



# The Avocet

TIME VALUE

VOLUME XVIII, Number 4

April 1971

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Apr. 1 BOARD MEETING, Thur. 7:30 p.m. at home of Harriet Mundy, 757 Tennyson, Palo Alto. Members welcome.
- Apr. 3 ISENBERG RANCH; Sat. 8 a.m. Take La Honda Rd. to Skyline. Turn L (south) for about 3 miles to Isenberg Ranch sign (near nursery). Turn R go to end of road 2½ miles in. Leader: Howard Wolcott, 321-6694.
- Apr. 6 BIRD DISCUSSION GROUP, Tues. 9:30 a.m. at home of Lloyd & Eve Case, 20537 Verde Vista, Saratoga. Bring lunch for birding trip to Hakone Gardens. Subject: Hummingbirds.
- Apr. 14 GILROY HOT SPRINGS, Wed. 8:30 a.m. Meet at Kings Ct. Shopping Ctr, Bascomb & Blossom Hill Rds, Los Gatos or at 9:30 at home of Emmanuel Taylor, 15195 Sycamore Ave, (off Watsonville Rd), Morgan Hill. Bring lunch. Leaders: Emmanuel & Mary Taylor, (408) 779-9097.
- Apr. 16 NORTH COUNTY BIRD DISCUSSION GROUP Fri. 9:30 a.m. Meet at home of Wm & Mary Postlewaite, 380 Menlo Oaks Dr. (off Ringwood), Menlo Park. 323-2198. Subject: Warblers.
- Apr. 17 ALUM ROCK PARK, Sat 7-10 a.m. Meet at bridge near park nature center. Leader: Fannie Zwaal, 292-2060. Plan to go to pancake breakfast after.
- Apr. 17 PANCAKE BREAKFAST, benefit for San Francisco Bay Wildlife Refuge fund. Sat., 8:30-11:00 a.m. ED LEVIN PARK, Oakknoll Site, Calaveras Rd. Milpitas. By reservation only (see page 3). Bring fork, plate & cup; Adults 75¢ & children 35¢.
- Apr. 21 GENERAL MEETING, Wed. 8 p.m. Homestead Hl, Homestead Rd, at Mary, Cupertino. SKYLINE REGIONAL PARK & OPEN SPACE DISTRICT PROPOSAL (See page 2)
- Apr. 24 PANCAKE BREAKFAST, Benefit for San Francisco Bay Wildlife Refuge Fund., Sat. 8:30-11:00 a.m. DUVENECK RANCH, Moody Rd. Los Altos Hills. By reservation only (see pg. 3). Bring plate, cup & fork. Adults 75¢, children 35¢.
- Apr. 25 STEVEN'S CREEK PARK, Sun 8:00 a.m. Take Foothill Rd. from Hyw 280 to park. Meet at parking lot near dam. Leaders: Lloyd & Eve Case, 867-4748.
- Apr. 28 PULGAS WATER TEMPLE, Wed. 9 a.m. On left off Canada Rd, Woodside. Participants will enter S.F. Watershed property, will go to Stone Dam for lunch returning by a different route about 3 p.m. You cannot leave early because of locked gate. Leader: Kay McCann, 327-4138.
- May 2 Special Field Trip for High School and college students.
- Jun. 14 ALBATROSS EXPEDITION, Santa Cruz. Boat trip for pelagic birds. For reservation information see pg 3.

GENERAL MEETING: SKYLINE REGIONAL PARK AND  
OPEN SPACE DISTRICT PROPOSAL

A regional park district similar to the highly acclaimed East Bay Regional Park District is proposed for the Mid-Peninsula to save some of our fast disappearing natural open space and provide for our increasing recreational needs. This will be a much discussed issue in the coming months as actions are taken to put it on the ballot in the November election.

The slide and sound program by Stanley Norton, Nonette Hanko, William Spangle, Mary Davey, Tom Brown and Larry Klein will fully explain the proposed district. Most of our members reside in the proposed district and therefore have a direct interest in the proposal. Come to the meeting and hear all about it in one hour!

--Ken Kidd, Program Chairman

HOW PESTICIDES ARE REGULATED

The detrimental environmental effects of Chlorinated Hydrocarbons Insecticides are ever more apparent, the Mark Commission# has recommended their use be banned in the United States, but the United States Department of Agriculture has shown little tendency to act. The following excerpts from a Congressional Hearing\* on USDA's lack of effectiveness under the act are instructive. (Emphasis is added.)

