

# The Avocet

Volume XI Number 6

June , 1964

## Annual Meeting and Picnic Wednesday, June 10

The annual meeting and picnic of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society this year will be held at Alum Rock Park east of San Jose on Wednesday, June 10. It promises to be an interesting afternoon and evening, the latter including the annual election of directors and a motion picture by Robert Nolls of San Mateo on his birding activities in the Central California coastal area.

The park is seven miles east of San Jose, reached by East Santa Clara Street, whose eastern portion becomes Alum Rock Avenue. Those coming from the north should leave 101 Freeway in San Jose at Santa Clara Street and drive east to the park.

Members are urged to gather as early as they wish in the afternoon. Alum Rock Park at all times of the day affords good birding.

Tables for picnickers will be reserved alongside the stream near the bridge which leads to the upper road out of the park. This is a little to the east of the Youth Science Institute Building, in which the meeting will be held.

What is proposed is before-dinner birding, then picnic dinner (all hands bring their own) from about 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., then the annual meeting. There will be brief reports from officers and committee chairmen, then the election of directors.

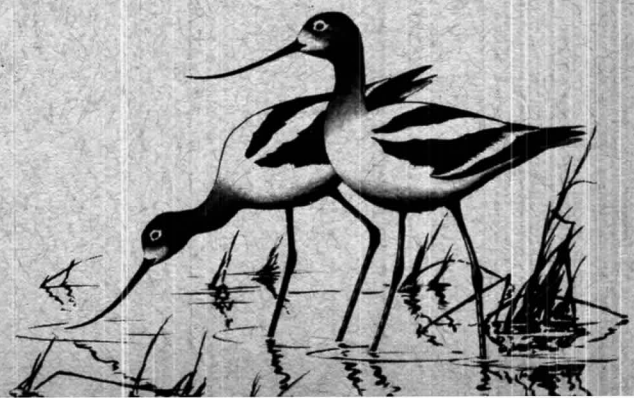
Five directors are to be elected. Three are for regular three-year terms to replace directors who are retiring: J.R. Brokenshire, Claude Smith and Warren Turner. Two are for one-year terms to replace directors who resigned: Dr. K.A. Phelps, who resigned last fall and whose position was filled to June 30, 1964, by the appointment of Ralph Trullinger; and Miss Wilma Thompson, whose resignation was accepted at the last meeting of the Board of Directors. Past President Turner is chairman of the Nominating Committee, which will recommend candidates for the five vacancies.

Noll's motion picture was previewed by directors at a recent meeting and pronounced excellent. Nolls is an amateur photographer and birder who is regularly employed as a technician in the ceramics laboratory of San Jose State College. His picture covers birding activities in the San Francisco Bay region, the Santa Clara Valley, and in and around Santa Cruz and Monterey.

-- J. Brokenshire

## Coming Events at a Glance

Sun. June 7	9:00 a.m.	La Honda
Wed. June 10	9:00 a.m.	Castle Rock Ridge
Wed. June 10	6:30 p.m.	Alum Rock Park
Mon. June 15	7:30 a.m.	Santa Cruz Wharf
Sat. July 11	9:00 a.m.	Stanford University
Sun. Aug. 9	9:00 a.m.	Mt. Madonna Park





June Calendar

Annual Meeting, Wednesday, June 10, details on page 1.

Field Trips:

Sunday, June 7, we are invited to the Al Wool ranch in La Honda, when wildflowers should be at their best. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the La Honda store at the crossroads. Bring lunch. Leader: Al Wool. For information call 243-2467.

Wednesday, June 10, to Castle Rock Rdige in the Santa Cruz Mountains. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at Saratoga Gap - the intersection of Skyline Boulevard and Big Basin Way. Leaders: Margaret Henderson (867-4304) and Catherine Lintott (EL 6-4264).

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.

Saturday, July 11, to the Stanford University campus. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at Hoover Tower on the University grounds. The trip will end at noon. Leader: Joe Greenberg (325-8939).

Sunday, August 9, to Mount Madonna State Park, which may be reached from Morgan Hill or Gilroy. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the park entrance on Hecker Pass Road. Bring lunch. For information call 243-2467 or 948-6821.

