

The Avocet

Volume IX Number 1

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The Controversial Topic - Conservation

William Hogan

The case for conserving what remains of the American wilderness hardly would seem to be a controversial subject. Yet conservationists are perpetually engaged in an uphill fight, often against what used to be called "powerful interests". The function of these interests, apparently, is to develop, wheel, deal, sell, utilize and exploit the American earth that remains uncorrupted.

When faced with preserving unused land, anticonservationists drag out the old cash-register blues -- "tax losses".

David Brower, executive director of The Sierra Club and former chairman of the National Resources Council of America, has an answer to this tax-loss lament. Mariposa county, he notes, once vehemently protested the removal from tax rolls of what later became Yosemite National Park. Now, he reminds us, Yosemite is Mariposa county's major source of funds.

Most of us are for conservation, vaguely, but do little about it. One thing we can do is to learn what conservation is; what it means and what is being done about it. The ideal place to begin is a book, "Wilderness: America's Living Heritage", edited by David Brower and published by The Sierra Club (\$5.75). This is a record of the Seventh Biennial Wilderness Conference, sponsored by The Sierra Club here last spring. Writers, artists, journalists, legislators, government officials, scientists and others presented their thoughts on conservation. All are thinkers: all are deeply concerned about preserving the wilderness, "our most fragile resource". Among them: Interior Secretary Stewart L. Udall; Gerard Piel, publisher of Scientific American; Joseph Wood Krutch; Ansel Adams, a score or so others..

This book is sensible, realistic talk on conservation. It includes plans to fight for conservation. It is not merely a series of minutes of the meeting, but a stirring, eloquent and revealing document for the average citizen to ponder. Sigurd Olson, the naturalist and writer, put it this way: "I think we are beginning to crack the facade of indifference and lethargy of the American people regarding the need of preserving wilderness. (But) the educational process has just begun." This book can become a part of that process. It is a case for American reason and good sense. - S. F. Chronicle 12/5/61

Coming Events at a Glance

Sun. Jan. 7	9:00 A.M.	Mt. Harmon & Hency Cowell State Park
Mon. Jan. 8	8:00 P.M.	Santa Clara
Tue. Jan. 15	8:00 P.M.	Palo Alto Junior Museum
Fri. Jan. 19	4:30 P.M.	Stanford University
Fri. Jan. 19	8:00 P.M.	San Jose State College
Sat. Jan. 20	9:00 A.M.	Richardson's Bay Sanctuary
Wed. Jan. 24	9:30 A.M.	Palo Alto Foothill Park
Sat. Feb. 3)		(Sacramento National
Sun. Feb. 4)	2:00 P.M.	(Wildlife Refuge



January Calendar

Board Meeting: Monday, January 8, 1962, at 8:00 P.M. at the home of Dr. Evelyn H. Case, 2586 Homestead Road, Santa Clara. (AX 6-2410)

Regular Meeting: Monday, January 15, 1962, at 8:00 P.M. at Palo Alto Junio Museum on Middlefield Road. We will see an illustrated lecture, ALONG THE WILDFLOWER TRAIL WITH THE DOES, presented by our own members, Charlie and Mimi Doe. They will also show a short sequence of pictures on duck banding near Los Bonos in the summer of 1960. Please note that this is the 3rd Monday because New Year's day comes on the first.

Field Trips:

Sunday, January 7, to Mt. Hermon & Henry Cowell State Park. Meet at 9:00 A.M. at the parking area near the Mount Hermon Post Office. The Los Gatos-Santa Cruz Highway (#17) now bypasses Scott's Valley and the Mt. Hermon Road at Camp Evers. Look for the exit to Scott's Valley after passing Santa's Village. The December 13 trippers saw about 50 Clark's Nutcrackers at Mt. Hermon. Bring lunch. Leaders: Fanny Zwaal (CY 2-2060) and Adist Boylan (ED 5-4995).

Saturday, January 20, to Richardson's Bay Sanctuary. Meet at 9:00 A.M. at parking area at "Vista Point", the first turn-off after crossing the Ricahrdson's Bay Bridge on Highway 101 (to San Rafael and points north). Bring lunch. Leader: Miss Betty Lennon of Marin. Warden John Larson says that he will be very glad to see us, and Mrs. Larson says that "the coffee pot will be full of hot coffee".

Wednesday, January 24, to the Palo Alto Foothill Park on Page Mill Road. Meet at the entrance to the park at 9:30 A.M. The group will be led by a city employee. We are pleased to have been granted this preview of the new park (not yet open to the public) and trust that plans for its development will include untouched wild areas. For information, call DA 2-1209.

