

# The Avocet

Volume XVII, Number 6

June, 1970

## ANNUAL MEETING

Original Historical and Bird Songs -- Sung by Keith Clark

Tuesday, June 9, 1970

Holbrook-Palmer Park, 150 Watkins Avenue, Atherton

Mr. Keith Clark will present a program of original songs. His lyrics have been put to music by Royal Stanton, Pete Seeger, B. J. Ius and his son, K.C. Clark. Mr. Clark, a member of our society, teaches creative writing at Palo Alto High School and Foothill College. It will be an enjoyable evening!

The grounds will be open at 5:30 pm for those who wish to bird watch and bring a picnic supper. There are no cooking facilities, but coffee and cake will be served.

The annual meeting will start at 7:30 pm. To reach the park turn west off Middlefield Road just south of the Marsh Road approach to Bayshore Highway. Guests are welcome. Reminder -- The park collects newspapers. Please bring them tied in bunches. Save paper, save the Bay, etc.!

-- Phyllis Klein, Co-Program Chairman

## Calendar of Events

Bird Discussion Group - - - - - Tues., June 2, 10:00 am

At the home of Eve Case, 20537 Verde Vista Ln. Saratoga, 867-4748. Subject will be the Western Crow. Fanny Zwaal will open the discussion.

Yosemite - - - - - Sat., June 6, 6:30 am

Meet at junction of Glacier Point Road and road to Bridalveil Campground. For mountain birds, Arctic black-backed Woodpecker, Williamson's Sapsucker, Blue Grouse, Great Gray Owl (???). Leaders, Russ and Joe Greenberg

Santa Cruz Boat Trip - Mon., June 8, 7:30 am

See May "Avocet" for details.

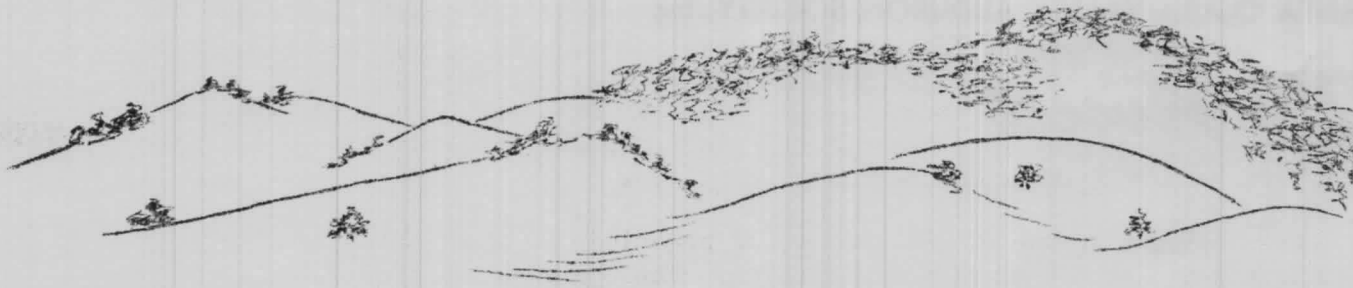
Annual Meeting - - Tues., June 9, 7:30 pm

Alum Rock Park - - Wed., June 10, 9:00 am

Meet at Jr. Science Museum parking lot.

Leader, Catherine Lintott





### OPEN SPACE

What ratio would you choose?

With the Bay Area facing an exploding population — projected to be 7.3 million by 1990, an increase of almost 50% — what can be done to assure a sane ratio of open space to people in the future?

We can and must stop the urban sprawl and building spiral. The sprawl consumes 14,000 acres per year in Northern California (the size of San Francisco). A highly urbanized population needs an accessible countryside for recreation and escape.

An attractive folder, just published by the People for Open Space states, "Open space is the insurance policy for civilization . . . the prism that reflects the unique value of living in the Bay Area — it is the playground of nature, the scent of blossoms, the rustle of leaves, and salt spray in the wind."

