

The Avocet

-88-

Volume XII, Number 10

December, 1965

"BAY OF GOLD"

December 1, 1965
8:00 P.M.

Coop Meeting Room
200 California Ave. Palo Alto

This magnificent film, produced by the Fireman's Fund Insurance Company, has been made available to us for this evening. The hour long film has as its subject the "Bay of Gold" - San Francisco Bay, and concerns its beauty, geography, values, future needs and plans. It will make our next meeting a most valuable as well as entertaining one. All are invited: members, friends and visitors. Why not tell someone you know about this opportunity to see this film?

DECEMBER CALENDAR

General Meeting

Wed., Dec. 1, 8:00 P.M.; Palo Alto. See details above.

Field Trips

Sun., Dec. 5 to Los Banos as guests of the Santa Cruz Bird Club. Meet at Tiny's Restaurant on Highway #152, Los Banos, and be ready to leave for the Refuge at 9:45 A.M. It is worth the trip to Los Banos to view myriads of Ducks, Geese, Whistling Swans, Sandhill Cranes, and other wintering water birds. Carlyle Sather will again lead the trip to Buttonwillow Lake. For information call Ralph Trullinger 854-4201

Sat., Dec. 18, The Santa Cruz Bird Club invites interested birders to the Frank Ertle persimmon orchard in Skyland, Santa Cruz Mts. Meet at the intersection of old Santa Cruz Rd. and Summit Rd. at 10:00 A.M.

Mrs. Wittgenstein 354-9420

Christmas Count

Sun., Dec. 26, 7:30 A.M. - See details elsewhere in this issue.

COMING EVENTS AT A GLANCE

Wed., Dec. 1	8:00 P.M.	Palo Alto (General Meeting)
Sun., Dec. 5	9:45 A.M.	Los Banos
Sat., Dec. 18	10:00 A.M.	Santa Cruz Mountains
Sun., Dec. 26	7:30 A.M.	San Jose (Christmas Count)



THE MARSHLANDS AND OTHER PROJECTS

Last month I discussed a few ideas about recreational activities for our Society. The response has been very encouraging. For example, Mrs. Alice Silberling has investigated charter bus rates and has learned that our proposed trip to Pt. Reyes would cost less than \$3.50 a person. So we have something to look forward to in the spring if enough interest materializes.

This month I'd like to mention just a few of the conservation ideas which have been bouncing around in my head. I think the most logical project would be an extension of our Palo Alto Baylands project to the other South Bay baylands such as Mountain View, Sunnyvale, Alviso, and up to the Dumbarton Bridge area. We need first to determine which areas, public and private, are worthwhile preserving. Then we need to organize for each town to do the job. You are aware, I'm sure, of the proposals by Mountain View and Sunnyvale to persuade the county to put in baylands recreation areas in their towns. But are there some fine natural areas which should be preserved and included in such plans rather than being "developed" for recreation? Secondly, there is a matter of the county bounty on mountain lions which should be eliminated. John Brokenshire has laid the groundwork with the supervisors; we only need a good concerted educational job on them now. Well, there is no end to conservation projects. We have creek-chain parks, scenic highways and parkways, parks in the foothills and many, many more projects. Lloyd Case, our conservation chairman, has indicated that he would like to organize a core action group of Audubon members from each community to watchdog and work on the local level.

How do we accomplish these things? Clearly, each of us must budget a part of his time (perhaps only a tiny fraction) for work on our conservation projects.

If you can do this, please let us know.

Herb Grench, President
321-7994

OCTOBER BOARD MEETING

The Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society met at the home of the McCanns, 12 persons attending.

Dr. Shellhammer reported that programs will include an Audubon film, "Islands of Green", a Firemen's Fund film "Bay of Gold", reports from Dr. Mewaldt and a California fish and game representative, a message from Mrs. Wittgenstein concerning her trip to the National Audubon Convention in Boston, a program to be given by Harriet Mundy, one by Mr. Phil Arnot on the North Cascades as a national park. Harold Gilliam is not free to talk to the group this season. Mrs. McCann suggested that a discussion of the geology of San Francisco Bay might be given by a San Jose State staff member.

Mrs. Conradson reported that Mrs. Proctor and others have been taking young groups on field trips and that starting the program with pictures helps to focus interest. She suggested that it would be useful also if the society owned some binoculars, a spotting scope and some copies of the old edition of Peterson. Dr. Harvey will see if some old copies might be available from San Jose State.

Mr. Trullinger reported on the Christmas count.