Saturday and Sunday, February 3 and 4, to Sacramento National Wild Life Refuge. This trip is an experiment. Several members have expressed interest in visiting a large refuge where ducks and geese are present in large numbers. The Sacramento Refuge offers much, both in the variety of species and the number of birds. In addition to seeing the "clouds" of ducks and geese in the sky, the large numbers of them on the feeding and resting ponds, hearing the evening chorus of thousands of red-winged blackbirds, as they come into the tule area of this refuge, is a rare and wonderful experience, almost impossible to believe and utterly impossible to describe.

The Refuge is on the east side of Highway 99-W, about 8 miles south of Willows. This is about a four-hour drive from San Jose. Route: Follow either Bayshore or Nimitz Freeway north across the Carquiniz Bridge, as though going to Sacramento on Highway 40. A mile or so beyond Vacaville, take the turnoff to Winters. About 35 miles north of the turnoff, this road enters Highway 99-W. Continue north to Willows. There are a number of good motels in Willows and a number of good eating places. (Eating places that cater to duck hunters in the wee small hours of dark, cold mornings, have to be good!)

The plan is for individuals to proceed to Willows, get settled into a motel, have lunch, and then meet at the Refuge at 2:00 P.M.

On your way north to Willows, look for the National Wild Life Refuge sign of the flying Canada Goose on the right-hand side of the road after you pass through the "village" of Norman. Note the time that it takes you to drive from the Refuge to Willows. Then you will know how long it will take to come back to the Refuge, so as to be there at 2:00 P.M.

Details for Sunday morning will be discussed at the Refuge.

Leaders: Lloyd and Eve Case (AX 6-2410) and Howard Wolcott (WH 8-6821). Telephone them for information regarding AAA recommended motels and restaurants.

Screen Tours:

Friday, January 19, 1962, at 4:30 P.M. at Stanford University. The Screen Tour will be shown in Cubberley Auditorium, Education Building, Escondido Road and Lasuen Street. Emerson Scott of Caro, Michigan, 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. An effortless way of rambling up and down mountains to one's heart's content!

Friday, January 19, at 9:00 P.M. Same Screen Tour as above shown at 8:00 P.M., Morris Dailey Auditorium, San Jose State College.

New Members

We are delighted to welcome the following new members:

Mr. John Rapach (Student Member)	1727 Terrace Drive	Belmont
Dr. & Mrs. Herbert	2828 South Court	Palo Alto
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Lyman	591 Salvattierra St.	Stanford

We are also happy to announce the marriage of Miss Sandra Saxon and Mr. Ronald Bishop, two of our student members.

---Mrs. Angelina Snow
Membership Chairman

Apologies!

Please note this corrected list. There really was no excuse for my last month's error. ---J.T.

1961 - 1962 Board Members

1. Mr. John R. Brockenshire	San Jose
2. Dr. Evelyn Case	Santa Clara
3. Mr. Claude E. Smith	Saratoga
4. Mr. Warren M. Turner	Stanford
5. Mrs. Howard Wolcott	Los Altos Hills
6. Dr. S.C. Woodward	Menlo Park
7. Mrs. Fanny Zwaal	San Jose
8. Miss Harriet Mundy	Palo Alto
9. Dr. Kenneth Hutton	San Jose

Notes from Afield

Miscellaneous Observations

FULMAR Still abundant along coast. 3 on 11/26 and 12 in two hours on 12/2 from Pescadero Pt. 5 on 12/3 from Pt. Reyes Lighthouse. Many vicinity of Monterey 12/23. EA.

AMERICAN BITTERN 12/11 1 PA Yacht Harbor. CA.

EUROPEAN WIDGEON Nov. and Dec. 1 mouth Carmel River. 12/17 CA, 12/23 EA.

WOOD DUCK 12.1 Pair PA Yacht Harbor MN. 12/10 20 Pacheco Creek Reservoir CA, RF.

BUFFLEHEAD 12/10 1 PA Yacht Harbor HM.

HARLEQUIN DUCK 12/9 1 Tomales Pt. CA.

RED-TAILED HAWK Wings above black & white stripe in an umbrella pattern. 11/5 two miles north of Isenberg Ranch on Skyline JT.

ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK 12/3 1 two miles inland from Pt. Reyes Lighthouse EA.

FERRUGINOUS HAWK 12/4 1 typical light phase. Panoche Valley. Harassed by a PIGEON HAWK. CA.

CLAPPER RAIL 12/16 1 Princeton Breakwater JT.

