

The Avocet

Volume XI Number 5

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California Condor Study

The National Audubon Society announced that a two-year investigation of the population status and habitat of the California Condor, one of the largest and rarest birds in the world, would be completed by late summer.

It will be the first such thorough study since the original biological research on the condor done by Dr. Carl Koford for the National Audubon Society in the early 1940's. It was the Koford study that resulted in the estimate that not more than 60 to 70 of the big birds remained alive.

The present study is being directed by Dr. Alden H. Miller, noted ornithologist and head of the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology of the University of California at Berkeley, who also directed the Koford study.

The current field work is being done by two widely-known naturalist brothers, Ian and Eben McMillan, ranchers of Shandon, California.

The central part of the condor range is in the Los Padres National Forest where the Sespe Wildlife Refuge was set aside. Other protective measures were instituted, and since 1948 the National Audubon Society has provided half the salary and expenses of a special Forest Service patrolman who watches over the condor. A number of local Audubon Societies in California have contributed funds for this purpose.

Audubon President Carl W. Buchheister thanked Regional Forester Charles A. Connaughton and Supervisor William H. Hanson of the Los Padres Forest for postponing a decision on whether to build the so-called Sierra Madre Ridge Road in the Santa Barbara district of the National Forest until the condor investigation is completed.

The proposed road, which has generated considerable local controversy, has been opposed by the Santa Barbara Audubon Society and the Sierra Club who have argued that increased traffic and human disturbance will further endanger the condor.

No announcement of the investigation was made prior to this time because it was feared premature publicity might attract photographers and curiosity seekers in such numbers as to interfere with both the study and the birds. The condor is extremely sensitive to human disturbance. However, the road controversy produced publicity that could not be avoided.

Coming Events at a Glance

Sun. May 3	9:30 a.m. or noon	Huddart Park
Sat. May 9	8:30 a.m.	Alum Rock
Wed. May 13	9:00 a.m.	Stevens Creek Park
Wed. May 13	8:00 p.m.	Palo Alto
Sun. May 24	9:00 a.m.	Saratoga Hills
Wed. May 27	8:30 a.m.	Los Altos Hills
Sun. June 7	9:00 a.m.	La Honda
Mon. June 8	Annual Meeting	Details later
Mon. June 15	7:30 a.m.	Santa Cruz
Wed. June 24	8:30 a.m.	Los Altos Hills



May Calendar

Regular Meeting:

Wednesday, May 13, at 8:00 p.m., Room R, Palo Alto Community Center, Middlefield Road. Mr. Philip Arnot of Adult Education Department, Palo Alto High School, will show color movies of hikes on Mt. Ranier, Mt. Baker and Mt. Shuksan (Washington). He will also have with him color slides of plants and scenery of the High Sierra region.

Field Trips:

Sunday, May 3, Joint Outing with the Sierra Club and Committee for Green Foothills, at Huddart Park, Miwok Flat Picnic Area. 9:30 a.m., meet at Miwok Flat Shelter for an easy family hike on Park trails. Groups may take their own hikes. 12:00 noon, picnic and informal talk at Miwok Shelter by Harold Gilliam of the San Francisco Chronicle, author of San Francisco Bay and many conservation articles. Candidates for Supervisor in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties have been invited to come and to give their views on open space and conservation. We will have a chance to meet and question them in county groups. Huddart Park is on Kings Mountain Road above Woodside. Park near the Ranger Station; $\frac{1}{4}$ -mile walk to Miwok Picnic Area. Bring your own picnic; cooking facilities available; presto logs 50¢. Limited parking at Miwok Flat. Call Mary Moffat (DA 6-1300)

Saturday, May 9, Alum Rock Park. The public is invited. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the parking area at the Youth Science Institute (formerly Junior Museum. Leader: John Brokenshire (CY 3-6289).

Wednesday, May 13, to Stevens Creek Park. The trees should be full of song and color with a myriad of birds. Also, many wildflowers should be at their peak of bloom. Meet at the dam at 9:00 a.m. Leader: Edna Winniger (AL 2-3796).

Sunday, May 24, a tour around the Pike Estate in the Saratoga Hills, birding as we go. Meet at 6th and Big Basin Way in Saratoga at 9:00 a.m. Leaders: Mr. and Mrs. John Henderson (867-4304).

