

# The Avocet

Volume XI Number 8

NOVEMBER  
October, 1964

## THANKSGIVING DAY

"Over the river and through the woods,  
To Grandfather's house we go. . ."

--Lydia M. Childs

It is indeed the season of mists and mellow fruitfulness. One now hears the softer notes of wintering flocks of birds in the mountains and at the shore. The hillsides, as well as the lowlands, offer a bounty of seeds and berries to the ground-feeding Sparrows, and to the soft-food birds, the Thrushes, Cedar Waxwings and Chickadees.

At our October meeting in Palo Alto, Dr. H. Thomas Harvey presented a fascinating program on salt marsh ecology. Members and guests enjoyed coffee before the meeting and looked at the fresh specimens of marsh plants on display: tall cord grass in bloom, branches of grindelia or gum plant, and Salicornia or pickle weed.

The pickle weed, although a salt marsh pioneer, uses only fresh water which it stores in its fleshy stems during the rainy season. One specimen of pickle weed was threaded-over by the orange parasitic marsh dodder. Its tiny white flowers could be seen among the mesh of its tendrils.

Alkali heath, Australian salt bush, sand dock and salt grass represented the imported salt-tolerant erosion-control plants; star thistle and tumbleweed: wind-blown pests; fennel or sweet anise, wild mustard, radish and chard: garden creeps; coyote bush and artemisia: chaparral plants. Many of these plants have mechanisms for disposing of salt or protective resins to prevent desiccation; many wait out the dry season in the form of a seed.

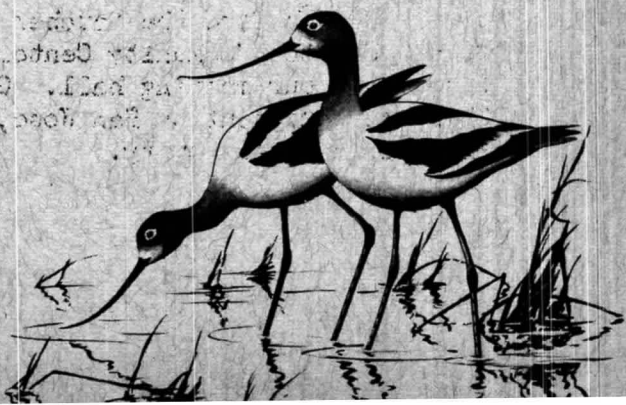
Mrs. Luther E. Cisne  
President

## December Trip

The Santa Cruz Bird Club has asked us to join them on a trip to the Los Banos Refuge on December 6. This will replace the second week-end trip in November. The group will leave Tiny's Restaurant in Los Banos at 10:00 A.M. sharp. Another announcement will be in the December Avocet.

## Coming Events At a Glance

Mon.	Nov. 2	7:30 P.M.	Lloyd Case's (Board)
Mon.	Nov. 9	8:00 P.M.	San Jose General Meeting
Wed.	Nov. 11	8:30 A.M.	Los Gatos
Sat.	Nov. 14	9:00 A.M.	Richardson Bay
Wed.	Nov. 18	9:00 A.M.	Stanford University



November Calendar

Board Meeting

Mon., November 2, 7:30 P.M. Lloyd Case's, 2586 Homestead Road, Santa Clara.

General Meeting

Mon., November 9, 8:00 P.M. Mr. Karl Belser, Director of Planning of Santa Clara County, will speak on "Planning for the Recreational Needs of Santa Clara County and the South Bay Area." Rose Garden Library, Dana and Naglee Streets, San Jose.

Field Trips

Wed., November 11, to the eight-acre hilltop home of Mrs. Orrin Lynde on Stacia Street in Los Gatos. Meet at 8:30 A.M. in front of the History Club of Los Gatos, 123 San Jose Avenue (formerly Bascom). Leader: Catherine Lintott (EL 6-4264).

Sat., November 14 to Richardson Bay. Cross the Golden Gate Bridge and the Richardson Bay Bridge. Turn right off 101 to access road just beyond bridge, and go to the Standard Station. Meet in the parking lot of the station at 9:00 A.M. Bring lunch to eat at the Audubon Sanctuary. This should be a good trip for land and water birds, especially Bitterns, Herons, and many varieties of Ducks. Dr. Grench is attempting to make arrangements with Col. Allan for the group to visit the bay model at Sausalito that afternoon.

Wed., November 18 to Stanford University. Meet in front of the Stanford Museum at 9:00 A.M. Leaders: Rebecca and Warren Turner (325-7777).

Christmas Count

The annual Christmas Census will be held on Sunday, December 20. Start planning the sector in which you will work. Even if you are not an expert, there is something you can do to help--drive a car, check birds seen by your group, discover birds. Every pair of eyes is useful.

