

The Avocet

Volume X Number 3

March, 1963

President's Message

About a year ago, the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society directors approved a plan to ask the Palo Alto City Council to preserve a strip of virgin marsh land that borders San Francisco Bay. This is City-owned land and the strip would be bounded on the north by Menlo Park and on the south by Mountain View. The strip would begin at the water's edge and extend inland (toward the west) from $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile, depending on the nature of the land. This is the area where most of the water and shore birds can be found. This plan was presented to the Palo Alto Planning Commission by letter last October, when this group was creating a long-range, general plan for Palo Alto's future growth.

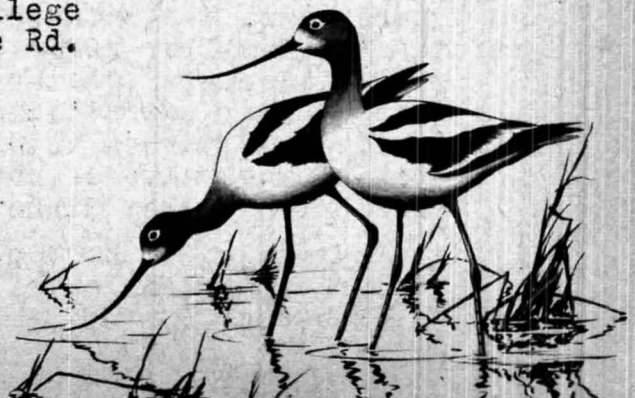
Recently, at a public hearing, the idea of preserving the strip of virgin marsh land by making it a Palo Alto City Park or a Palo Alto Bird Sanctuary was again presented verbally and later in writing to the Planning Commission, as it was finishing their general plan for Palo Alto. The Commission did not specifically recognize our request. They only stated there was no present pressure for use of the Palo Alto Baylands and it might be 10 years or more before there would be much change in this area. The Planning Commission chairman said the group did not want to be too specific; rather, they were painting their picture in broad terms. We were advised to take our Sanctuary plan to the newly formed Palo Alto Citizen's Recreation Committee for approval. This is a committee appointed by the Mayor and its findings will have influence with the Palo Alto City Council. Several interested Audubon members will continue their efforts in behalf of this worthy proposal.

Gifts received during February: \$300 to be used by the Education Com- for the purchase of 16 mm sound and color moving picture film, as chosen by the Directors; \$10 given "In Memory" also to be used "Toward purchase of films or any other use the Education Committee may deem important. These gifts are gratefully acknowledged by the Directors.

-- Warren M. Turner

Coming Events at a Glance

Sat. Mar. 2	9 - 11 a.m.	Fair Hill, Los Altos
Mon. Mar. 4	8:00 p.m.	Community Center, Palo Alto
Wed. Mar. 13	8:30 a.m.	Los Gatos
Fri. Mar. 22	4:15 p.m.	Stanford University
Fri. Mar. 22	8:00 p.m.	San Jose State College
Wed. Mar. 27	8:45 a.m.	Vicinity of Alpine Rd.
Sat. Mar. 30	9:00 a.m.	Huddart Park



March Calendar

There will be no Director's Meeting in March.

Regular Meeting:

Monday, March 4, at 8:00 p.m. in Room R, Palo Alto Community Center, Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. Dr. Marianne Welter, former resident of South Africa, will show color slides of the birds, animals, and plants of Uganda. She is here with her husband during his sabbatical year from the University of East Africa (Makerere College), Kampala, Uganda, where he is head of the Mathematics Dept. We shall also see Laurel Reynold's color film Canyon Ranch - picturing the lovely area on Bolinas Bay now being acquired by Marin Audubon Society as a wildlife refuge.

Field Trips:

Wednesday Morning, March 13, to the countryside east and south of Los Gatos. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Kings Court, a shopping center in east Los Gatos, at the intersection of San Jose Ave. and Blossom Hill Road. Bring lunch if you want to go all the way to Chesbro Reservoir to look for Wood Ducks. Leader: Mrs. Mary Taylor (379-3424).

Sunday, March 17 there will be a field trip to Searsville Lake. Meet at the gate at 9:00 a.m. Bring 25¢ admission charge and lunch. Bring friends, as this meeting is open to the public. Leaders will be Warren and Rebecca Turner (DA 5-7777).

