

The Avocet

Volume XII Number 8

October, 1965

HELP!

We have, I hope, an interesting Audubon year ahead of us. At our first meeting on October 6, I will suggest an ambitious set of plans for the year. We can increase our efforts both in our recreational activities and in our conservation projects. But, it will take people to carry out such a program. Come to the meeting and see if any of the plans interest you; or, come and suggest some of your own.

We have some basic needs for help right now. For example, Diane Conradson needs help on her Education Committee to lead groups on trips to the Palo Alto Baylands. This is a job which can take as little or as much of your time as you wish--even two trips a year would be most helpful. We also need a Social Chairman for our Palo Alto meetings and helpers for the Social Chairmen in both ends of the county. Our Conservation Chairman, Lloyd Case, is organizing a core of Audubon members from each city in the Santa Clara Valley to keep a conservationist's eye open on local affairs.

So step forward and let me know you would like to get further involved in our affairs. I sat around at meetings for two years waiting to be asked to do something. I was too shy and/or dumb to ask and others were waiting for me to express some interest.

Well, misery loves company and so do fun and accomplishment. I'll see you October 6 or call me at DA1-7994.

Herb Grench
President

Coming Events At A Glance

Wed. Oct.	6	8:00 P.M.	P.A. (General Meeting)
Wed.	13	8:30 A.M.	Alviso
Sat.	16	9:00 A.M.	Dumbarton
Wed.	20	7:30 P.M.	Palo Alto (Board)
Fri.	22	4:00 P.M.	Palo Alto (Screen Tour)
Sun.	24	9:00 A.M.	Glum Rock
Mon.	25	8:00 P.M.	San Jose (Screen Tour)
Wed.	27	9:00 A.M.	Ladera



October Calendar

Board Meeting

Wed., Oct. 20, 7:30 P.M., at Kay and Ray McCann's, 783 Garland Drive, Palo Alto, 327-4138.

General Meeting

Wed., Oct. 6, 8:00 P.M. P.A. Co-op Meeting Room, 200 California Ave., Palo Alto (2nd floor across parking lot from market). See details in last month's Avocet. The Cases will entertain with tales of the Wisconsin Audubon Camp and the Fish and Game Commission's Bay census.

Field Trips

Wed., Oct. 13 to the marshes and salt ponds of Alviso for fall migration of shore birds. Mr. David Hoxie of the Leslie Salt Co. will lead a tour of the salt ponds for choice birding. Meet at 8:30 A.M. in front of the George Mayne School on San Jose-Alviso Rd., which is an extension of San Jose North First Street. Leader: Catherine Lintott, 356-4264

Sat., Oct. 16 to Dumbarton. Meet at west end of bridge at 9:00 A.M. This is a rescheduling of last month's trip to look for returning migrants. Leaders: Mr. and Mrs. Les Sleeper, 323-9370

Sun., Oct. 24 Alum Rock Park. Meet in front of the Junior Museum at 9:00 A.M. Leader: Mrs. Fanny Zwaal, 292-2060

Wed., Oct. 27 Ladera. Meet at 9:00 A.M. at the Ladera Shopping Center parking lot. We will leave cars and hike one mile round trip to Felt Lake. Leader: Mrs. Virginia Bothwell, 322-1209

Anyone interested in leading field trips or in supplying transportation, please call Mrs. Wittgenstein, 354-9420.

Screen Tours

Fri., Oct. 22 Palo Alto, 4:00 P.M. and

Mon., Oct. 25 San Jose, 8:00 P.M.

First Screen Tour: C.P. Lyons - Nature's Plans and Puzzles - An exploration of the natural wonderlands of British Columbia. A brilliant picture from the lens of an expert photographer. Dates for the other films in Palo Alto at P. A. High School, are Nov. 19, 1965, Jan. 7, 1966, Feb. 11, 1966 and March 11, 1966--all at 4:00 P.M. In San Jose, and again in Morris Dailey Auditorium at San Jose State, the films will be shown at 8:00 P.M. on Nov. 29, 1965 and Jan. 10, 1966, Feb. 14, 1966 and Mar. 14, 1966. If you miss a film in one town, see it in the other. In San Jose send for season tickets (all 5 shows) \$4.00 (single admissions \$1.00, Students \$.50, under 12 accompanied by adult \$.25) to: Mrs. Fanny Zwaal, 478 Clifton Ave., San Jose, Calif., CY2-2060.