"The Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act is based on the concept of protecting the public and our total environment from possible..hazards from the use of these poisons. Registration procedures require proof of safety before a material is marketed in interstate commerce."

Statement by Agricultural Research Service (ARS):

...We believe that recall by the manufacturer or shipper is the most effective means..(of..removing violative products from the market....

Q. When inspectors find a potentially harmful product..do you examine manufacturer's records to ascertain (whether there are) other shipments of similar products?

A. No.

Q. Didn't you have one product you took off the market..because it caused a number of deaths of children?..Thallium...

A. That is correct.

Q. When was that cancellation?

A. ...in 1965.

Q. How many deaths do you know..resulted from Thallium?

A. About 400.

Q. Were any deaths of children reported after 1965?

A. I have seen no reports of any deaths.

\*"Deficiencies in Administration of Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act" Committee on Government Operations, May & June 1969. House of Representatives

#Report of the Secretary's Commission on Pesticides and their Relationship to Environmental Health; U.S. Department of Health, Education, & Welfare, Dec. 1969, \$3, Supt. of Documents.

BOARD NOTES

.Voted to endorse the concept of a Regional Park District & help secure enough signatures to enable the plan to get on the ballot. (Attend Apr. General Meeting & see March Avocet for details.)

.Received with thanks a contribution in memory of Teresa Pagen Hoyt of Santa Cruz and former SCVAS member.

.Received with thanks a gift in memory of a dead bird.

.Voted to support the California Coastal Alliance which seeks to consolidate conservationists' efforts toward preservation of California's Coastal Wetlands. (See page 5 for details.)

.Received an encouraging report on efforts to secure monitoring of local governmental meetings. (See page 3 for details)

WASHINGTON DC COURT OF APPEALS has ordered the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to cancel all uses of DDT in the US. (Cancellation takes years, suspension would be immediate.) The order is in response to a court suit brought by Nat'l Audubon, Sierra Club, Environmental Defense Fund and W. Michigan Environmental Council.

Q. In other words you feel the precautions you are taking now are adequate?

A. I hope so--

Statement by questioner: In order to spotlight the importance, might I read excerpts from the General Accounting Office Report--"The effective date of the cancellation..was 30 days after August 1, 1965...We found that subsequent to cancellation thallium products continued to be available..(are) still available in January 1968."

...Our review of IBM runs at the Poison Control Center..showed 20 thallium poisonings in the first 10 months of 1968.

(Continued page 4)

CAN YOU FILL IN THE BLANKS?

President Joe Greenberg reports progress in our efforts to monitor local government activities. However there are still a few blanks. Our representatives are:

- Palo Alto: Betsy Peterson, Kay McCann, Lucy Evans and Harriet Mundy.
- Los Altos: Mrs. Eugene Riebe, Ruth Troetschler.
- Los Altos Hills: \_\_\_\_\_
- Mt. View: John Mac Farlane
- Cupertino: \_\_\_\_\_
- San Jose: Grace Lind
- S.C. County Board of Supervisors: \_\_\_\_\_
- BCDC: Harriet Mundy
- Cupertino: \_\_\_\_\_
- Alviso: \_\_\_\_\_
- Saratoga: Mrs. H. C. Wittgenstein
- Los Gatos: \_\_\_\_\_ Campbell: \_\_\_\_\_
- Morgan Hill: \_\_\_\_\_ Other? \_\_\_\_\_

To fill in the blanks call Dr. Joseph Greenberg (9-5) 326-8120.

NEW MEMBERS will be welcomed next month when the listing is received from national headquarters.

AUDITOR NEEDED

Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society needs an auditor shortly after our fiscal year closes May 3, 1971. We would appreciate the services of a qualified member. In past years, a member did this for us as his contribution to the Society, but we can pay for it. Please call Treasurer, Joyce Todd, 326-7482.

RESERVE MY PLACE AT THE PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Between 8:30 and 11:00 a.m.

For my party of \_\_\_\_\_ adults and \_\_\_\_\_ children. (75¢ for adult, 35¢ for child)

\_\_\_\_\_ Ed Levin Park, Oakknoll Site, Calaveras Road, Milpitas, APRIL 17.

\_\_\_\_\_ Duveneck Ranch, Moody Road, Los Altos Hills; APRIL 24.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to 843 Moana Ct. Palo Alto

NEEDS OF THE WILDLIFE REFUGE COMMITTEE

.Posters to publicize the Pancake Breakfasts.

