

The Avocet

Volume XVI, Number 2

February, 1969

1969-Your Bay and Mine - Year of Decision

Thursday, February 20, 8 pm

Homestead High School
Room 5, Bldg. C

Homestead Ave.
Cupertino

Three distinguished members of our Society will bring us up to date on "Our Bay" 1969. Mr. Roy Cameron, Director of Planning in Santa Clara County, and Mr. Arthur Ogilvie, also of the County Planning Dept., will present the accomplishments and present status of the work of the South San Francisco National Wildlife Committee. Mr. Ogilvie received the 1968 California Wildlife Conservation Award for his work on this Committee. There will be an exhibit and slides. Mr. Tom Harvey, one of our ex-Presidents and ecological consultant to the San Francisco Bay Conservation & Development Commission, will discuss BCD's proposed plan for San Francisco Bay which has been presented to the 1969 State Legislature. This plan is the result of over three year's study and what happens to it in Sacramento will seal the fate of "Our Bay" and our environment. Please come out to welcome and support these men-our members- who have given, and are giving, so generously of their knowledge and time in the effort to Save San Francisco Bay. Now, the decisions rest largely in the hands of an informed and active citizenry and that means US.

Harriet Mundy, Program Chairman
CALENDAR.

Calaveras

Meet at Post Office at Milpitas. Ought to see some eagles and Common Mergansers.

Sat. Feb. 8, 9:00 am
Leaders, Mr. & Mrs. Les Sleeper

Bird Discussion Group

Topic will be Towhees - any kind that interests you. Meet at Mrs. Eve Case's, 20537 Verde Vista, Saratoga - 867-4748.

Tues. Feb. 11, 10:00 am

Board Meeting

At home of Mr. & Mrs. Mark Hopkins, 1185 Ruth Dr., San Jose.

Tues. Feb. 11, 7:45 pm

Santa Teresa Park

Park is off Monterey Hwy. south of IBM. Sign and turnoff are on west side of road opposite Swan Lake Motel. Meet at picnic parking lot. Leader. Margaret Henderson 867-4304

Wed. Feb. 12, 9:30 am

Tomales Bay

Meet at Post Office in Marshal (Rte. 1 between Pt. Reyes Station and Tomales). Hope to see Brant. Bring lunch or have some clam chowder in Marshal, and in the afternoon the hardier ones can try for Harlequin Ducks at McClure Beach on Pt. Reyes.

Sun. Feb. 16, 9:00 am

Leaders, Dr. J. Greenberg & Russ G. 327-0329

Palo Alto Baylands - Wed. Feb. 26, 9:00 am

Meet at duck pond at end of Embarcadero Rd.

Leader, Harriet Mundy
325-1192

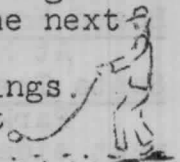


President's Message, "Free in His Freedom"

"Come, let's take the dog for a walk." Bosker, our dog, thinks this is a great idea for he is an enthusiastic walker, even when on a leash. He almost pulls us out the gate and directs us toward the park. Once past our property there are many things he just has to explore. Every telephone pole and every tree seems to have meaning to him. He especially likes the liquidamber, perhaps it's the bark. When the leaves are on the ground he finds great fun in putting his nose down in them, then rolling over into them and finally pawing furiously at them. As we walk along, his ears stand up. What does he hear? We stop to listen. Sometimes it's a towhee or robin, perhaps a cat. Now, it's a squirrel hopping to the other side of the street. A flock of birds fly into the tree we walk under as we go by the Girl Scout house. They look like finches but there's one with a long thin bill. Perhaps I should have brought my field glasses. The sun is out but on the wrong side of the tree. Moving to get a better look only scares the birds away. Now we have come to the big expanse of lawn and the dog is let loose - for that is what everyone does who brings his dog to the park. It is wellknown that dogs, and apparently all animals, develop neuroses when confined to small areas. Bosker revels in the freedom, running almost aimlessly, free in his freedom. Moving eastward we move toward some big oaks. A jay screeches an alarm. Working the lawn under the oaks are hundreds of robins relishing the morning dampness and earthworms that have surfaced because of last night's rain. Bosker would like to chase them just for the sport but I have told him about Audubon and how every dog should be kind to birds. Turning to the left past the swimming pool there is a grove of redwoods that always stirs a reverant spirit. Sometimes we sit in silence but today it is too damp. We stand motionless for several moments breathing in the fragrance. Bosker heels. A look at the watch snaps us back to reality. Work must be done and we must head home. Going along the walk we notice huddled against the fence a white cat soaking in the early morning rays of sun. I put the leash back on Bosker to keep him from chasing her. But the cat doesn't even notice us for we've gone that way before. Returning home the gate is closed and Bosker is set free to wander in our yard until the next time I need an excuse to wander in the out-of-doors.