In Palo Alto, season tickets \$3.50 (single admission \$.75, Student season ticket \$2.00, single student admission \$.50). Send to: P.A.Sr. High School, Auditor's Office (Biology Club) 50 Embarcadero Rd. DA22127

Notes from Afield

Dumbarton Bridge - Sept. 11

18 species were observed by only five people. Many of the migrants seemed not to have arrived as yet. Two large flocks containing Marbled Godwit and DOWITCHER were seen overhead and landing in the distance. It was interesting to see both Northern and Red Phalarope together in the same salt pond. Both were in fall plumage. Leader: Ralph Trullinger

Montalvo - Sept. 15

10 species were outnumbered by 11 observers who enjoyed the many marked exotic plants on these beautiful grounds. Most notable species were American Goldfinch, Hutton's Vireo, California Thrasher and Downy Woodpecker. Leader: Clyde Prussman

June 19 and 26 - 1 Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher in Foothill Park. -K. & R. McCann (I saw 10 Blue-Gray's in 1964 and no Ash-Throated Flycatchers; in 1965 the ratio was exactly reversed. Has this reversal been noticed by anyone else? Any theories? Nesting site competition perhaps? ? Leader: E. Curtis

July 7 - Purple Martins and Bank Swallows nesting at outlet of Lexington Reservoir. Leaders: E. Smith, K. Lintott, M. Henderson

Sept. 1 - 16 Least Terns on southern part of bay. These interesting birds are smaller than the Forster's and can be distinguished from a distance by their very rapid bat-like flight. Leaders: E. Case and E. Curtis

Sept. 14 - 1 Green Heron, immature, on south bay. Leaders: E. Case and E. Curtis

Aug. 22-28 - Yosemite Park. Nighthawks, Black Swifts, Nashville Warblers, Tennessee Warblers, Hermit Warblers, Macgillivray's Warblers, Hammond's Flycatcher, Grayheaded Juncos, Williamson Sapsucker. Leaders: K. and R. McCann

Mrs. Emelie Curtis, San Jose 269-0778
Field Notes Compiler

Education Committee

Will those of you who live in the southern part of the county please take it upon yourselves to encourage groups in your area (such as schools and scouts) to make use of our Society's educational facilities?

We should like to thank Mrs. Donald Radke for her contribution of an excellent Tree Swallow picture to our slide file.

Diane Conradson, 327-2512

Conservation Notes

One question frequently asked is: "Does it really do any good to write to these politicians on controversial conservation issues?"--meaning, of course, letters to our Senators, Representatives, Department Secretaries, etc.

OF COURSE IT DOES! For proof, look up your September Avocet and see for yourself: Secretary Udall's letter to the Palo Alto City Council. Obviously, letters are given attention and do have an effect.

A five-cent postage stamp is a small price to pay for the attention given to our expressions of personal opinions on controversial and important conservation issues, when those stated opinions are backed up by facts rather than just our sentiments. These busy men, who are speaking for us, must consider facts.

INCIDENTALLY, since reading the September Avocet article on the "Lower Colorado Storage Project", have you written any letters?

NOW: to get away from controversial legislative issues: -----

This is the time of year when true Audubonites begin to think of fall migrations and our winter visitants. In view of the location and nature of many of our field trips at this time of year, it seems that we like to see as many of our migratory wildfowl as we can. We trek to Moss Landing and even to Morro Bay where we usually find Black Brants and Cinnamon Teal in the back-water sloughs; we inspect Richardson's Bay and the waters offshore from the Audubon Sanctuary at Tiburon where we see large concentrations of many species; one of our favorite places seems to be the Los Banos Wildfowl Refuge, where we are kept busy identifying and enjoying so many different species--too many to list here.

Shall we give a bit of thought to where these birds come from and what is being done to insure their survival?

Many people hold the erroneous idea that DUCK STAMPS are something like a hunting license, and that they are to be purchased by hunters to pay for the privilege of hunting. This is QUITE INCORRECT! It is true that every hunter must purchase a Stamp, BUT there is a very interesting story in the history of the Duck Stamps, and the use of the revenues derived from their sales.

This stamp is a Revenue Stamp, printed by the U. S. Government, and the funds derived from its sales are used for the National Wildlife Refuge System, by the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, of the U. S. Department of the Interior, which is the Federal agency charged with the custodianship of waterfowl while they are within the borders of the United States.

By the early 1900's, drainage had destroyed millions of acres of marsh and water areas formerly inhabited by waterfowl, fish and fur animals. Much of the drained land proved practically useless for farming or any other purpose. This early drainage, followed by the drought in the 1930's dried up tremendous areas of important nesting grounds in the north, resting areas along the flyways and wintering places in the south.

