

SANTA CLARA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY, Inc.

The Avocet

Volume XI Number 10

December, 1964

PRESERVATION

URBANIZATION

Mel Scott

San Francisco Bay: A Part of California's Marine Resources

MONDAY, DECEMBER 14, 8:00 P.M.

PALO ALTO COMMUNITY CENTER

1305 MIDDLEFIELD ROAD

Dr. Scott:

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Lecturer, Department of City and Regional Planning, University of California

Member, Marine Resources Planning Committee, Scripps Institute of Oceanography

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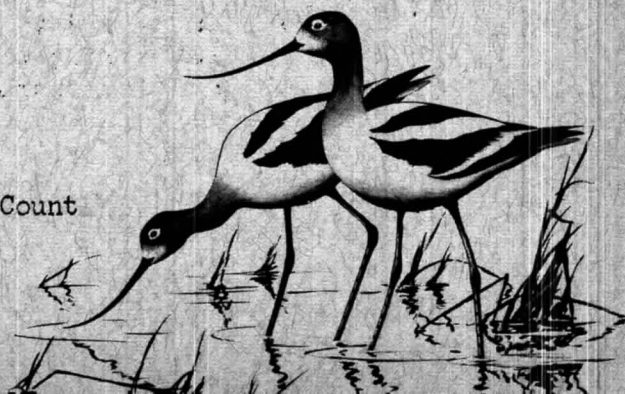
The Future of San Francisco Bay

The San Francisco Bay Area: A Metropolis in Perspective

Partnership in the Arts: Public and Private Support of Cultural Activities in the San Francisco Bay Area

Coming Events at a Glance

Sun. December 6 9:00 A.M. Los Banos
Mon. December 14 8:00 P.M. General Meeting
Sun. December 27 7:30 A.M. Annual Christmas Bird Count



CAROL OF THE BIRDS

Whence comes this rush of wings afar
Following straight the Noel Star?
Birds from the woods in wondrous flight,
Bethlehem seek this Holy Night.

--Bas-Cuercy

Again the Christmas season is upon us. We will soon unpack the creche, arrange soft grasses on the floor, carefully place the tiny beautiful figurines in it, and then set in the farm animals and shepherds to watch quietly. (Undoubtedly white doves looked down from the rafters of the real manger and softly murmured their understanding of the gentle scene). Three kneeling camels are placed. Three richly dressed urban wise-men, bearing gifts, have come to welcome a newborn child, a new concept of brotherly love. A bright star hovers over all.

NOEL

Before our November 9th meeting in San Jose, everyone enjoyed visiting with our speaker, Mr. Karl Belser, over a cup of coffee from the new urn. Mr. Belser is the Director of Planning for Santa Clara County and a conservationist fully aware of the difficulties in maintaining a balance between wildlife areas and the spatial needs of a rapidly growing population. He brought out many points of interest on planning for the county, its relationship to the Bay Area as a whole, and to the adjoining counties.

--Mrs. Luther E. Cisne
President

December Calendar

Field Trip:

Sunday, December 6. Los Banos Wildlife Refuge as guests of the Santa Cruz Bird Club. There is usually a good concentration of waterfowl at this season. In case of heavy rains at that time the road might not be passable. Meet at Tiny's Restaurant at 9:00 A.M. for breakfast. Leave for the Refuge at 10 sharp. Leader: Carlyle Sather. For further information call 243-2467.

General Meeting:

Monday, December 14. Dr. Mel Scott at Palo Alto Community Center, 8:00 P.M.

Annual Christmas Bird Count

Sunday, December 27.

Meeting Place: Security Savings, 2830 Alum Rock Avenue, San Jose.
Time: 7:30 A.M. Bring lunch. Reconvene at 4:30 sharp. Refreshments will be served during the tally.

Annual Christmas Bird Count (continued)

Count Areas: Same as in past years--a circular area 15 miles in diameter with center at junction of Mabury Road and Capitol Avenue, northeast of the city limits.

Sectors: The count area will be divided into five sectors:

A. Alviso Sector

Bounded on the east by State Highway 17 (the old "Oakland Highway") and on the south by Bayshore Highway. Bayshore Highway is inside this sector.

Leader: Dr. Henry Weston, 14700 Golf Links Drive, Los Gatos.
Telephone: 356-5936.

B. Southwest Sector

Bounded on the north and east by Bayshore Highway. South of Alum Rock Avenue; the Bayshore Highway is inside this sector.

Leader: Mrs. Irving Snow, 21441 Roaring Water Way, Los Gatos.
Telephone: EL 4-1811.

