

The Avocet

Volume XIII, Number 4

April 1966

BIRDS AND WILDFLOWERS OF MEXICO

8:00 P.M.
Wednesday, April 13

Co-Op Meeting Room
200 California Ave, Palo Alto

Bill Anderson, California Department of Fish and Game, will show us some of his slides of this region. He also promises a "surprise" and I am sure you will find it a delightful and rewarding one. Your program chairman has seen some of Bill's slides, especially his tele-photo bird slides, and they are magnificent. Hope to see you there, especially those from the San Jose area, at this meeting to be held in the usual meeting place, the Co-Op Meeting Room (across the parking lot from the market), but on Wednesday, April 13th. Note the date-- the second Wednesday of the month.

COMING EVENTS AT A GLANCE

Sun. Apr. 3	9:00 A.M.	Duveneck Ranch
Wed. Apr. 13	9:00 A.M.	Chesbro Dam
Wed. Apr. 13	8:00 P.M.	P. A. (General Meeting)
Sun. Apr. 17	9:00 A.M.	Pilarcitos
Wed. Apr. 20	7:45 P.M.	Board
Wed. Apr. 27	9:00 A.M.	Pilarcitos

"Ask not ..."

Spring is upon us;
The Audubon Warbler sings.
Do not ask for whom he sings;
He calls for thee.

For, you see, Spring is that time of year when our nominating committee forms to seek officers and committee members. I shall encourage the committee to contact as many of you as possible to see where and to what extent you want to fit into our program. Service on a committee may only require a couple of hours in a whole year; however, our society is strengthened greatly by the involvement of people to even a small extent. Better than waiting to be asked is letting us know that you want to do something in a particular field.

We can look forward to two new activities this spring if there is interest. First, we are planning a field trip via chartered bus to Pt. Reyes. Second, I propose that we have a family picnic--for this we will need some volunteers to make arrangements.

A happy and glorious Spring to you!

Herb Grench, President
321-7994



April Calendar

General Meeting

Wednesday, April 13, 8:00 P.M. Palo Alto (see first page).

Board Meeting

Wednesday, April 20, 7:45 P.M. Place to be announced.

Field Trips

Sunday, April 3. A special field trip, open to the public, to Duveneck Ranch. Meet at the Ranch at 9:00 A.M. Turn off Moody Rd. in Los Altos Hills at Hidden Villa Ranch. Meet in the olive grove just beyond the gate. For information, call Kay McCann, 327-4138 or Ralph Trullinger, 854-4201.

Wednesday, April 13, 9:00 A.M., to Chesbro Dam and Llagas Creek at the Machado School Area, Morgan Hill. Meet at King's Court parking area, corner of Blossom Hill Rd. and Los-Gatos-San Jose Rd., Los Gatos. Bring lunch if desired. Leaders: Emmanuel and Mary Taylor, 779-9097.

Sunday, April 17, 9:00 A.M., to Pilarcitos Lake and Stone Dam on the San Francisco Watershed Reserve. Meet at Las Pulgas Water Temple on Canada Rd., about 5 miles north of Woodside. Bring lunch (all day trip). Leaders: Mark and Leota Massle of Fresno. For information, call Manette Wittgenstein, 354-9420.

Wednesday, April 27, 9:00 A.M., to Pilarcitos Lake. Meet at Las Pulgas Water Temple (Canada Rd.). Bring lunch. Return about 3:30. Leaders: Ray McCann, 327-4138.

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Books---Africa

By request, Harriet Mundy has prepared a special reading list for those who were inspired (probably all who heard it) by her talk on Africa:

African Genesis by Richard Ardrey, Delta paperback, \$1.95.

The Flame Trees of Thika and The Mottled Lizard both by Elspeth Huxley, Chatto and Windus, 42 William IV St., London WC2. The Flame Trees is also in a Penguin paper edition, possibly the Lizard is, too.

Journey to the Jade Sea by John Hillaby, Simon and Schuster.

Serengeti Shall Not Die by Bernhard and Michael Grzimak, Dutton, \$3.95, but the Palo Alto Library has it.

Mystery of the Flamingoes by Leslie Brown. Not in P.A. Library, but Eve Case may have it.