Wednesday, May 27, at 8:30 a.m. to the Duveneck Ranch, Hidden Villa, on Moody Road in Los Altos Hills. The ranch is past Adobe Creek Lodge on the left side of the road. Meet just inside the entrance. Leader: Kay McCann (327-4138).

Sunday, June 7, we are invited to the Al Wool Ranch in La Honda. Al thinks the wildflowers will be at their best then. We'll meet in La Honda at 9:00 a.m. Details in June Avocet.

Monday, June 8, Annual Meeting of Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society. Details in June Avocet.

Monday, June 15, Leavitt McQuesten will conduct his annual "Albatross Expedition". A sport fishing boat will leave Stagnaro Landing on the Santa Cruz Municipal Wharf at 7:30 a.m. and return about noon. The destination will be a spot 12 miles offshore where the large pelagic birds are common at this season. Shearwaters, and often jaegers, petrels and alcids are also encountered. Tickets are \$1.50 and reservations should be made in advance. For more information write Leavitt McQuestion, 120 Otis Street, Santa Cruz.

Wednesday, June 24, to "Fair Hill", the Wolcott Ranch, at the corner of Elizabeth and Teaffe Roads in Los Altos Hills. Meet at 8:30 a.m.. Leaders: Margaret and Howard Wolcott (948-6821).

New Members

We are very glad to welcome the following new members:

Mrs. Fred G. Blakey	625 Teresi Lane, Los Altos
Mrs. Ruth E. Penwell	1005 Varsity Court, Mountain View
Mrs. Jacqueline Davis	909 Lois Avenue, Sunnyvale
Mrs. Elizabeth A. Gomperts	132 Tuscaloosa Avenue, Atherton
Mrs. Donna Brandes	122 Furne Avenue, Palo Alto
Mr. and Mrs. Gerald M. S. Kendall	14510 Sobey Road, Saratoga
Mr. Charles R. Glissom	2650 California Avenue, Apt. 47, Mountain View

--Angelina Snow, Membership Chairman

Audubon Group Heard before Palo Alto City Council

A large group of Palo Alto citizens, members of Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society and Save San Francisco Bay Association, was present at the 7:30 p.m. meeting of Palo Alto City Council, sitting as Committee of the Whole, Monday night, April 20. Dr. Tom Harvey, Associate Professor of Biology, San Jose State College, presented to the Council our suggestions for development of city-owned baylands north of the Yacht Harbor. He showed color slides of the plant, animal, bird life of the area, discussed plans and costs for walkways over the marsh to view points, building and naturalist for an interpretive program, planting of salt tolerant trees and shrubs to beautify the area for people and birds. The City of Palo Alto is indeed unique, as City Manager Jerome Keithley emphasized, in its possession of large mountain and shore lands, both beautiful and relatively undisturbed. Dr. Harvey showed a photograph of the only other similar marsh educational center in the United States, a shoreline in Pennsylvania.

Mr. Robert P. Anderson, who writes the science curricula for the Palo Alto Unified School District, enumerated ways he and the schools use the baylands and foothill areas. He felt that local students were most fortunate to have such unspoiled lands for ecology studies. Mr. Larry Hull, Biology teacher at Cubberley High School, was present to answer possible technical questions by Council members on baylands use.

Dr. Harvey introduced Walter Burgermeister, a 10-year old local boy, whose letter to the Editor on his enjoyment of the Palo Alto baylands was printed recently by the Palo Alto Times. He had circulated a petition, signed by 52 of his neighbors, urging councilmen to consider preserving part of the area.

Diane Conradson, teacher and author, spoke to the Council on her use of the baylands with Scout groups, Campfire girls, Audubon field trips open to the public. She showed the Council her book, Introduction to the Baylands, used in Palo Alto Unified School District. She said teachers agree there is a paucity of material on the area and much to be learned from preservation of marshlands.

Tom Harvey read a letter on record with S.C.V.A.S. from the Palo Alto Girl Scout Council, stating that 900 of its 1600 members have already used the baylands area this year.

Mrs. Howard Janir, President of Palo Alto Garden Club, spoke for her group, who approves preserving a portion of the marsh in its natural state. With proper landscaping, picnic areas, walkways, maximum use of the land by people as well as wildlife would be possible, she said.

We were most grateful to the Council for hearing us with great courtesy and without interruption. Council members asked questions about our proposals and later referred the matter for more discussion after our plans are drawn on city planning maps for study.

