

# The Avocet

Volume XII Number 3

March 1965

James P. Thurber, Jr.

## "ABAG AND REGIONAL PLANNING FOR PARKS AND RECREATION"

Monday, March 8, 8:00 P.M.  
Palo Alto Community Center, Room R  
1305 Middlefield Road

Mayor James P. Thurber, Jr. graduated from Stanford in 1950 with an A.B. in journalism. After serving in the U.S. Army, he worked for the Wall Street Journal as a reporter and bureau manager.

In 1956 he returned to Los Altos and started work at Stanford University, first as associate general secretary, then as assistant to the Dean of the Graduate Division, and currently as assistant to the Vice President and Provost.

He was elected to the Los Altos City Council in 1960 and was re-elected in April, 1964, for a second four-year term. He was elected mayor in 1962 and is now in his third term. Since 1960 he has served as Santa Clara County's delegate to the Association of Bay Area Governments and is chairman of the Association's Regional Recreation Committee.

This is the sixth program relating to the theme, "Recognizing and Obtaining the Proper Balance between Urbanization and Preservation in the Santa Clara Valley and San Francisco Bay Region."

### March Calendar

#### Board Meeting

Monday, March 1, 7:30 P.M. at Mrs. Diane Conradson's, 255 Edlee, Palo Alto.

#### General Meeting

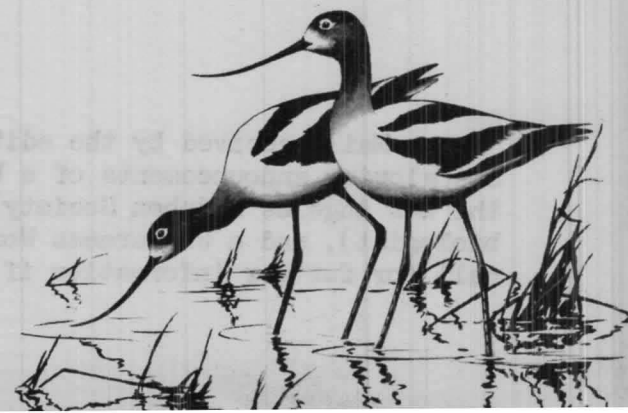
Monday, March 8, 8:00 P.M., Palo Alto Community Center.

#### Field Trips

Wednesday, March 10, to the ranch of George Peterson in the foothills above Saratoga. Meet at 9:00 A.M. at the corner of 6th and Big Basin Way. Leader: Margaret Henderson, 867-4304.

### Coming Events At A Glance

Mon.	Mar.	1	7:30 P.M.	Palo Alto (Board)
Mon.	Mar.	8	8:00 P.M.	Palo Alto (General Meeting)
Wed.	Mar.	10	9:00 A.M.	Saratoga
Sat.	Mar.	13	9:00 A.M.	Searsville Lake
Sat.	Mar.	20	1:30 P.M.	Los Banos
Sun.	Mar.	21	9:00 A.M.	Los Banos
Wed.	Mar.	24	9:00 A.M.	Palo Alto Duck Pond
Sat.	Mar.	27	9:00 A.M.	Alum Rock Park
Mon.	Apr.	8	8:00 P.M.	San Jose State College



Field Trips (continued)

Saturday, March 13, 9:00 A.M. Searsville Lake. Meet at entrance to Searsville Lake at end of Sand Hill Road. Mr. and Mrs. Les Sleeper will lead. For further details, call 323-9370.

Saturday and Sunday, March 20 and 21. Sacramento Audubon Society extends an invitation to attend its annual grasslands field trip. Host will be the Grasslands Water District. Meet on Saturday at 1:30 P.M. in Los Banos at the Canal Farm Inn. That day motorcades will be arranged to tour the flooded gun club lands in the south end of the grasslands and the little known San Luis Island. A dinner will be arranged Saturday night at which Arthur Barr will show the color film he made last year at the height of the Heron and Egret nesting season on San Luis Island. Sunday the group will reassemble at 9:00 A.M. at Canal Farm Inn and take in the Los Banos and San Luis Wasteway Waterfowl Management Areas and the northern end of the grasslands.

