

The Avocet

Volume XII Number 6

June 1965

June Calendar

Annual Meeting

Monday, June 7. Business meeting and program begin at 7:30 P.M. at Alum Rock Park, east of San Jose. Come earlier to cook and "bird."

Field Trips

Saturday, June 5. Meet at the west end of Dumbarton Bridge at 9:00 A.M. Leader: Ralph Trullinger (854-4201).

Wednesday, June 9. To Castle Rock Ridge off Skyline Blvd. above Saratoga. We may see White-throated Swifts. Meet at 9:00 A.M. at the Saratoga Gap (intersection of Big Basin Way and Skyline Blvd.). Leader: Claude Smith (867-3629, evenings only).

Wednesday, June 23. Meet at 9:00 A.M. at the Wolcott's, 26511 Altamont Road (Corner of Taaffe and Altamont), Los Altos Hills. Leader: Margaret Wolcott (948-6821).

Sunday, June 27. Meet at the entrance to Point Lobos Reserve at 9:00 A.M. We'll explore at least one new trail. Bring lunch. Leader: Lloyd Case (243-2467).

Board Meeting Notes, May 3, 1965

The board met in Palo Alto at the home of Dr. Herbert Grench. Board actions on meetings and the Wittgenstein Memorial are reported elsewhere in this bulletin.

The Treasurer will send memberships in National Audubon Society to Dr. Applegarth of the Science Department, San Jose State, who has managed the Audubon Screen Tours in San Jose for many years and to Dr. Richard Thaw of the same department who will take over for Dr. Applegarth next season while he is away. Token membership of \$1.00 will be sent to Save San Francisco Bay Association since we so recently sent them \$200 for a film fund.

Conservation Chairman Lloyd Case reported that Tom Harvey and Diane Conradson again presented our case to the Palo Alto City Council which decided again to send the matter to a committee reviewing recreational needs.

Coming Events At A Glance

Sat.	June	5	9:00 A.M.	Dumbarton Bridge
Mon.	June	7	7:30 P.M.	Alum Rock Park (Annual Meeting)
Wed.	June	9	9:00 A.M.	Castle Rock Ridge
Wed.	June	23	9:00 A.M.	Los Altos Hills
Sun.	June	27	9:00 A.M.	Point Lobos



Board Meeting Notes Continued

Education Committee Chairman, Mrs. Conradson, spoke of various changes at the Junior Museum in Palo Alto and of our hopes for a permanent marsh reserve and interpretive center at the Palo Alto baylands.

Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors is about to act on a possible chain of parks along Coyote Creek. It would not be continuous, but at this point any preservation of natural areas is better than none. We would encourage development of Uvas Canyon Park and watch for notice of hearings. Apparently the county feels there is a severe fire hazard along the only road leaving the park.

Avocet editor, Flore LaRiviere, who attended a recent Berkeley workshop passed on a suggestion made there that exchange publications of Audubon Societies in the immediate Bay Area and Santa Cruz be sent not only to the editors but also to several officers and field trip chairman of each group. Action was deferred.

Nominating Committee--Mr. and Mrs. Howard Wolcott, Mr. Henderson, and Kay McCann had no report as yet.

President Cisne commented on the March 27 Berkeley workshop at which a model set of by-laws was discussed. Bill Goodall suggested that a president should take office for two years, remain as advisor for three years; that the vice-president be program chairman and later president to give continuity of leadership and hold a society together. No action on these proposed changes was taken.

Need for distribution of an up-to-date membership list was stressed.

Fanny Zwaal will ask for use of the same Library Branch hall in San Jose for next year's south county meetings.

--J. Todd

Conservation Notes

During the past few weeks, quite a number of things have happened that are of interest to members of the Audubon Society, and it is nice to be able to say that a good portion of them are encouraging.

