

The Avocet

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Seaton Acts to Secure Alaska Wildlife Areas

In bold actions reminiscent of the days when Theodore Roosevelt used his presidential powers to set aside huge areas of the public domain as forest and wildlife preserves, Secretary of the Interior Fred A. Seaton signed land withdrawal orders Dec. 7, 1960, establishing three new National Wildlife Ranges in Alaska encompassing more than 11,215,360 acres:

The Arctic National Wildlife Range, approximately 9 million acres in the northeastern corner of Alaska, bordered on the north by the Arctic Ocean and on the east by the Canadian line. This vast wilderness of mountains, lakes, marsh and tundra provides range for grizzly and polar bears, Dall sheep, wolverine and great herds of caribou. Within it are nesting grounds for nearly one hundred species of birds, and numerous other wild animals.

The Kuskokwim National Wildlife Range, 1.8 million acres of first class waterfowl nesting grounds on the Yukon-Kuskokwim river delta in western Alaska. This is one of the most important breeding areas for migratory birds on the North American continent.

The Izembek National Wildlife Range, approximately 400,000 acres near the western end of the Alaska Peninsula. This is a vital gathering place for migratory waterfowl which feed on vast beds of eelgrass in the shallow waters of Izembek Bay and in marshes along the coasts of other bays and lagoons. The area also supports large brown bears and herds of Stone's caribou.

Conservationists have for many years advocated the withdrawal of these areas. A bill to create the Arctic Wildlife Range by legislation was balked in the last Congress by the Alaska senators. Secretary Seaton continues to advocate legislation that would permit mining in a manner to protect the wildlife habitat and surface values of the area.

Coming Events at a Glance

Sat. Feb. 4	9:00 A.M.	Los Altos Hills
Mon. Feb. 6	8:00 P.M.	Santa Clara
Wed. Feb. 8	9:00 A.M.	Alum Rock Park
Mon. Feb. 13	8:00 P.M.	Rosegarden Library San Jose
Sun. Feb. 19	9:30 A.M.	Mission San Juan Bautista
Wed. Feb. 22	8:30 A.M.	Los Altos Hills



February Calendar

Board Meeting: Monday, February 6, at 8:00 P.M. at the home of Dr. Evelyn Case, 2586 Homestead Road, Santa Clara (CH 3-2467).

Regular Meeting: Monday, February 13, at 8:00 P.M. at the Rosegarden Branch of San Jose Public Library, corner of Dana and Naglee Streets, San Jose. Mr. C. Smith, ranger at a San Jose Boy Scout Camp will discuss his work with youth in nature study and conservation. We will have a discussion period on conservation, continuing Dr. Tom Harvey's topic from last month's meeting.

Field Trips:

Saturday, February 4, A visit to the Wolcott Ranch in the Los Altos Hills. Meet at the Los Altos Shopping Center on Fremont Road, Los Altos at 9:00 A.M. Leaders: Mr. and Mrs. Howard Wolcott.

Wednesday Morning, February 8, to Alum Rock Park, about seven miles east from the center of San Jose, out Alum Rock Avenue. Meet at 9:00 A.M. in the Park at the Youth Science Institute (formerly the Junior Museum). In Alum Rock Canyon spring comes early for mosses and ferns, and Anna's Hummingbirds may be nesting in early February; but if the day is foggy or cold, it will be chilly in the Park. Leader: Mrs. Langford W. Smith (EL 4-4674).

Sunday, February 19, to Mission San Juan Bautista. Meet outside the Mission at 9:30 A.M. Leader: Wilma Thompson.

Wednesday Morning, February 22, to Los Altos Hills with Mr. and Mrs. Howard Wolcott. Meet at Los Altos Rancho Shopping Center on Fremont Avenue at 8:30 A.M. Call Virginia Bothwell (DA 2-1209) for information.

Don't Overlook that Postcard!

Please read before checking the enclosed stamped, return-addressed postcard. Please sign and mail, whether or not you check any activities, since we would appreciate a 100% response from members.

There are several new activities listed:

1. At some future date, the Society hopes to have a library available for members and the public. A fund has been started for this purpose. If you are interested in advancing this project, please check it.