BLK CYSTERCATCHER 12/23 26 Pt Lobos & 17-Mile Drive. EA

SNOWY PLOVER 12/16 1 Princeton Breakwater JT

RED PHALAROPE 12/2 2 Lake Lucerne (South of Pescadero) EA

FRANKLIN GULL 12/11 1 Palo Alto Yacht Harbor CA

HAIRY WOODPECKER 11/26 1 Lake Lucerne EA

CLARK'S NUTCRACKER 12/13 Flock still at Mt. Hermon. ES
PYGMY NUTHATCHES 11/12 6 Sunset Trail Big Basin JT
ROSE-BREADED GROSBEAK June 24, 25, 26 ('61) 1 Male AB, EL
EVENING GROSBEAK Mid-Nov 5 for about a week. Willow Glen BW
LAWRENC'S GOLDFINCH Since 11/16 Flock Santa Clara EC
WHITE-THROATED SPARROW Since 11/27 Vasona Dam area Los Gatos CL

The BAYLANDS were flooded by an unusually high tide on 12/10, driving the marsh dwellers onto higher ground. HM observed flocks of 30 or 40 BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERONS. Estimates she saw about 75 at one time.

Los Banos Trip.-

This trip was flooded out on the 3rd, and the disappointed Santa Clara contingent went on to Merced where the birding proved to be poor. Highlights were limited to an observation of SANDHILL CRANES overhead, and a view of the snow-capped Sierras. MW

OA and RF visited the Los Banos management area on 12/10 and observed the following species: W PELICAN DC CORMORANT GB HERON EGRET BLK-CRND NIGHT HERON CAN GOOSE SNOW GOOSE MALLARD GADWALL PINTAIL GW TEAL CIN TEAL AM WIDGEON SHOVELER CANVASBACK RUDDY DUCK RT HARK MARSH HAWK PEREGRINE GALLINULE COOT KILLDEER GTR YELLOWLEGS MRNING DOVE HYBRID FLICKER RS FLICKER NUTTALL'S WDPKR LB MARSH WREN MOCKINGBIRD WSTERN BLUEBIRD LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE MEADOWLARK RW & BREWER'S BLACKBIRDS HSE FINCH LESSER GOLDFINCH SA-JANNAH, WC, & GC SPARROWS.

Stanford Walk.-

Mrs. Kay McCann scouted the Stanford Mausoleum area on 11/28, then led a walk through the rain there on 11/29. The following species were noted: CALIF QUAIL ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD RS FLICKER ACORN WDPKR YB SAPSUCKER DOWNY WDPKR SCRUB JAY CB CHICKADEE PLN TIT-MOUSE C BUSHTIT CALIF THRASHER ROBIN HERMIT THRUSH RC KINGLET AUD WARBLER MEADOWLARK PURPLE FINCH HOUSE FINCH LSR GOLDFINCH RS & BRN TOWHEES CRGN JUNCO WC, GC, & FOX SPARROWS.

Dynamic Species.-

Miss Emily Smith reports a considerably greater number of ROBINS roosting in her vicinity (Saratoga) than she has seen there previously. She forwarded a 12/21/61 San Jose Mercury item reporting them to be disastrously more abundant and earlier than usual at an English holly farm west of Watsonville.

Wintering STARLINGS were observed in a vlock, estimated at about 1,000, half a mile north of Lake Lucerne on 12/2. EA
As many as 500 (estimate) have been observed at the PA Yacht Harbor.
OA

Vacation Memories.-

The Warren Turners recall seeing these, among others, around McLeod Lake in British Columbia last July: ARCTIC LOON HORNED GREBE with youn GRAY JAY MAGNOLIA WARBLER WW CROSSBILL MTN CHICKADEE TREE SPARROW.

December Additions for Dumbarton.-

OLDSQUAW (Single male in channel) WW & SURF SCOTERS (About 100
in channel) 12/24 RF

Key to Initials.-

AB Mrs. Adist Boylan	HM Miss Harriet Mundy
BW BW, San Jose	JT Mrs. Joyce Todd
CL Mrs. Catherine Lintott	MN Mr. Mark Nesbit
EA Mr. Earl Albertson	MW Mrs. Manette Wittgenstein
EC Dr. Eve Case	OA Mr. Oliver Allen
EL Mrs. Emma Linderoth	RF Mr. Bob Fuller
ES Miss Emily Smith	

Please send your notes to the compiler, Bob Fuller, 835 Webster St.,
Palo Alto, DA 5-9575.

Editor's Notes.