You must make your own overnight reservation. Motels in Los Banos are the Canal Farm Inn, Motel Stardust, Motel Cinderella, La Faria Motel and others. Camping facilities are available at Hatfield State Park near Newman, also camper overnight parking has been arranged.

All California Audubon groups have been invited. There is room for all. This should be a memorable weekend in a fabulous birding area-- a vast wetland in its spring mantle of wildflowers.

If you plan to attend, drop a card to Howard Leach, 3828 French Avenue, Sacramento (Phone: IVanhoe 9-1618).

Wednesday, March 24. Meet at 9:00 A.M. at the Palo Alto Duck Pond. Leaders: Mrs. Frances Felin, 322-0207 and Mrs. Harriet Masson, 321-8413.

Saturday, March 27. Alum Rock Park. To look for the Canyon Wren especially among the inhabitants of the floor and hillside of the Park. Meet at the parking area at the Youth Science Institute (formerly Junior Museum) at 9:00 A.M. Leaders: Fanny Zwaal and Caroline Davis, CY 2-2060.

And looking ahead to ---

Monday, April 8, 8:00 P.M. Mr. William Penn Mott, Jr. speaks on "Song of the Cricket."

Please note the location: San Jose State College, Science Building, Room 142.

Travel, Anyone?

Mail received by the editor is both a delight and a frustration. In hand are glowing announcements of a birding tour of Guatemala and Panama (sponsored by the Los Angeles Audubon Society), a safari in Kenya (led by a University of Redlands biologist), and a Wilderness Workshop at Mt. McKinley National Park, Alaska. Please call for further information if you are interested--327-2854.

Woodnotes

. . . Whoso walks in solitude and inhabiteth the wood,  
Choosing light, wave, rock and bird, . . .  
Before the money loving herd . . .

Ralph Waldo Emerson--1841

A few soft yellow rays of sunlight filtered down through the semi-mistiness under the tall Redwoods to touch a pure white Trillium. A little further along the spring-spongy footpath the shy brown streaked Mission Bells nodded in a whisper of a breeze. An irregular oval of Wild Ginger gently rolled over a slight rise above a clear mountain stream. Of just such beauty was the colored film, "Silent River," presented by Mr. Richard Tanner at our February meeting. Elder Creek, the subject of the film, was recently purchased by The Nature Conservancy and has been left in its natural state. It is about the only creek flowing into the Eel River with clear, sparkling water.

Mr. Tanner explained The Nature Conservancy; it is based on a concept borrowed from the British. The aim of the group is to save natural areas from the methodical, mechanical encroachment of bulldozers clearing the way for "civilization." The Conservancy buys land, or receives it as a gift, and holds it until some college can take it over as a perpetual outdoor biological laboratory, or some governmental agency can take it over as a park or wildlife area for the inspiration and recreation of the people forever!

A clause in all contracts provides that if the land is used for purposes other than that for which it was given, it reverts back to The Nature Conservancy. Money is loaned by the organization at a low rate to buy prized local natural areas; and on being repaid, is loaned again and again. Money is received through the generosity of interested people. [Rachel Carson set up a trust for the Sierra Club and The Nature Conservancy in her will.]

Many of our Audubon members belong to this group. Anyone interested in joining may send a tax-deductible five dollars to: The Nature Conservancy, 149 California Street, San Francisco. The Nature Conservancy News and other helpful material will be sent to you.

DON'T MISS THE SIXTH IN OUR SERIES OF MEETINGS!!! Be in Palo Alto March 8 to hear Mayor James P. Thurber of Los Altos.

Mrs. Luther E. Cisne  
President

Board Notes

The S.C.V.A.S. Board met February 1 at the home of Eva McRae in San Jose.

Previously budgeted funds, \$200 for California Condor Sanctuary, \$100 for Audubon Canyon Ranch, \$25 for The Nature Conservancy will be paid now. The Canyon Ranch check will include \$182.50 so far placed in the Grace Brubaker

Memorial Fund. Additional checks in her memory will be forwarded as they come in. A check for \$33, in memory of Mrs. Celia Cummings, will go to Save San Francisco Bay Association's film fund. The group is planning an educational film on the bay to be done by Laurel Reynolds--well-known for "Island in Time" and other fine conservation pictures.