San Jose Wins!

San Jose has a "pot" with a little help from Palo Alto. Mrs. Eva McRae, Mrs. Fanny Zwaal, Mrs. Norman Zabel, Dr. Amy Stannard, Mrs. R. Roman, Dr. Evelyn Case, Mrs. Luther Cisne, and Miss Elsie Hoeck gave books of Blue Chip stamps for a much needed coffee urn to be used at the monthly meetings in San Jose and at the annual Christmas Census.

Just before the October meeting in Palo Alto, the Hospitality Committee found that the Community Center would not only make coffee for us but also place the urn in our meeting hall. Green stamps collected here were traded for Blue Chip ones and sent to San Jose, returned, or sent to the 4-H Club Canyon Ranch project in Marin County.

### Looking Ahead

This year the theme of our meetings is recognizing and obtaining the proper balance between urbanization and preservation in the San Francisco Bay and Santa Clara Valley. The growth rate in our area has slackened; this is the opportune time to institute plans for our region which will serve the interests of all. We are making a special effort to invite the public to these meetings.

The programs planned to date are:

October 12 in Palo Alto. Dr. Thomas Harvey, Professor of Biological Sciences at San Jose State College spoke on the theme, "The Baylands, Going, Going, . . . ."

November 9 in San Jose. Mr. Karl Belser, Director of Planning of Santa Clara County will speak on a theme related to the planning of the recreational needs of Santa Clara County and the South Bay Area.

December 14 in Palo Alto. Mel Scott who is Research City Planner in the Institute of Governmental Studies and Lecturer in the Department of City and Regional Planning of the University of California will speak on "San Francisco Bay: A Part of California's Marine Resources." Dr. Scott's recent book, The Future of San Francisco Bay, has alerted people to the need for planning the future of our bay. He has been asked to serve on a committee of the Institute of Marine Resources at La Jolla which is concerned with the impact of urbanization on the resources of the ocean. He will relate what is happening in the bay area to what is happening all along the California coast.

January 11, 1965 in Palo Alto. Lt. Col. Robert Allan who is District Engineer, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, San Francisco, will discuss the Corps' role in the development of the San Francisco Bay Area. The Corps' bay model in Sausalito has been a valuable tool in investigating the dynamics of the bay. Col. Allan will explain the Corps' mandate on the bay as defined in the new comprehensive report of the bay area. This report will be made public about this time and undoubtedly will cause a great deal of public interest and comment.

April 12 in San Jose. Mr. William Penn Mott, Jr. will speak on regional park planning around the bay. Mr. Mott is general manager of the East Bay Regional Park District and has been most effective in acquiring land for parks and recreation. His leadership has visionary qualities; years ago in the National Park Service he developed plans to make Lake Tahoe a national park but the proposal failed by a narrow margin. He is hopeful that some day we will have a network of parks and greenbelts surrounding the bay. The title of his speech will be "Song of the Cricket."

--Herbert Grench  
Program Chairman

### A Note of Appreciation

Mrs. Ruth Paulus of Los Gatos has sent beautiful colored pictures of marsh and shore birds to be used for the bulletin board at the Yacht Harbor.

Books Audited

Mr. Warren Turner audited the financial records of the Society for the period, July 1, 1963 through May 30, 1964, and reports that they were properly maintained by the treasurer, Mrs. Fanny Zwaal; and that all monies were carefully accounted for.

Audubon Camp

Bill Goodall, Director of Audubon Camp of the West, has announced that there will be expanded facilities for next year, but suggests that inquiries and requests for reservations be made early still. Dates of the four sessions are:

Session I	June 27--July 9	Session II	July 11--July 23
Session III	July 26--August 6	Session IV	August 8--August 20

For full information, write: Audubon Camp, P. O. Box 3666, El Monte, California 91733.

Notes on a Board

On October 5th the board met at the home of Jill Cisne in Palo Alto. In the absence of Eva McRae, Diane Conradson acted as secretary. Mr. Warren Turner read the treasurer's report for Joyce Todd who was ill. ALL THE DULY PROPOSED, SECONDED, AND DISCUSSED PROJECTS PRESENTED AT THE SEPTEMBER BOARD MEETING AT CLAUDE SMITH'S WERE VOTED UPON. (FOR THE FIRST TIME) VOTES CARRIED!

Lloyd Case was given the typed stencils for the History of the S.C.V.A.S. It will be ready soon.

Mrs. Bernhard Jakobson reported that the Audubon Wildlife Screen Tours may be dropped from the Stanford schedule next year due to the remodeling of Cubberley Auditorium. Plans were discussed for the Society's taking the responsibility for the Tours and for possible places to show them. The possibility of having not only an afternoon showing but also an evening program was considered.