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A SPECIAL CONCERN

A REDWOOD NATIONAL PARK BUT WHERE? . . . HOW LARGE?

The establishment of a Coast Redwoods National Park has been a matter of public interest for fifty years.

In 1918 the Save-the-Redwoods League made the establishment of a "National Redwoods Park" one of its principle objectives. Since then, the League has raised over \$12 million, which has been matched by the State of California, to preserve outstanding redwood groves in a number of state parks.

Today, a number of disconnected units which include 50,000 acres of primeval redwoods have been given state park protection, but the remaining privately owned forest is being rapidly logged off--in a rush to get it, while the getting is good!

ONLY TWO AREAS SEEM TO BE WORTHY OF SERIOUS CONSIDERATION AS POSSIBLE NATIONAL PARKS!

After a year's survey, completed September 15, 1964, the National Park Service has published its report. The report designated as "certainly the most significant large block in terms of park values", the Redwood Creek Valley and adjacent tributary valleys of Lost Man, and Prairie Creeks, the latter being in an existing State Park. The Park Service recommended a preliminary first-choice Redwood National Park of some 53,000 acres in that area.

Since last October, over 30 bills have been introduced in the House of Representatives; and one in the Senate, by Sen. Lee Metcalf of Montana, that proposed a scenically and ecologically more complete national park of 90,000 acres.

Here are a number of outstanding features of the Redwood Creek (Saylor-Cohelan-Metcalf) proposal:

- 1) an unequalled sweep of primeval forest, extending almost unbroken from the coastal "near-rain-forests" southeastward across the width of the Redwood belt;
- 2) some of the most beautiful stands of the 500-year to 2,000-year-old giant trees, particularly in the existing Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, the Lost Man watershed, and along the lower flats of the Redwood Creek Valley;
- 3) a dozen or more unaltered tributary streams that are almost the only streams in the redwood region that have not been impaired by erosion from logging activity;
- 4) spectacular vistas of the last large valley of primeval forest: Redwood Creek;
- 5) the scenic Gold Bluffs seashore, which is one of the few unspoiled beaches on the entire west coast, and includes the adjacent Fern Canyon, with fern-covered sheer walls;
- 6) herds of native Roosevelt Elk, some of which reside (as nowhere else in the world) near the ocean, on the broad beach;
- 7) the tallest trees in the world (yet known, that is) soaring 367 feet, located in the heart of the Redwood Creek Valley;
- 8) a dozen miles of Redwood Creek that are valued for spring boat trips between "walls" of towering trees.

Of the 90,000 acres in the Redwood Creek Valley proposal, about 12,000 acres are within Prairie Creek State Park. Approximately 30,000 acres of privately owned primeval redwoods would be saved from logging.

(continued on page 40.)

A Special Concern (continued from pg 39)

Doesn't the summary of "outstanding features" make you want to spend some time in that area--relaxed and able to enjoy the birds, wildlife, native flora, and all of the natural beauty of such an area? Many of us have been in that general area, in years past, before it was so seriously threatened; we recall its superlative natural beauty. If we enjoy it, is it not worth saving for the coming generations to enjoy? If it is taken away, it will never be there anymore!

A letter of thanks and encouragement to Rep. Jeffery Cohelan, and letters expressing our personal opinions to our own Senators and Representatives in Washington add up to a very small price to pay for the satisfaction of having contributed to such a long-range project that will provide for the "enjoyment-of-nature" by so many people, for so many years!

A reference to the Saylor-Cohelan-Metcalf proposal will probably include the desirable Senate and House bills. For specific reference, the bills are:

H.R. 11705, by Rep. John P. Saylor (Pa.)

H.R. 11723, by Rep. Jeffery Cohelan (Calif.)

Amendment 487 to Sen Thomas H. Kuchel's S. 2962, by Sen.
Lee Metcalf (Mont.)

L. N. Case

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CONSERVATION NOTES

We noted with regret that our National Audubon Society President, Carl W. Buchheister, was compelled by illness and other circumstances to withdraw his name from the ballot for new directors of The Sierra Club. Both organizations will be losers.