In 1969 the People for Open Space sponsored a report with financial aid from the Ford Foundation which analyzed the economic value of open space. The study shows that urban sprawl creates higher taxes. While developers make a nimble dollar on tract houses, shopping centers, industrial parks, the whole community pays for the new highways, the new water supplies, new social services and new schools. People for Open Space have published the final report in a very attractive folder called "The Case for Open Space".

Figures published by the Open Space Action Committee shows there are 4,484,426 acres in the Bay Area. The ABAG 1969 revised plan proposes: 770,309 acres for resource production; 179,103 acres for resource preservation; 945,695 acres for Health, Welfare and Well-being; 104,265 acres for Public Safety; 19,245 acres for Corridors; 1,675,777 acres for Urban expansion (after 1990) and 790,032 acres for Urban expansion to 1990. Total permanent open space according to ABAG would be 2,018,617 acres or a ratio of almost acre for acre.

The most immediate step to be taken for the preservation of open space in the Bay Area is for you to study the details of SB 1400 (Sen. Marks, R., S.F.) which proposes a 27 member two-year regional open space commission, similar to the BCDC, charged with the responsibility of studying, planning and recommending action in connection with the acquisition, preservation and development of regional open space. The Bill would grant authority to the commission to control development of open space during the two-year period of study.

As stated in the People for Open Space folder: "the solution exists — a new, special governmental agency, regional in scope, will have to be established by the state legislature with authority and funds to reserve or acquire a system of permanent open space in the Bay Area. Land can be preserved by zoning, special districts, easements or outright purchase — too soon it may be too late."

If you would like to know more about this group called "People for Open Space,"

write to 126 Post St., Room 607, San Francisco, requesting one of their new folders and also the folder called "The Case for Open Space." The first one will be free and you can ask the price on the second one. Membership dues are \$5.00 per year which also includes subscription to the "Regional Exchange." Mrs. Williams Eastman, Los Altos Hills, is the Vice-President of the group and others from Santa Clara County are on the Council and Advisory Committee.

Mrs. Eastman is now in the process of organizing a speakers bureau to represent all aspects of the open space problem. The speakers will tell the story to service clubs, schools, public bodies while others will be making arrangements for the speaking engagements. If these chores do not appeal, how about circulating petitions for SB 1400, the Open Space Bill?

As the folder states so well, "Open Space is what will make tomorrow possible!"

— Tony Look, Conservation Chairman

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The Queer Tree Salamander - Of all queer things under the sun there are few more queer than the Tree Salamander. To start with, its eyes bulge way out. Next, its upper teeth protrude. Its coloration of dark brown with scattered yellow spots is not an odd combination, but its skin is very smooth. It has no lungs but can breathe through its toes and, very amazing, can climb trees! The tips of the toes are expanded and thin-skinned and, since they are most frequently in contact with the damp decaying wood of the tree cavities, they are able to act as gills or lungs. But the skin of the Tree Salamander is unusually thin and smooth, and since it must always be moist too, it probably serves as a lung to assist the toes. Then, through the nostrils, air is taken into the mouth; so the mouth itself acts also as a lung. What a lot of devices this animal must have to do the work of lungs!

One would expect that an animal with the many peculiarities of the Tree Salamander would have peculiarities also in the matter of its early life history. And such is the case. Not to the urge of winter rains do these Salamanders respond, for in the heat of late summer, they lay their eggs. In this respect they are totally unlike all other amphibians. Not to the pond, the puddle, the foothill stream do they go to lay the eggs, but to a dark, damp tree cavity. The young Salamanders are forced to forego their aquatic existence since there is no water; so the eggs must be very large to carry them through the entire period that might have been spent in water. Because her eggs are so large, the mother Salamander produces only a dozen to fifteen as compared to the hundreds or thousands of smaller eggs that are laid in water by other amphibians. But, in spite of the fact that there is no aquatic existence, the young Salamanders, in the jelly envelope of the egg, produce gills just the same. And the gills, in the egg jelly, secure oxygen for their possessors. But, when the young Salamanders leave the jelly of the egg some two months after the eggs are laid, the gills have been resorbed and have disappeared just as do those of Salamanders reared in water.