"An unwritten compact between the dead, the living,
and the unborn requires that we leave the unborn
something more than debts and depleted natural re-
sources." Washington State Supreme Court Decision.

When you are writing to a State Legislator or a National Congress-
man about an important Conservation Bill, - and you DO write, don't
you? - it just might be worth while to quote the above Court Decision.
-- Lloyd N. Case

The Western Tanager, monthly publication of the Los Angeles Audu-
bon Society, now boasts a new look - beautifully reproduced maps,
sketches and drawings, silhouettes, etc. Very bright and Handsome.
-- J.T.

"Today, to take birdwalks and nature hikes....without active in-
volvement in the problem of nature conservation, is to hide in an
ivory tower. Each one of us needs to be concerned about wise use of
the land, to join with... other groups that wish to preserve...areas
of wilderness, of beauty, of biological value."

--Dr. Hugo Iltis,
University of Wisconsin

Audubon Camp of California has a clever (and very accurate) theme
this year: ESCAPE TO REALITY. The camp is in the High Sierra near
Donner Pass - a lovely setting. There will be five two-week sessions
from June 24 through September 1, 1962. For information write to:

Audubon Camp
1000 North Durfee
El Monte, California

Paso Robles - A pure white albino buzzard has been spotted on the Bill
Roe ranch in the Shandon area and in the Santa Margarita Lake area.
Ian McMillan, rancher-conservationist, said this is an excellent op-
portunity to study the migration of buzzards. He has asked that any-
one seeing the albino buzzard drop a postcard to McMillan at Shandon,

stating where and when the bird was spotted.

-- Miss Harriet Mundy
Palo Alto (No date or source)

Sacramento - Edward F. Dolder took over Monday as chief of California's Division of Beaches and Parks. Dolder, a 43-year-old career civil servant, replaces Charles A. DeTurk, who moves up to director of the new Department of Parks and Recreation. Governor Brown named John H. Knight, 43, as deputy director of the Department of Parks and Recreation. The governor praised both men as highly qualified for their new posts. The Department of Parks and Recreation was created in Brown's recent reorganization of the state government, as was the Department of Conservation. Both are arms of the Natural Resources Agency, which includes the departments of water resources, fish and game and agriculture - the latter an independent agency grouped under the natural resources agency for representation on the governor's streamlined cabinet.

-- Palo Alto Times 11/14/61

This is a reminder that the membership is to elect a member of the nominating committee at the January meeting. This member, together with another elected by the Board select a third. The committee then prepares a slate of the new directors who serve for the next three years. Election of the directors is, of course, at the annual meeting.

-- Charles Williams,
President

Committee for Preservation of Tule Elk. The Tule elk, unique to the Owens Valley region, now number 296 individuals. The cattlemen object to their presence as presenting undesirable competition for range feed. It is, therefore, proposed to establish a great park, or refuge, in the southern part of Owens Valley. Those wishing to contribute to this refuge should communicate with the Tule Elk Committee, 5502 Markland Drive, Los Angeles 22, California

Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall said (in San Francisco) that he hopes to announce the "first major land acquisition" for the proposed Point Reyes National Park within the next few weeks. "We hope to be able to consummate a land exchange which will give the Federal Government its first large land holdings on Point Reyes," he said. "This will signify to the people of the Bay Area that we really mean business about providing a new national park for them and the Nation." The Senate has approved the Point Reyes Park proposal, but there was no action concerning it taken by the House of Representatives at the last Congressional session. "We hope now that we'll get a little help from the Marin County Board of Supervisors in slowing down subdividers and developers in the area," Udall said.

-- San Francisco Chronicle 11/9/61

About 3600 acres of mineral land about 200 miles north of San Francisco in Mendocino County will be preserved in an undisturbed state for scientific research, the U.S. Department of Interior announced yesterday. The acreage adjoins a 2900-acre preserve held by The Nature Conservancy, a private, non-profit organization devoted to keeping wilderness areas as "living museums". The 3600 acres set aside yesterday are located in the Elder Creek watershed in the Coast Range. The land will be used for scientific study of ecology and watershed

management, a department spokesman said. Its Bureau of Land Management and Geological Survey is co-operating with The Nature Conservancy to conduct studies in the area.

-- San Francisco Chronicle 11/6/61

Don't neglect to see the December 22 (two-in-one issue) of Life magazine. It is a special one entitled "Our Splendid Outdoors - The Land We Love and Enjoy - and the Fight to Save It." This popular magazine reaches hundreds of thousands of people who probably have never considered at all what is happening to their outdoors.

-- J.T.