Planned trips open to the public should be announced in the local paper as to time, date and place. Saturdays were thought to be the best time, and desirability of two leaders mentioned. Mr. Case reminded us that check-lists are helpful and, on narrow trails, frequent stops for discussion. Dr. Harvey's Scott Valley trip was noteworthy as a search for "indications of fall". Various projected trips were mentioned including a possible bay trip on one of the sea scouts boats.

Membership blanks now need zip code numbers which lower postal rate.

It was voted that 50 copies of Mrs. Proctor's bird notes which appeared in last season's AVOCET be mimeographed.

Since Admiral Williams has given much attention to revision of by-laws, the review committee is awaiting his return for further consideration.

In view of Mr. Dean Kingman's letter sent to Mayor Edw. Arnold (with copies to Kiethley and Santana) Dr. Harvey drafted a reply to be sent to Mayor Arnold care of the city council. After discussion it was voted that this letter be sent with approval of our Audubon group. Although Mr. Kingman's proposal recommended only 200 ft. eastward extension into the baylands for the airport, with a northward location for spoil and

use of part of the present golf course, certain of his premises seemed to require a reply from conservationists' view. His assumption that the marshes are not "static" was answered by Dr. Harvey's reference to an 1899 map of the area which demonstrated that change is so slow that shorelines remain essentially similar over more than half a century. Even if a compromise 200 ft. strip may appear a nominal encroachment on the marshes leaving additional saltland undisturbed, tidal action is needed to maintain marshlands, and unless an area is diked off it would be lost permanently to the bay. To Mr. Kingman's insistence on circumventing citizen's groups Dr. Harvey replied that professional naturalists as well as engineers are needed in determination of land use, and these were omitted from Mr. Kingman's definition of "professionals".

In further discussion of the Audubon plan for the baylands it was also pointed out that the yacht harbor plan as well is held up by the County's delay in deciding on spoil disposition.

Mr. Case reported that local conservation groups are assisted by Mrs. Cisne's membership lists arranged by geographical areas. There are 9 members concerned with Mt. View recreation plan; 11 Sunnyvale members are involved, one a member of the city council. The question of whether areas bordering the south bay and owned by Leslie Salt Co. are to be sold or set aside in accordance with the McAteer bill was considered. A map was shown describing tracts and boundaries under discussion. Dr. Shellhammer noted that the President of the State College had written to the President of Leslie Salt in regard to setting aside certain tideland areas and had received a negative reply. The large populations of mudflat and offshore birds of these areas were mentioned and possibility of California Fish and Game help in preservation of banks along sloughs and tidelands as reserved areas. Current price of marshland approximates \$3000 an acre. Dumbarton, an abundant duck area, is only a temporary sanctuary.

Dr. Grench reported on Bay Conservation and Development Commission Dinner at which McAteer and Lane spoke.

Mrs. Wittgenstein reported on the Audubon Convention which she attended and agreed to give a similar account to a general meeting. She noted that there has been a change in policy regarding nature centers and sanctuaries, the size varying from 8 to 100,000 acres.

Mrs. Kay McCann discussed the Gold Beach Bluff area. A map showed it to be a piece out of Prairie Creek Park. A beach road through the redwoods is recommended by the State Highway Department. An alternative route would skirt the park to the east. A ridge road is a compromise solution. Token contribution of \$100 toward the 500,000 still needed by Save-The-Redwoods-League was proposed by Dr. Harvey. It was voted

that this amount be sent by the treasurer 1 month prior to the dead line.

Next meeting to be held at the home of Dr. Harvey on the 3rd wednesday in November.

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Felin,
Secretary

NOTES FROM AFIELD

Alviso - Oct. 13, Leader: Catherine Lintott

A sunny morning, no wind. At the school we saw two White-tailed Kites sitting together in a dead shrubby tree: later, a Sparrow Hawk in same area. At gate to the levee were Meadow Larks, Song and Savannah Sparrows. Among the thirty species seen were Western Grebe, Pied-billed Grebe, Black-crowned Night Heron, Long-billed Curlew, Black-bellied Plover, Ruddy, Scaup, Shoveller, Mallard, Pintail, White Pelicans, and a flock of unidentified geese.

Dumbarton - Oct. 16, Leaders: Mr. & Mrs. Les Sleeper

A group of Black-necked Stilte were feeding at the radio station, and a large flock of White Pelicans wheeled over the Coyote hills. Other species of note were: White-tailed Kite, Marbled Godwits, a pond full of Avocets, Dunlin, and a Black-bellied Plover laboriously lifting his heavy muddied feet.

(E. G. C.)