There was discussion on "what we are saving for" following the Treasurer's report on current status of our savings account. Eva McRae told us the original project for which S.C.V.A.S. savings was intended was the writing and publishing of a book on the birds of Alum Rock Park, a long-defunct effort. Dr. Tom Harvey felt we should re-examine our objectives and use the money for current projects of pressing importance.

Dr. Herbert Grench spoke about the February meeting and use of the Nature Conservancy film, "Silent River." Special publicity will again be arranged for the William Penn Mott's program later this spring.

Lloyd Case has made some 500 copies of the N. A. S. release on the California Condor. Topatopa Dam project near the Condor refuge could force the big birds to extinction. Board members will give copies of the article to people who might write protests. Mr. Case reported a healthy total of 42 Whooping Cranes. We will send a letter of protest to Department of Fish and Game concerning the recent shooting of Bald Eagles by a rancher at Point Reyes.

Diane Conradson noted a recent article in "Sports Illustrated" on the elaborate care given a young Whooping Crane found injured. She also cited an article on the war between wilderness and skiers in the San Geronio area of southern California. This area was finally included among areas protected by the Wilderness Bill. Mrs. Conradson also told of a booklet available from the State Department of Natural Resources entitled "Natural Areas for Schools." She recently attended a workshop in San Francisco for elementary teachers on the subject, "How to Get Conservation into the Public Schools Science Program." She stressed that we need to work with children, even more than with adults, to instill a better attitude toward conservation of natural beauty in all forms. Diane sometimes does as many as twelve programs a month at this time of year and desperately needs help. You don't need to be an expert. Most of us Audubon members, as limited as we feel our knowledge to be, know vastly more than the people who ask for programs. Please call her (327-2512) if you can help with children, heavy projectors, field trips, etc.

President Cisne read a communication from N. A. S. Western Representative Bill Goddall asking for three half-scholarships \$62.50 each to Audubon Camp of the West. He hoped to send three rangers from parks in this area who want very much to attend and will benefit from instruction there. One is from Coe Park in south Santa Clara County. S.C.V.A.S. paid for one half-scholarship last year.

--J. Todd

#### Screen Tours

Monday, March 1. "New England Saga" The rugged beauty of New England from the mountains to the sea, and the story of its wildlife. Produced and presented by Dr. John D. Bulger. 4:00 P.M. Cubberley Auditorium, Stanford. 8:00 P.M. San Jose State Concert Hall.

Screen Tours (continued)

Monday, March 22. "Ranch of the Purple Flowers" Venezuelan wildlife in color and action: a vivid array of flowers, birds and animals of the Orinoco Basin, filmed and narrated by Robert C. Hermes of Homestead, Florida. 4:00 P.M. Cubberley Auditorium Stanford; 8:00 P.M. San Jose State Concert Hall.

These are the last two programs of the 1964-65 Screen Tour. Remember that this fall the 1965-66 Audubon Wildlife Films will be managed by the Biology Club of Palo Alto Senior High School. All proceeds will be used to send biology students on field trips and to supply some field equipment. Mr. Le Van Shugart of the Science Department will supervise the project.

Would your service group be willing to supply a block of tickets to a group of handicapped children or shut-ins? What could be more wonderful than to share the beauties of the out-of-doors via these films? Discuss this with your civic-affairs chairman.

A Special Condor Bulletin

From Carl W. Buchheister, National President.

SENATE BILL 261, an important bill, has been introduced in our State Legislature to increase the penalty for breaking the law that protects the California Condor. At present there is a jail sentence of up to six months or a fine of not more than \$500, or both. The new bill would allow a term in jail not to exceed one year, or a fine not exceeding \$1,000, or both. This would provide the same penalty as that in the law protecting the sea otter.