C. Evergreen Sector

Bounded by Bayshore Highway, Alum Rock Avenue and Mt. Hamilton Road. Mt. Hamilton Road is inside this sector.

Leaders: Mr. and Mrs. William Pillow, 675 Orange Ave., Los Gatos.
Telephone: WH 8-1300.

D. Alum Rock Sector

Bounded on the south and west by Mt. Hamilton Road, Alum Rock Avenue, and Bayshore Highway, on the north by Capitol Avenue and Sierra Road. Alum Rock Avenue, Bayshore Highway, Oakland Highway, and Capitol Avenue are all inside this sector.

Leader: Grace Brubaker, 191 Mountain View Avenue, San Jose.
Telephone: 258-2289.

E. Calaveras Sector

Bounded by Sierra Road, Capitol Avenue, and the old Oakland Highway. Sierra Road and Oakland Highway are inside this sector.

Leader: Mr. Albert J. Wool, Box 68, La Honda.
Telephone: PI 7-0317.

Each leader is responsible for planning the itinerary within his sector. (If you know where there is good birding within a sector, please let the leader know about it.) When we meet at 7:30 A.M., we will divide into groups to cover each sector; and individuals may select the leader and sector they wish. If you know now which sector you prefer, please write, or telephone, to the leader. It will be a big help in planning the itinerary if each leader knows beforehand how many observers (and cars) he can count on for his sector.

Annual Christmas Bird Count (continued 2)

If you have any questions, call:

Eve Case 243-2467
Howard Wolcott WH 8-6821

or one of the leaders.

Records:

One person in each group will enter the counts of each species of wild birds that are positively identified.

In making estimates of large numbers, indicate the probable error.

For example: 2000 ± 300 .

If unable to estimate the degree of accuracy, record as: "2000 est."

In adding estimates to the actual counts, in the final tally indicate the accuracy in this way:

Coot: $2173; (2000 \pm 300. 173)$

This shows that of the total number of 2173 Coots reported, 173 were actually counted, and the rest were estimated.

The Recorder for each group, in each sector, should also note:

1. The hours spent (a) on foot, and (b) by car.
2. The mileage covered (a) on foot, and (b) by car.

This data is important in the overall picture.

Since weather conditions affect the activity of birds and thus are reflected in the results of the count, please try to keep a record of:

1. Minimum and maximum temperatures;
2. Wind direction and approximate velocity;
3. Percent of sky that is covered by clouds;
4. Additional pertinent notes, such as: fog, rain, sun, etc.

Habitats are important in evaluating species counts!

Please record the habitats visited,--and the approximate time in each,--such as salt marsh, canyon stream, oak woodland, grassland, golf course, etcetera.

Give the percentage of total field time spent in each habitat.

McAteer Commission

Dr. Thomas Harvey addressed the November 17 meeting in Oakland of the San Francisco Bay Conservation Study Commission. He spoke on the general ecology of the Bay, emphasizing its importance to man, first, because it plays a vital role in controlling climate, flooding, earthquakes and waste disposal, and second, because of its inestimable esthetic and educational value.

Among other speakers at the meeting was William Penn Mott. Of special interest was his outline of a proposed park in the Coyote Hills, north of the east end of the Dumbarton Bridge. If negotiations with Leslie Salt and Patterson Farms are successful, there may be established a park with facilities for general recreation, hiking, and a twenty acre natural area for White-tailed Kites.

Battle of the Palo Alto Baylands

On Saturday, November 14, many of us read in the Palo Alto Times:
. . . "The opening round of the battle for the baylands in Palo Alto will be conducted Monday evening. . . present and foreseeable commitments of 1,887 acres of city-owned property are outlined. . . the Audubon Society has urged development of a Natural History Interpretation Center in the marsh lands. . ."

The meeting was a hearing by the Palo Alto City Council, sitting as a Committee of the Whole, to review the staff recommendations for the future use of the flood plain and marsh areas. Dr. Herbert Grench, our program chairman, Dr. H. Thomas Harvey, one of our directors, and a Professor of Biology at San Jose State College, and Mrs. Diane Conradson, our Education Chairman, again encouraged the City Council to seriously consider our conservation project: a staffed nature-study center, walkways, observation platforms, and enough open space for a sanctuary to be used by students or individuals of all ages, as well as the birds. Mrs. Kay McCann spoke on behalf of our project as a private citizen. Mr. Robert P. Anderson of Gunn High School explained how the science classes of the Palo Alto schools are using the baylands as an out-door study hall of this salt marsh biome. Mr. Charles Scull represented the Sierra Club in support of bayland conservation.