In looking ahead and considering the conservation issues that are going to be of top-priority this year, a Sierra Club editor commented that "no general in his right mind would commit his forces to combat on three fronts if he could possibly help it, but conservation leaders have no choice."

The three fronts referred to are not new issues, but three very important conservation issues which are 'jelling' simultaneously. If you are cooking dinner, and three sauce-pans on the stove reach their final moment at one-and-the-same time, you are not going to "just stand there"! Well, we cannot "just sit here" without taking some quick and definite action about the issue of a national park in the North Cascades, and the proposed (but absolutely unnecessary) dams at Bridge Canyon and at Marble Gorge, on the Colorado River in the inner gorge of the Canyon.

These are not the only issues, of course, but with these three, time is of the essence.

It appears that our hoped-for Seashore National Park project is not going to receive the attention of Congress at this session. Even so, it would not be amiss to inform your Senator and your Congressman of your personal desires to see suitable areas of our northern California beaches set aside as National Parks, at the earliest possible time. California's population is increasing much too rapidly for conservation measures to keep up. Every year of delay means just that much less available area for "Natural Beauty Areas".

(continued on page 41)

Conservation Notes (continued from page 40)

(Trying to mention all that I feel is important enough to deserve serious consideration, and to condense it into a page and a half makes me feel that I am something like a drop of cold water on a hot skillet!)

While our 'area' problems are very important conservation problems, I think that most of us feel that our wildlife problems are our special interest. Quite fittingly, then, the problem of "Survival Or Surrender" of any of our wildlife species faced with possible extinction, should demand our greatest interest and attention. Aldo Leopold wrote that for one species to mourn the extinction of another was something new under the sun--that we mourned the loss of the Carrier Pigeons, but that if it had been our funeral, the pigeons couldn't have cared less!

Historical geology shows us that through the eons of time there have been countless species that have lived and died after being an important part of the "Web of Life" and the balance of nature. These prehistoric species that disappeared before the relatively recent arrival of man did so because of slow changes, such as elimination of habitat by glacial advance, or by encroachment of ocean-waters, or because of climatic changes and other such gradual processes. But man, with his 'civilized' technology and ability to change an environment rapidly, his seemingly irresistible desire to 'monkey with the landscape', his uninformed and thoughtless introduction of competing species, and, particularly, with his more direct means of destruction, has greatly speeded up the disappearance of many species.

Our own North American continent has been the scene of the greatest number of extinctions since the beginning of 'historic time'. Species are disappearing faster than new ones are evolving. Among these can be counted five species of birds, ten mammals, at least seven fish: this is far from a complete count!

The Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, of the U.S. Department of the Interior, has established four categories: 1) endangered, 2) rare, 3) peripheral, and 4) status questionable.

An 'endangered' species is one whose prospects of survival and reproduction are in immediate jeopardy. Of 200 forms of mammals, birds, fishes, and reptiles listed as occurring naturally within the U.S. and Puerto Rico, 78 species are listed as endangered. This list includes 34 birds, 16 mammals, 25 fishes, 1 reptile and 2 amphibians. Our California Condors and the Whooping Cranes with estimated populations of 40 and 42, respectively, (in the wild) are in critical condition. The threat of extinction, in each case, is due directly to acts of man: extensive removal or alteration of habitats and environmental requirements, as well as shooting.

The best hope for remedying this situation appears to be an aroused public opinion insisting on strict enforcement of existing laws, the providing of additional refuge areas, the restoration of suitable habitats, combined with a careful watch and check on encroachments of the sometimes unnecessary 'progress'.

This means, in fact, that every Audubon member should be as well informed on these issues as is possible, and that he should act as a 'committee-of-one' in the education of the general public regarding the conservation point of view.

