

SANTA CLARA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY, Inc.

478 CLIFTON AVENUE

SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA 95128

Non-Profit Org.
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT No. 1290
San Jose, Calif.



The Avocet

TIME VALUE

Volume 19, Number 5

May, 1972

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- May 2 Bird Discussion Group, South County, Tuesday, 9:30 A.M. at the home of Eve Case, 20537 Verde Vista Lane, Saratoga, 867-4748. Topic: "Rufous-sided Towhee.
- May 6 Pajaro Dunes Field Trip, Saturday, 8:30 A.M. Travel South on State Route 1 from Santa Cruz to the vicinity of Watsonville. Take the Riverside Drive turnoff from Route 1 to your right. Turn right almost immediately again at the Standard Station. Turn left at the first stop sign and go toward the beach on Beach Road. The Pajaro Dunes Gate House is at the end of Beach Road. You will be directed from there. Leader: John Warriner, 170 Golden Oak Drive, Portola Valley.
- May 9 Board Of Directors Meeting, Tuesday, 8:00 P.M., at the home of J. Andre, 12578 Radoyka Drive, Saratoga. Meeting open to all members.
- May 10 Field Trip South, Byrne Park, Wednesday, 8:30 A.M. Meet at intersection of Taaffe and Altamont Roads, Los Altos Hills. For ride pooling, meet at the Case home, 20537 Verde Vista Lane, Saratoga by 8:00 A.M. Leaders: Lloyd and Eve Case, 867-4748.
- May 13 Sunol Regional Park Spring Trip, Saturday, 8:30 A.M. Nimitz Freeway to Mission Blvd. East on Mission Blvd. just 2 blocks. North on U.S. 680 (sign says Martinez). 9 miles to Calaveras Road. South on Calaveras Road about 4 miles. Left at Sunol Park sign to Park Headquarters. Leader: Frank Farran, 252-3874.
- May 19 Bird Discussion Group, North County, Friday, 10 A.M. The group will tour Audubon Canyon Ranch in Marin County, to view nesting Egrets and Herons. Follow State Route 1 about 3 miles beyond Stinson Beach to the Ranch. Allow about 2 hours driving time. Car pools can be arranged. For further information, contact Barbara Allen, 326-0521.

(Cont'd. on pg. 2)

- May 21 Stevens Creek Park Field Trip, Sunday, 8:00 A.M. Meet at the parking lot near the dam. Leader: R. Jay Andree, 257-2038.
- May 24 Foothill Park Field Trip, Wednesday, 9:00 A.M. Meet at the entrance to the park on Page Mill Road. Leaders: Barbara Allen, 326-0521 and Joni Bradley, 327-5973.
- May 24 General Meeting, Wednesday, 8:00 P.M., Homestead High School, Room 5, Building C. See notes on page 3 on "Chlorinated Hydrocarbons and Marine Birds."

AN ORNITHOLOGICAL RESEARCH STATION

We (SCVAS) have the opportunity to establish a permanent ornithological research station on the 1300-acre Wool Ranch on Mission Ridge between Milpitas and Calaveras Reservoir. With the indulgence and help of the Wool Family, the Avian Biology Laboratory (SJS) has worked there during the last two years. Our (ABL) findings confirm unique and strategic features of the Wool Ranch for the study of land bird migration. Critical base line data can be obtained and long-term monitoring programs can be initiated. The Ranch is also ideal for significant long-term studies of the population biology of grassland and oak woodland birds, as well as study of the total ecology of these communities.

An ornithological research station program would depend heavily upon two sources of people power: (1) A volunteer staff from the membership of SCVAS. Members who qualify themselves could work in year round bird-banding and many-faceted observational programs. And (2) upper division and graduate students from San Jose State College. The opportunities for graduate research are excellent and perpetual. Also, a limited Docent program would be most appropriate for the limited group visits that this facility could tolerate.

We (ABL) have worked closely with Point Reyes Bird Observatory and the Station should of course continue the kind of cooperation which would reinforce both programs.