In 1934 Congress passed the Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp Act, which included a provision that not less than 90% of the receipts from stamp sales would be used for purchase, development, administration and maintenance of waterfowl refuges throughout the country. The stamps were to cost \$1.00 each.

Since 1934 there have been several very desirable amendments to the Act, the price of the stamp climbed to \$2.00, then to \$3.00, which is the current price at any U. S. Post Office.

Between 1934 and June 30, 1964, the revenue totaled more than \$84 million and was used to acquire over 440,000 acres of refuge lands, to purchase outright almost 55,000 acres, and to obtain easements prohibiting drainage of an additional 94,000 acres of wetlands for waterfowl production areas. In 1960, an amendment to the Act specified that all of the moneys except the actual expenses connected with the sale of the stamps by the Post Office Department must be used to acquire land for migratory birds. (Since 1960, the receipts have totaled more than \$16.5 million, to which Congress has added an appropriated \$25 million. The ready availability of these funds has enabled the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission to approve about 250,000 acres for addition to refuges and for new migratory bird refuges, in the past four years. This is almost as much waterfowl acreage as was acquired in the first three decades in which the migratory bird legislation was in operation!).

Thus, those of us who now purchase Duck Stamps do contribute directly to the acquisition, development and maintenance of National Wildlife Refuges. Spotted strategically along the flight paths of the birds, these refuges give sanctuary to great numbers of migrant and wintering ducks and geese.

The current issue of the Duck Stamp pictures three Canvasbacks in flight over open water. It shows the characteristic long, sloping head-profile, with an indication of the dark chest and the light back and upper wing surfaces.

For the benefit of those members who may wish to participate in this "direct action" program of perpetuating wetlands for wildfowl, I shall have several Duck Stamps available (for \$3.00 each) at each of our meetings, from now until July, 1966.

In the meantime, good birding, but please give some thought to the necessity of insuring the perpetuation of ALL of our forms of wildlife, and their necessary habitats. "Environmental Conservation" is a part of Audubon philosophy and of our conservation program.

Lloyd N. Case, Conservation Chairman

Budget

A proposed 1965-66 budget was approved at the Sept. 16 Board Meeting. It assumes an estimated income of \$1390.00 (450 members at \$3.00 plus sales and subscriptions) and expenditures of \$1262.50. Main expenditures are for the Avocet (\$460.00), Condor fund (\$250), other contributions, scholarships and organizational operating expenses.

Joyce Todd, Treasurer

San Francisco Bay

On July 29, 1965, Hugo Fisher, administrator of the Resources Agency of California, in a letter to Col. Allan of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, withdrew the state's objection to the Shoreline Properties--Bay Farm Island project. Thus, approval for the project was given in time for work to start before the fall moratorium (Sept. 17) set up by the McAteer-Petris Bill.

Several conditions were stated to granting this approval: a public yacht harbor adjacent to the project, a public beach along the entire south shore of the project to be constructed by Shoreline Properties, Inc., dredging of a navigation channel from Bay Farm Island into deep water in the bay, and the stipulation that new areas should be explored for establishing bird and wildlife sanctuaries.

An open letter from William Penn Mott (Aug. 11) challenged the enforceability of the conditions, and Mr. Fisher has attempted by letter and meetings to explain his haste, caused, he says, by contract deadlines of the Port of Oakland and the Bay Area Rapid Transit System tube operation. He has strongly reiterated the state's intention to enforce its conditions.

State Senator Eugene McAteer, author of the "Save-the-Bay Bill" spent an informal half-hour on KFRC's "In Search of A Solution" on Sept. 22. Throughout the program, he stressed the tremendous influence that concentrated group interest and action can have. (See Conservation Notes in this issue also.) Although he attempted to spread credit for the accomplishment evenly, he nevertheless singled out "... an outstanding ecologist from San Jose State, ...!"

Actually McAteer's notion on how the Commission might respond to proposals was not completely reassuring to this listener. He said he would like to see the S. F. Bay remain as it is, but that the real test is "Does this type of fill do irreparable damage to the shoreline of the Bay?"

He concluded with the reminder that if people want something and write, they can get it.

P. D. La Riviere

For Reading Enjoyment

Now in paperback, the beautifully told, simple story of the lone remaining Curlew: The Last of the Curlews, by Fred Bodsworth. (Dodd, Mead, N.Y.) \$1.75

Can modern Californians stop the destruction of their mountains, meadowlands, marshlands? An angry book decrying our trading away, as the American Indians did, "gold for glass beads."

The Destruction of California by Raymond F. Dasmann (MacMillan, N.Y.) illus. \$5.95

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