Lloyd N. Case

Notes From Afield

Alum Rock Park--Feb. 9. Leaders: John Brokenshire, Eva McRae

It was sunny but quite cool with some wind down the canyon. Twelve persons attended, including four members of a local garden club. The number of species identified was not impressive; but some of the individual birds were very satisfactory, especially to people new at bird study. The Varied Thrush gave us long and close-up views of itself as it fed on Toyon berries. A California Thrasher sang at length from the top of a leafless shrub; and a pair of flickers displayed themselves close at hand as well as identified themselves with song and call notes. Other birds of interest seen were: Red-tailed Hawk, Golden Eagle, Wrenit, Bewick's Wren, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Loggerhead Shrike, Audubon's Warbler, Rufous-sided Towhee, and Anna's Hummingbird.
E. McRae

Henry Cowell State Park--Feb. 19. Leaders: Marie Siddens, Manette Wittgenstein

Ten birders braved rain and fog. Half of the group stayed in the park; the others sought refuge in Mrs. Boylan's home in Mt. Hermon. Birding was surprisingly good--twenty species recorded by each group. Highlights in the park were the ever-present Varied Thrushes, Brown Creeper, Townsend Warbler, Bandtailed Pigeons. At the Boylan home we observed a large flock of Pine Siskins, Anna and Allen Hummingbirds at the feeder. Bygmy Nuthatches and Chickadees took walnut meats from our hands.

Searsville Lake--Feb. 23. Leader: Flora Houck

Ring-necked Ducks! If you're looking for them as I've been, they're all at Searsville Lake. Three hundred and seventy-two of them! Seventeen people enjoyed an unexpectedly spring-like morning birding along the lake, across open hillsides and down wooded ravines. A total of 49 species were checked off on the trip and the scouting day. Six Violet-green Swallows arrived on Wednesday. Bluebirds were busy with nesting materials. A Cooper's Hawk was driven away by a more daring Sparrow Hawk. Also of note were Greater and Lesser Scaup, Canvasback, Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, Hutton's Vireos, and Yellow-throats.

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Good birding has been reported by Mrs. Evelyn Hester at the percolation ponds off Highway 17 at the Camden exit. On Feb. 25 and 27, she saw, along with various ducks and shorebirds, four kinds of grebes: 25 Pied-billed, 1 Eared, 1 Western, and 4 Least Grebes. She says she saw the small grebes next to the Pied-billed Grebes and Ruddy Ducks, and they seemed very small; they had a white throat patch and appropriate bill; and they swam on the surface very fast, as though in a hurry. Mrs. Hester has a 20-power telescope. If anyone else has seen these small grebes, please notify Mrs. Hester, 15015 Karl Ave., Monte Sereno, or your field notes compiler.

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Rare bird reports: Mrs. Eleanor Bruce of Summit Rd. reports seeing on two successive mornings in February a 'different' bird. She had a very good look at it through binoculars as it perched on a limb for twenty minutes. It looked like a flycatcher, larger than a Black Phoebe, dark gray on the back and pale gray on the breast, with a definitely rose throat, and a sort of white line below the beak. This description fits that of a Rose-throated Becard which is a tropical bird and would indeed be rare this far north.
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Notes from Afield (continued from page 42)

Arrival dates of Violet-green Swallows:

Feb. 21 at Anderson Reservoir. E. Curtis
Feb. 25 at Camden, E. Hester
Feb. 26 at Chesbro Reservoir. Alan Walther

Mrs. Emelie G. Curtis, Field Note
Compiler
Box 307, Morgan Hill, Calif. 95037

SOME RARE HAWAIIAN NOTES

Mr. Warren Turner's notes from Kailua-Kona, on the Island of Hawaii: "Our hotel is built on a point jutting into the Pacific Ocean. Our second floor quarters are just above the large ocean waves rolling by. The great swells crest as they pass and thunder mightily into the black lava rocks that form the shore line. The country-side is quite dry and brown, very different from the lush green of Kauai and Oahu. Directly east, and 8500 feet above us is the volcano "Hualalai". On its lower slopes are the Kona coffee farms. We birded along the shore to the south where Koa and a mesquite-like tree, the Kiawe, grow along the road. Our first sight of the small, green-backed, vireo-like Mejiro was heralded by his soft, contented note--contented, no doubt, because of numerous bugs and spiders. Next we heard a Mockingbird-like call which proved to be from a handsome Cardinal! We looked for the Wandering Tattler, that timid, wild creature that follows the retreating waves, and saw one briefly. On the way back to the hotel we saw the Hawaiian Thrush, the "Omao", and heard his musical song. Of course, we saw and heard the common Barred Dove and Myna Bird.