These wonderfully talented people, who speak out on behalf of conservation of a natural resource and the plants and animals of an unspoiled bit of land, are our representatives of intangibles of space, beauty, and freedom of spirit to enjoy them. It is indeed sad that these public presentations for those very factors that give us an opportunity to knit our very souls together are ignored!
WE CAN AT LEAST MAKE THE EFFORT TO GO, AND BY OUR PRESENCE SIGNIFY OUR SUPPORT FOR WHAT WE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO EXPRESS VERBALLY.

--Jill Cisne

National Audubon Society

The sad plight of the California Condor, proposed dams that threaten our national parks, and Mexican bird refuges were among subjects discussed at the 60th annual convention of the National Audubon Society held November 7 - 11 in Tucson, Arizona. Several members of our Society attended these sessions and the field trips to the Southern Arizona deserts: Mr. and Mrs. Albert Wool of La Honda, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Trumbull and Mrs. John L. McBride of Los Altos, Mr. Frank Goraj of Palo Alto, Miss Emily Smith of Saratoga, and Mrs. Mary Rugh of Los Gatos.

Bird Slides

In response to a request in the Avocet the Education Committee has received a gift from Mrs. Violet Homem of Oakland--several very beautiful and much appreciated color slides of the California Quail and Chestnut-backed Chickadee.

Conservation Notes

THE CALIFORNIA CONDOR'S PRESENT STATUS was the subject of a report presented to the NATIONAL AUDUBON CONVENTION in Tucson, Arizona, by Dr. Alden Miller, who has been directing a study of these birds during the past two years. This study was sponsored by the National Audubon Society and financed by the National Geographic Society. Dr. Miller is the curator of the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology at the University of California in Berkeley. He was assisted by Ian and Eben McMillan, prominent ranchers of San Luis Obispo County, who are also dedicated conservationists. (Many of us may recall the excellent screen tour on The Shandon Hills, the area of the McMillan ranch holdings).

The report carried the warning note that the Condor population has, during the last fifteen years, dropped from sixty to forty birds. This decrease has been due to shooting, poisoning by accidental consumption of poisoned rodents used as bait for other predator targets, and to other human pressures in their area.

Dr. Miller pointed out that the present population includes ten young birds who, if allowed to mature and breed, will be able to keep the count from further reduction. He warned, however, that if the present rate of killing (approximately four birds each year) is allowed to continue, the reproduction will not be able to keep pace with the losses.

As safeguards, Dr. Miller urged stronger protective regulations, more rigid enforcement of the existing measures, the creation of a "buffer zone" around the present sanctuary, and the complete elimination of any pressures due to human beings entering the nesting and breeding area. It is known that when disturbed, the adult birds abandon the nest, eggs, and young birds almost inevitably resulting in the death of the latter.

Our local membership can be proud of the part which we have played by our annual contributions to THE CONDOR FUND, but we must renew our efforts to ensure that a truly effective protection program is implemented. There can be no "multiple use program" for the National Forest in that area as is now being sought by many residents of the southern region. Their contention is that the Condors can have their niche in the rocky cliffs, caves, and peaks, but that the people also be allowed to have their roads, trails, etcetera, in the canyons. These people do not realize that Condors will not accept any such compromise and "invasion" of their habitat.

The situation is extremely critical and calls for immediate and definite action on the part of individuals, much letter-writing and much educational conversation. The unpleasant fact is that if we do not NOW take decisive action to save the Condors, we must be willing to explain to future generations why we were so apathetic as to allow our largest bird to be pushed into extinction.

--Lloyd N. Case

Publisher's Catalogue

If you would like a free copy of the catalogue of Naturegraph Books, write to the company at: Secret Valley, 5215 West Dry Creek Road, Healdsburg, California.

Notes from Afield

Villa Montalvo -- October 7

About 20 people studied the arboretum and specimens of native trees and shrubs and saw twenty-four species of birds, notably a Townsend's Warbler.

Near Palo Alto Hills Golf Course -- October 21

Thirteen birders on a fresh cool morning that turned into a warm day. Thirty-one species were observed among them a Common Snipe and a Golden Eagle harassed by a Red-tail Hawk.

Dumbarton Bridge Trip -- October 10

On this trip 38 species were seen. Highlights of the trip were the large flocks of Ducks coming in, Black Turnstone, Semi-palmated Plovers, and a raft of White Pelicans. Douglas Claypole, a new student member from Alamo, California, and three of his friends came over for the trip.