We were an enthusiastic audience and we feel that our ideas are good and workable. Won't you join at the next hearing?

One of the Councilmen said afterward that this was the best presentation of a request by a citizens' group ever made since he took office.
-- Joyce Todd

60th National Audubon Convention - Tucson, November 7-11, 1964

It is not too soon to register for the exciting 1964 National Convention, the first in the history of the Society to venture to the west. It will be a noteworthy occasion. Send your registration fee (\$5.00) to Mrs. Duryea Morton, National Audubon Convention, 613 Riverside Road, Greenwich, Connecticut, and you will receive full information about convention activities and housing procedures. Make checks payable to "National Audubon Convention". Act now--and then relax.

Audubon Camp of the West

While extending regrets to the many who tried to attend camp this summer only to find it full, Bill Goodall suggests you let him hear now if you are interested in the 1965 program. Already, many have placed their names on a priority list to receive information in advance early in the fall. We would be glad to add you to the rapidly growing roster, so don't delay.

Addresserett Stencil Typist Needed

Our circulation manager, Elsie Hoeck, a miracle of devotion, organization and attention to minute detail, badly needs someone to type for Avocet mailings names of new members, changes of name or address, etc. on Elliot Addresserett Stencils. If a San Jose or other nearby member can do this work, it would be most convenient. However, the few needed at any one time could easily be handled by mail. Your help would eliminate present addressing of over 45 Avocet covers by hand. Please contact Miss Elsie Hoeck, 1311 Cristina, San Jose 25 (293-5668).

S.C.V.A.S. BOARD ACTION

The Board of Directors met at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 8, at the home of Mrs. Luther Cisne, 1868 Bret Harte, Palo Alto.

We are still previewing films for possible purchase for Education Committee. Mr. Bob Knowles showed his 40-minute film

on Farallone Islands, Monterey Coast, Audubon Canyon in Marin, West Cliff Drive, Santa Cruz, Palo Alto Yacht Harbor. There were elegant views of Brandt's Cormorant, Tufted Puffin, Pigeon Guillemot, Black-footed Albatross, herons nesting, Caspian tern, Snowy Plover.

Minutes were read by Mrs. Eva McCrea and approved.

President Brokenshire read the Treasurer's report in the absence of Fanny Zwaal.

Attempts will be made to gather material for the Avocet earlier so that it can be mailed earlier to avoid first-of-the-month rush. We will try to include the list of officers each time.

A letter of thanks from an Audubon Scholarship recipient was read.

Letter from Supervisor Della Maggicre inviting us to see and consider alternatives to Air Point Park was read. He agrees Santa Clara County needs more parks.

Possible locations for the June Annual Meeting were discussed.

Duplication of Warren Turner's history of S.C.V.A.S. was considered. A report on costs will be heard next month. Requests for the booklet have come from Bill Goodall, Western Representative, and N.A.S. Library in New York.

Board decided not to circulate a petition for initiative on pesticides harmful to humans in California. The group sponsoring it was not known to us, provisions of the bill vague.

We learned that improved sewage disposal methods in San Francisco Bay have made it possible for the bay shrimp to return in significant numbers - after a very long absence.

Admiral Charles Williams reported on successful Stanford Screen Tour season. Discussion was heard on possible double bill for '64-'65 season - both afternoon and evening presentations, perhaps one at Stanford, one at Palo Alto.

Dr. Tom Harvey reported California Fish and Game asks our participation in 2-year survey of birds dependent on South San Francisco Bay lands.

Board approved Ralph Trullinger's request for full printing of field trip lists in Avocet. -- J. Todd

Conservation Notes

Here is an extremely encouraging development!

Working on the problem of preventing the complete despoliation of the southern San Francisco Bay tidelands by the inevitable encroachment by industry, our Dr. Tom Harvey has set up a program that coordinates our conservation objectives with the field-study program of the California Department of Fish and Game.

Definited areas have been designated by the Fish and Game people in which they wish to have a census of the bird population and its variation from month to month over a two-year period.

This is a most desirable approach because, if we can show that a stated number of individuals of a definite number of species of waterfowl and/or shorebirds depend on certain tideland conditions and/or areas, we will be in a much stronger position when seeking to preserve and protect these particular areas of tidelands.

The success of the entire project depends upon a number of our members who are giving their time to go to a specified area and to take a census of the birds that are in that area at that time. Most of the designated areas have already been provided for.