You see, Bosker is an imaginary dog that likes real things.

Howard Wolcott, President



South San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge - A Report

Representatives of Sequoia, Diablo Valley, Ohlones and Santa Clara Valley Audubon Societies met recently with Paul Howard, Western Representative of National, to discuss the proposed Wildlife Refuge. On January 8 the Congressional Bill was introduced for the appropriation of the monies for the Refuge and was co-authored by eight Bay Area Congressmen.

The City of Fremont whose boundaries encompass one third of the Proposed Refuge area whole-heartedly endorsed the concept on Jan. 14. Later this month the Refuge will come before the City Councils of Redwood City and San Jose. Since this is the most positive and exciting action on the Bay to take place since the formation of the Bay Conservation and Development Commission the memberships' attendance at these Council Meeting would be quite worthwhile.

Nancy Holmes, Education Chairman

Future Board Member, Anyone?

On Jan. 14 the Board elected Nancy Holmes to be Chairman of the Nominating Comm. Her address is 843 Moana Ct., Palo Alto 94306. She is anxious to receive names of those who might be interested in being Board members. Will members consider this and contact her with ideas.

Hickel, Nixon, and Conservation



When the curtain rises on a new cast of characters in the Department of the Interior on January 20, 1969, it will be beginning of a four act play with new stars, supporting cast, and a new director.

The one department of the government that deals with conservation and natural resources in the greatest depth and in the most critical areas will be managed by the star of the show, Gov. Walter J. Hickel of Alaska. The producer of the show will be President Nixon who has been planning this four act play for many years.

Mr. Hickel has certainly been gaining a great share of the pre-opening publicity, not all favorable, but at least you know more about the gentleman than you did when he was in the statehouse of Alaska. The publicity has generated mountains of mail and telegrams to the quantity that he may have trouble finding his way to the center stage of the Department.

One veteran Western Union operator stated "the telegrams being sent against Mr. Hickel's confirmation far out-number those recorded against Abe Fortas."

Duties of the Interior Secretary

What duties will Mr. Hickel carry out as Secretary of the Interior? He will head a department of about 75,000 federal employees in many bureaus, commissions and agencies. Some of the main ones include - National Park Service, U.S. Geological Survey, Fish & Wildlife Serv., Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Reclamation, Office of Oil & Gas, Alaska Power Adm., SW'ern & SE'ern Power Adms., and Bureau of Mines.

He will influence the policy of the Nixon administration and of the Interior Department in Oil exploration on Federal lands, the hearings on Wilderness areas under the Wilderness Bill, the mining of natural resources and many others. By Executive Order, for instance, he can open up the 9 million acre Arctic Wildlife Reserve to the oil exploration and possible drilling. This area is in the Brooks Range and is a most unique and ecologically fragile area.

Conservation Policy of Pres. Nixon

What of the conservation policy of President Nixon and the GOP - does this protect our natural resources from a man whose background is in oil development and real estate? Not very much, I am afraid.

President Nixon has several statements in regard to pollution, in about the same generalized manner as the policy on conservation and natural resources. The GOP platform contains the word "development" which should have tipped us off about being concerned in regard to his conservation policies - maybe even about the appointment of Mr. Hickel.

While this is being written the confirmation of Mr. Hickel is still in doubt; however, veteran political observers believe he will succeed in taking over the office.