Wednesday, March 27, to an area off Alpine Road. Meet at the Ladera Shopping Center on Alpine Road at 8:45 a.m. Come prepared to hike. This beautiful area near the shopping center is disappearing as rapidly as the privilege to see and enjoy it. Leader: Mrs. Norman Zabel (DA 5-5939) or call Virginia Bothwell (322-1209) for information.

Saturday, March 30 there will be field trip to Huddart Park. This park is located on the old Kings Mountain Road just outside of Woodside. Meet at the gate at 9:00 a.m. Bring lunch. Leaders will be Bill and Bernice Pillow (948-1300).

Screen Tours:

Friday, March 22, at 4:15 p.m. Cubberly Auditorium, Education Bldg., Escondido Rd. and Lasuen St., Stanford University. Karl H. Maslowski will present "Gone with the Wilderness". This is the last Screen Tour this season. You are cordially invited to hear these eminent speakers and see their wonderful films, Help further the cause of conservation through appreciation and understanding of the world of nature. Bring your family and your friends. Through superb color photography with sound effects and time-lapse features, Mr. Maslowski, famed conservationist from Cincinnati, Ohio refutes the familiar remark, "Before we built here there was nothing but wilderness". Natural wonders are lost when a forest falls under a power saw attack; when a marsh is drained or filled; when a prairie is turned into a suburb. This film is an eloquent appraisal of the value of conservation. Tickets are available at Tresidder Union Ticket Office.

Friday, March 22, at 8:00 p.m. Morris Dailey Auditorium, San Jose State College. Mr. Maslowski will show the above film. Tickets available at the door.

Special Invitation to all Members

Mrs. Margaret Wolcott, local Audubon Society Secretary, invites us to a get-acquainted coffee-klatch and bird-walk at her home on Saturday, March 2, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. The address is:

Fair Hill
26511 Altamont
Los Altos

Altamont is the second road to the right off Moody Road as you pass the Foothill College parking lot. Or, go up Page Mill Road to Altamont and proceed on Altamont until you see the Wolcott's mail box (about 1 mile). Margaret hopes old members will take this opportunity to meet new members, as well as to renew old friendships. The Wolcotts are serving coffee and homemade rolls, and you are welcome to come for any part of the two hours - even if it rains.

-- J.T.

Highlights of the February Board Meeting

Our president reported that National president Buchheister will not be able to be with us at our April meeting.

The weekly field trips open to the public have been very successful in the Palo Alto area and those in the Saratoga area are gaining momentum - all this in spite of the cold weather.

Unanimous approval was given to the purchase of the film "Next Door to Nature", mentioned in the February Avocet.

The education committee chairman reported a number of requests for filed trips and nature walks.

New bird slides have been purchased and more will be added when available.

Our supply of Sibley's "Birds of the San Francisco Bay Region" is sold out. The books may now be obtained at the National Audubon Resource Center, 2426 Bancroft Way, Berkeley 4. The price is \$1.50.

We at last have the "Checklist of the Birds of Santa Clara Valley" from the printers. Doctors Harvey and Weston have put a great deal of effort into this project and we announce the publication with extreme gratitude. This not only lists the birds, but indicates their presence and abundance in the various seasons. The price is 10¢ each. Available at meetings and by mail from Eve Case, 2586 Homestead Rd., Santa Clara Tel. 296-2410.

Escape to Reality

Plan now to attend Audubon Camp of the West, in the Wind River Range of Western Wyoming - near Grand Teton and Yellowstone National Parks. There will be three two-week sessions on field ecology, June 23 through August 2, with university credit available. For information write: Audubon Camp, P.O. Box 3666, El Monte, California.

Saturday Hours in Berkeley

Audubon Conservation Center in Berkeley, 2426 Bancroft Way, announces Saturday hours from now through May 25. Open from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., the Center invites members and friends, students and all nature lovers to browse among the educational and inspirational materials available. (Your editor has just recently discovered the delights of this shop. There are books you can't find anywhere else

and lovely hand-printed stationery adorned with birds, plants and other glories of nature nobody seems to love but a few conservation-ists.)---J.T.