AlumRock Park - Oct. 24, Leader: Fanny Zwaal

A beautiful clear day with warm sunshine. The birding was fairly good and included: Yellow-bellied Sapsucker; Nuttall's Woodpecker; Canyon and Bewick's Wrens; Townsend's Warbler; Fox, Song, Golden-crowned, and White-crowned Sparrows; and Anna's Hummingbird. The total number of species were 27.

Felt Lake - Oct. 27, Leader: Virginia Bothwell

Typical fall day - chilly in the morning and warm later. Among 24 species were Black Phoebe, Lesser Goldfinch, Nuttal's Woodpecker, and grebe.

Field Notes:

- Sept. 16 - 8 Cedar Waxwings by Evelyn Hester.
Oct. 2 - At Pt. Lobes a Red-eyed Vireo with Audubon Warblers by Russ Greenberg.
Oct. 17 - At Stanford Mausoleum a Yellow-shafted Flicker (hybrid golden wing shaft, yellow tail shafts, red nape patch, red whiskers) by Russ Greenberg.
Oct. 8-12 and Nov. 7, 8 - Black-throated Gray Warbler at Saratoga by Eleanor Radke.
Nov. 5 - 2 Palm Warblers at Neary Lagoon - Viola Anderson.

Field Notes Compiler
Emelie G. Curtis, P.O. Box 307
Morgan Hill, Calif., 779-2637

FOR READING ENJOYMENT

An interesting article mentioning the work of our former member, Bob Wood:

"Animal Ecology in Antarctica" by Richard S. Peterson in Pacific Discovery - Nov.-Dec. '65.

Try this on your little child - fun for you both:

Sandpipers by Edith Thacher Hurd (Thos. Y. Crowell, N.Y.) 1961.

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome to our new members:

Mr. & Mrs. Richard J. Boubelik
4110 Sutherland Drive, Palo Alto, Calif.

Helen H. Buckholz
755 Raymundo Ave., Los Altos, Calif.

Henry A. Dietz
19020 Portas Dr., Saratoga, Calif.

Mrs. W. K. Estes
900 Lathrop Drive, Stanford, Calif.

Konard Kluver
945 Woodland Ave., Menlo Park, Calif.

MEMBERSHIP

Byron V. Walker
165 Downer Ave. SP 79, San Jose, Calif. 95123

Steven Bowerman (Student)
4921 Paseo Olivas, San Jose, Calif.

Richard Boubelick (Student)
4110 Sutherland Dr., Palo Alto, Calif.

Peggy Hutsell (Student)
1304 Freda Count, Campbell, Calif. 95008

Alan Walther (Student)
16501 Marchmont Dr., Los Gatos, Calif.

With sadness we report the deaths of Miss Mary Meehan, August 10, and Mr. John Hoeck, November 2, 1965.

Fanny Zwaal,
Registrar

CONSERVATION NOTES

Whooping Cranes, one of the Audubon Society's top-priority projects, always attract our attention at this time of year, at the completion of the fall migration. This year, the Department of the Interior reports that, as of Nov. 8th, 31 of these great birds, including 7 young, have completed the long migration flight from Canada to the Aransas Wild Life Refuge in Texas. We have noted with regret that one adult did not complete the journey; a collision with a high-power line resulted in fatal injuries.

The increase in numbers this year is small and further gains will probably continue to be small each year. But, with continued vigilance on the part of all Audubon members and other interested parties, the cranes should be able to successfully traverse the "long road back" from the verge of extinction.

Waterfowl, specifically our wild ducks and geese, claim a great deal of attention at this time of year, when they are appearing in large numbers in our areas. (This is the time of year when we usually think about visiting the Richardson's Bay Refuge, the Los Banos Refuge, the Merced Refuge, or the Sacramento Refuge together with the other units in that area.) This year, those who go afield, awater-fowling,

should be amply rewarded! I do not make that statement as a prediction, but merely to observe that because the Canadian Prairie water conditions were right, the fall flight this year has been comparable to that of 1964. The later nesting species (Widgeon, Gadwall, Shoveler, Blue-winged teal, Mallard and Pin-tail) should produce about the same numbers as in 1964. This means, actually, that if we go to our favorite spots for observing ducks and/or geese, we should be rewarded by seeing at least as many birds as we saw last year; probably more.

"Duck Stamps": these two words come to my mind when I think of our migratory waterfowl. Just by way of a bit of follow-up on the recent article on the Duck Stamps. Total sales have increased for the third year in succession. The Mississippi Flyway area has lead in total numbers sold, during the last four years, but California, with sales in excess of 120,000 has had the honor of being the leading state during the last four years.