Nature, in her great experiment that produced land dwelling animals from water dwellers and that succeeded only in part with amphibians, came nearer success with the Tree Salamander than with the others. She made it possible for Tree Salamander young to develop out of water; if she had given to the grown-ups a hard covering so that they could resist drying and had preserved for them their lungs, the experiment would have been, in their case, a complete success.

— from "The Tree Salamander" by Gayle Pickwell



First 1931 Dates for Summer Residents and Migrants in Santa Clara Valley

These dates, put down in chronological order, have been gathered, for the most part, from the journals of Miss Gladys Record, Miss Emily Smith, & Dr. G. Pickwell.

- Allen Hummingbird - 1, Feb. 7, Los Gatos; common, Feb. 22, Los Gatos
- Turkey Vulture - 1, Feb. 22, Los Gatos; 3 pairs, Mar. 21, Silver Creek Hills
- Lutescent (Orange-cr) Warbler - 1, Feb. 28, Woodwardia, common, Mar. 8, Los Gatos
- Violet-green Swallow - Many, Mar. 9, Los Gatos
- W. Mourning Dove - 1, Mar. 13, Los Gatos
- Lawrence Goldfinch - Several, Mar. 14, Los Altos; pair, Mar. 21, San Felipe Hills
- Pileolated (Wilson's) Warbler - 1, Mar. 17, Los Gatos; several, Mar. 31, Uvas Canyon
- Western Flycatcher - 1, Mar. 19, Los Gatos; common, Mar. 28, Los Gatos
- W. Warbling Vireo - 1, Mar. 19, Los Gatos; common, Mar. 28
- Cliff Swallow - Many, Mar. 21, Silver Creek Hills
- Bullock Oriole - 1, Mar. 27, Los Gatos; 1, Apr. 4, San Jose
- Barn Swallow - Several, Mar. 28, Los Gatos
- W. House Wren - 1, Mar. 28, Guadalupe Mine; common, Apr. 6, Los Gatos
- Anthony Green Heron - 1, Apr. 1, San Jose State College Campus
- W. Grasshopper Sparrow - 1, Apr. 1, Mt. Hamilton foothills
- Blackheaded Grosbeak - 1, Apr. 3, Los Gatos; common, Apr. 15, Los Gatos
- Yellow Warbler - 1, Apr. 6, San Jose; 1, Apr. 8, Los Gatos
- Cassin (Solitary) Vireo - 1, Apr. 8, Los Gatos
- Texas Nighthawk - 2 pairs, Apr. 10, Coyote Cr. south of San Jose
- Western Kingbird - 1, Apr. 11, Silver Creek Hills
- Ash-throated Flycatcher - 1, Apr. 11, Silver Creek Hills
- W. Chipping Sparrow - 1, Apr. 11, Los Gatos
- Russet-backed (Swainson's) Thrush - 1, Apr. 12, Los Gatos
- W. Wood Pewee - 1, Apr. 16, Alum Rock Park; common, Apr. 27, Los Gatos
- Rough-winged Swallow - pair, Apr. 16, Alum Rock Park
- Lazuli Bunting - 1, Apr. 16, Alum Rock Park
- Olive-sided Flycatcher - 1, Apr. 18, Los Gatos
- Long-tailed (Yellow-breasted) Chat - 2 or 3, Apr. 19, San Jose
- Western Tanager - 1, Apr. 28, Los Gatos

Try marking your calendar with these arrivals in red, these departures in blue, and your own observations in black.