Santa Teresa Park Field Trip -- October 25

Our field trip to Santa Teresa Park on Sunday, October 25, was well attended; and judging from the comments of those present, was an enjoyable, successful trip. We were joined at the meeting place by a number of Sierra Club members who accepted our invitation and by a number of interested people who had seen our invitation in the Mercury-Herald. It was a pleasure to have all of them as visitors and the exchange of ideas in the conversations as we walked along the trails was stimulating.

The birding was even a little better than should really be expected at this time of year; but the outstanding aspect of the day was the enjoyment of walking on new trails and the realization that Santa Teresa can be enjoyed by all if it is wisely and efficiently managed by the County Park Commission. Some of us were fortunate in seeing a magnificent buck deer, who watched us with intent curiosity and then trotted leisurely and sedately across the grassy hillside and over the ridge. We were able to see enough birds and plants to realize what a wonderful area this will be in the spring with the migration of our non-resident birds and the blossoming of wildflowers.

If you were not on the trip, why not go there on your own and see for yourself? Look for Ken Robison, the Park Ranger, who is doing a wonderful job of improving the park.

--Ralph Trullinger, 854-4201*

* Editor's Note: Mr. Trullinger's notes are complete and will be published separately.

Observations:

Mrs. Felin's home observations: the first White Crowned Sparrows at the Cases' in Santa Clara--September 23. Virginia Bothwell reports three Wandering Tattlers and eight Caspian Terns together at Dumbarton Bridge, September 3. Harley Bothwell saw the White-headed Woodpecker, Pine Grosbeak, and a pair of Evening Grosbeak in August near Bass Lake.

November 9 General Meeting

It may have been a wet, cool evening outside; but it was warm and encouraging inside Rosegarden Branch Library on November 9.

Mr. Karl J. Belser, Director of Planning for the County of Santa Clara, outlined the present levels of planning that will, hopefully, combat the current "transformation which will make the environment incompatible with man himself."

The latest county bond approval will allow 20 park units to be completed by 1970. In 1957 there were only two and today there are eight. On the regional level there are about 450 square miles of publicly owned lands around the Bay. Of this only about one-tenth is open, the remainder is held strictly as conservation area. Mr. Belser sees rising land values as the biggest threat to these open spaces. He feels we should establish the right of first refusal for other public agencies before districts can sell their holdings. Our state government is presently (1) formulating a state development plan, (2) working out some coordination of efforts by state agencies, and (3) moving toward a pesticide control program.

Mr. Belser had the following suggestions for our organization:

1. That we express our point of view at every opportunity to governmental planning agencies and committees; and
2. That we propose the forming of a conservation committee of ABAG to be consulted in regional planning.

The program was stimulating and enlightening. Our thanks, Mr. Belser!

--Mrs. Herbert Grench

Hello

"Hello. Is this the Audubon Society?" Our membership is spread over such a large area that we need to have several phones listed. It would be a dedicated service to our organization if a few members, in scattered locations, would help answer the many questions asked by an interested public. Have the telephone company list AUDUBON SOCIETY, your address, your phone. You will be reimbursed for service charges of two or three dollars by the treasurer, Mrs. Joyce Todd, 945 Matadero Avenue, Palo Alto, California.

For Reading Enjoyment

Two favorite anthologies for reading and re-reading:

Green Treasury by Edwin Way Teale. (Dodd Mead, New York) 1952.

The Bird Watchers Anthology by Roger Tory Peterson. (Harcourt, Brace, New York) 1957.

Man's place in evolution, interestingly told:

The Immense Journey by Loren Eiseley. Paperback edition (Vintage, New York) 1957.

A new publication noted by Mr. John Hoeck:

The Department of Interior's Waterfowl Tomorrow, 784 pages with 194 photographs, other illustrations and maps. \$4.00 from the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D.C. 20402.

Care to read a moving article by an outspoken conservationist? Try "America Down the Drain" by Robert H. Boyle (Sports Illustrated, November 16, 1964). From self-serving politicians and heedless federal "wrecklamation" projects to eager land developers and speculators, Boyle paints a startling canvas of just how far along the road of no return we have come. He suggests several courses that might be taken by conservation groups, stressing foremost the need for a powerful national organization capable of unifying the seemingly diverse aims of the present splintered factions.

Avocet

Our publication appears monthly except July and August. It is \$2.00 a year for non-members. Copy, preferably typed, is requested by the 15th of each month.

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SANTA CLARA VALLEY 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
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