

The Avocet

Volume XV, Number 6

June, 1968

Annual Meeting

Monday, June 10, 6:00 p.m.

Garden City Hofbrau
Bavarian Room

So. Market & Posts.
San Jose

Our Annual Meeting will take place at the above location. Serving will be cafeteria style and the meeting will be in the upstairs Bavarian Room. Our speaker will be our old friend and distinguished leader, Bill Goodall, who has been Director of the Western Region of the National Audubon Society and who retires this year. He will show us a movie on the Wood Duck. The election of Directors and of Officers will also take place. See you all there!

Calendar

Board of Directors meeting, last of year - - Tues., June 4, 8:00 p.m. To be held at Lloyd and Eve Case's, 20537 Verde Vista Ln., Saratoga. (867-4748) Chairmen of Standing Committees are requested to submit a brief summary of the activity of their committee for the past year.

Yosemite Field Trip - - - - - Sat. & Sun., June 8 & 9
Meet at dawn on Sat. at Peragoy Meadows where camp road meets road to Glacier Point. We shall stay there until 9:00 a.m. and then bird surrounding area until noon. For p.m. there will be choice of Evans Flat or Hennis Ridge. We'll do much the same on Sun. with a possible drop to the valley. Everyone must make his own housing arrangements, which most likely will be camping. Prepare for cold nights. See May "Avocet" for list of birds expected to be seen.

Leaders: Dr. Joseph Greenberg, Doug & Russ G. 327-0329

Bird Discussion Group will meet - - - Tuesday, June 11, 10:00 a.m. at Eve Case's, 20537 Verde Vista Ln., Saratoga. Subject, nuthatches.

Canyon Road Field Trip - - - Wed., June 12, 9:00 a.m.
Meet at Big Basin Way & 6th Street in Saratoga.

Leaders: Emily Smith & Katharine Intott.

Invitation to Tea to hear Mrs. Daniel Stern, Thurs., June 13, 2:00 p.m. talk on "The Whooping Crane" at home of Mrs. William Smyth, 19642 Charters Ave., Saratoga, 867-4532. This promises to be an interesting talk by the daughter of a Professor of Ornithology in Minnesota, R.S.V.P. (For the ladies only.)

Mt. Pinos Field Trip (S.W. of Bakersfield) Aug. 3 & 4

Meet at parking lot on top of Mt. Pinos at 9:00 a.m. Will spend day looking for Condors; also likely are Clark's Nutcrackers. Camping is available, but may be difficult because of opening of deer hunting. If time permits on way home Sun. may go by way of Taft to look for Le Conte's Thrashers.

Leaders: Dr. Joseph Greenberg, Doug & Russ G.



THE PRESIDENT WISHES to express his sincere personal thanks to the members of the Society for all that they have done, collectively and individually, to help make this past year one of successful achievement, both for our local Society and for the general cause of Conservation, at all levels: local, regional, state and national. It would be presumptuous of me to mention names or specifics, because I am sure that many members have written letters, and have engaged in conversations and activities of which I am, of course, unaware. Many thanks to you, the "Silent Workers"!

I wish also to express special appreciation for the time, thought and energy spent on the projects and/or problems of the Society by the other Officers, the Directors and Chairmen of the Standing Committees and of the Special Committees, and to the members who have assisted in the routine work, as Committee Members.

One of the greatest rewards of being an "Audubon Member" is the satisfaction that comes from active participation in one or more of the projects of "Outdoor Conservation Education", Field Trips, etc., in which the Society is involved. I hope that during the coming year many of our new members will be able to find the time and interest that will allow them to participate in the activity of one or more of our numerous Committees. It is a sort of "Round Robin" situation: the success of the Society depends upon the voluntary activity and participation of its members; the returns to the members themselves depends on their own participation - the more they put in, the more they get back. If this sounds like a plea for even more support for your next year's Officers, Directors and Committee Chairmen, that is because it is! We have had a good year, have increased our membership, have achieved some of our goals, are still working toward the achievement of others, but we cannot sit back, relax and contemplate what we have done, without finding that we are losing ground to the persistent encroachment of "development". Let us adopt a policy of "not blind resistance to progress, but resistance to blind progress", and continue, or, better yet, even increase our activity.

Once again, my sincere thanks for the support and cooperation which you have given during the past year.

Lloyd N. Case, Retiring President.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, at their regular May meeting, took the following actions for the Society:

Accepted, with regrets, the resignation of Eleanor Kidd as a Director, effective as of the regular meeting of the Society in June.

Appointed Kenneth Kidd as a Director to fill out the unexpired portion (one year) of Eleanor's elected term.