President in Retiring "Message" Says "Thank You"  
and Tells about San Jose's Alum Rock Park

Department of Appreciation: This department provides opportunity for the president to express appreciation to the many who assisted in Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society affairs during his 1963-64 administration. This includes officers, committee chairmen and others who were called upon to help in one way or another, or helped without being called upon, during the year.

If progress was made, it must be attributed, more than anything else, to the unflinching willingness of members to lend a hand with Society projects and activities.

So, if the number of members increased in spite of the increase in dues, if programs continued to be entertaining and informative, if merits of conserving wildlife resources are more widely recognized, if specific goals of the Society with respect to Palo Alto baylands and other projects are nearer realization, if the Society functions more effectively in the program to which it subscribed, these things are the result of cooperative effort, of the kind of impetus which is achieved when many individuals work well together.

So, from the retiring president, his sincere appreciation to the many who made his administration a pleasant one, and perhaps also a not unproductive one.

And for the new administration which takes over for the coming year, the retiring president can wish no more than the kind of cooperation he received during the year ending. Let's all continue to lend a hand. Let's all cooperate to make each year of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society a year of progress toward the goals we seek.

### Some Geological Lore about Alum Rock Park

Department of Amplification: Some of those who joined in the field trip to Alum Rock Park on May 9 were good enough to suggest others might be interested in the geological lore respecting the park which your president was able to offer as a sort of preface to the field trip. Since we'll be in the park for our annual meeting, this information about the park may be worth repeating:

Alum Rock Park takes its name, not from the huge manganese boulder for many years mistakenly assumed to be a meteorite and broken up and sacrificed to the war effort in 1918, but from a mineral called potassium alum, a white, dust-like substance which will be seen deposited on rocks and in crevasses at various places about the park.

The spectacular cliff which faces the motorist as he descends into the park is evidence of ancient volcanic action. It is formed of rhyolite or volcanic rock. This is a special variety of rhyolite called Alum Rock rhyolite, and is well worth a stop for closer inspection.

About the Mineral Springs: Springs of mineral water, soda, sulphur and iron, in the park are the result primarily of earthquakes. It is not coincidence that a line of such springs stretches from Warm Springs in the north, through Alum Rock Park, Madrone Springs, Gilroy Hot Springs clear down to Paso Robles in the south. They are along the line of two great earthquake faults. (For exterior evidence of this, drive 1.1 miles from Alum Rock Avenue up the Mount Hamilton road and look to your left.) Surface waters penetrating the earth through these faults come in contact with what the geologist describes as tertiary and cretaceous marine sediments -- deposited when the area was at the bottom of a sea-- and the mineral impregnated springs are the result.

Clear evidence that the area was once ocean bottom is visible at various places. Strata of an unusually hard mineral, chert -- deposited originally as a gelatinous blanket at the bottom of the ocean -- is visible at various points. Between the strata of chert are sands which under microscopic examination will reveal forms of minute marine life. Huge boulders formed almost wholly of fossilized shell fish, their clam-like shells clearly visible, are to be seen in the stream bed in the floor of the park. Here they were carried in times of flood from higher up in the canyon from the area which marked the shore of the ancient ocean.

How the Canyon was Formed: The canyon itself is formed as countless are formed, by a combination of a stream erosion accompanied by upthrusts which formed the mountains, a process extending over millions of years. Parts of the canyon are extremely narrow; in other areas the canyon is a broad valley. Examination will disclose that where the canyon is narrow, the eroding stream had to cut through the harder-than-granite chert; where the canyon is wide, the stream carved out a broad valley from the softer, and one hundred million years older, shale.



Great Manganese Mystery: Geologists in recent years have succeeded largely in dispelling the mystery of the huge boulder of manganese ore which for years was conspicuous on the floor of the lower portion of the park. For many years thought to be a meteorite because it was entirely unrelated to anything in the vicinity in which it stood, the huge mass, as big as a small cottage, was sacrificed to the war effort in 1918. It was broken up and hauled away to help relieve the then critical shortage of manganese.

