

DECEMBER CALENDAR

Annual Count

Saturday, December 30, Annual Christmas Bird Count

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

Time: 7:30 A.M. Bring lunch. Reconvene at 4:30 P.M. sharp.

Refreshments will be served during the tally.

Count Areas: Same as in past years, i.e., a circular area 15 miles in diameter, with center at junction of Mabury Road and Capitol Avenue, northeast 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 Highway"), and on the south by Bayshore Highway. Bayshore Highway is inside this sector.

Leader: Dr. Thomas Harvey, 716 Garner Court, Santa Clara, tel. 243-6956

B. Southwest Sector: bounded on the north and east by Bayshore Highway, south of Alum Rock Avenue. Bayshore Highway is inside this sector.

Leaders: Mrs. Charles (Fannie) Zwaal, 478 Clifton Avenue, San Jose, Tel. 292-2060  
Mr. John Brokenshire, 102 South 23rd Street, San Jose, tel. 293-6289

C. Evergreen Sector: Bounded by Bayshore Highway, Alum Rock Avenue, and Mt. Hamilton Road. Mt. Hamilton Road is inside this sector.

Leader: Mr. Roy Cameron, 20560 Komina Avenue, Saratoga, tel. 867-9309

D. Alum Rock Sector: bounded on the south by Mt. Hamilton Road, Alum Rock Avenue, and Bayshore Highway, on the north by Capitol Avenue and Sierra Road, on the west by State Highway 17 (old Oakland Highway). Alum Rock Avenue, Bayshore Highway, Oakland Highway, and Capitol Avenue are all inside this sector.

Leader: Mr. Richard Sandkuhle, 1221 Glenwood Avenue, San Jose, tel. 292-1534

E. Calaveras Sector: bounded by Sierra Road, Capitol Avenue, and the old Oakland Highway. Sierra Road and the old Oakland Highway are inside this sector,

Leader: Mr. Albert J. Wool, Box 68, La Honda, tel. 747-0317

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.)

The Annual Christmas Bird Count Registration is your invitation to participate in this exciting event on Saturday, December 30. Please return your Registration Form not



later than December 15 so that the Sector Leaders can meet and organize their team personnel. The 1966 policy of equalizing the number of people on the various Sector Teams will be followed in 1967. Your first Sector preference checked on your Registration will be honored as far as possible. Information concerning the number of people and cars available will enable the Sector Leaders to plan more effective coverage of their respective areas.

Records: One person in each group will serve 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, e.g., 2000 + 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 as follows: Coot: 2173 (2,000 + 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 the following: (1) hours spent (a) on foot and (b) by car; (2) mileage covered (a) on foot and (b) by car. This information is an important factor in the overall picture that is developed from the data submitted by each group.

Because weather conditions affect the activity of birds, and influence the results of the count, please try to keep a record of (1) minimum and maximum temperature; (2) wind direction and approximate velocity; (3) percent 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 spent in each, such as salt marsh, canyon stream, oak woodland, grassland, golf course, etc. Give the percentage of total field time spent in each habitat.

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PRESIDENT ASKS FOR MORE "TROOPS - When any organization covers as much geographical area as our Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society does, and has as large a membership as ours, it is obvious that the majority of the members are not going to be able to attend all, or even many, of the regular monthly meetings. Believing that an "informed membership is likely to be an interested membership", we are hoping to counteract the inability to attend meetings by using the Avocet to keep you informed as to what is going on behind the scenes, - what your officers, directors, and committee chairmen are doing, in conducting their respective parts of the business of the Society.

No organization, however, can be successful and effective with "All officers and no troops", or "All chiefs and no Indians", so we earnestly urge each member to take a greater interest in the Society than just reading the Avocet in order to find out what is going on. A "Participating Membership" is even more important to the successful organization than an "Informed Membership", and in our S.C.V.A.S. there are so many opportunities for participation: meetings, field trips, committees in several areas of interest, even the opportunity to initiate and to implement a new activity.

WORKSHOP DISCUSSION SESSIONS: These sessions, held in Tiburon on October 28, were attended by representatives of Northern California Audubon Branches and Affiliates who represented their respective

branches in three areas of interest: (1) Presidents in Office, (2) Bulletin Editors and Public Relations, and (3) Education. Our own S.C.V.A.S. was represented in each of the three groups, and each representative felt that many good ideas were obtained during the six hours of exchange of information, and informal discussions of problems.

CONSERVATION WORKSHOP: The Conservation Workshop which was announced in the November "Avocet" was attended by eight members of S.C.V.A.S., all of whom agreed that each session was decidedly worth while attending. Sponsored by the Conservation Committee of the Loma Prieta Chapter of the Sierra Club, this workshop was decidedly not "just a Sierra Club function"! The papers presented could very well have been prepared for a gathering of Audubon members, they were so thoroughly in agreement with our own stated purpose: "conservation of wilderness and wildlife, natural beauty and natural resources".