Voted that the S.C.V.A.S. should be one of the Sponsors of the Conservation Seminar to be held on September 21, at the Santa Cruz Campus of the University of California. This Seminar will include groups from all of the cities and towns on both slopes of the Santa Cruz Mts., from San Francisco southward. Our Conservation Chairman, Tony Look, will act officially for S.C.V.A.S.

Voted to aid and support the Sierra Club's current conservation activity by contributing to the Club's "Big Basin Fund".

Voted that S.C.V.A.S. go on record as requesting the San Mateo Co. Board of Supervisors and the County Park Commission to consider favorably the proposed acquisition of 2,400 acres of 60-year old, second-growth redwoods, adjacent to Huddard Park. Tony Look will act as our representative and spokesman and will point out that we, in Santa Clara County, consider that this proposed acquisition and addition to the "open spaces" of the Peninsula is a matter of regional interest and benefit, and are expressing our interest, while not presuming to involvement in the County's policies.

Voted that the S.C.V.A.S. go on record as approving and supporting the proposed establishment of State and/or National Wildlife Refuges on the southern portion of San Francisco Bay, and directed that the following letter be sent to the County Board of Supervisors and to the County Planning Commission, with similar letters to the California Fish and Game Commission and to the Regional Office of the National Fish and Wildlife Service:

Gentlemen:

The Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society, with a membership of over five hundred citizens of Santa Clara County, wishes to go on record as being in favor of, and supporting, the proposed establishment of State and/or National Wildlife Refuges in the southern portion of the San Francisco Bay area.

It is a well-established fact that during certain months of the year, hundreds of thousands of wildfowl rest and feed in this area. This avian population includes not only migratory game birds, such as ducks and geese, but also a great many species of shore birds that are not classified as game birds, such as Terns, Egrets, Willets, Dowitchers, Avocets, Black-necked Stilts, Whimbrels, Curlews, a number of species of smaller shore birds collectively called "Peeps", and other well known species of shore birds.

With the rapid increase in the human population of the Bay Area, it is inevitable that in the very near future there will be an increasingly heavy demand for land to be developed for residential, commercial and industrial uses. Such development inevitably encroaches upon, and destroys, the habitat necessary for the existence of various species of wildlife. Consequently, unless certain suitable areas are specified and set aside, now, as Wildlife Refuges, the southern reaches of the Bay will soon no longer be available for feeding and resting areas for the great flocks of wildfowl and shore birds that use this branch of the Pacific Flyway. Under proper land-management policies, specified areas of Refuges can be opened to controlled hunting, as is presently done on the Los Banos and the Merced Wildlife Refuges, where controlled hunting is permitted in specified areas on specified days. This practice is of both recreational and economical value and, with proper controls and enforcement of State and/or Federal Game Laws, does not threaten the survival of the hunted species.

We respectfully urge the County Planning Commission and the County Board of Supervisors to cooperate fully in the establishment of proposed State and/or National Wildlife Refuges in the southern area of San Francisco Bay.

Sincerely,

Lloyd N. Case, President,

(for S.C.V.A.S. as directed by Board of Directors at May 7 meeting)


In addition to the "official" expression of opinion by the preceding letter, it is hoped that our members will watch their respective local newspapers for articles pertaining to these proposed refugees, and will express their own personal opinions, in writing, to the Board of Supervisors and to the Planning Commission. Both are located in the County Administration Building, 70 West Hedding Street, San Jose, California 95110.

Lloyd N. Case

" _____ An opinion not communicated is but a thought.
_____ An opinion communicated idly is mere speculation.
_____ An opinion registered too late is a complaint.
_____ An opinion not based on knowledge is a danger.
BUT, A REASONABLE OPINION EXPRESSED IN TIME TO THE
APPROPRIATE PEOPLE CAN BE A DETERMINANT."

from League of Women Voters

A Look at Conservation



SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS

What do we know about this impressive range to our West? Do they begin and end in Santa Cruz County or do they rise from the Pacific Ocean near San Francisco and end at the Pajaro River in Santa Cruz County? Is one county alone going to determine future plans or are the Counties of San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Santa Cruz all involved?

Do you know the answers? You may or may not, but you can learn more about this range. "The Future - Santa Cruz Mountains" will be the subject of a seminar programmed by the University of California at Santa Cruz which will be presented on Saturday, September 21, 1968, at the Santa Cruz Campus.

Are we guilty of not being visionary enough to protect this magnificent range of hills? Will our children look towards the Santa Cruz Mountains to the west and see only terraced benches with skyscrapers and dull dwellings as their vista? Or, will they see the same beautiful refreshing sights we now enjoy: the fog resting on the tree tops waiting for the valley air to cool before it continues its eastward journey, or the last rays of the setting sun illuminating the silhouette of the range before before they pass from our vision? The few natural areas remaining in the Santa Cruz Mountains may be there forever as their Creator intended or they may be obliterated like so many other vital areas we once knew and thought would withstand the pressure of civilization. The future is now and it is up to us!