C O N S E R V A T I O N N O T E S

A REPORT FROM THE CONSERVATION CHAIRMAN TO THE MEMBERSHIP-AT-LARGE:

The previous issue of THE AVOCET contained mention of a proposed chain of parks along Coyote Creek, and the desirability of including a nature study center in such a park program. Expressions of agreement and enthusiasm led to further exploration of the situation. I report to you that it is now my personal opinion that the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society should not undertake any independent project toward such a goal, but should join in the support of an already organized and activated plan, and that we should apply the old, trite-but-true adage: "In union there is strength."

Three of us met with Mr. Laurence Moitozo, the Executive Director of "The Youth Science Institute", and (like the Walrus in "Alice in Wonderland") we spoke of many things, --- and we learned much! We learned:

 details of his nature study program, now being conducted at what was formerly called the Junior Museum, in Alum Rock Park;

 why the name was changed from "Junior Museum" to "Youth Science Institute";

 of the sources of financial support for the operation of such nature centers;

 of the availability of personnel for administration;

 of the location of suitable sites for such a center;

 of the reasons why it should not be moved to the Vasona Park area at the present time;

 and, most important of all, we learned of incidents that have occurred in the meetings of the Planning Commission which indicate, irrefutably, that the Commission is primarily interested in recreational facilities for adults, and is not even considering plans for the conservation-and-nature education of youngsters.

It is obvious that the master plan for any Nature Study Center must not only include policy and programs, but must also provide for the funds necessary to establish, maintain, and staff the Center. It is even more obvious that our own S.C.V.A.S. group cannot possibly undertake such a Nature Center as our own group-project, --- with disbursements amounting to \$15,000 annually. Moreover, as a small minority group, we could not hope to have any satisfactory degree of success in influencing the Planning Commission by our "single-group" effort.

Individually, the members of the Planning Commission are undoubtedly conscientious and sincere citizens and parents. Collectively, they are responsible for the proper expenditure of large amounts of taxpayers' money, for which they must obtain optimum results, with maximum benefit to the people as a whole, according to their interpretation of "MAXIMUM BENEFIT" and "THE PEOPLE AS A WHOLE".

The present situation seems to indicate the possibility that, as a body, the Commission is either uninformed, or is misinformed, as to the nature of, and the need for, a Nature Study Center that will not only provide this type of combined recreational and educational activity to our youngsters in age-groups of from 7 or 8 years up through the teens, but will also have facilities available for groups of our adult

citizens. They must be shown how such objectives cannot possibly be achieved in our public-school classrooms, even by dedicated teachers who are aided by generous donations of time, effort, and resources of several groups that are interested and active in providing this type of education to our youth.

The success of any project for establishing the best possible Nature Study Center for the Santa Clara Valley will require the con-
certed effort of all groups interested in such a project. In order to explore the possibility of promoting the necessary unity of effort, establishing the required close liaison between the interested groups, securing the maximum degree of cooperation, and to provide a nucleus for future united effort, we have scheduled a meeting of key personnel from the Youth Science Institute, our local Audubon Society, and the Loma Prieta Chapter of the Sierra Club. This meeting will be strictly "exploratory" in nature; no commitments whatever will be sought or made.

The Coyote Creek Chain of Parks may be some twenty years in the future, but it is hoped that this nucleus will be able to come up with a plan for concerted effort on the part of many interested organizations, and that through such concerted effort we can make the Nature Study Center a reality in much less than twenty years.

ON THE NATIONAL LEVEL:

THE BUREAU OF OUTDOOR RECREATION, the new bureau of the Interior Department, is getting off to what seems to be a good start, with a bill, S.20, introduced by Sen. Clinton P. Anderson (New Mexico) which would provide the basic authority needed to coordinate recreation policy among federal agencies and to carry out the other functions of the Bureau. Another bill now being drafted will propose sources of revenue of a "Land and Water Conservation Fund" and for federal grants to help states in planning and acquiring new park and recreation lands.

WATER POLLUTION CONTROL is the objective of a new bill introduced by two conservation leaders in Congress. This bill would move the control "out of the Public Health Service basement" and would put the program under a commission responsible directly to the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare.