At its February meeting, the SCVAS Board of Directors appropriated \$200 to study our preliminary findings and plans and to prepare an articulate proposal for wider and in depth consideration of possible purchase of the Wool Ranch and the founding of an ornithological research facility. The Wool Family is receptive to this disposition of their property. Time is a critical factor in this matter.

An initial block of several hundred thousand dollars will be essential to open negotiations.

We welcome your suggestions and counsel. I may be reached at the Avian Biology Laboratory, San Jose State College, San Jose, California 95114, or at my home at 5140 Golf Drive, San Jose, California 95127.

L. Richard Mewaldt

NO CONVENTION THIS YEAR

No National Audubon Convention is planned for this year, but set aside June 7-11, 1973, for the 67th National Convention to be held at Denver, Colorado. The scheduled events and field trips hold promise for a very interesting and exciting experience.

CHLORINATED HYDROCARBONS AND MARINE BIRDS

May 24, Wednesday, 8 ;.m.
Public invited--no charge

Homestead High School
Room 5, Building C

The controversy about the effects of chlorinated hydrocarbons on marine birds continues unabated. At the provocative program in March we heard Dr. J. Gordon Edwards assert that DDT is not a significant factor in the decline of the Brown Pelican population.

Now, in rebuttal, we will have an equally stimulating talk and slide presentation by Monte N. Kirven, Chairman of the Educational Activities Division of the San Diego Natural History Museum.

Mr. Kirven has engaged in field research on marine birds on the West Coast from the Channel Islands to Baja California for the past six years. He will summarize and illustrate the research findings on the effects of chlorinated hydrocarbons on marine birds of the West Coast.

There will be a question and answer period at the end of his presentation.

THANK YOU MRS. GHOLSON

The following letter has been sent to Mrs. Gholson in appreciation and response to her presentation on Regnart Canyon:

March 15, 1972

Dear Mrs. Gholson,

May I express the board's appreciation for your splendid presentation on Regnart Canyon. You stimulated a series of lively discussions that culminated in the following position statement.

The Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society recognizes and appreciates the extreme need for the preservation of open space adjacent to or surrounded by urban communities. Toward this goal, our Society recommends that every attempt be made to obtain the lowest possible human density in the Regnart Canyon area of Santa Clara County.

We do not recommend, however, the expenditure of National Audubon Society funds for the purchase of these lands for public use. We do recommend that Audubon Society members residing in Cupertino, Saratoga, and Santa Clara County be approached in regards to supporting your group's efforts in securing the best possible zoning, commensurate with your goals for Regnart Canyon.

Sincerely,

Robert L. Hassur
President
(signed)

DON'T FORGET YOSEMITE

Again, as in the past, Joe Greenberg will lead the Yosemite National Park Field trip. This is a great one, so plan to attend. Details will be included in the June Avocet.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Forty-two species were observed on the La Honda Log Cabin Ranch trip. Allen's Hummingbirds, Bluebirds, and Bufflehead Ducks were among the birds seen.

Betty Lou Berg reports about 12 persons sighted 41 species during the Alum Rock Park trip. Notable sightings were a Pygmy Owl watched for 1/2 hour, and a Golden Eagle. (2 Golden Eagles were spotted several days earlier soaring over Sycamore Flats.) Migrant birds seen in the area were Bullocks Oriole, Rufous and Allen's Hummingbirds, and Violet Green and Rough-winged Swallows.

Emmanuel and Mary Taylor report 38 species seen on the Coyote River Park field trip. Of special note was the migration of swallows, of which four species were observed: Violet-green, Bank, Cliff, and Rough-winged. Also seen were many White-throated Swifts.

The Taylors also report White and Golden-crowned Sparrows have been migrating through their area since the beginning of April

SAVE OUR COAST PETITIONS AVAILABLE

SCVAS members who missed the opportunity to sign the Coastline Conservation Act Initiative Petition at the April general meeting may wish to contact the Santa Clara County Initiative Chairman, Paul Brandon (408) 289-8262, or in north county, Ruth Troetschler (415) 948-4142. Either can tell you where you can sign, or will send you a petition to circulate among your friends and neighbors.

If enough qualified signatures are secured, the measure will be on the November ballot. The proposed law would create a Statewide, and six Regional Conservation Commissions which would initiate statewide and regional planning for, ensure orderly development of, and necessary conservation of our coastal resources. The text of the proposed law is on the back of the petitions.