We, who have been called a special interest (and worse) group, are really the protectors and guardians of a most important range - a wondrous skyline when seen from the ocean or our valley. Other special interest groups would appear to be the people who would develop this area; their special interest would be to despoil the range with developments, to add profit on profit by complete utilization of every knob

and level spot. What is really needed is an absolute and unchangeable plan which would really add more to community values than the exchange of profits. Some development will certainly come to the Santa Cruz Mountains, but it must be under an Authority for the Santa Cruz Mountains. Open space for this magnificent range is as much a part of our environment as is the San Francisco Bay.

To expedite the formation of such an Authority, your attendance as a conservationist and the attendance of political planners, developers, land agents, and utility representatives is most essential at the seminar on the Santa Cruz Mountains on September 21, 1968, U.C. at Santa Cruz.

BRIEFS

WILDERNESS AREAS - 26 more additions to the National Wilderness Preservation Systems are recommended in a message to Congress by President Johnson. In keeping with this message, Senator Thomas Kuchel of California has introduced legislation to include the following areas in our state: Lava Beds National Monument, Lassen National Park, Pinnacles National Monument, Ventana Wilderness in Los Padres Forest, and Desolation Wilderness in Eldorado Forest.

BIG BASIN FUND APPEAL - The appeal for contributions to expand Big Basin State Park by 382.5 acres at a cost of \$19,000 to conservationists added to the State of California's funds of \$108,000 was successful and oversubscribed by the deadline date of May 1, 1968. A mountain - Mt. McAbee; a vista point - overlooking the Waddell Creek with its redwoods and meandering course to the Pacific Ocean; and a chance to create a trail from Headquarters to Berry Creek; all were provided by this purchase.

REDWOOD HEARINGS - Final hearings on this important measure will be held in Washington, D.C., by the House Interior Committee under Chairman Aspinall on May 20 and 21, 1968. The session will be devoted exclusively to testimony from representatives from each of the four lumber companies involved in the area proposed, and one spokesman from each of the national conservation organizations.

- Tony Look, Conservation Chairman

Progress?

The majestic giant stands
With all his royal greenery,
The oldest monarch yet alive.
He is older than you or I.

When he was born
Christ was yet to come,
And Egypt still shone in all her
glory.

Through many tempests he has
reigned
Yet always he has come to see
The sun again.

Hark! What is that sound?
"Tis the sound of the forest
crashing down.

Hark! What is that sound?
"Tis the anguish of his soul
As he crashes down.

I ask of you do not let him die,
For what harm has he done to you
or I?

None,
For he is the greatest monarch of
all

And should not die.

By Bill Cameron, one of our junior members

California Field Notes

by

Doug and Russ Greenberg

After the late April and early May flood of migrants, most birds have now settled down to the business of nesting and raising their young. During the period of migration, however, many unusual birds were reported. The most spectacular visitor to the state was a male Tufted Duck in Arcata, near Eureka. This bird, found by Dr. Stanley Harris of Humboldt State College, was first seen in early April, and then seen again during the first week of May.



A day-long boat trip out of San Diego proved unsuccessful for birders in late April, but the appearance of seven Pale-footed Shearwaters made the trip interesting, even though none of the Tropicbirds and Cook's Petrels that had been reported in the area were in evidence.

Closer to home, a rare Black-headed Gull was sighted several times near San Quentin Prison (a jailbird?) over a period of weeks starting in mid-April.

Although they are rarely seen, Baird's Sandpipers do occasionally pass through California. Emelie Curtis reports having seen three on May 1, along Coyote Creek, - a most unusual find.

As many people had predicted earlier, Boat-tailed Grackles have now been reported nesting on West Pond, along the Colorado River. Up to twelve have been seen there at one time. A solitary Boat-tail remained in Los Angeles through the month of April.

Two Brown Thrashers were discovered (or rediscovered) by Shirley Welles in the Palos Verdes area south of Los Angeles.

While looking for the Dickcissel which wintered in Monterey, Dave De Sante found a singing male Parula Warbler. Warbler migration was generally heavy, with Yellow-breasted Chats reported from Gilroy, and up to six Yellow Warblers in one tree in Palo Alto.

One of the strangest reports of the season was one of a flock of 100 (yes, one hundred) Lark Buntings in a park near San Juan Bautista.

The report came from a reliable naturalist, and his description seemed accurate. If this is correct, it would mark the first time in many years that a huge flock of Buntings has appeared anywhere in the state. They were once abundant along the Colorado River. A single Lark Bunting was caught in a mammal trap near Aptos, and was promptly released.