As recently as 1951, the "Geologic Guidebook of San Francisco Bay Counties", published by the Division of Mines of the State Department of Natural Resources, described this boulder as "still one of the mineralogical mysteries of California".

Analysis of the mineral at the time it was broken up disclosed it contained a form of manganese which at the time had not previously been found in California. This added further to the "mystery" of the origin of the boulder, and the term "kempite" was given this form of manganese.

Geologists Have Solution Geologists have since ascertained, however, that this form of manganese was not as rare in California as first presumed. Presence high above Alum Rock Park of serpentine rock with which manganese is associated, and the fact that the boulder had been carried into the park by a landslide, appears to be the answer to the "mystery".

The area -- more than 600 acres in extent -- was first made a park by actinn of the State Legislature in 1 72. The city of San Jose later took it over, and it has been conducted as a municipal park for more than half a century.

-- J. R. Brokenshire

#### New Members

We extend a cordial welcome to the following new members:

Mr. Richard Robertson, Jr.	2728 Meridian Road, San Jose 95124
Miss Elvira Goettsch	225 Mountain View Drive, Chula Vista
Mr. and Mrs. Harley S. Baird	1712 Newcastle Drive, Los Altos
Mr. Eddie Folsom	2424 Tulip Road, San Jose
Mr. and Mrs. Peter Hughes	2577 Louis Road, Palo Alto
Mr. John Cisne (Student)	1868 Bret Harte Avenue, Palo Alto
Miss Jean B. Swain	491 Luther Drive, Santa Clara
Mr. Bill Wood	10271 Imperial Avenue, Monte Vista 95014
	-- Angeline Snow
	Membership Chairman

#### S.C.V.A.S. Board Action

The board met on May 4 in San Jose at the home of President J.R. Brokenshire.

Treasurer Fanny Zwaal reported funds are slow in coming from N.A.S. apparently because of delayed billing to members. \$200 will be given to the Condor Fund, \$100 to Canyon Ranch in Marin County. She requests all bills now payable be sent to her before books close in June.

Mrs. Luther Cisne reported on beautiful professional overlay maps of our plans for Palo Alto baylands -- created for each city councilman by Mrs. W.A. Proctor of Palo Alto, landscape architect and S.C.V.A.S. member. Councilmen were able to see at a glance whatever aspect of our program Dr. Tom Harvey discussed. Planning for our next hearing is in progress. San Jose Mercury applauded Dr. Harvey's presentation and appeal to Palo Alto to "upgrade" its unique shorelands.

Some 50 copies of Warren Turner's History of S.C.V.A.S. will be run from stencils -- with wide left margin and heavier cover stock for possible binding.

In response to request from Scholarship Chairman Kenneth Hutton for grants to summer scholarships, and following discussion by board, it was decided 75% of each year's screen tour profits will go to spring and summer scholarships. Dr. Arnold Applegarth, Screen Tour Chairman, will submit statement from San Jose State Business Office to S.C.V.A.S. board once a year. -- J. Todd

### Conservation Notes

It is with sincere regret that all conservationists note the recent passing of Howard Zahniser, Executive Director of The Wilderness Society, and a dedicated champion of the Wilderness Bill. He was a leader in the fight for the passage of a satisfactory bill, and his efforts have had a great influence in behalf of a sound Wilderness Bill.

The recent losses of such dedicated leaders as Olaus Murie and Rachel Carson, and now Howard Zahniser, will be felt for some time, but conservationists can find encouragement in the fact that the mantle of leadership appears to be falling upon capable shoulders. Interior Secretary Udall has recently appointed Dr. A. Starker Leopold (University of California), Sigurd F. Olson (Ely, Minnesota) and Dr. Stanley A. Cain (University of Michigan) to act as advisors and to assist the National Park Service in formulating and evaluating its natural history study programs. These men are prominent scientist-conservationists, and their names are not new to Audubon members.