If he is successful in his confirmation, he will certainly have been placed on notice by conservationists from all 50 states that the protection of our natural resources come above all else. He may also feel the hot warm breath of eager conservationists as they carefully observe his signature being placed on Executive Orders.

Claude Look, Conservation Chairman

Field Trip Report

Bodega Bay, Jan. 12 - Leaders; Dr. Joseph Greenberg & Russ G.

It was a miserable, cold, rainy day, the kind of day that the field Trip Chairman feels obliged to apologize to the leader for. The leader in turn apologizes to the twelve hardy ones that were there. The best birds were the ones we missed: no Rock Sandpipers were seen - no sane Rock Sandpiper would want to be seen -, no Emperor Geese, nor Yellow-billed Loons. But 84 species of birds were seen in the circuit of Bodega Bay and the Marin coast to Limitour Spit, Point Reyes, and Bolinas Lagoon. But - wet, cold, and wind-driven! I like the north coast in a storm. J.G.

An Historical Note

In the year 1958 the Avocet changed to a monthly publication. Previously it had been bi-monthly like the National Audubon Magazine. With this change came a new staff and editor. The new editor was Mrs. Lois Todd and the staff consisted of the same people who are still faithfully performing their duties as this is written. That means that for over ten years Miss Elsie Hoeck, Mr. & Mrs. Emmanuel Taylor, Miss Carol Rulofson, Mrs. J. Castner, and Mr. & Mrs. Chas. Zwaal have been giving their services to the welfare of the society. Those who read this, please clap your hands three times and shout so they can hear it - "Well done and thanks!"

Mrs. Todd was editor for six years and is now the Society treasurer. Mrs. Florence LaRiviere followed for three years and Mrs. Emelie Curtis is midway through her second year. Our congratulations and thanks to these kind people.

Warren M. Turner, Historian

Summary of 1968 Christmas Bird Count - Emelie Curtis, Compiler

Our 1968 Christmas Bird Count was made on Dec. 22, 1968, between 5:00 am (perhaps earlier by one or two owlers) to 4:30 pm. Les Sleeper was the count director, and the sector leaders were H.T. Harvey, A. Wool R. Cameron, D. Schmoldt & R. Sandkuhle, Mrs. F. Zwaal & J. Brokenshire. Participants this year totaled 45, sadly less than our all-time high of 71 participants last year. Perhaps the flu or season commitments or an ill-timed count date dwindled our ranks. Whatever the reason, many of our much-needed regulars were absent, and due to last minute absenteeism, the large productive Calaveras sector was covered by only one party. Better party distribution could have been attained had absentee notification reached the central meeting place prior to dispersal at 7:30 am.

The traditional count area was within the 15 mile diameter circle centering at Capitol Ave. and Maybury Rd. Time spent by the 45 observers in 17 parties estimated a total of 137½ party hours (64½ on foot, 73 by car), and distance covered totaled 447 party miles (56 on foot, 391 by car). Temperature averaged from 28° to 45° with a 5-10 m.p.h. north wind. The day was overcast with good visibility. The afternoon brought rain and sleet, the sleet announcing itself with an omnipresent tattoo on the crisp live oak leaves before being felt.

A total of 134 species were recorded during the day of the count. The total number of individuals came to 83,823, an all-time high. The increase centers on birds adaptable to high population areas, namely Ruddy Ducks, Brewer's Blackbirds, and Starlings. Gulls are holding their own at a generous 20,000, indicating no decrease in available sanitary fill. A notable and happy increase is that of the handsome, shy Varied Thrush, from 254 in 1967 to 652 in 1968. And that increase does not take in the unmanned areas of Calaveras. The only outstanding species tallied was the Golden Plover, eight of which outnumbered their more usual cousins, the Black-bellied Plover numbering only three.