Wilderness

The present time is one of interest to all those who worked for the passage of the Wilderness Act of Sept. 3, 1964 (PL 88-577). It is of particular importance of us of the Audubon Society, because the present action definitely involves the welfare of the California Condors; and we, for the past several years, have contributed rather generously to the Audubon Condor Sanctuary Fund.

As you will recall, The Wilderness Act stipulates that the Secretary of Agriculture review each area presently classified as "primitive", as to its suitability for wilderness, and to report his findings, with recommendations, to the President.

The San Rafael Primitive area in Southern California is the first unit of wilderness in the United States to be proposed for addition to the new Wilderness Preservation System, under the procedures of the 1964 Wilderness Act. As the first unit of wilderness to undergo review, it is a test case of far-reaching significance in setting a pattern for rounding out the National Wilderness Preservation System. It is of particular importance to us, because the Condor Refuge lies within this area.

The Forest Service developed a recommendation, and held hearings on its proposal in Santa Barbara on November 8. The Forest Service recommendation added a rather large area to the present primitive area, all of which would become Wilderness Area. An alternate proposal, presented and supported by The Wilderness Society, The Sierra Club, The National Audubon Society, The Federation of Outdoor Clubs, and other

conservation groups called for the additional inclusion of significant adjacent areas of land.

At the hearing, the units proposed for addition by the Forest Service were designated as Units A and B; the units proposed for addition by the Wilderness Society were designated as Units C, D, and E. The addition of these three units should have the active support of Audubon members.

At the same time, the proposal of the Forest Service to exclude an area designated as Area 1, should be vigorously opposed! Because of the great importance of large conifer trees as Condor roosting sites, and because of the anticipated increase in use of this area by Condors as the restoration program progresses, it is vitally important that the "Big Pine Mountain-Madulce Peak Unit" remain in the Wilerdess Area.

It is now too late to have opinions included in the record of the hearing, but it is not too late for private opinions to be expressed to yours Senators, Representatives (in Washington), and to The Secretary of Agriculture, The Secretary of the Interior, and President Johnson. Written Statements submitted to The Regional Forester (630 Sansome Street, San Francisco) may still be of some value. Remember to urge that Area 1, and Unit E be definitely included, because of their importance to the Condor Restoration Program, and to the scenic integrity of the region.

L. N. Case

Sunday, December 26, Annual Christmas Bird Count

Meeting Place: Security Savings, 2830 Alum Rock Ave., San Jose.

Time: 7:30 a.m.; Bring lunch; Reconvene at 4:30 sharp.

Refreshments will be served during the tally.

Count Areas: Same as in the past years: - a circular area 15 miles in diameter, with center at junction a Mabury Rd., and Capitol Ave., north-east 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 Hwy."), and on the south by Bayshore Highway. Bayshore Hwy. is inside this sector.

Leader: Dr. Thomas Harvey, 716 Garner Ct., Santa Clara, Tel. CH3-6956.

- B. Southwest Sector: bounded on the north and east by Bayshore Highway. South of Alum Rock Ave., the Bayshore Hwy. is inside this sector.
Leader: Mrs. Charles Zwaal, 478 Clifton, San Jose, Tel. 292-2060.
- C. Evergreen Sector: bounded by Bayshore Highway, Alum Rock Ave., and Mt. Hamilton Rd. Mt. Hamilton Rd. is inside this sector.
Leader: Mr. Roy Cameron, 20560 Komina Ave., Saratoga, Tel. 867-9309.
- D. Alum Rock Sector: bounded on the south by Mt. Hamilton Rd., Alum Rock Ave., and Bayshore Hwy.; on the north by Capitol Ave. and Sierra Rd.; on the west by State Hwy. 17 (the "Old Oakland Hwy."). Alum Rock Ave., Bayshore Hwy., Oakland Hwy., and Capitol Ave. are all inside this sector.
Leader: Mr. Phil Gordon, 37758 Elmore Ct., Fremont, Tel. 793-6391.
- E. Calaveras Sector: bounded by Sierra Rd., Capitol Ave., and the Old Oakland Hwy. Sierra Rd. and the Oakland Hwy. are inside this sector.
Leader: Mr. Albert J. Wool, box 68, La Honda, Tel. 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 the sector which they wish. If you know 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 before hand how many observers (and cars) he can count on for his sector.

If you have any questions, call:

Ralph Trullinger 854-4201, or one of the leaders.

Records: One person in each group will act as recorder, and will record 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 \pm 300. If unable to estimate the degree of accuracy, record the estimate as: "2,000 est."