### Wildlife Refuge Additions

The Migratory Bird Conservation Commission, which is composed of the Secretaries of Interior, Agriculture and Commerce, has recently authorized the addition of a total of 2,811 acres to the national wildlife refuge system. The largest single addition was 1311 acres added to the Pahrnagst Refuge in Lincoln County, Nevada, bringing the refuge to its total planned size of 5,200 acres, or over 8.5 square miles.

### Florida Turnpike Sanctuary

The Florida State Turnpike authority, with the cooperation of the Florida Audubon Society, has designated the Turnpike as a wildlife sanctuary where interested drivers can observe native birds and mammals in their natural habitat. The Turnpike winds through some of the state's more remote areas, where bald eagles, horned owls, wild turkeys, herons, egrets, ibises, and wood storks are to be seen. (Isn't this a challenge to our Governor Brown-appointed California Highway Commission?)



### Towns as Bird Sanctuaries

An ordinance passed by the City Council of Danville, Illinois, made the town a wildlife sanctuary -- a successful realization of a plan sponsored by the Vermilion County Audubon Society. Other towns or cities that have recently made themselves bird sanctuaries include: Woodstock, Virginia; Delray Beach, Florida; Elk City, Oklahoma; Santa Ana, California (sponsored by Sea & Sage Audubon Society); Midwest City, Oklahoma; Hemphill, Texas. Perhaps we should give a bit of serious consideration to the fact that, except for Santa Ana and Danville, these plans were all sponsored by Garden Clubs! Would you, as an Audubon member, be interested in working on, and/or with, a committee to sponsor such a plan for your community? Practically all townships and "cities" already have ordinances prohibiting shooting within city limits; consequently they are, for all practical purposes, wildlife sanctuaries. Your Conservation Chairman would like to have your opinion on sponsoring such plans in your particular community.

### Tule-Klamath Bill

The House Interior Committee recently reconsidered the Tule-Klamath Bill and deleted the objectionable section that would have permitted the legislatures of California and Oregon to veto the effect of the bill. But the House Committee also weakened the original bill by amending it to give water priority to the need of local irrigators.

If we Californians who wish to continue enjoying our heritage of wild geese and ducks -- and this includes hunters as well as non-hunting bird-lovers -- do not stand up and be counted, - speak up and be heard- write up and be read, we may see the dwindling of that heritage brought about by the loss of this vital resting area. Practically the entire wildfowl population of the Pacific Flyway uses this basin as a resting area before dispersing to their individual wintering grounds.

### Pesticides

Governor King of New Hampshire has asked state agencies (of New Hampshire) to stop using DDT as a pesticide and has also urged towns and landowners who spray to "use approved insecticides of a less accumulative nature".

The recent pesticides disasters and fish-kills in the lower Mississippi Basin seem to have finally shattered "the bureaucratic apathy hitherto prevailing in the pesticide field", as the New York Times expressed it. Secretary Udall told Senator Ribicoff's Senate Subcommittee that the nation cannot "afford to use these persistent toxic chemicals if we cannot control the movement of their residues after use."

President Johnson has signed a pesticide control bill that greatly strenghtens the restrictions on pesticides. While signing the bill, he stated that his only regret in signing it was that Rachel Carson would not know of it. She could, indeed, have been proud of her part in achieving such control.

-- Lloyd N. Case

Notes from Afield

Sawyer Camp Road Trip - April 22

The weather was so cold that the trip was attended by only eight people. Along with the 21 species of birds observed, over 23 species of plants were seen.

Horned Grebe	Downy Woodpecker	Warbling Vireo
Pied-billed Grebe	Steller's Jay	Orange-crowned Warbler
Mallard	Scrub Jay	MacGillivray's Warbler
California Quail	Common Bushtit	Wilson's Warbler
American Coot	Swainson's Thrush	Black-headed Grosbeak
Red-shafted Flicker	Hutton's Vireo	Rufous-sided Towhee

-- Leader: Virginia Bothwell

Steven's Creek Dam and Park Trip - April 25

Approximately 60 people met at the dam on a beautiful day. Our numbers were swelled by our guests from the Marin County Audubon Society. Several exciting and rather rare species were seen as you will see by reviewing the list that follows. It was most enjoyable to stand on the bridge at picnic area #3 and watch the many varied species come to the creek to drink and bathe. A Solitary Vireo was observed on the nest. Acorn Woodpeckers and House Wrens were seen entering and leaving holes in the sycamore trees. Other nests observed were those of Robins and a Black-headed Grosbeak. Our total list for the trip was 52 species.