(continued on page 16)

SPECIES	ALVISO	SOWST	AL.RK	CLVRS	EVGRN	TOTAL
Avocet	2136	0	0	0	0	2136
Brewer's Blackbird	2751	3836	834	1000	2285	10706
Red-winged Blackbird	4	1515	0	4	58	1581
Bluebird, Western	0	0	56	10	35	101
Bushtit	0	53	110	10	82	255
Chickadee, Chestnut-backed	2	10	24	10	25	71
Coot	1421	9	0	200	204	1834
Cowbird, Brown-headed	19	1	0	0	0	20
Cormorant, Double crested	0	0	0	2	15	17
Creeper, Brown	0	0	4	0	2	6
Crow	0	25	5	5	22	57
Curlew, Long-billed	56	0	0	0	0	56
Dove, Mourning	42	101	9	4	42	198
Dowitcher, Long-billed	334	0	0	0	0	334
Dowitcher, Short-billed	2	0	0	0	0	2
Duck, Buffhead	0	2	9	0	8	19
" Canvasback	19	0	0	0	76	95
Gadwall	0	0	33	0	0	33
Golden-eye, Common	0	0	0	0	1	1
Mallard	2	8	0	5	8	23
Merganser, Amer.	0	0	0	10	8	18
Pintail	14	0	0	0	6	20
Ring-necked	0	0	157	20	200	377
Ruddy	4073	14	18	15	218	4338
Scaup, Lesser	501	0	0	0	1	502
Shoveller	263	0	0	0	1	264
Widgeon, Amer.	0	0	8	0	4	12
Wood	0	1	0	0	0	1
" Unidentified	29	0	13	0	0	42
Eagle, Golden	0	0	1	3	4	8
Egret, Common	14	0	0	0	0	14
Egret, Snowy	74	0	1	0	0	75
Finch, House	4689	472	141	20	1984	7306
" Purple	0	0	0	0	17	17
Gallinule	0	0	0	4	0	4
Godwit, Marbled	11	0	0	0	0	11
Goldfinch, Amer.	0	552	4	0	33	589
" Lawrence's	0	0	0	0	26	26
" Lesser	18	184	189	410	342	1143
Goose, Canada	0	0	0	400	95	425
Grebe, Eared	4480	0	0	0	1	4481
" Pied-billed	2	3	2	10	4	21
" Western	1	0	0	0	0	1
Gull, Bonaparte's	413	0	0	0	0	413
" California	50	657	0	0	19	726
" Glaucous-winged	87	0	0	0	0	87
Herring	5012	10	0	0	0	5022
Ring-billed	123	0	173	100	302	698
Western	50	0	0	0	0	50
" Unidentified	9555	2807	50	1050	10	13472
Hawk, Cooper's	0	3	2	0	3	8
" Marsh	6	0	0	1	0	7
" Red-tailed	8	3	16	20	13	60
Sharp-shinned	0	3	0	0	1	4
Sparrow	17	19	9	15	37	97
" Unidentified	5	1	0	0	1	7
Heron, Black-crowned Night	3	0	0	0	0	3
Heron, Great Blue	2	0	0	0	1	3
Hummingbird, Anna's	4	18	13	2	2	39
Jay, Scrub	14	60	94	10	108	286
" Steller's	0	0	94	3	16	113