BOARD NOTES

The Board authorized President Hassur to send a telegram to Secretary of the Interior Morton concerning disposition of 45 million acres of public land in Alaska.

The board authorized the purchase of two pair of binoculars by Kay McCann, for which she will be reimbursed. The cost is not to exceed \$50 for both pair. The binoculars will be send to the San Francisco Youth Authority facility at Log Cabin Ranch in La Honda, for use by the boys at the ranch.

The Board authorized Ruth Truxler to set up a table for the signing of the Coastal Alliance Petition at the next general meeting. See also the note concerning "Save Our Coast Petitions."

QUOTE OF THE CENTURY

"I'm collecting a little money to give to the Nature Conservancy so they can purchase the Interior Department!"

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

The slate of officers and Board Members suggested by the nominating committee is as follows:

President: Bob Hassur
Vice President: R. J. Andree
Treasurer: Joyce Todd
Secretary: Dorothy Miner
Board Members: Mrs. Ray Lyman Wilbur
Dr. William Sabbag
Mr. Frank Farran

Nominations from the membership are invited. The election will be held at the May General Meeting.

BAAC MEETS IN SACRAMENTO

The Bay Area Audubon Council (BAAC) meeting April 8 in the Western Regional office was hosted by the Sacramento Audubon Society. Paul Howard brought the representatives up to date on a variety of subjects including the new bill of Assemblyman Z'Berg's, AB 1561, that would ban oil sumps in California, the Wild Rivers Bill of Senator Peter Behr, SB 107, that would protect the Eel, Smith and the Trinity-Klamath Rivers, and urged a careful objective examination of Proposition 9 on the June ballot.

Ron Jurek credited the volunteer efforts of Audubon members with some 3,000 hours in assisting with his state wide Fish and Game Shorebird Survey during his slide talk.

Robert Mallette, President of Sacramento Society gave a presentation on California's endangered Wildlife, and the Departments' nongame programs. (A new address and price for that most interesting publication by the nongame department of California Department of Fish and Game, "At the Crossroads" which describes endangered species: send \$2.10 to the Office of Procurment, Documents Division, P. O. Box 20191, Sacramento 95820)

Florence LaRiviere
Nancy Holmes

ASILOMAR - 1972

The Western Conference of the National Audubon Society at Asilomar was an informative and stimulating experience. It was well organized by Paul Howard and the Monterey Society, and if all our state agencies were run as efficiently as Asilomar I am sure we would save millions of tax dollars.

Most impressive was the excellent quality of Audubon's leadership. We had the opportunity to hear and talk with President Stahr, Vice President Callison and Clement, and the heads of many departments and programs at the Delegates' meeting. The message of the Conference was essentially one of hope. Some of their comments were:

President Stahr: "Economics and technology have been well studied while ecology is a new and recent science. Therefore, our opportunity in the 70's is to educate, evaluate facts, persuade and talk--NOT shout! Thus we can help to get done what we know must be done." He urged all members to read the Audubon aims on page 112, March issue of AUDUBON. It is as important to give credit where it is due as it is to give 'em 'ell when that is necessary!

(Con't. on pg. 6)

Vice President Clement: "Audubon's pitch at the Stockholm Conference this June will be that Spaceship Earth is all we have, that mankind is ONE. Human objectives must be reevaluated in this light. Man is part of nature and we must accept trusteeship for it. We must struggle to become really human, to treat our fragile ecosystems gently, to humanize our social institutions and governments. . . . All pollution problems are essentially world wide." Could this be a basis for drawing nations together?