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, at their November meeting, were concerned more with routine matters than with any special issues. The most important item on the agenda was:

THE CHRISTMAS COUNT. This year, the arrangements for "The Count" are being made by William Luick, and the details are described by him in another article in this issue.

For the information of members who have joined us during the last year, let me explain about this annual activity. Every year, between dates set by the National Audubon Society, the Branch Societies, on a nation-wide basis, each conduct a one-day, intensive count of all of the species and individuals that can be found in an area having a radius of fifteen miles and centered at a specified point. The center of our S.C.V.A.S. Area has been selected to give as great a variety of habitat as possible, thus providing the opportunity of finding a greater number of species. Our entire area is divided into five "sectors", with a "sector-leader" in charge of the activities in that sector, and the actual coverage is provided by "teams" working in co-operative effort, covering a specified area within the sector.

Each team consists of several people doing the several "jobs" that are required, such as observers, recorders, drivers, and possibly others set up by the Team Leader. **IT IS NOT NECESSARY FOR EACH MEMBER OF A TEAM TO BE AN EXPERT IN BIRD IDENTIFICATION!!!!** Here is where our new members can experience a thrilling participation in an Audubon activity: Each team needs a driver, and a recorder, neither of whom needs to be "expert" in recognizing birds. (You'll probably be surprised at the number of species you can identify after participating in a "Count"!)

In the late afternoon of Count-day, all of the teams reassemble at the designated place, each Sector Leader tabulates the results reported by each of his teams, and then the "Count Compiler" tabulates the reports of the Sector Leaders. (In the meantime, "the troops" are enjoying hot coffee and delicious goodies.)

But this is not the end of the activity! Each Count Compiler sends the total report to the National Office where the reports of the branches all over the United States are edited, totals tabulated, up- or down-trends in the numbers of the individuals of various species are noted, and the over-all results of the Census are published by the National Society.

Please read Mr. Luick's article, and plan to join us on Saturday, Dec. 30th; we can assure you that you will have an interesting day!

If you have any question that is not answered in the Avocet, please feel free to call me for information, - - the best time to get me by telephone is at meal-times: (early) breakfast, lunchtime, or early dinner-time.

In any case, have a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and "Good Birding", all year.

Lloyd N. Case  
(867-4748)

MOUNTAIN VIEW MEMBERS URGED AS "PLANNERS" - Mountain View members, of whom there are fourteen, now have a wonderful opportunity to bring our S.C.V.A.S. into active participation in a non-controversial conservation project in their own community. Without attempting to go into specifics and details of the situation, the over-all picture is as follows: When it became apparent that the proposed Stevens Creek Parkway was not going to become a reality (at least in the near future), Mountain View decided to "go it alone" for the area within their jurisdiction. It is very gratifying to note that the Planning Commission has gone ahead with the development of plans for a stream-side parkway, with pathways for riding and/or walking, and a barrier for planting between the paths and the new Freeway to be constructed. The preliminary maps, plans, and intentions seem to indicate that the entire project has been thought out in terms of "public interest", rather than for the benefit of privileged groups, a concept which seems to have infected so many of our city governments.

The Planning Commission of Mountain View seems to be doing a commendable job on this project, and it would certainly not be out of place for our members living in Mountain View to get acquainted with the members of the City Planning Commission, to attend such of their meetings as are open to the public, and to offer suggestions that seem to be indicated.

We believe that City Planners are individuals who are trying to make the community a better place in which to live. But, many times, they are not aware of many of the details of "Nature", such as natural habitats, areas of natural beauty, areas of specific interest to students of nature, and so many other little things that make for "natural beauty". It is not presumptuous for those of us who are aware of these things, to call them to the attention of the Planners, and to urge the inclusion of these details in the "Master Plan".

Names and addresses of our members living in Mountain View can be obtained by requesting them from your President, telephone 867-4748.

PHOTOGRAPHS WANTED FOR JANUARY MEETING - The January 9th meeting in Palo Alto is Amateur Night when we members have an opportunity to show off our best slides. Warren Turner asked me to arrange an exhibit of members' photographs - enlargements, either black and white or color - of nature subjects or scenery. We have never done this and it fits nicely with the program of the evening. It is not too early to think about it for time is needed to choose one or two and have enlargements made - 8 x 10 in a plastic mount or smaller if matted. If you wish to participate, please contact me so that I may know how many there will be.

Miss Harriet Mundy  
257 Tennyson, Palo Alto 325-1192

BIRDING IN SONORA, MEXICO - SIERRA SAFARI RECREATION-EDUCATION FIELD TRIPS will conduct two 7-day Birding trips to Northern Sonora, Mexico;

May 19-25 and May 27-June 2nd, 1968. These trips will be in the area of Imuris, Cananea, Bacoachic, Arizpe, Sinoquipe and Cucurpe.