There is one bird we have heard about but not seen. It is called the Ooh Ooh Ouch. According to Hawaiians, it is the only bird known to lay square eggs. When it lays the eggs or sits on them it calls out "ooh ooh OUCH",

SAVE THE BAY

On March 18 at the meeting of BCDC there will be a vote on a flood control project in Marin County. There have been public hearings on this project, known as the Corte Madera Flood Control Project, and I feel that this will be one of the most important votes to be taken so far.

At the last meeting, Mr. Frank Stead, Chief of the Division of Environmental Sanitation of the State Department of Public Health spoke to the Commission, citing the many conflicting interests with which it would have to deal. He pleaded with the members to make wise and knowledgeable decisions, and indicated that this might be the last chance for MEN to do this in the coming computer age. He begged them to think one thousand years ahead.

If filling continues at the present rate, 50 square miles will be consumed before 2000 A.D. Some way must be found to shrink this material to a smaller volume. As for sewage and garbage, disposal by present methods simply cannot continue. They must be treated in such a way that they can be returned to the land for, as he said, "replenishment". Having used that expression at the end of my African program the night before, I nearly fell out of my seat! How did he get the message so quickly?

(Continued on page 44)

Save the Bay (Continued from page 43)

I can hardly wait to see how they vote about Corte Madera. I feel that this will set a precedent and perhaps decide which way they will go in the future. Do try to attend some meetings--they are all fascinating, and the Commission must be kept aware that we the people are watching.

H. Mundy

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EDUCATION COMMITTEE NOTES

Our sincere thanks to Professors Harvey and Shellhammer for their wonderfully instructive workshop on program and field trip leadership. Practical matters were discussed and demonstrated--from name tag usage to plant physiology. The effectiveness of the education committee has been greatly enhanced through the efforts of both men.

A new address and telephone number for Education Chairman Diane Conradson: 4337 Miranda Ave., Palo Alto 941-2102.

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TWO WEEKS WITH PAY?

You might consider these:

Camp Denali, McKinley Park, Alaska. Tundra Wilderness Workshop this summer. Address: Camp Denali, Box D, College, Alaska--before June 1.

C. P. Lyons, who gave the first Screen Tour here last fall, is conducting 9-day spring tours of Mexico from Mazatlan. Groups are limited to five or six. Mr. Lyons has done travel films for the Canadian Broadcasting Company, and has visited Mexico eight times and completed a lecture film "Mexican Adventure". Dates of the tours are April 16 and 27, May 8, 19 and 30, and June 10. Cost is about \$220--from and return to Mazatlan. Cost of getting there is on you! For information, write Mr. Lyons: 1345 Monterey Ave., Victoria, B.C., Canada, or call Harriet Mundy, DA 5-1192.

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NEW MEMBERS

We welcome with pleasure our new members and invite their participation in meetings and field trips.

Mrs. R. C. Newton, Jr.
13551 Beaumont Ave.
Saratoga, Calif. 95070

Miss Margaret Zulch (Student)
350 Manzanita
Palo Alto, Calif.

Mrs. Ruth T. Goen
1054 Pine St.
Menlo Park, Calif. 94027

Mrs. Shyrle Roith (Student)
722 Marion Ave.
Palo Alto, Calif.

Mrs. Betty T. Azary
1373 Teakwood Dr., Apt. 94
San Jose, Calif. 95128

Mrs. Willis A. Roller
12781 West Sunset Dr.
Los Altos, Calif. 94022

Kim H. Newson (Student)
115 Via Santa Maria
Los Gatos, Calif.

Mr. & Mrs. James A. White
11567 Crooked Creek Dr.
Los Altos, Calif. 94022

John Dukat (Student)
573 Pinecrest Dr.
Los Altos, Calif. 94022

Dick R. Highfill
3805 Louis Road
Palo Alto, Calif., 94303

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New Members (Continued from page 44)

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Menlo Park, Calif.

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643 Jay St.
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Mrs. Margaret Penn
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Caroline Davis
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Avocet

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