2. As you read in the January AVOCET, Stanford's Committee on Public Exercises is sponsoring (and financially underwriting) the S reen Tours for the 1961-62 season. We wish to set up a committee to help assure the success of this project. If the first year "goes

over the top", perhaps the Tours will become an annual event. San Jose State will continue to present them. If you are interested in helping to promote the Tours, please check Stanford or Santa Clara County (for San Jose State) under item SCREEN TOURS.

3. Would you be interested in attending an occasional dinner meeting, if one could be arranged at reasonable cost, before a monthly meeting or screen tour?

4. There are occasional requests from out-of-the-area visitors who would like to see our California birds. Would you be interested in escorting such visitors on field trips? We understand the Boston Society has such a service, and it could be an interesting project.

5. Are you interested in working on a check list for Santa Clara County - keeping records of birds, habitats, migration dates, etc.?

NOW, please sign (LAST name first), check and mail! Thanks.
---Harriet Mundy

(P.S. On line 1, Scholarships and Conservation should be checked separately. J.T.)

What Shall We Save before It's Too Late?

The meeting of January 16th was held at the Palo Alto Junior Museum. A panel discussion was lead by Dr. Tom Harvey and included Dr. Weston and Dr. Hutton, all of San Jose State. The topics discussed were (1) the pros and cons of the Rainbow Bridge controversy, (2) the Wilderness Bill, (3) the new idea of conversation.

The meeting certainly was a lively one, with everyone participating. While there were no heated arguments one way or the other, everyone showed keen interest, both through questions and answers and arguments and suggestions. It was made quite clear that the old idea of conservation is a thing of the past, and a new concept has taken its place.

It would be interesting if we could have more discussions of this nature, where everyone, as the saying goes, "gets into the act."

---C. McBride

Warren Turner gave an excellent short talk on his visit with his wife to Green Island last April. It was bright, informal and personal, given with real feeling. He is the first one to respond to the call for member-participation in the programs; it was a great success and the members loved it. Thank you, Mr. Turner!

We feel that discussions such as Tom Harvey and his colleagues held before the January meetings are most stimulating and the sort of forward-looking and constructive activities that fit in ideally with

the Audubon concept. These three busy people presented a program that was worthy of a university-wide audience, at least. To get a result worthy of its quality, we should put these three gentlemen on the local educational television programming. It lets us get beyond our own somewhat limited circle of interests and venture into a wider sphere of influence where we can do greater good. We should like a response from the members as to whether this concept represents the consensus of the group as a whole.

---Charles Williams, President

Peterson's Field Guide to Western Birds

Due March 31 is the new book we must all have -- completely reset and enlarged to include Western Canada, Alaska and Hawaii. Six hundred species are included, identification plates are all new, and half of them are in color. (Houghton-Mifflin \$4.50)

---J.T.

New Members

We give a hearty welcome to the following new members:

Mr. Nell E. Kness	1521 Scott Street	San Jose
Mr. Carl Newman	12641 Quinn Hill Avenue	Los Altos
Miss Ruth Mack	23672 Arbor Avenue	Los Altos
Mrs. John T. Kullman	2711 Kipling Street	Palo Alto
Mrs. Harriet Masson	2230 Amherst Street	Palo Alto

---Angelina Snow, Membership
Chairman

Christmas Bird Count

The 1960 "San Jose, California" Christmas Bird Count of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society was made between 7:30 A.M. and 10:30 P.M. on Saturday, 31 December 1960. The count was directed by Emmanuel Taylor. Forty-seven persons participated in the count, and more than fifty (including the Texas Larsons) assembled between 4:00 and 6:00 P.M. for the summary at the East San Jose home of Fran and Dick Mewaldt. Refreshments were arranged by the Social Committee.