CALIFORNIA CONDORS:

National Audubon's Research Report No. 6, "The Current Status and Welfare of the California Condor," by Dr. Alden Miller, Ian McMillan, and Eben McMillan is now available. It is a 61-page, paper-bound booklet detailing the procedures and the findings of the McMillan's and Dr. Miller in their 1963-64 investigation of the Condor sponsored by National Audubon. The report can be obtained from Audubon Resource Center, 2426 Bancroft Way, Berkeley. The price is about \$3.00 (allowing for sales tax and postage).

President Buchheister has "welcomed" a suggestion made by Mr. Hugo Fisher, the administrator of the State Resources Agency of California, that a meeting be held (probably in Sacramento) to "discuss Condor conservation in relation to plans for water development in the Sespe Creek basin." The greater danger inherent in this project is not the dam, per se, but is the desire of the water district to build an access road through the nesting area and the sanctuary to the dam site.

Conservation Notes Continued

President Buchheister has requested that the agenda include a discussion of alternatives to the Sespe Project plan (also known as the TOPATOPA DAM PROJECT), and that members of the press be invited in order to "insure prompt, fair and accurate coverage" of the meeting.

THE RAMPART DAM PROJECT:

Although far away on Alaska's Yukon River, this project not only continues to be a threat, but is steadily becoming a greater threat to some 10,500 square miles of breeding areas of hundreds of thousands of ducks and geese that fly down our Pacific Flyway every year, because adequate steps are not being taken to stop the project while it is still only a plan.

Time is of the essence! Promoters of the Rampart Dam have asked the Alaska State Legislature to create a Yukon Power Authority. They may be fearful that Congress will not approve the giant project, but in any case, the backers say that a YPA could float \$1.5 billion in revenue bonds to build the dam under a Federal Power Commission.

Our Senators and Congressmen in Washington should be informed as to how their constituents, as individuals interested in the perpetuation of the yearly flights along our Pacific Flyway, feel about this proposed project. The piece-by-piece nibbling away of areas and habitats necessary for wildlife will, as in the past, result in the gradual elimination of species dependent on those areas. The Rampart Dam would gobble up a great deal more area than can be called a "nibbling."

MIGRATORY-BIRD SANCTUARIES:

Senator Lee Metcalf (Montana), who has frequently opposed efforts of the Budget Bureau to force disposal or transfer of lands at eleven National Wildlife Refuges, has introduced a bill to prevent the short-sighted give-aways in the future. His bill would require the approval of the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission before any refuge lands acquired with Duck Stamp Funds could be disposed of, or transferred to another agency. It is hoped that each of us who is interested in our migratory wild-fowl will express our personal opinions on this bill to our own Senators and Congressmen.

PREDATOR CONTROL:

Senator Dingell (Michigan) has introduced a bill into the House of Representatives, and Senator Long (Missouri) will introduce one into the Senate which will reorganize and modernize the predator control program. These bills deserve active and immediate support. It certainly is time that an end be put to the hiring of "government hunters" to stalk and slaughter many of our wild animals who have earned the name of "predator," but in fact do very little, if any, damage to man or his property. It is time for a "Mutiny on the Bounty!"

If you would like to read an extremely interesting and enjoyable book with many amusing bits of narrative about one of the least understood, most maligned, and most persecuted of our western mammals, I unhesitatingly recommend "THE VOICE OF THE COYOTE," by J. Frank Dobie. (If the public library does not have it, I do; ask me for it.)

THE PT. REYES LABORATORY:

Under the supervision and direction of Dr. Mewalt, Pt. Reyes Laboratory is rapidly and efficiently emerging from a "chrysalis" state into a remarkable reality. The Western Bird Banding Association is to be congratulated on its achievement not only in developing such an extensive project but also in getting the support and cooperation of the Park Service, the agency which has the last word in matters pertaining to the Pt. Reyes National Seashore.

SPEAKING OF NATIONAL SEASHORES:

The State of Oregon may possibly soon have its counterpart of our Pt. Reyes National Seashore. In behalf of the struggle to preserve some of the Oregon Dunes area, Representative Duncan has introduced a bill (H.R. 7524) which would preserve a 30-mile stretch of coastline.