It was decided to invite the Sierra Club, Garden Club and other conservation groups and interested individuals to the December 14 meeting to hear Mel Scott, and on January 11 to hear Col. Allan and on April 12 to hear William Penn Mott.

A telegram was sent on October 6 to the Hon. J. Eugene McAteer, San Francisco Bay Conservation Study Commission, stating that the 475 members of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society wish to preserve the natural beauty of the bay without fill or freeway, the marshlands at Palo Alto as a public park and the wildlife sanctuaries for shore birds and waterfowl.

At their request a letter and a geodetic map were sent to the "Citizens for Regional Recreation and Parks" outlining our bayland proposal to the City of Palo Alto for a Nature Interpretation Center and Wildlife Refuge with walkways to facilitate its use as an outdoor classroom. A copy of a letter of commendation from our National President, Carl W. Buchheister, to the Mayor and City Council for their serious consideration of this project was included, and Diane Conradson's booklet, "An Introduction to the Palo Alto Baylands."

--Jill Cisne

### Conservation Notes

It seems to me that I have only just finished writing the Conservation Notes for the October issue, and here is another deadline, only two days away! Time has sped by, unnoticed, in the exciting events that come with the fall season: the changing color of foliage, the changing silhouette of deciduous trees, the increasing numbers of White-crowns, Golden-crowns, Gold Finches and other migrants that have begun to appear in our various areas, the sudden increase in the numbers of shore-birds to be seen along the bay's tidelands--all of these things tend to keep a person from noting the rapid passing of the days.

At this time of each year I am thankful that my early years were spent in the northern Sacramento Valley, when there were few paved roads, no freeways, and only very few automobiles, in fact. It was there that I first knew the thrill and excitement of hearing wild geese honking overhead in the dark night as they followed their migration pattern. In these later years I get even more enjoyment from this season, for I have richer memories: thin skeins of geese silhouetted against a full moon, the cold crispness of pre-dawn hours in open fields, walking over lumpy, frozen ground with slush-ice on the edges of ponds, the "small-talk" of geese and ducks just beginning to awaken, the increased volume of sound as they become more aware of the approaching dawn, the sudden "boiling-up" of countless hundreds, even thousands, of birds as they take to the air, and the exciting game of trying to identify the birds seen only in silhouette in the dim pre-sunrise dawn.

These things may be a thrill for you as they are for me, and for thousands of others. If they have value for us, will they not have the same values for future generations?

If I may make an admittedly farfetched comparison: What good is a farm-yard barn without hay and animals in it? What good is a house without people in it? What good would the preservation of the Tule-Klamath Basin area and the rest of our Wildfowl Refuges be without our Pacific Flyway's population of wildfowl, a considerable portion of which is now threatened by the rapidly developing RAMPART DAM project? (It seems to me that conservationists are constantly concerned with one dam project after another!) This controversial project has been the subject of numerous editorials in newspapers, articles in Sierra Club Bulletins, sportsmen's magazines, and the Audubon Magazine. Please look up the map and article on page 238 of the Audubon Magazine for July-August, 1963 and the CONSERVATION NOTES in the AVOCET for March, 1964.

For the information of those who may not have access to these articles the Rampart Dam Project proposes to build a huge dam in northern Alaska. It would be the world's largest earth-fill dam; it would probably also be man's greatest mass extermination of wildlife since he started the thoughtless, deplorable plundering of our planet. The 10,500 square miles that would be flooded are areas of habitat and/or breeding grounds for thousands of moose, uncounted small mammals, and millions of migratory birds, mostly wild-fowl. Added to these, of course, are all of the other forms of life that are associated in the ecological unit of the area. Maps of breeding areas (See The Ducks, Geese and Swans of North America by F. H. Kortwright) show that the threatened area is breeding ground for Lesser Canada Geese, White-Fronted Geese, Mallard, Baldpates, Pintails, Green-winged Teal, Shovellers, Canvas-Backs, both the Greater and Lesser Scaup, American Golden Eyes, Buffleheads, White-winged Scoters, Surf Scoters, and Redbreasted Mergansers.

The latest issue of AUDUBON MAGAZINE has a paragraph describing the latest developments in the propaganda campaign of the dam-supporters and the large sums of money being put up for propaganda purposes. As I indicated in the first paragraph, time is passing, rapidly. The issue will come to a show-down when Congress reconvenes. Now that Congress is in recess, our Congressmen are in their home areas which gives us an excellent chance to get in touch with them, to express our views, and to ask them to state theirs. If conservationists do not take prompt and positive action, we may once more hear the sad words that have been spoken regarding the atomic power plant at Bodega Head: "Too much money and effort has been spent to stop the project, now!"