The traditional count area is enclosed within the 15-mile diameter circle whose center is at Capitol Avenue and Maybury Road in East San Jose. Estimates of time spent and distances traveled by the 47 observers in 15 parties included 104 party-hours (66 hours on foot and 38 by car) and 413 party-miles (59 miles on foot and 354 by car). The weather was clear; visibility was unlimited in most sectors; temperatures varied from 34° to 53° in the valley, but ice remained at mid-day on the Arroyo Hondo; wind varied from 0 to 6 m.p.h.; the previous week was clear and cool, and the rainfall for the season was about normal. Approximate percentages of time spent in the several habitats were: canyon stream 20%; valley stream 17%; grassland and

pasture 15%; and deciduous orchard 13%; salt water marsh 5%; oak woodland 5%; formal parks 5%; chaparral 5%; town suburbs 4%; truck crops 4%; fresh-water lakes and ponds 3%; fresh water marsh 2%; dumps 2%.

The 130 species represent a new high for the San Jose count area. The skill and experience of the census takers must be credited for this increase, the third all time high in as many years. It is unlikely that the numbers of species present in the count area are increasing from year to year. Our counts for the years 1956-1960 have included 157 species (see Table 1). It is likely that there are more than 150 species present in the San Jose count area each year on the day of our Christmas Bird Count. A summary of counts from some recent years is presented in Table 2.

Table 1

Species observed in the San Jose Count Area 1956-1959, but not in 1960.

Horned Grebe	Western Gull
White Pelican	Forester's Tern
Green Heron	Great Horned Owl
Black-crowned Night Heron	Short-eared Owl
American Bittern	House Wren
Snow Goose	Red-breasted Nuthatch
Green-winged Teal	Mountain Bluebird
Blue-winged Teal	Townsend's Warbler
Cinnamon Teal	Black-throated Gray Warbler
Red-shouldered Hawk	Wilson's Warbler
Marsh Hawk	Grasshopper Sparrow
Clapper Rail	White-throated Sparrow
Marbled Godwit	Harris' Sparrow
Ringed Plover	

Table 2

Summary of Counts, 1953-1960

<u>Year</u>	<u>Numbers of Species</u>	<u>Numbers of Birds</u>	<u>Observers</u>	<u>Parties</u>
1953	110	19,284	31	5
1954	114	39,489	29	9
1955	(Extensive floods caused cancellation.)			
1956	107	24,364	25	7
1957	115	45,512	34	12
1958	122	57,845	38	12
1959	125	44,689	45	14
1960	130	50,458	47	15

Of more than usual interest is the increase in the Starling (110 in 1958, 98 in 1959, and 255 in 1960). Numbers of this species recorded in the San Jose count area for the first time in 1958 will probably be in the thousands within the next five years. Numbers of

Robins counted in recent years (1953-1960) have varied from 3840 in 1954 to a low of 194 in 1958. This year's 650 is low. Factors responsible for the great fluctuations are obscure. In contrast are the numbers of Hermit Thrush, which have varied from 58 (1953) (12? in 1956) to 136 (1960) during the same years and which probably provide a crude index to coverage made by the census takers from year to year.

Substantial increases in numbers of species in three sectors (Alviso, Southwest, and Evergreen) reflect more thorough coverage. Each rose above 70 species for the first time in recent years. Numbers of species in the Alum Rock and Calaveras sectors tend to remain nearly constant. The unusual variety of habitats in the Calaveras sector causes it again to register the greatest number of species. As might be expected, each of the Alviso and the Calaveras sectors accounted for twelve species not recorded by any other sector, while the other three sectors each recorded five species not counted in any other sector in 1960. The 39 species thus recorded underscore the importance of a broad coverage of the census area.

As usual, the Alviso sector (Table 3) recorded the largest number of individual birds with the smallest number of counters (3). The annual decrease in numbers there (27,500 in 1958, 25,000 in 1959, and 22,500 in 1960) can probably be laid to the "reclamation" projects underway at the south end of San Francisco Bay.

The 1960 sector leaders and their teams were as follows:

Alviso: Henry G. Neston, H. Tom Harvey, and Lynn Robbins.

Southwest: Angelina Snow, Fanny Zwaal, Charles Zwaal, Eve Case, Lloyd Case, Jane Goraj, Francis Goraj, Roy Wolcott, Howard Wolcott, Ethel Louderback, Cliver Allen, Margaret Wolcott, Ruth Vail, Glen Vail.

Evergreen: Emmanuel Taylor, Mrs. Taylor, Robert Fuller, Emily Smity, Mathew Vessel, Eva McRae, Florence Durfee, Glenn Pierce, Virginia Bothwell, Wilma Thompson, Virginia West, Alberta C. Edell.

