocet on a salt pond dike at Alviso on July 7. A Black Swift was incubating an egg in a sea cave near Santa Cruz on June 24, July 10 and 24 (although possibly not the same egg), a downy nestling was present on August 18. Rough-winged Swallow fledglings left their nest in a drain pipe near the center of Saratoga on June 22, according to Peg Gorham. Emmanuel Taylor saw a Brown Creeper feeding nestlings at Alum Rock Park on June 9. Miss Emily saw juvenile Pine Siskins being fed near Santa Cruz on July 21 and an adult and three juvenile Sage Sparrows together on August 1 near Mt. Umunhum in the Santa Cruz Mountains.

---Robert Woods  
1007 Los Trancos Road  
Menlo Park  
ULmar 1-1237

#### EDITOR'S NOTES

Micanopy, Fla. - One of the largest wood ibis rookeries in Central Florida has been declared a wildlife sanctuary under a cooperative agreement between the Florida Audubon Society and the Franklin Lumber and Basket Co. The area, a fine stand of cypress, is remarkable for its scenic beauty and birds. An estimated 500 wood ibis nests are located in the new sanctuary.

---Conservation News 8/15/59

Ed Pickett of Sacramento reports Governor Brown signed into law AB 2236 which puts the yellow-billed magpie on the unprotected list on September 18, allowing them to be taken at any time by anyone whether or not they are doing damage.

This bird occurs only in California. Further, it spends its entire life within a short radius, making it extremely easy to control when damaging to crops, but also making it prone to depletion now that it is unprotected.

Assemblyman Lowery of Yolo County has agreed to a time limit of two years on this bill. Unless re-enacted then, it dies and the bird is protected again.

---Sacramento Audubon Observer  
September 1959

Dr. Vannevar Bush, who loves songbirds, built houses and feeding stations for them in his garden, but was annoyed to find the song birds routed by pigeons and blue jays. After some reflection he arranged the perches in the form of hinged platforms held up by coils of fine wire. When the heavier birds lighted on them the perches gave way under them, though giving the lighter birds firm support. Exit pigeons and jays!

---Saturday Review of Literature  
August 1959

George Morell of Palo Alto, owner of about 800 acres of Palo Alto's newly-annexed six square mile Foothills #3 (Recall articles on Teynham Woodward's land in recent Avocets...J.T.) wants his property and that of some of his neighbors reserved as a wild animal museum.



This is in contrast to another owner who wants to establish a large commercial and apartment zone, in the area. Morell said the foothills area has a wide variety of animal and plant life. The establishment of a live, wild animal museum, he said, would give people a chance to see the native animals and plants in their natural environment. The area contains the only remaining virgin stand of Douglas fir in Santa Clara County. Morell warned that extensive earth moving might lead to damaging erosion since heavy rain is common on the higher hills. Raccoons, wildcats and foxes are common and last year a female mountain lion raised two cubs near his ranch buildings. The city planning commission is studying a proposed agricultural conservation zone for the eastern portion of the annexation area, including the Morell property. The zoning, if approved, would encourage preservation of the area in its natural state.

---Palo Alto Times 9/21/59

#### Estivation

Hibernation of certain animals during the cold months is a well known phenomenon. It is not so commonly known that several species estivate to escape the worst heat of summer.

John and Jean George tell of digging at the edge of a stump and uncovering in a leaf-lined nest in the moist soil a sleeping chipmunk. His body was cool to the touch and he appeared almost lifeless. However, disturbed by their touch, he shuddered, scolded them sharply and disappeared into a deeper portion of his burrow.

A ground squirrel similarly investigated was actually in such a deep sleep that their touch did not rouse him. His body, too, was cool, his breathing and heart beat much below normal.

In both cases the naturalists carefully restored the earth barrier they had disturbed and left the little animals to sleep away the hot season.

---Christian Science Monitor  
7/15/59

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1959 - 1960

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