--Lloyd N. Case  
Conservation Chairman

#### Proposition 1

Please give thoughtful consideration to Proposition 1 on the November ballot. It will provide \$85 million for acquiring state park lands, \$20 million for minimum development of these lands, \$5 million for Wildlife Conservation Board projects, and \$40 million for local park and recreation grants. California needs these lands desperately, and delay in acquiring them means that the cost of them will increase.

#### Notes from Afield

##### Field Trips:

##### Palo Alto Baylands, September 23, 1964

A group of 16 people identified 38 species. Twelve to fifteen greyish geese were seen flying over. A mammal several feet long was seen swimming in the slough; opinion was divided whether it might be a seal or otter. Among the interesting birds were Horned Larks, two beautiful White-tailed kites, and Black and Ruddy Turnstones (the last two on the scouting trip).

##### Moss Landing, September 27, 1964

Thirty-two people attended this trip to Moss Landing and the mouth of the Salinas River. Several cars arrived as early as 7:00 A.M., and Wilma Thompson and Virginia West camped the preceding night at the end of Jetty Road. Although many returning winter birds and migrants were listed, the highlight was an excellent view of a Golden Plover at the Salinas River mouth. This species nests along most of the Arctic coast and spends the winter on the island groups of the Central Pacific. Only rarely is this bird seen in our area. It was in full plumage and was observed both in flight and standing at the river's edge with other shore birds. A total of 53 species were observed, among them the Knot, Pomarine Jaeger, and Elegant tern.

Observations:

Jill and John Cisne were happy to add a Pomarine Jaeger to their life lists. On October 16 they watched a mature individual (dark phase) chasing flocks of "Peeps" and Forster's Terns off Station N at the mouth of Charleston Slough.

From Mrs. Masson's home observations: Mrs. Lintott of Los Gatos reports an Orange Crowned Warbler drinking honey syrup from a Humming Bird feeder. The feeder, which has a small branch as a foot rest, has also been enjoyed by Humming Birds, Titmice, Chickadees, Wren-tits, Goldfinches, Orioles and Pine Siskins. For the first time in the many years he has lived on Amherst in Palo Alto, Mr. James Masson noted a Townsend's Warbler in a redwood tree in his back yard, October 20.

Please send your observations to Field Notes Compiler: Ralph R. Trullinger, 1960 Santa Cruz Avenue, Menlo Park, California, 94026. Phone: 854-4201.

The Turners Visit Wildlife Refuges

The Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge, south of Willows on U. S. 99W, is an interesting place to visit. Inside the gate is a protected "display pool" where rangers place injured birds to recover. We saw Snow Geese, Whistling Swans, White-fronted Geese, and Pintail, Mallard, and Widgeon Ducks. Some birds are wild migrants eating the good food passed out by Uncle Sam.

Mr. Sanford Wilbur, the young biologist in charge, said that at the time of our visit (October 15) the refuge was well populated with perhaps 500,000 migrants. Even more will be in resident during the hunting season, and then many will scatter to their favorite feeding areas to remain until early spring. As we drove around the refuge we flushed great numbers of wild fowl until the sky was nearly black in all directions.

The Delevan National Wildlife Refuge is south of the Sacramento Refuge and east of the town of Maxwell. We did not stop there but continued on to the Colusa National Wildlife Refuge just south of the town of Colusa. It contains only 1,100 acres as compared with 3,969 acres at the Sacramento one; but it seemed to us that there was even more wildlife here. Also there seemed to be more water available. A substantial amount of plowed ground was ready for rice culture this winter and spring.

We learned that all three refuges were acquired by the government during the depression of the early 1930's when land was very cheap and available in quantity.

From Palo Alto the Sacramento Refuge is about 180 miles (one way). Weather was ideal the second week in October. We camped one night at the Colusa-Sacramento River State Park on the west bank of the wide-flowing Sacramento River on the outskirts of Colusa.

We also journeyed to Clear Lake and camped there at the state park. This was one of the nicest camps we have ever enjoyed, especially since our favorite bird, the Western Blue Bird, was abundant. We plan to return to Clear Lake in late March and April to make some color moving pictures of the Western Grebe nesting.

--Rebecca and Warren Turner

SANTA CLARA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY  
BRANCH OF  
NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

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Field Trips

Week-end	Mr. Howard Wolcott	26511 Altamont Road Los Altos Hills	948-6821
	Dr. Evelyn Case	2586 Homestead Road Santa Clara	243-2467
Mid-week	Mrs. Ray McCann	783 Garland Drive Palo Alto	327-4138
	Mrs. John Henderson	21215 Sullivan Way Saratoga	867-4304
	Mrs. Catherine Lintott	17150 Buena Vista Ave. Los Gatos	356-4264

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