As individuals wishing to act on this issue, you may write to the senators who introduced this bill:

John F. McCarthy	Post Office Box 870	San Rafael, California
Carl L. Christensen	937 Sixth Street	Eureka, California
Hugh M. Burns	Post Office Box 748	Fresno, California
Robert J. Lagomarsino	21 So. California St.	Ventura, California
Walter W. Stiern	212 Goodman Street	Bakersfield, California

or to the Co-sponsor:

Assemblyman  
Burt M. Henson                      34 So. Chestnut St.                      Ventura, California

The bill has been referred to the Senate Fish and Game Committee whose chairman is:

Senator Aaron W. Quick 713 State Street                      El Centro, California

To the Committee of Natural Resources whose chairman is:

Assemblywoman  
Mrs. Pauline L. Davis                      Post Office Box 1071                      Portola, California

Your legislators will vote for this Bill 261 only if they have evidence of public support--that's us! This is the little you CAN DO to help.

The Department of Fish and Game is supporting this bill.

--Jill Cisne

Notes from Afield

Williams State Park and Kelly Park, San Jose Trip -- January 13

These two parks are on Coyote Creek, only a few blocks apart, in southeast San Jose. Thirteen people attended. The weather was clear and cold and a total of 21 species were observed; of special interest were the Hermit Thrush and the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.

Stanford -- January 16

This trip included the Mausoleum and Lake Lagunitas. Weather was overcast. Twenty-five people saw 48 species. Of special interest: Green-winged Teal, Ring-necked Duck, Bufflehead, Mew Gull, Yellow-shafted Flicker, Hermit Thrush, and Hutton's Vireo.

Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park -- January 30

This trip attended by 27 people was made on a day that started out cool but turned out to be very nice. We walked mostly through the Redwoods along the San Lorenzo River. At one point two Chickadees fell at our feet locked in combat. Two Winter Wrens were heard by several of us but only two were fortunate enough to see one. A Varied Thrush was seen by almost everyone. A Ruby-crowned Kinglet put on a marvelous display for us at a distance of about ten feet for a long time. After lunch some of us went to Mrs. Bolan's home in Mt. Hermon to watch the Anna's Hummingbirds at her feeders. They came so close they almost flew into our faces. Of the 29 birds observed, of note were Band-tailed Pigeon, Belted Kingfisher, Steller's Jay, Brown Creeper, Winter Wren, and Purple Finch.

Santa Teresa Park -- February 10

We had a sunny, spring-like day for this trip. We were glad that the winds of the previous day had disappeared. The hills were green and spring wildflowers were beginning to appear. Maidenhair fern and coffee fern were especially beautiful. Ken Rogison walked with us and showed us some of his special nooks and a look-out point with the valley spread below. There was a good deal of interest in plants. Both Ken and Smitty answered many questions. A total of 37 species of birds were seen, among them: Say's Phoebe, Loggerhead Shrike, Pine Siskin, and Savannah Sparrow.

Lake Merced -- February 13

Eleven people attended on an overcast day. We made several stops and took two short walks. Observations of particular interest were the Common Gallinule, Green Heron, and Red-throated Loon (in winter plumage). Both mature and immature Common Gallinules were seen swimming and wading on some reeds. The Green Heron put on a good show for us, stretching its neck and showing its shaggy crest. Also seen among the 32 species were the Red-breasted Merganser, Long-billed Marsh Wren, and Fox Sparrow.

From Mrs. Neil Estrada -- January 19

Four Clapper Rails--west side of Dumbarton Bridge.

Notes from Afield (continued)

Mrs. Cisne and R. Trullinger -- January 31

One American Bittern--near Palo Alto Yacht Harbor.

Mr. and Mrs. Albert Gilleece

A Ringed Turtle Dove has been present since the latter part of January at their home, 430 Yale Road, Menlo Park. It has adopted the pepper tree outside their kitchen window. The Mourning Doves, with whom it feeds, show no animosity toward it; but they preen themselves in another tree in the yard. The Ringed Turtle Dove is very tame and does not fly off when the yard is entered as the Mourning Doves do. Note: your field note compiler observed this bird on February 7 at the above address.

Mrs. McCann reports a White-throated Sparrow was seen at the foot of Mt. Madonna on the Gilroy side on February 2.

Joe Greenberg reports an Old Squaw in Monterey Bay the first part of February.