Those of us who have been fortunate enough to travel the Oregon coast know its beauty; those of us who have not, need only visit our Pt. Reyes beaches to realize how important such areas are to our growing need for coastal recreation areas. Your U. S. Senator and Congressman would probably welcome your (individual) expression of appreciation of our Pt. Reyes area and the suggestion that the Oregon bills deserve California's support.

--Lloyd N. Case
Conservation Chairman

New Members

We are very glad to welcome the following new members and invite their participation in meetings and field trips:

Mrs. R. Orth
27361 Altamont Road
Los Altos Hills, Calif.

Mr. E. H. McClintock
17568 Commanche Trail
Los Gatos, California

Mrs. Louise Holdahl
175 Primrose Way
Palo Alto, Calif.

Mr. Robert Conway
840 Talisman Drive
Palo Alto, Cal. 94303

Mrs. Neil Estrada
12695 La Cresta Drive
Los Altos Hills 94022

Mr. Bob Lochett
909 Forest Lane
Alamo, California

Mr. Gerald Breazeale
3460 Louis Road
Palo Alto, Calif.

Mr. Alfred H. Brokenheim
69 Paul Avenue
Mountain View, Calif.

Mr. Phillips J. Tunnell
220 South Castanya Way
Menlo Park, California

Mr. & Mrs. R. Little
1015 Ross Avenue
Sunnyvale, Calif.

Mrs. Dorothy B. Fagan
806 Coleman Avenue
Menlo Park, California

Mr. Philip Horvath
900 Underhill Drive
Alamo, California

Mr. Robert D. Griswold
3775 Nathan Way
Palo Alto, Cal. 94303

Mrs. Nancy A. Holmes
843 Moanna Court
Palo Alto, Calif.

Mrs. R. H. Kimball
1100 Bryant Street
Palo Alto, Cal. 94301

New Members Continued

Mr. & Mrs. Tom Tanner
409-7 Stanford Village
Stanford, California

Mr. Mel Brewster
7483 De La Farge Drive
San Jose, Cal. 95129

Miss Elma Isabel Bradley
385 So. 4th St., Apt. 7
San Jose, Calif. 95112

Mr. Paul R. Smith
3347 St. Michael Court
Palo Alto, Calif. 94306

--Angelina Snow, Membership Chairman

Dr. Wittgenstein Memorial

In a plea for courteous driving, the San Jose Mercury recently published this letter:

"Editor . . .

Those of us who worked with Herbert Wittgenstein knew him as a polite, humorous person who planned for tomorrow, but who didn't forget to enjoy today.

His wife has lost a devoted husband. The five of us who worked in his unit at the Welfare Department have lost a well-liked, enthusiastic, fellow worker, who, although he held a Ph.D. in another field, preferred to do social work. The community has lost a skilled social worker who has devoted the last eight years to this community . . .

Perhaps a small tribute to the very nice person this community has lost could be made by each person reading this letter.

Today, think about what a few seconds could mean and take the time to be courteous to at least one other driver when tempted to do otherwise.

Mrs. Janet M. Hanley, Mrs. Annabell Budde, Mrs.
Raina Clarke, Mrs. Josephine Radcliffe, Mrs.
Florence Martin"

A motion by Dr. Case was passed at the May 3 board meeting giving funds received as a memorial to our Vice President and Director, Dr. Wittgenstein, to the Pt. Reyes Bird Observatory. Dr. Tom Harvey will investigate and report to the board on what permanent memorial would be fitting at Pt. Reyes--perhaps a piece of equipment urgently needed and of permanent value. Dr. Wittgenstein was intensely interested in the station now being set up and contributed to similar laboratories in Europe. Those wishing to donate in his name may do so, and S.C.V.A.S. as a group will add to this memorial when a decision is made on the total amount needed.

Notes from Afield

***** NOTICE

NOTICE

NOTICE *****

Starting in September 1965 the field notes will be compiled by Emelie Curtis. From this date forward please send your field notes to:

Mrs. W. T. Curtis
1627 Hallbrook Drive
San Jose, Calif. 269-0778

Palo Alto Baylands -- March 24.