.Names of people (nationwide) who will write their Congressmen regarding the Refuge. (For hints see the Feb. & April Avocet.) Every letter counts.

.Helpers at the pancake breakfasts.

.Typists, card filers and envelope addressers at 843 Moana Ct., Palo Alto, weekdays.

...To Help: Call Nancy Holmes, 948-1854.

AVAILABLE TO HELP PUBLICIZE THE REFUGE

. Refuge brochures and display unit.

. Two sets of 35mm slides complete with descriptions can be borrowed to show PTA's classes, service clubs, etc.

. Refuge pins, \$1.25 or more, Box 4386, San Jose, 95126.

FIELD TRIP REPORT: Searsville Lake

On February 17, under partly cloudy skies, 35 people recorded 42 species of birds. We witnessed the first return of the Violet-green Swallows, with three pair being present. Notable also were 4 pairs of Gadwalls in breeding plumage, 60 to 70 Mallards and several Ringnecks. We found that the Great Blue Heron nests have been moved farther up the stream into some redwoods.

--Les and Nell Sleeper

ALBATROSS EXPEDITION SLATED

Leavitt McQuesten's annual Albatross Expedition will be held Monday, June 14, A Stagnaro Sport-fishing boat will take 40 observers offshore from Santa Cruz. Many pelagic species have been seen in former years, and Black-footed Albatrosses usually float within a few feet of the boat. Price of the 4-hour trip is \$2. For reservations, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Leavitt McQuesten, 120 Otis Street, Santa Cruz, 95060. (Hurry, spaces go fast!)

PESTICIDE REGULATION (Continued)

- Q. When did the ARS first become aware that the Public Health Service (PHS) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) had questioned the use of lindane vaporizers?
- A. 1953.
- Q. Why was it necessary for you to wait 16 years (before you performed) tests to find that residues (were) left on food?
- A. The agency objecting...is required to submit data to support their objection..
- Q. ..This data was not submitted?
- A. No.
- Q. What form did the..complaint take?
- A. ..mainly they did not believe that humans should be submitted to the same concentration of a pesticide in the atmosphere as is required to destroy pests.
- Q. But you don't consider that was a warning against hazard?
- A. We considered that..a warning. We continued to search the literature..for data that would show a definite cause and effect relationship. We could not find it.
- Q. Was the complaint a..one shot affair?
- A. No..you might say (it was) a standing objection.
- Q. But that objection has never been reviewed in terms of study in your..laboratories?
- A. No sir.
- Q. So when one agency of the Federal Government didn't provide another..with information, the second agency decided it wasn't necessary to pursue it further?
- A. ..we looked everywhere, journals, experts..
- Q. But you did not utilize the laboratory to make this examination?
- A. No.
- Q. Do you go ahead and register..even though PHS objects?
- A. Yes sir, we do.
- Q. Could you give..your logic in doing that?
- A. We are required..to get their advice..and it can be judged along with other evidence ..(but) We believe, as the one who is charged with administration of the act, our judgement should prevail and the action we take is to register in the absence of evidence to indicate it shouldn't be.
- Q. Do you see your mission as getting..economic poison on the market or protecting the American consumer..?
- A. Our mission is to administer the..Act and our goals are to register only those compounds that are safe and effective..
- Q. When the PHS suggests..even though not in the..language you would like that they find something that they are wary of..you go ahead and register?
- A. The alternative is not to register when there is any objection.
- Q. Isn't a Government agency a responsible group? If you held up a few (products) it wouldn't be any great damage to society.
- A. Our basis for holding up would be what?
- Q. The objection of the PHS.
- A. When we have no basis..for the objection ..it's impossible for us to evaluate..
- Q. Is there any structure in the Government that..can oversee this dispute?
- A. Yes sir..the Secretary of Agriculture.
- Q. Have you ever brought this problem to him?
- A. Not yet.
- Q. Doesn't the interagency agreement require that if there are unresolved questions..as to the safety of..compounds, that the questions are to..go to the Secretary of the Department concerned?
- A. Yes sir.
- Q. We have heard (in previous testimony) that there are 252 products in one year's time to which PHS objected. Did they withdraw any of these objections?
- A. No sir.
- Q. (They were) in a form unsatisfactory to you?
- A. That's correct--
- Q. Were any one of those 252 products..referred to the Secretary..as required..?
- A. No sir.
- Q. So in effect you have not been following the agreement?
- A. We have resolved the issue..we feel we have resolved the issue by taking action.
- Q. ..you went ahead and put it on the market?
- A. Yes sir.
- Q. Without calling it to the attention to the Secretary..as required..?
- A. The agreement requires, if we didn't resolve this, that we take it to the Secretary..Our contention is that we have resolved it..if we don't know what to do because of this objection, then we would have reason to send it to the Secretary.. We know what to do because we registered it. (And so it goes for 310 similar pages) Ed.