Some Last Dates for Winter Visitors

- Varied Thrush - 1, Mar. 26, Los Gatos
- Hermit Thrush - Mar. 21, Silver Creek Hills; 1, Mar. 31, Uvas Canyon
- Ruby-crowned Kinglet - Several, Mar. 31, Uvas Canyon
- Audubon Warbler - Several, Apr. 11, Los Gatos
- W. Savannah Sparrow - Numerous, Mar. 21, Silver Creek Hills; many, Apr. 11
- W. Robin - Large Flocks, Mar. 27, Los Gatos; small flock, Apr. 17, Los Gatos
- Golden-crowned Sparrow - Small flock, Apr. 17, Los Gatos; several, Apr. 21, San Jose
- White-crowned Sparrow - Small flock, Apr. 14, Los Gatos; several, Apr. 21, San Jose
- Cedar-waxwing - Flocks common throughout April in Los Gatos & San Jose.

First Dates for Winter Visitors and Migrants

- July 19, Alviso : Semi-palmated Plover, Black-bellied Plover, Hudsonian Curlew (Whimbrel), W. Willet, Least Sandpiper, Long-billed Dowitcher, W. Sndpr
- Sept. 14, Alum Rk: Say's Phoebe
- Sept. 17, Dumbarton Bridge: Water Pipit
- Sept. 19, Alum Rk: White-crowned Sparrow, flock
- Sept. 21, Los Gatos: W. Robin
- Sept. 25, Los Gatos: Golden-crowned Sparrow
- Sept. 27, Mt. Hamilton : Red-breasted Sapsucker, Audubon Warbler, Savannah Sparrow, Gambel white-crowned Sparrow
- Oct. 2, Los Gatos: Ruby-crowned Kinglet
- Oct. 4, Cedar Waxwing; Oct. 7, Hermit Thrush; Oct. 15, Varied Thrush & Fox Sparrow  
(Above data taken from S.C.V.A.S bulletin of Oct. 1930 & Apr. 1931)

Insect Music

"It has been said that insect music can give us pleasure solely because of its associations. This we can understand in the case of the 'cricket on the hearth'; also of the field cricket when we remember Gilbert White's words: 'Thus the shrilling of the field cricket, though sharp and stridulous, yet marvellously delights some hearers, filling their minds with a train of summer ideas of everything that is rural, verdurous and joyous.'

"I am convinced that there are many insects in this order that delight us with the intrinsic beauty of the sounds they emit. . . . Of those known to me I will mention only one — a leaf-locust of the genus *Aecanthus*, found throughout North and South America. It is a slender, frail-looking insect, all of it, wings included, of a pale, delicate green, the whole body like the wings looking almost



semi-transparent. By day it lies concealed in the clustered foliage of trees and sings after dark and appears to be most tuneful on moonlight nights. It has a sustained note, repeated several times with silent intervals of a second or less; then a longer interval of silence and the strain once more. It is a soft and silvery sound, and differs also from the music of other locusts and crickets in its slowness. For the locust sound is not only one, but a series of sounds following so rapidly that they blend into one sustained chord of sound; whereas in this insect the points or drop of sound are heard distinctly as separate notes. Several American writers have tried to describe it; thus Thoreau called it 'slumberous breathing', and Hawthorne more successfully describes it as 'audible silence,' and adds: 'If moonlight could be heard it would sound like that.'

— from "A Hind in Richmond Park" by W. H. Hudson

Education Committee Report

Since June 1, 1969, the Education Committee has hopefully opened the eyes of the following numbers of people to environmental joys and environmental problems. Lloyd Case has helped in the Saratoga area, Mary McPherson is a welcome addition in the Campbell area (and needs help showing garden bird slides next year). A new hard worker in the Palo Alto area is Courtney Dawson-Roberts. The older members of the committee continue to give time, energy, and knowledge to the young and old of the Santa Clara Valley and the rest of the Society should be very proud of them. They are: Florence LaRiviere, Diane Conradson, Lili Estrada, Dorothy Love, Yvonne Kortum. Why aren't you on this committee??