Asilomar brought to our attention that California is the most urbanized state with 91% of our people living in urban areas; that 25% of all foreign born in the U.S. live here; that the State Highway Department now has a Conservation and Environmental Factors Unit (CEFU) and that the Department of Public Works is trying to adapt to changing demands and will listen to citizens; that our Secretary for Resources urges individuals to reduce their use of energy as much as possible; that 35,000 game birds and 100,000 song birds (not to mention other animals) are trapped and destroyed by oil sumps in California each year and that there is a bill, AB 1561, now before the Legislature to outlaw open sumps; that this is a national problem not confined to California; that Conservation Education is mandatory in California but only \$45,000 is allocated to this while \$15,000,000 is allocated to driver education (What is YOUR school program? Ask your School Board!); that recreational use of the deserts has increased 50% in four years; that ORVs (off the road vehicles) have increased from 600 to 2600 in the same time and that our laws for control are way behind the times? Can our deserts, beaches, trails take this kind of treatment?

Conclusions: Land use planning is basic and essential. This involves every level of government as well as private development. We must insist on substantive environmental evaluations of all projects. Eternal vigilance is the price of environmental health for all the people.

Please read all the yellow pages of Audubon Magazine every month before you look at a picture, for here is where the action is.

Harriet Mundy, Delegate

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Los Altos - Palo Alto Area

Robert A. Barnes	300 Curtner Avenue	Palo Alto, Calif. 94306
Seth Baron	25285 Laloma	Los Altos, Calif. 94022
Mr. & Mrs. P. R. Bauer	2767 Grier Road	Palo Alto, Calif. 94303
Mr. H. Bell	27141 Moody Road	Los Altos, Calif. 94022
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Biondi	3663 Evergreen Drive	Palo Alto, Calif. 94303
Ruth R. Boniala	4127 Wilkie Ct.	Palo Alto, Calif. 94306
Neil A. Clumpner	735 Middlefield Road	Palo Alto, Calif. 94301
Mike Crumly	1563 Walnut Drive	Palo Alto, Calif. 94303
Teven Curran	11608 Monte Verde Avenue	Los Altos, Calif. 94022
Mr. Joesph Degrazia	11 Middlebury Lane	Los Altos, Calif. 94022
Mrs. Anthony L. Gully	2340 Wellesley	Palo Alto, Calif. 94306
Mr. Ralph W. Kane	27700 Lupine Drive	Los Altos Hills, Calif. 94022
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph C Kreese Jr.	34 Ashfield Road	Atherton, Calif. 94025
B. L. Lagerstrom	253 Tennessee	Palo Alto, Calif. 94306
George Lawrence	3742 Rose Road	Palo Alto, Calif. 94303
David C. MacMichael	1102 Ramona Street	Palo Alto, Calif. 94301
Mrs. J. G. Norris	25026 La Loma Drive	Los Altos, Calif. 94022
Juan A. Palacios	86 East Escondido Village	Stanford, Calif. 94305
Joan B. Schneider	835 Ross Cite	Palo Alto, Calif. 94303

Mrs. Annie Urbach	691 Roble Avenue #3	Menlo Park, Calif. 94025
Miss Carey Van Tamelen	23570 Camino Hermosa	Los Altos Hills, Calif. 94022
Mrs. R. Steinstra	364 Churchill Avenue	Palo Alto, Calif. 94301
V. Van Velzer	4048 Laguna Way	Palo Alto, Calif. 94306
John Weeks	Escondido Village Quillen 9C	Stanford, Calif. 94305
Williams	1950 Cooley Avenue #5110	Palo Alto, Calif. 94303
E. G. Woodard	4039 Scripps Avenue	Palo Alto, Calif. 94306
Mr. Morgan S. Woolett	1824 Oak Creek Drive #214	Palo Alto, Calif. 94304