RESERVE MY PLACE AT THE PANCAKE BREAKFAST  
Between 8:30 and 11:00 a.m.

For my party of \_\_\_\_\_ adults and \_\_\_\_\_ children. (75¢ for adults, 35¢ for child)

\_\_\_\_\_ Ed Levin Park, Oakknoll Site,  
Calaveras Road, Milpitas, APRIL 17.

\_\_\_\_\_ Duveneck Ranch, Moody Road, Los  
Altos Hills, APRIL 24.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to 843 Moana Ct., Palo Alto.

FIELD TRIP REPORT: Merced, Los Banos, San Luis Wildlife Areas, February 20.

Thirteen observers on a sunny, windy day saw 76 species of birds including Mountain Plovers near the Merced Refuge, over 150 White-faced Ibis, many Common Bitterns and geese, a Slate-colored Junco and a Great Horned Owl sitting on a nest.

--Joe Greenberg

SCVAS CAMP SCHOLARSHIP BENEFITS STUDENT

Seventy-five dollars from our 1970 AUDUBON CAMP OF THE WEST scholarship will allow Carole Spurlin, San Pablo student-teacher, to go to Wyoming this summer as our guest. Miss Spurlin has shown unusual conservation aptitude, starting nature clubs in 8 schools while she continued her studies on the environment.

CALIFORNIA COASTAL ALLIANCE

The California Coastal Alliance (recently endorsed by your SCVAS board) is a special purpose organization designed to co-ordinate the efforts of major California conservation organizations in our fight to secure passage of a strong, effective coastline protection bill in the California Legislature this year. The shoreline, marshes and estuaries are both our richest and our most vulnerable marine resources. The proposed legislation would be similar in scope and power to BCDC's regulation of S.F. Bay development. If you wish to participate as an individual in this campaign write to California Coastal Alliance, P. O. Box 4161, Woodside 94062.

FACT AND FANCY: THE DDT CONTROVERSY

FANCY\*

.DDT is broken down readily by bacteria in soil or water; seldom persists for more than a few days.

.Approximately half of the material identified as DDT in many analyses is not DDT, but may be PCB.

.Birds are not becoming extinct...in fact they seem to thrive because there is more food available and they have fewer insect parasites.

.The Audubon Bird Census show some species; robins, blackbirds, doves, quail, pheasants & ducks are more abundant now than during pre-DDT years.

.Food prices will soar if DDT is banned for suitable insecticides must be applied 4 to 15 times more often and each application costs to 5 times as much as DDT treatment.

FACT#

.DDT & its product DDD are extremely stable, at least half persisting 10 years or more. However it is volatile; 75% of the amount sprayed evaporates to spread as an air pollutant; eventually reaching the ocean where it adheres to particles or is stored in the bodies of plankton, fish or shellfish. (DDT is water insoluable)

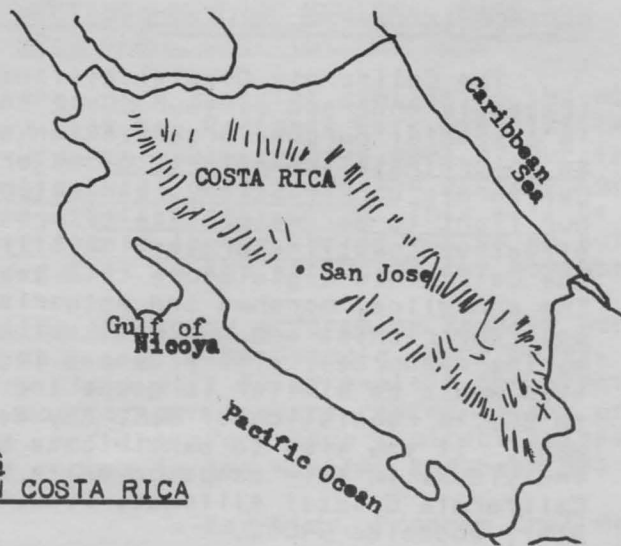
.By modern methods we are able to detect the differences between these related compounds. Only in industrial areas (such as S.F. Bay region) is the ratio this high. PCB's, though harmful poisons, seem not to cause the eggshell thinning which is preventing reproduction in many sea birds.