The Marin Audubon Society has undertaken an imaginative, major new project. It is raising funds to acquire the 507-acre Canyon Ranch that lies adjacent to the Bolinas Lagoon on the Shoreline highway northwest of Stinson Beach and only a short distance from the proposed Point Reyes National Seashore. The scenic ranch is the site of the last major rookery of great blue herons and American egrets in that vicinity. It is an area of rolling meadows, deciduous woodland and canyons forested with redwood and Douglas fir. The ranch borders the Lagoon which is an important link in the Pacific flyway. Its shallow waters and mud flats are heavily used by migrating waterfowl and a variety of shorebirds. If the ranch is successfully acquired, the Marin Society hopes to lease a substantial part of the lagoon, thereby creating a sanctuary of over 1,000 acres.

-- Audubon Conservation Guide
12/1/61

A small but useful booklet on biological and cultural controls for insect pests, "Gardening Without Poisons," can be purchased for 35 cents from Friends of Nature, 346 Concord Ave., Belmont 78 Mass. It was written by Beatrice Trim Hunter.

-- Audubon Conservation Guide
8/1/61

Defenders of the Tule-Klamath Wildlife Refuges have new reason to cheer and to gird themselves for a final push in the next session of Congress to secure the permanency of these vital waterfowl areas in northern California and southern Oregon. Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall announced Nov. 15 that he was sending a "do pass" recommendation to Congress on S.1983, the bill introduced by Senator Thomas H. Kuchel of California to protect the refuges from further raids by homesteaders and irrigation interests. This indicates Mr. Udall has been able to override the Bureau of Reclamation opposition which has blocked settlement of the Tule-Klamath controversy for decades. The Udall report recommends certain amendments to S.1983 which Senator Kuchel said he had been advised "will be minor in nature and will not weaken the attempt to give permanence to the refuges." The fact that agreement has been reached within the Department of Interior does not necessarily mean the local irrigation interests and land speculators have given up. They can be expected to use all the political pressure at their command to defeat the Kuchel bill.

-- Audubon Conservation Guide
12/1/61

Alarmed bird lovers learned (in Atlantic City) that the dwindling population of bald eagles in the Nation has fallen to only 3642 - excluding Alaska. The information was contained in a report to the 57th

annual convention of the National Audubon Society by Alexander Sprunt IV, the society's research director. The bald eagle serves as the national emblem. The Society is engaged in the first attempt ever made in this country to determine how many bald eagles there are and what can be done to halt a long decline in their numbers.

-- S.F. Chronicle 10/29/61

The George Opp farm in Rock Port, Mo., a most unusual place, is a plush stopping-off place for hundreds of wild geese headed South. Opp and fellow farmers provide \$1,500 worth of grain daily for the visiting birds. So far this season, they have been hosts to about 150,000. A large photograph shows part of the guest flock on land and lake on Opp farm.

--Palo Alto Times 12/7/61

North central Santa Clara County stands ready to forge a streamside park chain ranking with the finest in the land. Stevens Creek Park Chain, as imaginatively projected by the County Planning Department in a new pamphlet, would rival Rock Creek Park in Washington, D. C., and the Arroyo Seco Parks in Los Angeles. Stretching 18½ miles from the South Bay to the Skyline, it would provide a green ribbon of recreation for countless people, including the 70,000 to 80,000 expected to live within easy walking distance of the creek by 1985. Governmental leaders of the county and four cities -- Mountain View, Sunnyvale, Los Altos and Cupertino -- generally agree on the desirability of this development. The county has offered to share 50-50 with the cities the cost of land required for the park chain. What is needed now is a push to embody the project in a program of action. And some urgency underlies this need. Forging of the park chain has become possible largely because the State of California has acquired creekside acreage for the future Stevens Creek Freeway. Not all this land is required for right of way; the excess could and should be acquired for park use. It is probable that the state will finance construction of the freeway section from Bayshore Freeway (near Homestead Road) in the next highway budget. Once construction begins, the state's need to settle disposition of the excess acreage will grow. So the county and the cities should shape their program of action soon. If parkland is to border the freeway, the state can save landscaping costs and may very well be persuaded to deed the acreage over for park use. No pattern for an action program has been chosen yet. A good possibility, it seems to us, would be a master agreement among the several jurisdictions. The effort to hammer out such a program would give direction to the project and provide a rallying point for its proponents. But whatever pattern is selected, some move to pull the elements together should be made soon. The County Board of Supervisors could properly take the initiative in inviting the cities and the state to step up to the anvil.

--Palo Alto Times 12/5/61

Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society
Branch of
National Audubon Society

1961 - 1962

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