In adding estimates to the actual counts, in the final tally indicate the accuracy in this way: Coots: 2,173 (2000 + 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 keep a record of:

- 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 an important factor in the overall picture that is developed from the data submitted by each group.

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) % 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 streams, oak woodland, grass land, golf course, etc. Give the percentage of total field time spent in each habitat.

THE BIRDS OF FOOTHILLS PARK

On October 31, 1965 the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society conducted a Bird Census of Foothills Park in Palo Alto from 7 A.M. to 11 A.M. The morning was foggy and cool. There were 18 observers and 7 territories. 56 species and 1311 individuals were observed. The territories were divided as follows:

- Territory A -- the lake and marsh.
 - Observers - Howard and Margaret Wolcott
- Territory B -- the Toyon Trail.
 - Observers - Bob Badaracco, Tom Harvey, Diane Conradson
- Territory C -- the Chamise Trail, road to Vista Hill.
 - Observers - Emelie Curtis, Florence La Riviere
- Territory D -- Lee Grove and Las Trampas Valley.
 - Observers - Warren and Rebecca Turner, Jill Cisne, Russel Greenberg.
- Territory E -- Steep Hollow Trail to Sunrise Trail.
 - Observers - Ray McCann, Herb Grench
- Territory F -- Trappers Trail and Madrone Canyon.
 - Observers - Ralph Trullinger, Joe Wissel, Frank and Jane Goraj
- Territory G -- Wildhorse Canyon.
 - Observers - Kay McCann and the Turners

H A B I T A T

BIRD SPECIES	CHAPARRAL	OAK WOOD	BAY FOREST	ORCHARD-GRASS	LAKE-MARSH	TOTAL
Great Blue Heron	1					1
Mallard	12					12
Ruddy Duck	1					1
Cooper's Hawk	1					1
Red-tailed Hawk	1					1
Sparrow Hawk	1					1
California Quail	47	12	9	28		96
California Gull				1		1
Mourning Dove				8		8
Great-horned Owl				1		1
Anna's Hummungbird	1	3				4
Red-shafted Flicker	12	17	1	10		40
Acorn Woodpecker		2	1			3
Hairy Woodpecker		1				1
Downey Woodpecker		3	3			6

BIRD SPECIES	CHAPARRAL	OAK WOOD	BAY FOREST	ORCHARD-GRASS	LAKE-MARSH	TOTAL
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker				2		2
Black Phoebe			1		1	2
Say's Phoebe			2			2
Stellar's Jay	15	14	15			44
Scrub Jay	22	31	25			78
Chickadee	1	30	24			55
Plain Titmouse	3	28	5			36
Common Bushtit	129	36	60			225
Brown Creeper			4			4
Wrentit	29	10	13			52
House Wren	2		1			3
Winter Wren			2			2
Bewick's Wren	34	10	3			47
Mockingbird			1			1
California Thrasher	9	3	3			15
Robin	3	2		1		6
Hermit Thrush	1	7	2			10
Swainson's Thrush		1	5			6
Western Bluebird	3		1			4
Golden-crowned Kinglet		2				2
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1	54	3			58
Water Pipit				10		10
Cedar Waxwing	21	9				30
Hutton's Vireo	1	4				5
Audubon's Warbler		10	2			12
Townsend's Warbler	1	1	3			5
Western Meadowlark				15		15
Brewer's Blackbird	31					31
House Finch	26		3	5		34
Pine Siskin	12					12
Lesser Goldfinch	45		7	1		53
Lawrence's Goldfinch	2					2
Rufous-sided Towhee	10	16	4			30
Brown Towhee		7	27	30		64
Lark Sparrow				1		1
Oregon Junco	18	41	43			102
White-crowned Sparrow		3	25			28
Golden-crowned Sparrow	43	10	41			94
Fox Sparrow	3		2			5
Lincoln's Sparrow				1		1
Song Sparrow	12					12

I wish to thank Bob Badaracco, Chief Ranger at Foothills Park, for his help in setting up territories and for working with us on the day of the census. Many thanks to Rebecca Turner who helped me compile these figures. And thanks to those who turned out on a raw, foggy morning at 7 A.M. to count. Mr. Badaracco will be able to use the information gathered for educational purpose. We plan to have three censuses a year until the bird population of the park has been established. The next ones will be the third week of March, the third week of May, and the first week of October, 1966.

Kay McCann, Leader

A V O C E T

Our publication appears monthly except July and August. It is \$ 2.00 a year for non-members.

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