SPECIES	ALVISO	-14- SOWST	AL.RK	CLVRS	EVRCN	TOTAL
Junco, Oregon	15	169	130	5	316	635
Killdeer	59	186	29	2	56	332
Kingfisher	0	6	5	1	3	15
Kinglet, Golden-crowned	0	0	2	0	1	3
Kinglet, Ruby-crowned	0	3	28	6	32	69
Kite, White-tailed	10	2	1	1	4	18
Lark, Horned	35	0	0	0	0	35
Magpie, Yellow-billed	0	4	12	81	77	174
Meadowlark	51	149	104	701	67	1072
Mockingbird	16	32	32	3	57	140
Nuthatch, Red-breasted	0	0	0	0	4	4
Nuthatch, White-breasted	0	0	30	0	8	38
Owl, Barn	0	0	3	0	1	4
" .Burrowing	3	0	1	0	0	4
" ,Horned	0	0	15	0	4	19
" ,Screech	0	0	4	0	0	4
Pheasant, Ring-necked	24	16	1	1	4	46
Phoebe, Black	2	7	3	3	12	27
Phoebe, Say's	0	0	0	3	2	5
Pigeon, Band-tailed	0	0	53	200	0	253
Pippit, Water	69	12	0	0	0	81
Plover, Black-bellied	3	0	0	0	0	3
Plover, Golden	8	0	0	0	0	8
Quail, Calif.	135	43	64	20	215	477
Rail, Clapper	1	0	0	0	0	1
Raven	0	0	14	0	0	14
Robin	94	382	315	10	81	882
Sandpiper, Least	1167	0	0	0	0	1167
" ,Dunlin (Red-backed)	820	0	0	0	0	820
" ,Spotted	1	0	1	0	0	2
" ,Western	1766	0	2	0	0	1768
Yellow-legs, Greater	2	4	7	1	0	14
Sapsucker, Yellow-bellied	0	1	6	1	3	11
Shrike, Loggerhead	13	10	2	8	16	49
Siskin	0	1	0	50	0	51
Snipe, Common	45	9	0	1	9	64
Sparrow, Fox	0	0	0	0	4	4
" ,Golden-crowned	174	198	165	250	358	1145
" ,House	170	34	37	25	70	336
" Lark	0	0	0	500	11	511
" Lincoln's	5	0	0	0	0	5
" Rufous-crowned	0	0	2	1	0	3
" Savannah	45	1	0	6	0	52
" Song	26	7	24	2	1	60
" White-crowned	258	318	207	350	764	1897
Starling	5100	755	183	150	1823	8011
Stilt, Black-necked	17	0	0	0	0	17
Swan, Whistling	1	0	0	26	0	27
Swift, White-throated	0	0	34	30	0	64
Tern, Forster's	1	0	0	0	0	1
Thrasher, Calif.	0	0	8	1	3	12
Thrush, Hermit	4	10	79	9	27	129
Thrush, Varied	0	0	638	2	12	652
Titmouse	0	1	53	1	26	81
Towhee, Brown	18	159	94	5	58	334
Towhee, Rufous-sided	1	1	40	4	9	55
Vireo, Hutton's	0	0	1	0	0	1
Vulture, Turkey	0	0	1	0	0	1
Warbler, Audubon's	18	50	27	0	264	359
" ,Myrtle	0	0	0	0	13	13

SPECIES	ALVISO	SOWST	AL.RK	CLVRS	EVRCN	TOTAL
Warbler, Yellowthroat	1	0	0	0	0	1
Waxwing, Cedar	6	507	342	0	20	875
Whimbrel	0	28	0	0	0	28
Willet	968	0	0	0	0	968
Woodpecker, Acorn	2	9	60	4	13	88
" , Downy	1	1	3	2	0	7
" , Flicker, Red-shafted	16	31	65	11	45	168
" , Hairy	0	0	1	0	0	1
" , Nuttall's	1	0	8	0	1	10
Wren, Bewick's	0	1	10	1	10	22
" , Canyon	0	0	6	1	0	7
" , House	1	0	0	0	0	1
" , Long-billed Marsh	4	0	0	3	0	7
" , Rock	0	0	0	1	0	1
" . Winter	0	0	0	0	1	1
Wrentit	0	0	17	0	4	21
Unidentified Sandpipers	1114	0	0	0	0	1114
Unidentified sparrows	0	0	132	0	0	132
Unidentified Woodpeckers	0	0	7	0	0	7
						83823 T.

Table I	ALVISO	SOWST	AL.RK	CLVRS	EVRCN	YEAR
	66	47	64	78	63	1957
Number of Species	65	52	64	82	58	1958
	54	51	68	84	69	1959
by Sector	71	73	67	82	75	1960
	78	65	66	83	82	1961
1957-1968	75	50	64	83	65	1962
	90	52	78	93	68	1963
	96	44	78	83	62	1964
	107	52	84	88	62	1965
	82	55	72	80	56	1966
	84	55	88	107	79	1967
	82	59	75	68	83	1968