-- Lloyd N. Case

Gardening without Poisons
Beatrice Trum Hunter

In the months since the publication of Silent Spring by the late Rachel Carson, millions of Americans have become aware of the dangers stemming from the indiscriminate use of lethal chemicals to control insects and plant diseases on our farms and in our gardens. What we are still largely unaware of are the natural controls developed by modern science that will in the long run be much safer and more effective than the deadly chemicals with which we are now poisoning our own environment.

For example, dormant ladybugs can be purchased ready for release in the garden. A preparation is now available that will cause Japanese beetle grubs to sicken and die but will not infect other insects or the birds that feed on them. There is a beetle that attacks nothing but the Klamath weed. These are only a few of the recently developed techniques that help us to maintain healthy gardens without the use of hazardous chemicals.

In Gardening without Poisons Beatrice Trum Hunter shows how natural protections against insect plagues and pestilence work and how we can make these forces help us if we understand them. The book is \$5.00, Houghton-Mifflin publishers.

Save San Francisco Bay Association
P.O. Box 925, Berkeley, California

Fact Sheet: The Threat to the Future of San Francisco Bay

1. A rapidly increasing population is predicted for the Bay Area resulting in increasing land values.
2. About 70% of the San Francisco Bay is shallow enough to be filled, thus making it possible to view much of the Bay as potential land, rather than as water.
3. The shallow water surface of the Bay (water less than 6 feet deep) is important in tidal action and it is also necessary for the oxidation of sewage wastes.
4. As water, the Bay is used principally for navigation, fishing, recreation and sewage disposal.

5. As land, the Bay is filled by garbage, hard fill for industrial and some residential development.
6. Marshlands, tidelands and shallow water are used as the sources of food for fish and birds.
7. Of the 276 miles of shoreline, less than 5 are now in publicly owned and developed recreational areas.
8. Hit and miss development has not produced a beautiful shoreline. Most of the shoreline is ugly because garbage dumps spread their unsighlliness over ever larger areas, with no examples of the promised use as parks. Shoreline areas held for many years by private owners, such as Santa Fe, have been miles of ugly dumps or dirty debris floating over mudflats without effort made to improve the appearance of these properties.
9. Despite all this, San Francisco Bay is now one of the best known beauty spots of the world, owing in part to its expanse. It attracts new residents and new business because of its generally clean air and beautiful viess. These are economic values as well as are those of navigation, fishing and recreation.
10. Without a large amount of shallow water to preserve the present tidal prism and some inter-tidal mud flats and marshes to preserve the biological uses of the Bay, none of the present water uses will survive without large additional public costs (i.e., more dredging, sewer lines to the ocean, etc.)
11. There is no regional or state authority to prevent the rapid piecemeal conversion of water to land.
12. Because of the anticipated increase in the urban population of this area, all open space and recreational facilities now owned by the public will become of even greater value and should be reserved for these uses.

Notes from Afield

Alum Rock Park Trip - March 11

18 members met at Alum Rock Park for a perfect morning of birding. Both Emily Smith and Smitty (Claude Smith) were with us, which insured a successful count. A total of 30 species was identified:

California Quail	Plain Titmouse	Western Mead wlrk
Anna's Hummingbird	Wrentit	Lesser Goldfinch
Red-shafted Flicker	Bewick's Wren	Rufous-sided Towhee
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Canon Wren	Brown Towhee
Nuttall's Woodpecker	California Thrasher	Rufous-crowned Sparrow
Black Phoebe	Robin	Oregon Junco
Violet-green Swallow	Hermit Thrush	Golden-crowned Sparrow
Steller's Jay	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Song Sparrow
Scrub Jay	Cedar Waxwing	
Common Crow	Audubon's Warbler	

Leaders: Agnes and Clyde Frusman

Los Altos Hills Trip - March 21

This trip was to Wolcott's "Fair Hill". A total of 30 species was identified:

Band-tailed Pigeon	Scrub Jay	Starling
Rock Dove	Chestnut-backed Chickadee	Audubon's Warbler
Mourning Dove	Plain Titmouse	Western Meadowlark
Anna's Hummingbird	Common Bushtit	Red-winged Blackbird
Allen's Hummingbird	Brown Creeper	Brewer's Blackbird
Red-shafted Flicker	Wrentit	House Finch
Acorn Woodpecker	Mockingbird	Rufous-sided Towhee
Red-breasted Sapsucker	California Thrasher	Brown Towhee
Robin	Western Bluebird	White-crowned Sparrow
California Quail	Golden-crowned Sparrow	

Leaders: Margaret and Howard Wolcott

Palo Alto Yacht Harbor Trip - March 25

This trip drew a beautiful sunny day with very little wind. Around 20 members and guests saw 50 species of birds. Around 500 Marbled Godwits and 25 Long-billed Curlews highlighted the trip. Tightly knit flocks of shore birds could be seen in all directions. The scouting trip netted 65 species.