We met at the Duck Pond on a cool, overcast morning with some wind, visibility especially good. We were also fortunate in having with us Jill Cisne, her telescope and telescopic eye. Her experience in making bird counts in the Baylands and knowing what is likely to be there accounts for a high number of species on our list, 46. We were also treated to the sight of a jack rabbit, a Kildeer egg deposited in a depression in the middle of the road, and a burrow occupied by a nesting (?) burrowing Owl. Leaders: Mrs. Harriet Masson and Mrs. Frances Felin.

Alum Rock Park -- March 27.

The rain through the night discouraged all but seven people. We walked up the road along the north side of the canyon and went into an area that we had not gone into for some years. While it was pretty muddy under foot in places, the sun came out and we had some good birding. Of the 35 species seen, some were higher birds that we have not as a rule gotten on the Alum Rock trips. Leaders: Caroline Davis and Fanny Zwaal.

Pilarcitos Lake -- April 14.

This trip was attended by six hardy souls who turned out in spite of overcast weather following a heavy rain. A total of 44 species of birds was seen. Everyone had a chance to see the Winter Wren. At least 20 deer were seen at various times. The highlight of the trip was the Bobcat that ran down the road ahead of us. One other Bobcat was also seen on the scouting trip. Many wild flowers were also seen. Leader: Kay McCann.

Stevens Creek Park -- April 21.

Fourteen people attended and it was perfect weather for birding. The recent rains had brought out a myriad of beautiful wild flowers. The group identified 29 species of birds, some of whom were starting to build their nests.

For any who might wish to go and see the wild flowers, I would suggest driving to Picnic Area #3 and walking up the canyon road from there, always looking high up on the left bank. Don't miss the orange colored wind poppies.

Thanks to Miss Emily Smith and Claude Smith for their help in identifying birds, trees and flowers. Leader: Mary Rugh.

Uvas Canyon Park -- April 25.

This was a most enjoyable trip. It was the first time we had been here. We first birded around the picnic area and then walked up Swanson Creek and back.

The creek was beautiful; along its banks were many wild flowers as well as seven species of ferns and a California nutmeg tree. Twenty-one species of birds were identified.

After lunch a number of us went to the west end of Chesbro Reservoir to bird. Along the way, on Croy Road, we stopped to admire the fields of wild flowers and to identify them. At the reservoir we identified 23 species of birds. Starlings were feeding young in nests in holes in the trees. Twenty people attended. Leader: Roy Cameron.

Wool Ranch -- May 9.

About 60 people identified at least 35 species of birds. The nests of a Bushtit, Western Flycatcher and Oregon Junco were seen. Leaders: Mr. and Mrs. Al Wool.

From Fanny Zwaal, San Jose, March 20.

We watched two young Mourning Doves being fed by the parent birds in a walnut tree here on Clifton Avenue. We couldn't find the nest in that tree, but the young could fly a little.

April 2. Will Luick saw the first Bullock's Oriole (a male) in South San Jose. We had a male Bullock's at our bird bath April 3. The next day a pair of Hooded Orioles were feeding on blossoms of our Abutilon Shrub. We see them feeding each day--a pair of Hooded, the Bullock's, so far, alone.

From Margaret Henderson, April 14.

Saw a beautiful Bobwhite Quail feeding with my flock last night, and then heard it call early this morning. It is a male bird and is probably an escapee from someone's pen.

From Lt. Commander Jim Dagdigan, May 11, 1965, 3:00 P.M.

One Red-crested (Brazilian) Cardinal at the Moffett Field Golf Course, observed by two people for 8 to 10 minutes. This most likely is an escapee.

From Eve Case

April 21. White-throated Sparrow in my garden. Had close view.

May 7 and twice subsequently: Swainson's Thrush.