- The facts: 49 Bay lectures and 49 fieldtrips: 1,457 children and 134 adults
- 13 Bay lectures, no fieldtrips: 2,304 children and 188 adults
- 4 Bay field trips only: 44 children and 75 adults
- Garden Bird slides: 708 children and 107 adults
- Garden Bird field trips: 66 children and 14 adults
- Films with talks: 255 children and 80 adults

The four films without speakers have gone to 24 Junior High, High Schools, and Colleges plus the Palo Alto Baylands Interpretive Center. The figures aren't in, but in most cases the film was seen by the entire school. The "Warning Warning" film was in particular demand and could have been booked twice as many times all spring.

Nancy Holmes, Education Chairman

Stray Field Notes: Albino Jay at home of Mrs. Ross Phinney, Los Gatos. 2 Lazuli Buntings, a Rock Wren & Chipping Sp. feeding together at Calaveras Res. Apr. 26; a Roadrunner (plus his convulsive call), Rufous-crowned Sp. & Lawrence Goldfinch on Coe Park road Apr. 29. - E. Curtis. (Ed. Note: I hope the arrival & departure dates will be kept & compared currently. Should be helpful to new birders to area.)

A WARM WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS !

Mrs. Grace N. Shepard, 600 Foothill Rd., Stanford 94305  
 Miss Katherine E. Martin, 239 Thurston St., Los Gatos 95030  
 Mrs. George S. Center, 1233 University Ave., Palo Alto 94301  
 Peter R. Holmes, 843 Moana Ct., Palo Alto 94306  
 Mrs. Walter D. James, 250 Camino Al Lago, Atherton 94025  
 Mrs. W. E. Mileski, 467 Alicia Way, Los Altos 94022  
 Mrs. Catherine Miller, 1201 Bryant St., Palo Alto 94301  
 Melissa E. Miller, 1020 S. 8th St., San Jose 95112  
 Richard B. Muffley, 425 Lowell Ave., Palo Alto 94301  
 Robert H. Pleas, 3333 Woodside Rd., Woodside 94062  
 Blair P. Udale, 184 Primrose Ln., Palo Alto 94303  
 Mr. & Mrs. Lou S. Young, 1190 Littleoak Dr., San Jose 95129  
 - Caroline Davis, Membership Chairman



S.C.V.A.S. Officers and Chairmen

President:	Dr. Joseph Greenberg, 270 Kellogg Ave, Palo Alto 94301	327-0329
Vice-Pres:	Mrs. Grace Lind, 1615 Dry Creek Rd, San Jose 95125	266-9598
Secretary:	Mrs. Diane Conradson, 4337 Miranda, Palo Alto 94306	941-2102
Treasurer:	Mrs. Joyce Todd, 945 Matadero, Palo Alto 94306	326-7482
Education:	Mrs. Nancy Holmes, 843 Moana Ct, Palo Alto 94306	948-1854
Registrar:	Mrs. Fanny Zwaal, 478 Clifton, San Jose 95128	292-2060
Membership:	Mrs. Caroline Davis, 104 Winslow Ct. 4, Campbell 95008	378-1603
Historian:	Warren Turner, 646 Alvarado Row, Stanford	325-7777
Conservation:	Claude Look, 411 Los Ninos Way, Los Altos 94022	948-6790
Program:	Miss Harriet Mundy, 759 Tennyson, Palo Alto 94306	325-1192
	Mrs. Phyllis Klein, 4264 Newberry Ct, Palo Alto	327-4378
Field Trips:	Dr. Joseph Greenberg	
" Wed.North:	Mrs. Kay McCann, 783 Garland, Palo Alto 94303	327-4138
" Wed.South:	Mrs. Catherine Lintott, 17150 Buena Vist, Los Gatos 95030	356-4264

AVOCET

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