--Ralph Trullinger

What Do You Know?----About San Francisco Bay

San Francisco Bay is the outstanding geographical feature of this area. How many of these questions can you answer about it?

1. Who acquired ownership of the bay when California became a state in 1850?
2. How much of it does it still own?
3. How many square miles does the bay cover?
4. What changes should we expect in our climate if the bay is subjected to continued filling?
5. Where are the highest tides in the bay?
6. What effect does wind have on the tides?
7. In what ways do salt marsh plants cope with the saline content of the water?
8. How long does it take sewage dumped into the bay at Oakland to go out the Golden Gate?
9. Why does the Ideal Cement Company operate a plant at Redwood City?
10. What is a "hot pond?"
11. Up to 90% of the western population of what outstanding game bird winters on San Francisco Bay?
12. What birds-of-prey are found in the baylands?
13. What are the two dominant plants of the baylands?
14. What is the most common visible animal of the intertidal zone?
15. What are two animals found only in the south Bay Area?

16. Why is it dangerous to build on fill in the bay?
17. What causes the various colors of the salt ponds?
18. Do you know the yearly value of caught fish which require the bay for a part of their life cycle?
19. Exclusive of migrating Ducks and Geese, how many shore birds does a mile of the bay's marshes and tide flats support?
20. What is the average depth of the bay?

Answers in next month's Avocet.

Suggested reading: San Francisco Bay by Harold Gilliam

The Future of San Francisco Bay by Mel Scott

#### Reading Enjoyment

Modc-filled description of endangered Louisiana salt marshes:

"The Trembling Prairie" by Lew Dietz, Field and Stream, February, 1965.

A capable writer's eloquent description of his sojourn on a string of densely wooded coral islands off the southeastern coast of Florida which the Department of Interior hopes may become The Islandia National Monument:

"The Last of the Keys" by Berton Roueché, The New Yorker, December 26, 1964.

If you have a small boy, you may have to read these aloud many times:

The Tale of the White-Faced Hornet by Henry B. Kane, Knopf, New York, 1943.

The Tale of the Wild Goose by Henry B. Kane, Knopf, New York, 1946.

#### Conservation Notes

##### A SPECIAL BULLETIN ON THE CALIFORNIA CONDORS

ON THE DANGER SIDE: The TOPATOPIA DAM PROJECT is still a most serious threat to the continued existence of the California Condors. Every member of S.C.V.A.S. should, again, carefully read Dr. Miller's Report, "HOPE FOR THE CALIFORNIA CONDOR," in the January-February 1965 issue of The Audubon Magazine, then study the special sheet that was mailed from the New York Office, "THE CONSERVATION GUIDE," and make note of the reasons why this project so greatly endangers the condors. Having formulated your own opinion, you should inform your State Senator and your Assemblyman of your personal feelings on this important matter, and state your reasons for opposing the construction of the TOPATOPIA DAM.

We have evidence, in the form of a reply to one of our letters, that some of our Senators think that after the construction work has been completed, "the area will return to its former natural state!" We of the Society, individually and collectively, need to carry on a campaign of education, pointing out to all those who hold the above opinion that the Condor is so intolerant of human intrusion into the nesting area that the disturbance caused by the construction



activities is going to result in the abandonment of eggs and nestlings with the inevitable serious depletion of the Condor population below its already precarious situation!

(I do not like long sentences, but I got wound up on that one, and couldn't stop!)

The proposed public road from the town of Fillmore northward through the Condor nesting sanctuary would cause a definite end of breeding in that area. Admittedly, it would be of some economical benefit to the people of the town of Fillmore, --BUT is the estimated, speculative gain worth the certain loss of the few remaining individuals of the continent's largest bird? (WHY doesn't Fillmore exploit the possibility of seeing one of these rare birds as it forages over the area instead of taking action which will exterminate them? Maybe we should call this to the attention of the Mayor, the Supervisors and the Chamber of Commerce of Fillmore?)