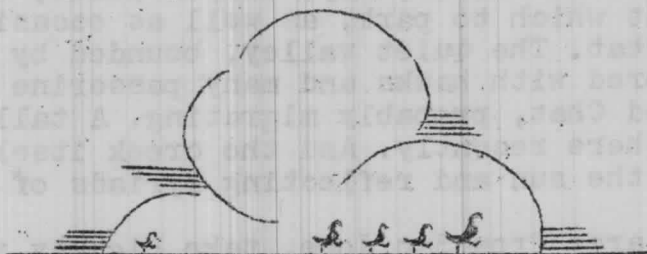


Emelie Curtis reported that a pair of Lawrence's Goldfinches was (and probably still is) nesting along Coyote Creek. This area, between Anderson and Coyote Reservoir, seems promising for birds but is not easily accessible. Wood Ducks were also seen nesting there.

Gene Cardiff and Guy McCaskie found a flock of twenty Chestnut-collared Longspurs in the Anza-Borrego Desert. The birds were almost in full spring plumage.



After the late May trickle of rare migrants passes through the state, the summer will once again be with us. Summertime is a great time for trips to new and distant places, such as Texas and Southeast Arizona, or to such familiar places as Yosemite and the Mendocino Coastline. After the long, dull summer is over, fall migration will begin again, bringing new and unusual birds into our backyards and favorite birding haunts. By the way, don't forget the Condor trip in early August. It's the best time of year to see Condors, and we'll be going to Mt. Pinos, the best place. So how can we lose?



Pilarcitos Lake Field Trip Report - April 24 & 27

"On April 24 and again on the 27th the trips to Pilarcitos Lake and Stone Dam in the San Francisco Water Co. property found the wild flowers in full bloom. Such rarities as Romanzoffia, the Saxifrages, Woodland Star and Youth-on-Age and Bleeding Hearts were out. Forget-me-nots were in profusion as was Meadow Rue and Red-berried Elder. The Winter Wren sang everywhere and the Wilson's Warbler was also seen. The most exciting discovery was on Saturday when a pair of Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were seen and heard by several of us. These are far out of range, but the very yellow underparts and markings as well as the characteristic call of Killic were all present. The leaders were familiar with the bird from eastern Canada. The birds remained nearby for some time. The views of the Crystal Springs Lakes and of the entire South San Francisco Bay were much enjoyed on both trips."

Leaders: Ray & Kay McCann

EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

The following figures include only the lectures, movie presentations and field trips that have gone through my telephone since October 1967. With a few exceptions that work has been done by Fanny Pargot, Janet Fisher, Florence La Riviere and me.

We have shown garden bird slides, nature films and our new Redwood slides to 137 adults and 140 children on 10 different occasions. This does not include the hundreds of children, literally entire schools that have seen the "Save San Francisco Bay" film and the new Sierra Club film, "The Redwoods", because we have taken these films to them. And the exciting part, we gave 49 lectures, and field trips to the Baylands with 185 adults accompanying 1059 children! These children range from first graders from Sunnyvale to sophomores from College of San Mateo. Fourteen of these field trips were arranged for through the Palo Alto Junior Museum and I am employed by them for these trips. In the San Jose-Saratoga area Lloyd Case has given lectures to Junior High and adult audiences, Mary Rugh has shown slides and led trips with children. My thanks to them both.

Nancy Holmes

WELCOME to New Members:

A.J. Barrett Jr., 580 Centralia Ct., Sunnyvale 94087
Mrs. Allan W. Davis, 1260 University Ave., Palo Alto 94301
Mr. & Mrs. L.H. Norwood, 1824 Calif. St., Apt. H, Mtn. View 94040

Caroline Davis, Membership Chairman

Favorite Birding Haunts

For a pleasant early morning bird walk, try the creekside road which meanders to the Gilroy Hot Springs of by-gone remown. One can walk along the tree-shaded road or on the gravel creeksides edged with sycamores, alder, black walnut, bay, digger pines, etc. There are frequent lay-bys at which to park, as well as occasional open meadows for change of habitat. The quiet valley, bounded by ridges of a dry character, is favored with hawks and many passerine birds, including the Yellow-breasted Chat, probably migrating. A tally of fifty-one species was made there recently. And the creek itself is a pleasant balm sparkling in the sun and reflecting myriads of butterflies.

To reach this area from San Jose, take Highway 101 to San Martin, turn east on San Martin Ave. to its limit and proceed south on New Ave. until you come to a sign indicating Coyote Reservoir. Turn east here on Roop Rd. which becomes Gilroy Hot Springs Rd. When this road turns left, it will take you to Coyote Reservoir. By going straight you will follow the creek to the springs.

Good birding, Emelie Curtis

AVOCET

Our publication appears monthly except July and August. It is \$2.00 a year for non-members. Copy is requested by the 15th.

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