Leaders: Mrs. L.E. and John Cisne

Letters from Rebecca and Warren Turner:

April 2 - We are on Padre Island near Brownsville, Texas, today. There is a strong south wind, so the birding is not good. Will leave in the morning for Corpus Christi and Rockport and Aransas Wildlife Refuge. Saw a flight of perhaps 200 Broad-winged Hawks arrive last evening, 7:00 p.m., and settle down all around us in the Santa Ana Wildlife Refuge. They came in from South America where they winter. There was a strong south wind that bore them along. They were off again this morning at 7:00 a.m., leaving in groups of 25 or 50, and again they rode a strong south wind taking them north. We do not see them on the west coast.

April 2 - This is written at the Santa Ana Wildlife Refuge, near McAllen in south Texas, right next to the Rio Grande River. We have just finished 2 days of fabulous birding: one day at Bentson State Park, and one day (today) at the Wildlife Refuge mentioned above. The weather has been humid, cloudy, some misty, with some wind from the east and south. Trees and shrubs are so very different: semitropical. Wildflowers on the roadside in south Texas were beautiful beyond description. Here are listed the results of our birding. All the birds mentioned were checked carefully with the manager of each place. Our complete list since leaving home is 85.

Least Grebe (3)	Golden-fronted Woodpecker (6)
Red-billed Grebe (2)	(new)
Black-bellied Tree Duck (8) (new to us)	Ladder-backed Woodpecker (8)
Gadwall (50)	Tropical Kingbird (10) (new)
Pintail (10)	Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (20)
Cinnamon Teal (5)	Kiskadee Flycatcher (4) (new)
American Widgeon (10)	Rough-winged Swallow (4)
Shoveler (30)	Green Jay (20) (new)
Lesser Scaup (10)	Black-crested Titmouse (2) (new)
Ruddy Duck (5)	House Wren (4)
Broad-winged Hawk (200) (New)	Mockingbird (50) (numerous)
Chachalaca (15) (new)	Curve-billed Thrasher (2)
Bobwhite (4) (new)	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (2) (new)
American Coot (50)	Licheensteins's Oriole (2)
Jacana (1) (new)	(new, handsome)
Little Blue Heron (1)	Savannah Sparrow (6)
Boat-tailed Grackle (50) (numerous)	Cardinal (4)
	Hooded Oriole (2) (new)

Camp Stuart, Saratoga Trip - April 8

There were 15 people enjoying walks through wooded and open country. Besides seeing 19 species of birds, we were in time to watch squirrels, chipmunks, and various birds answer the call to their breakfast.

Anna's Hummingbird	Plain Titmouse	Lesser Goldfinch
Downy Woodpecker	Wrentit	Rufous-sided Towhee
Violet-green Swallow	Bewick's Wren	Brown Towhee
Steller's Jay	California Thrasher	Oregon Junco
Scrub Jay	Orange-crowned Warbler	Gold-crowned Sparrow
Chestnut-backed Chickadee	Purple Finch	

Leader: Claude Smith

Charles and Fanny Zwaal:

First male Bullock Oriole in Willow Glen, 1027 Camino Ricardo, San Jose, April 4 - Will Luick.

A pair of Bullock's Orioles in an Abutilon Shrub morning of April 6. The following morning, April 7, a male Hooded Oriole was feeding in the same shrub.

This may be of interest: the Cedar Waxwings have been feeding all week on the blossoms of our appletree, apparently eating the petals.

Ralph Trullinger:

Pelagic Cormorant - several - Jade Cove - March 21.

Catherine Lintott reports she has Pine Siskins feeding from her hummingbird feeder.

Eve Case:

Lincoln's Sparrow April 3, 5, 6. It moved from tree to tree and sang repeatedly.

-- Ralph Trullinger
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SANTA CLARA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY
Branch of
National Audubon Society
1963-1964

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The Avocet

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