--Ralph Trullinger, Field Note Compiler

Good Reading

Louise Darling: The Gull's Way, \$6.50 Morrow. The author observed the breeding grounds of gulls off Maine. The book is small--but full of fine color photographs, black and white plates, and drawings done by the author as he followed the life cycle of gulls near his home.

--J. T.

SONG OF THE OPEN ROAD

Out of the rush, and the roar, and the riot of the world of women and men,
Into a land of gracious quiet, turn we our steps again,

--Susan Owen Moberly
'Round the Year with the Poets
M. C. Oliver

In the exciting exchange of ideas at the panel discussion on "Cooperation in Conservation," much of the regular monthly business for May was waived. We all felt, however, that the enthusiastic reception with which the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society's invitation to confer and work together was accepted and acted on was a major step in the right direction. This means a communication center of ideas for action to be taken now! By our collective thinking, duplication of effort will be eliminated, and valuable time saved--time that might make the difference between a park-site being won or lost to a "development."

If you would like to be part of this dedicated, dynamic group, or can aid by doing the vital routine jobs, attend the meeting on Thursday, June 10, County Administration Building, 70 Hedding Street, Seventh Floor conference room at 7:30 P.M. Come along! Bring your ideas, your energy, and your enthusiasm. The natural scenic values you help to save may be your own.

ACTION Contact these people to help conserve your "local greenery."

Bayland Nature Center	Tom Harvey	243-2467
Bill Board and Sign Control	Janet Hayes	295-3609
Coyote River Parkway	Howard Olson	354-8110
Flood Plain Legislation	Walt Hayes	286-9700
Hiking and Riding Trails	Lilyan Brannon	241-5769
Los Gatos Creek	Sue Lowry	378-4584
Saratoga Creek	Lilyan Brannon	241-5769
Save San Francisco Bay	Will Blessing	298-0242
Scenic Highways	Barbara Eastman	948-1783
Skyline Parkway	Mary Moffat	326-1300
Stevens Creek Park Chain	Del Dow	967-5501
Committee for Green Foothills	Mary Moffat	326-1300

Our Annual Meeting, the last get-to-gether, before we head for the open road on vacation, will be held at Alum Rock Park on Monday, June 7.

Come early to do some birding, to look at the wild flowers and to "cook-out."

An informal business meeting and program are scheduled for 7:30 P.M.

Have a wonderful summer! Good "birding!"

--Mrs. Luther E. Cisne
President

Care of Wild Birds--the Injured, the Sick, Nestlings and Fledglings

Throughout the year, but especially in late spring and summer, the Audubon telephone is kept ringing with inquiries about the home care of wild birds that have met with misfortune. Many of the local casualties end up at our door--literally. Not long ago we returned from an outing to find a coffee can at our door. Inside was a tiny bird and a note: "Mrs. Proctor, please make this bird well. My cat got him and he is pretty sick." The donor was a friend of my small daughter, the younger the child, the greater the faith in our healing powers. I couldn't save that one; it had puncture wounds, shock, starvation and was chilled on the shady step. But trial and error over years has taught us to do better on others.

When I began, there were no books containing practical information on the care of wild birds. Since then, an excellent one has been published: Finches and Soft-billed Birds, by Henry Bates and Robert Busenbark (T.F.H. Publications, Inc., 245 Cornwellson Avenue, Jersey City 2, New Jersey). (About \$10.00 in some pet shops.) Noteworthy sections are the first one on general information, care and management, Chapter 2 on diet (pages 27-42) and the discussion of protective and prohibitive laws (page 45).