PHYLLIS LINDLEY will conduct the bird studies on the May 19-25th trip. We will make a Spring announcement regarding the official birder for the second trip. Most of our staff are Audubon Society members.

Cost of each trip is \$125 per person. We will meet participants at Nogales, Arizona. We provide transportation in Mexico, food, tents. Our staff consists of naturalists, a historian, cook, pot washers, etc. Each trip is limited to 14.

For further information and/or reservations, write or phone PAT BAUER, 223 Taurus Ave., Oakland, Calif. 94611 (415-654-0864) or write BILL & MAVIS CLARK, Bix 686, Mi-Wuk Village, Calif. 96346

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"REDWOODS" BILL  
PASSED BY  
SENATE

The most significant news of this month and many months is the passage of the Redwood National Park bill by the Senate of the United States on Wednesday, 11-3-67. This is a major step in the long struggle to secure a park worthy of the name. This bill is a compromise version of several proposals and is known as S. 2515 by Senators Jackson, Kuchel, and Bible. It calls for the creation of a 2 unit park of about 64,000 acres. The northern unit would be about 28,000 acres including Mill Creek drainage and Jedediah Smith State Park. The southern unit would include parts of Redwood Creek, some of its tributaries, and Prairie Creek State Park. A coastline strip north of Orick to Crescent City will be the connecting link between the two units.

During debate on the bill a vote to delete a very important section provides for the transfer of some National Forest Service lands to lumber companies in trade for redwood lands held by them. These private holdings would then be included in the new park boundaries, and the lumber companies would be allowed to harvest the trees on the National Forest Service lands.

HOUSE TO ACT  
ON "REDWOODS"  
BILL IN  
SPRING

The battle for a Redwoods National Park is far from finished. The House of Representatives must act on the proposal, but this will not happen until the opening of the Congressional session in 1968. A key member of a committee which must hear the bill is Rep. John Saylor (R. Pa.), who predicts action on the bill when it is "Springtime in the Rockies" which, incidentally, is the home of the Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Wayne Aspinall of Colorado. The Honorable Mr. Aspinall has stated he will not consider the legislation until the committee has held a hearing in Northern California.

On the day after the Redwoods National Park bill passed, the Senate called for a vote on the North Cascades National Park bill and this also passed by a large majority. Two great pieces of legislation in two successive days. The Third Wave of Conservation is gaining momentum.

AUDIO-VISUAL  
TOOL FOR  
SCHOOLS

Many of the people attending the Conservation Workshop sponsored by the Loma Prieta Chapter of the Sierra Club which was held in Palo Alto remarked that the session on Conservation Education was especially interesting. Conservation Education must be a strong area for our endeavors in the coming year. A very important way in which we can help is by making available to the schools and educators the many tools of audio-visual techniques. These materials would be most helpful in making conservation and ecology more interesting in the school rooms.

Although the bill to create a State of California Conservation Education Service was vetoed by the Governor, a \$25,000 federal grant has been secured to study what the state should be doing in the field of conservation education.

BACK-PACKING  
AT PT. REYES  
SEASHORE

Welcome news which is closer to home and to the people in Audubon is the announced opening of 3 back-pack camps in the Bear Valley District of Pt. Reyes Seashore. The 3 sites are Sky Camp, Coast Camp, and Glen Camp located on the hiking trail system between 4 and 8 miles from headquarters. Camping and fire permits are required and only one night at each camp is permitted.

SMOG,  
SMELLS,  
AND NOISE

The following is taken from a recent Save San Francisco Bay Asso. letter: Public agencies and private organizations can be assisted in efforts to better control environmental pollution if citizens express interest by requesting information on apparent violations. For Bay Area members, the following numbers can be called.

SMOG - Bay Area Pollution Control, 1480 Mission Street, San Francisco 552-1300

SMELL - from the Bay it can be garbage or water pollution: Garbage - Public Health - Mr. Stewart, Regional Engineer, 2151 Berkeley Way, Berkeley, 843-7900. Water pollution - Water Quality Control Board, 364 14th Street, Oakland, 834-3460

SONIC BOOM - Hamilton Air Force Base, San Rafael, 883-7711 ext. 3711; Citizens League Against Sonic Boom, 19 Appleton Street, Cambridge, Mass. 02138

Conservation Chairman, Claude A. Look

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA FIELD NOTES

The flood of rare bird sightings that usually reaches its peak during mid-October failed to materialize this fall. There was a steady trickle of rare migrants reported from early September until late October, but there were no "big" weekends for birders, as there have been in previous falls. Even the expected migration of common birds was late in coming, probably due to unusually warm weather. There were, however, many notable sightings during October and early November, in addition to the arrival of our familiar wintering birds.