Common Loon	Rough-winged Swallow	Yellow Warbler
California Quail	Cliff Swallow	Audubon's Warbler
Caspian Tern	Steller's Jay	Wilson's Warbler
Rock Dove	Scrub Jay	Redwinged Blackbird
Mourning Dove	Chestnut-backed	Brewer's Blackbird
Vaux's Swift	chickadee	Brown-headed Cowbird
Anna's Hummingbird	Plain Titouse	Western Tanager
Allen's Hummingbird	Wrentit	Black-headed Grosbeak
Red-shafted Flicker	House Wren	Lazuli Bunting
Acorn Woodpecker	Mockingbird	House Finch
Hairy Woodpecker	Robin	American Goldfinch
Downy Woodpecker	Varied Thrush	Rufous-sided Towhee
Black Phoebe	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Brown Towhee
Western Flycatcher	Cedar Waxwing	Chipping Sparrow
Western Wood Pewee	Solitary Vireo	Golden-crowned Sparrow
Olive-side Flycatcher	Warbling Vireo	Song Sparrow
Violet-green Swallow	Orange-crowned Warbler	Lesser Goldfinch

Leaders: Eve Case

Horace and Connie Hinds

Alum Rock Park Trip - May 9

This trip was attended by 18 people. The weather was beautiful and helped in observing a total of 43 species. A Bullock's Oriole nest was observed with the female going in and out.

California Quail	Black Phoebe	Wrentit (heard)
Band-tailed Pigeon	Western Flycatcher	House Wren
Mourning Dove	Western Wood Pewee	Bewick's Wren
White-throated Swift	Violet-green Swallow	Canyon Wren
Anna's Hummingbird	Rough-winged Swallow	Mockingbird
Allen's Hummingbird	Steller's Jay	California Thrasher
Redshafted Flicker	Scrub Jay	Robin
(heard)	Common Crow	Swainson's Thrush
Acorn Woodpecker	Chestnut-backed	Nashville Warbler
Nuthall's Woodpecker	Chicakadee	Yellow Warbler
Ash-throated Flycatcher	Common Bushtit	Audubon's Warbler



Wilson's Warbler  
Brewer's Blackbird  
Brown-headed Cowbird  
Black-headed Grosbeak

House Finch  
Lesser Goldfinch  
Rufous-sided Towhee

Brown Towhee  
Oregon Junco  
Song Sparrow

Leaders: Emily Smith  
John Brokenshire

Steven's Creek Park Trip - May 13

18 members met at the park for a wonderful morning of birding. A total of 36 species was identified. We saw nests of Orioles, Solitary Vireo, House Wren, Black-headed Grosbeak. A female Grosbeak was observed feeding her young from a doughnut in a trash can.

California Quail	Scrub Jay	Orange-crowned Warbler
Mourning Dove	Plain Titmouse	Yellow Warbler
Anna's Hummingbird	White-breasted Nuthatch	Bullock's Oriole
Allen's Hummingbird	House Wren	Brewer's Blackbird
Acorn Woodpecker	Bewick's Wren	Black-headed Grosbeak
Downy Woodpecker	California Thrasher	House Finch
Ash-throated Flycatcher	Robin	Lesser Goldfinch
Western Wood Pewee	Swainson's Thrush	Rufous-sided Towhee
Olive-sided Flycatcher	Hutton's Vireo	Brown Towhee
Violet-green Swallow	Solitary Vireo	Oregon Junco
Steller's Jay		Song Sparrow

Leader: Edna Wininger

Mr. and Mrs. Wittgenstein of Saratoga report their Red-breasted Nuthatch was still seen on April 29. Apparently it is nesting as it has never stayed this late in previous years.