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BILLS include H.R. 2578 (a reintroduction by Rep. John D. Dingell, Mich.) providing for a \$2 annual stamp to be purchased by bird watchers and other recreation users of the National Wildlife Refuges, the funds to be used to buy new refuge lands.

Another bill in this group is S. 468 by Sen. Lee Metcalf (Mont.), to avert unnecessary damage to fishing streams and wildlife habitat by requiring approval by the Secretary of the Interior of federal-aid highway plans.

Several bills would increase the percentage of National Wildlife Refuge revenues paid to local counties, the purpose being to abate political opposition that is blocking wetlands acquisition in the Dakotas.

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR STEWART L. UDALL announced Jan. 28 that federal regulations had been approved to give full protection to the bald and the golden eagle from hunting by airplanes and poison.

-- Lloyd N. Case
Conservation Chairman

Notes from Afield

It is urgently requested that you send your interesting observations to the compiler so that they may be shared with the rest of our members. Among other things please include the following basic facts: Species, Quantity, Location, Date, Observer. Please send your information so that I may compile it and send it to the editor of the Avocet by the 20th of each month.

Compiler: Ralph R. Trullinger
1960 Santa Cruz Ave.,
Menlo Park (321-3955)

Palo Alto Christmas Count - December 20, 1962

Location of the center of the circle: Page Mill Rd. and Junipero Serra Blvd.

Observers: 16 in 4 parties

Weather: Heavy fog in the lowlands which lingered over the Bay all day. Clear in the upland areas.

Total species seen: 101

Total individuals seen: 11,552

The heavy fog over and near the Bay greatly reduced the number of water birds seen.

Observers at the higher elevations reported a scarcity of wintering land birds, believed due to the mild winter preceding the count.

Most unusual species: Lesser Yellowlegs (2) - seen at Lagunita on Stanford campus; Pygmy Nuthatch (flock of four); Black-throated Gray Warbler (1).

There were extremely low counts of Robins (62) and White-crowned Sparrows (47).

Information from
Earl A. Albertson

Searsville Lake trip - January 23

On an overcast but warm day a total of 31 species were seen - the most interesting being one Yellowthroat and 43 Ring-necked Ducks.

Following is a list of the species seen: Acorn Woodpecker, Scrub Jay, Red-winged Blackbird, Coot, Bushtit, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Golden-crowned Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Yellowthroat, Red-shafted Flicker, Western Meadowlark, Hummingbird (Anna's?), Brown Towhee, Wrentit, Black Phoebe, Western Bluebird, Band-tailed Pigeon, Mallard, Canvasback, Lesser Scaup, Great Blue Heron, Ruddy Duck, Bufflehead (1 female), Ring-necked Duck, Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, California Thrasher, Ruby-crowned Kinglet (identified by V. Bothwell by the song).

Information from
Carol Zabel

San Juan Bautista-Fremont Peak State Park Trip - February 2

A total of 29 species were seen by 12 people on an overcast but warm day - the most interesting being one Say's Phoebe near the Mission at San Juan Bautista.

Following is a list of the species seen: Robin (8), Brewer's Blackbird, Red-winged Blackbird, House Finch, Western Meadowlark, California Quail, White-crowned Sparrow, Golden-crowned Sparrow, House Sparrow, Say's Phoebe, Scrub Jay, Mockingbird, Audubon's Warbler, Cedar Waxwing, Lesser Goldfinch, Brown Towhee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Band-tailed Pigeon, Red-shafted Flicker, Acorn Woodpecker, Nuttall's Woodpecker, California Thrasher, Oregon Junco, Western Bluebird, Mallard, Bewick's Wren (heard only), Turkey Vulture.

Leader: Wilma Thompson

Eve Case reports a House Sparrow with white outer tail feathers at her home during end of January and first part of February.

Hooded Oriole - Feb. 11 - Again this year in the 1300 block on University Ave., Palo Alto two, presumably nesting in the palms and feeding regularly at hummingbird feeders on Hamilton Ave. - Dorothy R. Taylor.

Orchard Oriole - Jan. and Feb. 1963 - One male feeding on blossoms of the aloe shrubs along the beach near Lover's Point in Pacific Grove. - Ethel Case and Florence Durfee.