Large flocks of White Pelicans migrated through the Bay Area during mid-October; up to three hundred were seen at the Palo Alto Yacht Harbor.

The usual flocks of geese and ducks arrived in Northern California

just in time to be greeted by the barrage of flying lead that marks the start of the hunting season. A snow Goose was seen at Bodega Head on November 4. This species is unusual outside of its normal Central Valley range.

American Golden Plovers were seen at Dillon Beach during October, the only unusual shorebird reported during the month.

Ted Chadik discovered one of the most exciting birds seen during the fall: an immature Franklin's Gull at the Palo Alto Yacht Harbor on October 13. Another wanderer to the coast, a Black Tern, showed up at Rodeo Lagoon, just north of the Golden Gate Bridge.

A Yellow-Shafted Flicker at Pt. Reyes on October 14 was one of a small but regular population of this bird that winters along the California coast.

Two Tropical Kingbirds were seen at Pt. Reyes on October 14. A few of these Mexican flycatchers wander northward each fall, sometimes even reaching the State of Washington before succumbing to the harsh forces of the approaching winter. Occasionally, an individual will appear during mid-winter, struggling for survival in an unfamiliar area with an inhospitable climate.

Very few rare warblers were seen during the latter half of the fall. One of the few that were reported was a Magnolia Warbler in Monterey, which arrived in mid-October and stayed five days before continuing its migratory journey. A Paririe Warbler was reported by Dave Gaines for around the tenth of October, near Santa Cruz.

Many Vesper Sparrows arrived in the Sacramento area during late fall, indicating that more of these little sparrows are going to be wintering in the Central Valley than did last year.

The usual winter populations of Cedar Waxwings, White-crowned and Golden-crowned Sparrows, and Audubon's Warblers also arrived during this time period. It is among these common birds that the winter rarities are seen. Bohemian Waxwings, Harris' and White-throated Sparrows, and Palm Warblers are birds that are reported regularly during the winter months. A trip to one of the many Eucalyptus groves in the Monterey area might produce a Baltimore or Orchard Oriole. A Blue or Emperor Goose might appear in any flock of common geese at one of the waterfowl refuges. These are but a few of the birds that can be seen during the winter. We know they're around, the trick is to find them. Regarding this problem, all I can say is, good luck!

Doug and Russ Greenberg

#### FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Palo Alto Baylands - October 21 - Leader, Harriet Mundy

High points were the several hundred White Pelicans, 3 Clapper and 1 Virginia Rail, and Marsh Wren. Others of interest were Black-bellied Plovers, Black-necked Stilts, 3 White-tailed Kites, Shoveler, and American Widgeon. We covered South Path, the Duck Pond and Lagoon and tallied 42 species. Low tide was about 9:00 A.M.

Palo Alto Foothills Park - October 25 - Leaders, Virginia Bothwell and Kay McCann

We had a bright, sunny, windless, warm day for our trip along the Chamise Trail. Twenty-four people showed up and we divided into two groups, led by each leader and with the help of Betsy Landes and Zoe Olds. Twirty-five species of birds were seen on the combination of field trip and scouting trip. We were all able to examine the fall plants. A high spot was a weather balloon, sighted by Eleanor Hollis.

Most of us got an excellent look at the California Thrasher and Bewick's Wren.

Natural Bridges State Park - November 5 - Leaders, Lloyd and Eve Case

A slightly rainy morning that threatened to get wetter may have discouraged some of our members, but the weather on the Santa Cruz side of the mountains, and along the West Cliff Drive, was considerably better, - only a couple of short, light sprinklings, pleasant temperature, and good light.

The real "exciting sighting" of the day was a Saffron Finch that is at present "residing in the area at the southeastern corner of the parking lot at the Natural Bridges. It was identified by Eve, who has seen them and became somewhat familiar with the species, in Panama. It is a South American bird, not even included in North American bird lists, quite common in yards and gardens in Jamaica; ranges from Panama southward as far as northern Argentina. Obviously, this individual is an escapee from some private owner, but it is making itself quite at home, is relatively tame, even following the ranger around when he is cleaning up in the area of the picnic tables. If we keep up this finding of the unusual, - last month the Pink Flamingos, and now the Saffron Finch - we may come to call this "The Year of the Escapees". Twelve of us watched it from a distance of about 35 or 40 feet, for about five minutes; light was good and the bird was in the open; the red on the head was clearly visible, even without the use of binoculars.

Among the other birds seen were: Green Heron, Heerman's Gull, Bonaparte's Gull, Black and Ruddy Turnstones, Black-bellied Plover, Wandering Tattlers (2), Eared Grebe, Red-throated Loon, and White-winged Scoters.

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AVOCET

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