Beginnings

It is hardest to work on tiny birds. If you have a choice, start with scrub jays. They are hardy, resolute birds--so brassy they win my grudging admiration. It is quite touching to have so bold a bird flap its wings and call you "Mama Scrub Jay!!" We have had a succession of jays. The first we called aptly, Mephistopheles; he screamed wildly for immediate restaurant service and kicked us savagely when we complied. I solved that problem by wrapping him in a quarter section of a baby's receiving blanket. He really wasn't being mean or ungrateful--that was his instinctive method of getting the greatest share of the food when the parents fed the brood in the nest. After he grew up and was ready to handle hard food, we put him in a flight cage outside to strengthen his wings and wean him from us. While I was settling another crippled jay, he escaped. My daughter was inconsolable. He still ate only soaked Mynah bird mash--fed with a special device; he was not from our neighborhood. It rained torrents all night. The next afternoon we were out by the cage and who should be on the fence flapping his wings and crying "Mama," but our Mephistopheles! Not a feather out of place! I reached out my hand and took him. Later on when he was ready, we let him go.

Feeding Baby Birds

There is a choice of foods to buy at the Pet Shop--Mockingbird food for the insectivorous birds, nestling food for either type, feeder, and Mynah bird pellets. I favor the latter soaked in boiled water and thinned with additional water to feeding consistency. If I feel the bird needs extra nourishment, I stir a boiled egg yolk smoothly into the mixing water. Sometimes I add bird vitamins too (I prefer Avitron brand). Others like to add ripe banana or ripe avocado (to feed Mockingbirds and Robins especially), but this has to be done with great care. If the fruit is not ripe enough or is fed in too great a proportion, it can cause severe diarrhea. When insect-eating birds are old enough, I try to get the natural food for them--earthworms for Robins, aphids for little Finch types, mealworms for Gold-crown Sparrows, fruit flies to supplement

nectar food of Hummingbirds, etc. For the fruit eaters I provide ripe extra sweet fancy red apples (our crippled Cedar Waxwings show a strong favoritism toward Washington Delicious! Perhaps they know those are the most expensive!) We have apples from our own tree, but apparently the sugar content does not develop sufficiently--they cause illness. Sweet grapes, ripe black berries and others are good, too. I have two Pyracantha Rosedale bushes which the wild birds completely devour early in the season. A neighbor, however, has a whole hedge of Pyracantha that is luxuriant so my fruit eaters have the berries almost all year round. *Raphiolepis indica rosea* (Yeddo Hawthorn) has edible berries for Robins. The wild Cedar Waxwings eat our ivy berries but our crippled pets refuse. I've tasted them, and agree.

Mostly, it's a case of feeling your way along and finding out what their wild diet is and trying to duplicate it, remembering that all babies even the seed eaters eat a higher percentage of protein food as nestlings than as adults. Don't stint on the protein food.

Method of feeding is vital. If you are serious about feeding nestlings, invest in an efficient baby bird feeder. I tried the types sold by most pet shops, pointed tubes fitted with a plunger made of glass or plastic, various eyedroppers, toothpicks, etc. I didn't find any of them very satisfactory. Finally, I ran into a friend whose husband's hobby is jewelry design. He devised a feeder for her that is the best I have ever used. It is a metal tube and plunger designed for use in ceramic work to extrude clay onto vases, etc., for decoration. The tips furnished with it are of no use for your purpose, so discard them. Instead, substitute the tip from an empty plastic shampoo bottle which you may buy at any drugstore, or any other plastic pointed tip bottle which you can cut off and use at the end of the tube. Sometimes I have different sized tips for different sized mouths. For convenience you may have each size in a different color. The metal portion is \$1.95 and the plastic tip about 50¢; however, if you plan to do much, the purchase is well worth it. Other kinds of feeders are frustrating when the bird opens its mouth, they usually jam; when the bird closes its mouth, the cheap feeder spurts food all over the bird, you and the surroundings. The one I recommend is perfectly tooled and never jams. The food can be served warm by putting the metal part in hot water a few minutes before serving. If the bird is especially delicate, or sick, or in shock, or very young, I warm the food and the tube; if the bird is sturdy and a little older, I don't bother.

Frequency of feeding varies from perhaps three times an hour for a small insectivore to, say, every two hours for a large baby pigeon. Feeding is generally necessary from sunrise to sundown. The proper amount to feed will be learned with experience, and can be judged partly by watching the crop (a lump in the lower right neck) fill slowly.