I still have about 300 of the reprints of the text of the "CONSERVATION GUIDE" which was mailed to California members. These reprints carry a "bold-type" heading: DO YOU THINK THAT THE CALIFORNIA CONDOR IS WORTH SAVING? instead of the regular Audubon Society heading that was on the copy which New York mailed to the membership; otherwise, they are identical including the map. I would like to send you as many as you think you could mail to those who might help to save the Condors. It is most important that we impress as many of our State Senators and Assemblymen as possible with the serious danger of this project and that we make them aware of our united opposition to it. (Letters from a large number of individuals will make them aware of the voters' opinions.)

#### THE BALD EAGLE SITUATION:

No man should be denied the right to protect his property from predators. I think that we must subscribe to this within certain limits.

THE PRESENT LAW allows a rancher or farmer to obtain a permit to shoot eagles that are actually attacking his livestock. THE INEFFECTIVENESS OF THE PRESENT LAW is that the rancher has already lost his animal, and the killed eagle reduces the present small population. THE PROPOSED REMEDY to this mutual loss could be that the proper governmental agency should reimburse the farmer for his loss--if it was proven an eagle made the kill. THE BENEFIT: The rancher would not suffer financial loss, and the EAGLE WOULD STILL BE ALIVE.

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT? Write to Congressmen, State Senators and Assemblymen and everybody you know. If they are not interested in conservation of our national bird, try to convert them!

--Lloyd N. Case  
Conservation Chairman

Aloha

We visited the meeting of the Audubon Society in January. It was held in a lecture room adjoining the Honolulu Aquarium. There were perhaps 40 people

in attendance, many being tourists like ourselves. The president, Mr. Michael Ord, a young Englishman with a definite English accent, started the meeting by giving a report on the Christmas Census.

Thirty-four species were recorded and 10,140 birds were seen on December 27, 1964. He also reported on a birding trip to the big Island of Hawaii partly to check on Nene or the Hawaiian Goose. It was an area where the Society had been influential in planting or stocking this bird. He reported none seen, but there were numerous wild dog tracks and he wondered if the dogs had done away with the Nene. He called the bird "stupid" and not capable of properly taking care of itself because of its hand nurturing.

There was a discussion of how to save the Alakai Swamp on the Island of Kauai.

The entertainment consisted of bird notes recorded on tape. The area taped was the Berkeley hills; so we heard many familiar notes. There was also a recording by an Englishman made in the Severn Trust Bird Sanctuary, England.

We do not have a very large list of Honolulu birds. This is partly because we are still unfamiliar with the best birding areas. We have not been to any mountain areas where the "Elepaio" is to be seen. This is a wren-like bird. We have motored along all the Oahu coasts but have seen only about 6 Sandpipers (not sure). No other water birds except the Golden Plover which we have seen on grassy lawns near the coast. Here is our list:

Mynah--perhaps the most common bird. House Sparrow--also common. Barred Dove--small--common. Chinese Spotted Dove--also called Lace-necked Dove. Cardinal--same as in U.S. Apapane--See Peterson--Hawaiian birds. Brazilian Cardinal; Rice bird--See Peterson--Hawaiian birds. House Finch--same as at home. Japanese White-eye--See Peterson. Anianian--See Peterson. Golden Plover--Have seen several around Honolulu Zoo and Ala Moana Park.

That is the list at present. Hope we can add to it during the month we plan to spend on the Island of Kauai.

We are gradually getting acquainted with some of the native (or imported) trees, such as the:

Banyan Tree	Sausage Tree
African Tulip Tree	Hala Tree
Pink Tecoma Tree	Haw Tree
Jacaranda Tree	Royal Poinciana Tree

and, of course, the graceful coconut palms that are everywhere. We are very fond of them. Some of the above trees are in bloom even now. Some of the blooming plants are hibiscus (several varieties), spider lily, red torch ginger, plumeria (used in leis), anthurium, hilippine orchid, poinsettia, candle bush (yellow), shrimp plant, oleander.

The Turners are blooming too, for we are enjoying our visit to Oahu very much. Perhaps it would have been more interesting for Avocet readers if we had written about the Polynesian dancing girls from Samoa and Tahiti and Tonga. We have been seeing their graceful and exciting dancing quite often.

--Rebecca and Warren Turner