Table II	YEAR	SPEC	BIRDS	COUNTRS	PARTIES	WEATHR	PTY HRS
	1956	107	24364	25	7	clear	49
Summary	1957	115	45512	34	12	fog	81
	1958	122	57845	38	12	rain	84
of Counts	1959	125	44689	45	14	clear	97
	1960	130	50458	47	15	clear	104
1956-1968	1961	139	50407	56	18	fog	114
	1962	128	56676	42	13	clear	92
	1963	138	62262	62	19	clear	144
	1964	138	58385	56	17	cloudy	116
	1965	149	64567	59	21	clear	141
	1966	130	61321	41	19	clear	166
	1967	144	78558	71	24	0'cst, clear	160
	1968	134	83823	45	17	0'cast	137½

Table III, Percentage of Time Spent in Various Areas During Count Period

	1968	1963-67		1968	1963-67
Saltwater marsh	5	2.9	Oak woodland	6.7	11.7
Freshwater msh.	1.5	1.8	Freshwater lake	5.8	5.7
Deciduous orchd	8.8	12.7	Sanitary fill	2.8	2.3
Town suburbs	4.9	6.8	Canyon stream	8	6.6
Grassld & pastrs	23.5	21.7	Valley stream	8.5	9.9
Cult. cropland	4.4	4.8	Chaparral	6.2	3.5
Bay saltwater	3	2.7	Formal parks	11	7.4

Table IV Summary of Eight Species Whose Counts have been High.

Year	Starling	House Finch	Brewr Blkbd	Redwg Blkbd	Coot	Ruddy Duck	Lesser Gldfch	WhCrn Sparw
1954	0	2009	2645	60	972	632	808	1665
1956	0	1356	3492	428	1834	613	539	1530
1957	0	1940	13016	3986	985	1128	1042	2612
1958	110	3865	6855	1029	2493	192	1346	4432
1959	98	1188	2872	415	783	1061	2196	2470
1960	255	1716	8091	1550	1376	436	947	2442
1961	202	2136	6801	3435	1024	380	2054	3690
1962	1806	3842	8175	4561	692	466	445	3510
1963	4105	4542	5959	1839	1485	1039	1037	1857
1964	1872	7078	8183	4121	926	1160	855	1773
1965	3328	6500	7291	3518	2620	2332	2277	4511
1966	4216	6475	6985	2210	1104	741	1134	1482
1967	4653	9438	7559	3566	2401	2706	2575	2890
1968	8011	7306	10706	1581	1834	4338	1143	1897

Participants by sector were: Alviso - W.Alexander, E. & L. Case, H.T. Harvey, J.MacDonald, T.Myers, F.Sunzeri, P.Uhry, J.Stanley, C.Stewart.

Southwest - N.Baird, J.Brokenshire, J.Domiter, R.Dewing, J. & M. Henderson, C.Lintott, H.Newell, D.Patt, R.Troetschler, E.Wagenhale, C. & F.Zwaal.

Alum Rock - B.Burge, D.Guzzeta, L.Kozen, R.Sandkuhle, D.Schmoldt,.

Calaveras - R. & T. Smock, A. Wool.

Evergreen - B.Arnold, K. & R.Balcom, H., R., & W.Cameron, E.Curtis, M.Floss, L. & R.Herndon, J. & W.Lakin, J. & W.Wheeler.

Summary (continued from page 12)

Those species seen in the 1967 count, but not in 1968, were: Solitary Vireo, Tricolored Blackbird, Dipper, Red-breasted Merganser, Redhead, Surf Scoter, Green-winged Teal, Bald Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Horned Grebe, Mew Gull, Short-eared Owl, White Pelican, Semi-palmated Plover, Snowy Plover, Tree Swallow, Orange-crowned & Townsend's Warblers, Amer. Bittern, White-throated Sparrow, Western Tanager.

Those species seen in 1968, but not 1967, were: Wood Duck, Gallinule, Lawrence Goldfinch, Western Gull, and House Wren.

We seem to need on our Christmas Counts a little more enthusiasm extending right into the tallying after the count (try it sometime), and perhaps more pre-scouting and training as suggested by Dr. Weston two years ago. The birds are still there, let's find them next time!

In closing, I wish to thank our refreshment committee for their talents and time. I'm sorry I neglected to thank them at the tally; too busy eating. They never fail the tired, hungry, weathered counters who straggle in. Also, my thanks to Bryan Arnold for his welcome assistance in the addition of individuals at the tally.

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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