Alum Rock: Grace Brubaker, Anne Peterson, Homer Peterson, Bob Nevis, Don Schmoldt, Andy Shulman, Phil Gordon, Richard Thaw.

Calaveras: Albert J. Wool, Roy Fisk, Lu Venia Arnold, Bob Wood, Les Sleeper, Burt Ball, Doris Tengan, George Tengan, Bill Mewaldt, L. Richard Mewaldt.

Table 3.

Summary of the San Jose, California 1960
Christmas Bird Count by Sectors (Alv.-Alviso,
S.W. - Southwest, Evg. - Evergreen, Alum -
Alum Rock, Cal. - Calaveras)

SPECIES	Alv. Sect.	S.W. Sect.	Evg. Sect.	Alum Sect.	Cal. Sect.	All Sect.
Eared Grebe	2654	-	-	-	-	2654
Western Grebe	1	-	-	-	-	1
Pied-billed Grebe	-	-	1	-	2	3
Double-crested Cormorant	-	-	-	-	1	1
Great Blue Heron	-	-	-	-	3	3
Common Egret	2	-	-	-	2	4
Snowy Egret	17	-	-	-	2	19
Canada Goose	-	-	-	-	527	527
White-fronted Goose	-	-	6	-	-	6
Mallard	-	-	4	2	2	8
Pintail	43	-	4	-	50	97
American Widgeon	3	-	-	-	1	4
Shoveler	4204	-	-	-	-	4204
Wood Duck	-	-	-	-	1	1
Ring-necked Duck	-	-	13	-	-	13
Canvasback	1	-	53	2	-	56
Lesser Scaup	46	-	-	-	-	46
Common Goldeneye	1	1	-	8	-	10
Bufflehead	2	-	2	-	-	4
Ruddy Duck	277	-	79	28	52	436
Common Merganser	-	-	-	8	-	8
Red-breasted Merganser	-	-	-	-	1	1
Ducks, Spp.	-	2	-	-	250	252
Turkey Vulture	-	1	3	-	1	5
White-tailed Kite	7	1	2	-	1	11
Sharp-shinned Hawk	-	1	1	2	1	5
Cooper's Hawk	-	-	1	3	-	4
Red-tailed Hawk	1	1	9	11	22	44
Golden Eagle	-	-	-	1	5	6
Prairie Falcon	-	-	-	1	-	1
Sparrow Hawk	17	22	21	1	12	73
Hawks, Spp.	-	3	1	-	-	4
California Quail	76	98	100	40	11	325
Ring-necked Pheasant	5	1	-	-	-	6
Common Gallinule	1	11	-	-	-	12
American Coot	1094	17	115	-	150	1376
Killdeer	197	125	16	2	3	343
Black-bellied Plover	32	-	-	-	-	32
Common Snipe	3	19	8	-	2	32
Long-billed Curlew	13	-	62	-	-	75
Whimbrel	-	1	-	-	-	1
Spotted Sandpiper	1	-	-	-	2	3
Willet	134	-	-	-	-	134
Greater Yellowlegs	14	6	-	1	-	21