The seed eaters are the easiest birds to feed when they mature. Probably any wild bird mixture is fine. I happen to like Volkman's brand. Provide cuttlebone and health food grit, which is gravel with minerals added. Optional are greens carefully selected and washed, spray millet, peanut butter sometimes, fruit (orange and red apples), and hard boiled eggs. If you're going to be able to release the birds, try to accustom them to the kind of food they are likely to find. Most of mine love seeding grasses and dandelions. Be sure they

are not sprayed. Birds cared for in captivity should be released in the native habitats. A Violet Green Swallow we cared for recently was released at Lake Lagunitas and immediately joined its flock circling over the lake.

One word of caution--be sure the bird needs help! Hundreds of fledglings are "rescued" every year when they first leave the nest. At this stage they fly in scatter formation to various bushes and trees. They call for the parent birds to come feed them wherever they are. This leads well-intentioned humans to think they are lost. Wait and see if the parent birds, who will do a better job than you, are around. The young birds may be old enough to be aware that tall, bare-faced creatures are not their kind, and will fight you and the cage at this stage. When a bird is injured, at any age, generally he instinctively welcomes help.

Caring for Injured Birds

It is very important to get the bird soon enough to begin proper care in captivity. Delay in getting started can mean the difference between saving or losing the bird's life. If there are raw wounds, sterilize them with an anti-septic power puffed on from a plastic container. This as well as the other medicines discussed may be obtained from a veterinarian with his instructions.

Sometimes it helps to give one or two drops of a tonic that combines an appetite stimulant with vitamins, especially for shock. However, I follow the policy of the less medicine the better. Given rest, quiet and good food most birds will heal rapidly. Sometimes if the wounds are very deep, it is necessary to use one of the antibiotics, too. However, they must be handled with caution. For respiratory ailments I have found Marvel-aid effective. It is available in pet shops.

After the bird's injuries have been examined and treated, the next important step is to provide food. If it is a baby, follow the instructions given earlier and hand feed; if a mature bird, set food and water in its box for self feeding. In administering liquid medicine or water, it is possible to drown the bird; so be very careful. Hold him on his side and dribble in one drop at a time slowly giving him plenty of time to swallow. Hold him gently and with as loose a hand as possible. All your movements should be slow and deliberate; your voice reassuring and quiet. Keep others out of the room if they can't be quiet too.

After treatment and food, the next important step is to put the injured bird in a small cardboard box set on a heat pad with the thermostat adjusted to low. The box should be small enough to conserve the bird's body heat, but large enough to provide space for food and water if it is an older bird. Either close the top flaps on the box, or drape a towel over the top opening. Be sure it is in a safe, draft-proof spot, with protection from inquisitive cats. Sometimes, I try to imitate the natural hiding place an injured bird might choose as well as I can within the confines of box or cage. For example, Pyracantha branches for an injured Cedar Waxwing to hide or simply perch in. Rest, quiet and semi-darkness seem to be very important factors in recovery. The heat is essential. Until I learned to do this I lost birds even if proper food and medicines were given. This is an absolute must during the night; it is optional during the day depending on the weather, house temperature, and how sick the bird is.

This about sums it up, the only thing left to do--is leave the bird alone! Children love these sad waifs with a passion. Unless they are taught differently, most children will look in on them constantly, disturbing and handling them too much. Such treatment will kill a bird quicker than anything else. The self-discipline of putting the bird's welfare above their own pleasure is very hard for some, but the rewards are very satisfying. There is a special joy for them to see a bird they rescued made well and whole again. My own daughter understands since she has grown up with many different kinds of pets.

Her friends and new children who come with patients for me are glad to follow rules that have good reasons behind them. They feel that their help is part of the cure. I like to encourage them to save these waifs. The number of birds saved is very insignificant, but the important thing is how the children feel about life with the proper reverence for each little part of our wonderful world, even each fallen House Sparrow. I feel that teaching the children is a basic first step in Conservation.

--Helen Proctor

The Avocet

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