From Russell Greenberg, 1621 Channing Avenue, Palo Alto. March 29 - Sunol Park - White-tailed Kite, House Wren, Canyon Wren, Purple Finch, Lincoln's Sparrow. April 18 - Backyard - Bullock's Oriole; unidentified bird with rufous belly, black head and breast and back, with white specks on the head and breast. April 19 - Steven's Creek Park - Caspian Tern, Downy Woodpecker, Rough-winged Swallow, Yellow Warbler, Hooded Oriole, Black-headed Grosbeak, Purple Finch, Vaux's Swift. April 19 - Candlestick Park - Vaux's Swift, White-throated Swift. April 22 - backyard - Downy Woodpecker.

From Emilie Curtis - One Osprey in typical crooked-wing flight over Uvas Reservoir on May 9.

From Mrs. Donald E. Richardson, 685 Georgia Avenue, Palo Alto, near the new Gunn Senior High School - 3/21 Audubon's Warbler. 4/5 Cedar Waxwings in great numbers (est. over 1000). They appeared to be flowing down the street like a river. 4/19 White-crowned Sparrows. 4/22 Cedar Waxwings. 4/26 Golden-crowned Sparrows. A neighbor reports 3 House Finches with deformed upper beaks making feeding very difficult. They scoop food from the ground into the lower beak.

From Catherine Lintott, Los Gatos, May 19: Chickadees have their young ones here this A.M., feeding them syrup from the Hummingbird feeder. They sipped while worms hung from their beaks. The parents then flew off - busy developing a sweet tooth in their young still in the nest.

-- Ralph Trullinger  
1960 Santa Cruz Avenue  
Menlo Park  
(854-4201)



Editor's Notes

This is my last issue. I have resigned as Avocet editor after a seven-year term. I have enjoyed the work and owe endless gratitude to our typists, Mrs. Jane R. Castner and Miss Carol C. Rulofson of Redwood City, Miss Elsie Hoeck and circulation staff of San Jose, Mr. and Mrs. Emmanuel Taylor of Saratoga, mimeographers. Thanks also to the many, many people who have contributed vital information (and unusual material) faithfully every month.

Have a pleasant summer!

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

<u>Name</u>	<u>Office</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
John R. Brokenshire	President	102 South 23rd Street San Jose 27	293-6289
Dr. Evenyn H. Case	Vice Pres.	2586 Homestead Road Santa Clara	243-2467
Mrs. Eva McRae	Secretary	55 Manning Avenue San Jose	258-3011
Mrs. Fanny Zwaal	Treasurer	478 Clifton Avenue San Jose	292-2060
Dr. H. T. Harvey	Director	716 Garner Court Santa Clara	243-6956
John Henderson	Director	20570 Canyon View Drive Saratoga	867-4304
Ralph Trullinger	Director	1960 Santa Cruz Avenue Menlo Park	854-4201
Claude Smith	Director	P.O. Box 489 Saratoga	867-3629
Miss Wilma Thompson	Director	758 Pollard Road Los Gatos	378-4333
Mrs. Joyce Todd	Director	945 Natadero Avenue Palo Alto	326-6904
Warren M. Turner	Director	646 Alvarado Row Stanford University	325-7777
<u>Education Committee Chairman:</u>		Mrs. Diane Conradson 255 Edlee Avenue, Palo Alto	327-2512
<u>Membership Chairman:</u>		Mrs. Irving Snow 21441 Roaring Water Way, Los Gatos	EL 4-1811

Conservation Resource Center  
 National Audubon Society  
 2426 Bancroft Way  
 Berkeley 4, California

Office of Western Representative  
 National Audubon Society  
 1000 North Durfee Avenue  
 El Monte, California

The Avocet

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Editor Mrs. John E. Todd  
 945 Matadero Avenue, Palo Alto (326-6904)

Circulation Manager: Miss Elsie Hoeck  
 1311 Cristina, San Jose 25 (CY 3-5668)

Typists: Mrs. Jane R. Castner  
 Miss Carol C. Rulofson  
 112 Murray Court, Redwood City (366-2514)

Mimeographers: Mr. and Mrs. Emmanuel Taylor  
 14311 Quito Road, Saratoga (DR 9-3424)