Wood Ducks - Three the middle of Feb. - Numerous sightings of one pair at Palo Alto Yacht Harbor duck pond.

Clapper Rail - First part of Feb. - Palo Alto Yacht Harbor one - Dumbarton Bridge area 3. - Norma & Herb Grench.

Tree Swallows - Feb. 10 - Approximately three dozen seen by Catherine Lintott at her home near Vasona Reservoir.

-- Ralph R. Trullinger

The Morro Bay trip was a huge success - good weather, good birding, a thorough good time by all. It will be fully reported for the next Avocet.

-- Eve Case

Editor's Notes

On March 11, at 7:30 p.m. the Planning Commission of the Palo Alto City Council will meet in its chambers at 1313 Melville Road to discuss the master plan for development of the city. As yet there has been no sanctuary (however small) set aside in the city-owned Bay marshlands.

NAS president Carl Bucheister has sent out a letter and an enclosure from the New York Times in rebuttal to a nationwide publicity and public relations campaign (HEAVILY FINANCED) to counteract and discredit Rachel Carson's book, SILENT SPRING, and to try to lull the public into apathy about the over-use and misuse of chemical pesticides which threaten humans as well as wildlife. Concern about this threat is not "BALONEY", as one of the detractors would have the public believe.

The scenery, forests and wildlife of our state, the purity of its soil, air and water are constantly under attack by those to whom no consideration is important except financial gain. But education, awareness, alertness and determination are paying off; dismay and indignation are making themselves heard; and the growing number of conservationists in California may yet save for the future some of the priceless assets of wildness and beauty with which our state was endowed.

--William S. Picher, President
Marin Audubon Society 2/63

To enjoy a Desert Wildflower Tour, trips through Oak Creek Canyon, Arizona, the Navajo Reservations, Hopi Country, Rainbow Bridge, Havasu Canyon, the Chiricahua Mts. or Southeast Arizona or the Muir Trail in the Sierra Nevadas, write to:

Wampler Trail Trips
Box 45
Berkeley 1, California

Governor Edmund G. Brown proposes an interstate commission to work on plans for a bistate park in the Lake Tahoe area. Brown submitted his plan to the California Commission on Interstate Co-operation,

and said an interstate park compact would be "an urgent first step toward preserving one of the most beautiful areas in the Nation". He said Nevada had indicated its willingness to move ahead on such a project. Brown's proposal would create a six-member commission, with two members appointed by each Governor. The commission would plan, buy land, develop and regulate parks in the Tahoe basin. It could charge admission and each State's share of the commission's budget would be determined by negotiation.

--S.F. Chronicle, 2/1

How YOU can help protect America's wild life:

Each year, thousands of animals die needlessly in our forests. Follow these simple rules when playing, camping or traveling through the countryside and you will do your part to conserve our country's natural resources and protect wild animals from injury and death:

- 1 - Never destroy animals, their dens, nests or homes.
- 2 - Put out our campfires, matches and cigarettes. Forest fires are the greatest destroyers of wildlife.
- 3 - Never remove a wild animal baby from the woods, Usually its mother is close by only waiting for you to go away.
- 4 - Leave care of innured animals to professionals. Call your local game warden or park policeman.
- 5 - Don't molest snakes - (and know the 5 poisonous types). All others are harmless and perform a useful function in nature's check-and-balance system.
- 6 - Don't discard bottles or unsmashed cans - an animal may get its nose or head caught inside.
- 7 - Don't throw food scraps on roads or highways - animals may be killed trying to scavenge.
- 8 - Don't let pets run loose in the woods - they may chase and kill or injure wild animals.
- 9 - Drive slowly through "deer crossings" - honk horn. Hundreds of deer are killed annually by speeding motorists.
- 10- Don't rob the nests of birds or small mammals

-- Defenders of Wildlife,
Washington, D.C.

Our society now has a very attractive folder, designed by Director John Brokenshire, called "Invitation to Membership". It tells everything about the National and Local Audubon Societies that a prospective member wants to know. You will see it at meetings and be encouraged to give it to interested people.

Don't forget the National Audubon Western Conference at Asilomar, Pacific Grove, April 6 to 9. Theme: "Our Living Heritage - Going Where?"