.The Peregrine Falcon is extinct in the U.S. The Bald Eagle, Brown Pelican, Osprey and all other sea birds are threatened. Sea birds are more vulnerable because they are at the end of longer food chains than land birds. (At each step of the food chain, DDT is concentrated by a multiple of 10).

.Seemingly higher counts, when corrected for the increased number of counting teams, show no evidence of increase for these species. Gulls (feeding on garbage) and the introduced Starling (exploiting man's disturbed land) have increased. (Note both are fairly low on the food chain.)

.DDT is little used on food crops; most common use is on cotton. Prices we pay for insecticides should reflect their cost in environmental degradation. Integrated control: crop rotation, use of natural predators, with restricted spraying (at vulnerable periods) with less persistent pesticides may cost more initially, but will cost less in the end.

\*Quoted from a leading local proponent of unrestricted DDT use. #Information from several sources. References available on request.



### BIRDING IN COSTA RICA

The pleasure of our vacation in Costa Rica was heightened by observing its birds.

In the tropical Gulf of Nicoya we particularly enjoyed the striking black and white Frigatebirds gliding in the sky. What a relief it was to see Brown Pelicans in abundance, and two of their white cousins. Shorebirds were not numerous, but we recognized old friends--Spotted Sandpipers, Kingfishers, Egrets, Ospreys and Green Herons. The Common Egrets were common indeed, as they stood sedately in fields among cattle--nearly one to a cow. A handsome heron, new to us, was the Tricolor.

In the arid sub-tropics several species of dove were seen, the most prevalent being the small Ruddy Ground Dove which act and look like a quail. Speaking of quail, what a surprise to see the Magpie Jay with a long recurved crest like a Mountain Quail! Swallows and swifts abounded and the Jacaranda and other flowering trees were a haven for a variety of hummingbirds; most easily identified being

the Cinnamon. Among the birds new-to-us were the Kisdatee and the Boat-billed Flycatcher--very similar except for size. The Barred Wren and the Barred Antshrike are a common sight for Costa Ricans, but they were exciting finds for us. Talkative groups of Anis were everywhere and Black Seedeaters were another first.

In the greener suburbs of San Jose, we saw the Olive-green Woodpecker, the Grey-blue Tanager, the fantastic Scissor-tailed Flycatcher and the Clay-colored Robin. The prevalence of Tropical Kingbirds and other members of the Flycatcher family, suggest that they must be the most common group there.

Our guide was The Birds of Guatemala published 1970 for the International Committee for Bird Preservation, Pan-American Section. Several people were excited to see the book, the best thing available even though there are some differences between Costa Rican and Guatemalan birds. They wanted to buy it from us, but we hung on tight because it had been lent by Eve Case! The plates & descriptions were very usable except that there are plates only for birds not found in the U.S., so it would have been better to have had our Peterson also. Spanish names are given, but are not indexed; handicap.

We enjoyed our simple observations so much, an expert would, we think, be wild with delight. This small country is easy to traverse if you don't mind bumpy bus rides. You can travel in a few hours from the coastal tropics, to sub-tropics, moderate plateau, mountains, and a volcanic peak where it is cold at 11,000 ft.

--Louise & Bob Wilson, 326-6785.

### SCVAS OFFICERS AND CHAIRMEN

President: Dr. Joseph Greenberg 326-8120  
 V. President: Mrs. Grace Lind 266-9598  
 Secretary: Mrs. Diane Conradson 941-2102  
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COUNCIL FOR ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY will require federal agencies to publish Environmental Impact Statements 90 days before the decisions which they affect are made and 15 days before public hearings. Citizens groups have complained that statements have been released too late to exert any influence on final decisions.  
 Science

THE AVOCET is published monthly, except July & August. Joint membership Santa Clara Valley and Nat'l Audubon Societies \$10, 478 Clifton, San Jose, 95128. Copy Deadline, 12th of each month. Editor: Ruth Troetschler, 184 Lockhart, Los Altos 94022. Staff: Elsie Hoeck, addressing; Chas. & Fanny Zwaal, mailing; Marcia Upchurch, typing.