SPECIES	Alv. Sect.	S.W.. Sect.	Evg.. Sect.	Alum Sect.	Call. Sect.	All. Sect.
Least Sandpiper	150	-	-	-	-	150
Dunlin	452	1	-	-	-	453
Short-billed Dowitcher	714	-	-	-	-	714
Long-billed Dowitcher	-	15	-	-	-	15
Western Sandpiper	454	4	-	-	-	458
American Avocet	59	-	-	-	-	59
Glaucous-winged Gull	83	-	-	-	-	83
Herring Gull	2216	-	-	-	-	2216
California Gull	3	42	-	-	750	795
Ring-billed Gull	1431	1	-	-	-	1432
Bonaparte's Gull	769	4	-	-	-	773
Gulls, Spp.	3600	48	-	23	3050	6721
Band-tailed Pigeon	-	1	-	25	110	136
Mourning Dove	201	33	18	3	56	311
Roadrunner	-	-	-	-	1	1
Barn Owl	-	-	-	1	-	1
Burrowing Owl	7	8	1	-	-	16
White-throated Swift	-	-	-	-	11	11
Anna's Hummingbird	2	12	4	13	2	33
Belted Kingfisher	2	5	-	4	3	14
Red-shafted Flicker	8	59	51	34	32	184
Acorn Woodpecker	1	27	29	32	27	116
Lewis' Woodpecker	-	-	-	-	1	1
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	-	2	7	6	4	19
Hairy Woodpecker	-	5	2	2	-	9
Downy Woodpecker	1	10	6	5	5	27
Nuttall's Woodpecker	-	-	1	8	8	17
Empidonax, Spp.	-	-	-	-	1	1
Black Phoebe	8	9	14	6	10	47
Say's Phoebe	-	-	3	-	5	8
Western Wood Pewee	-	1	-	-	-	1
Horned Lark	-	-	2	-	50	52
Steller's Jay	-	3	5	82	46	136
Scrub Jay	2	80	84	72	91	329
Yellow-billed Magpie	-	1	80	-	166	247
Common Crow	-	-	49	2	11	62
Chestnut-backed Chickadee	3	5	21	33	-	62
Plain Titmouse	-	7	38	29	7	81
Common Bushtit	40	27	91	73	26	257
White-breasted Nuthatch	-	-	3	11	13	27
Brown Creeper	-	-	-	2	-	2
Wrentit	-	-	6	12	5	23
Dipper	-	-	-	-	1	1
Winter Wren	-	-	-	1	-	1
Bewick's Wren	-	3	2	12	2	19
Long-billed Marsh Wren	13	2	-	-	-	15
Cañon Wren	-	-	-	3	1	4
Rock Wren	-	-	3	-	-	3
Mockingbird	18	65	19	11	10	123
California Thrasher	-	6	4	6	-	16
Robin	7	229	89	248	77	650

SPECIES	Alv. Sect.	S.W. Sect.	Evg. Sect.	Alum Sect.	Cal. Sect.	All Sect.
Varied Thrush	-	5	5	75	6	91
Hermit Thrush	4	10	23	71	28	136
Western Bluebird	-	2	6	9	25	42
Townsend's Solitaire	-	-	-	-	1	1
Golden-crowned Kinglet	-	1	-	-	-	1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	4	29	18	35	17	103
Water Pipit	381	80	122	-	35	618
Cedar Waxwing	-	63	-	93	6	162
Loggerhead Shrike	9	8	19	1	6	43
Starling	168	-	87	-	-	255
Hutton's Vireo	-	1	-	1	2	4
Orange-crowned Warbler	1	-	-	-	-	1
Myrtle Warbler	-	1	1	2	-	4
Audubon's Warbler	74	211	429	41	21	776
House Sparrow	282	222	200	63	75	842
Western Meadowlark	393	177	438	4	233	1245
Redwinged Blackbird	326	50	1150	-	24	1550
Tricolored Blackbird	-	1	10	-	-	11
Brewer's Blackbird	784	958	5975	144	230	8091
Brown-headed Cowbird	-	-	3	-	-	3
Evening Grosbeak	-	1	-	1	-	2
Purple Finch	-	1	68	8	6	83
House Finch	435	434	689	98	60	1716
Pine Siskin	-	-	28	31	105	164
American Goldfinch	10	47	367	77	5	506
Lesser Goldfinch	94	207	371	74	201	947
Lawrence's Goldfinch	-	-	2	-	-	2
Rufous-sided Towhee	-	12	10	7	8	37
Brown Towhee	5	119	77	70	19	290
Savannah Sparrow	79	63	17	-	69	228
Lark Sparrow	-	-	2	15	67	84
Rufous-crowned Sparrow	-	-	-	-	8	8
Oregon Junco	7	93	31	323	264	718
White-crowned Sparrow	328	493	802	393	426	2442
Golden-crowned Sparrow	40	198	510	262	322	1332
Fox Sparrow	2	6	4	2	4	18
Lincoln's Sparrow	-	1	-	-	-	1
Song Sparrow	29	28	12	18	11	98
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Total number birds	22,545	4547	12,609	2787	7970	50,458

Total number species	71	73	75	67	82	130