San Jose - Santa Clara

Jerry P. Balistreri	5897 Bridle Way	San Jose, Calif. 95123
Mrs. Hortense R. Bastion	1552 Wawona Drive	San Jose, Calif. 95125
William & Julie Brazill	1672 El Dorado Avenue	San Jose, Calif. 95126
Mrs. Bruce Breiholz	79 Michael Way	Santa Clara, Calif. 95051
J. Corbin	941 Faris	San Jose, Calif. 95111
Evelyn F. Cox	72 South 12th Street	San Jose, Calif. 95112
W. S. Cummings	101 East Williams Street #3	San Jose, Calif. 95112
Miss A. M. Falvey	University of Santa Clara P. O. Box 1083	Santa Clara, Calif. 95053
A. T. Hahn	4819 Tony Avenue	San Jose, Calif. 95124
Floyd Haird	768 Regent Park Drive	San Jose, Calif. 95123
Larry D. Heywood	2433 Hedding Street	San Jose, Calif. 95128
The Hutzler Family	655 North Monroe Street	San Jose, Calif. 95128
T. H. Kistner Family	1757 Lorenzen Drive	San Jose, Calif. 95124
Miss Sandra Meadows	40 Glen Eyre, #29	San Jose, Calif. 95125
C. Morrow	3600 Benton	Santa Clara, Calif. 95051
Claudia Peterson	796 Pescardero Drive	San Jose, Calif. 95123
Jane Springer	6227 Ocho Rios	San Jose, Calif. 95123
Roy D. Tennant	3211 Vistamont Drive	San Jose, Calif. 95118
Mr. S. Teresi	134 Washington Street	Santa Clara, Calif. 95050
Lucille Torich	Route 1, Round Table Drive	San Jose, Calif. 95111
Al Young	162 Mt. View Avenue	San Jose, Calif. 95127

Los Gatos - Saratoga - Campbell

Mrs. Donald D. Bacci	19261 Citrus Lane	Saratoga, Calif. 95070
Dr. John Brabant	19857 Charters Avenue	Saratoga, Calif. 95070
The Burt Family	202 Blossom Villa	Los Gatos, Calif. 95030
George Green	20146 Thompson Road	Los Gatos, Calif. 95030
Mrs. Marcel Landras	954 Hedegard Street	Campbell, Calif. 95008
Malcolm McDonalds	18797 Aspesi Drive	Saratoga, Calif. 95070
Mrs. G. I. Smith	13754 Howen Drive	Saratoga, Calif. 95070
Mrs. Mansfield Smith	20021 Bella Vista Drive	Saratoga, Calif. 95070
Dr. Paul Steward	117 Broadway	Los Gatos, Calif. 95030
Mrs. Martin Trieb	15970 W Road	Los Gatos, Calif. 95030

Mountain View - Sunnyvale - Cupertino

Jeffrey C. Brown	439 Del Medio #4	Mt. View, Calif. 94040
Nancy Dewasker	10744 Stevens Creek Blvd.	Cupertino, Calif. 95014
D. E. Hage	674 Tiffany Cite	Sunnyvale, Calif. 94087
Mrs. Bernice L. Lester	1220 N. Lawrence Expw. #508	Sunnyvale, Calif. 94086
W. W. Lester Jr	10650 Linnet Lane	Cupertino, Calif. 95014
Mr. Michael Roa	10161 Lebanon Drive	Cupertino, Calif. 95014
Gwendolyn Taylor	515 South Bernardo #17	Sunnyvale, Calif. 94187

Other Areas

Thomas A. Crandall	3005 Kerris Way	Sacramento, Calif. 95821
Mr. & Mrs. Leigh Mueller	81 Arden Cite	Redwood City, Calif. 94061

A VISITATION OF SWALLOWS

A murmuration of starlings, a chattering of choughs, a badelyng of ducks, a cast of hawks, and oh so prosaically - a "flight" of swallows. All group terms coined over the years. For the strange behavior of Tree Swallows observed by Eve and Lloyd Case and I in Florida, I'd like to use the expression "visitation."

With our backs to the Gulf of Mexico, we slowly drove along the coastal marshes of St. Marks Refuge, hoping for a glimpse of another Hooded Merganser or Bald Eagle or the wintering geese that have passed the refuge by. A cold fog had effectively erased the gulfside birding and a chilling wind kept us gloved and carbound. So we idly and gratefully watched Tree Swallows hawking above the marsh. Suddenly all the swallows alit in a single large bush and remained there in an animated, puzzling congregation. We were able to approach to within 30 or 40 feet of the bush which had changed from green to the iridescent dark blue of the closely perched birds. The mass seemed to twinkle as wings intermittently fluttered to secure balance on the heavily burdened branches. Lloyd and I automatically clicked our cameras while Eve kept her binoculars on the birds. She reported that they did not appear to be feeding on the bush which we later examined and noted to be still loaded with tiny blue berries. A low whirring monotone issued from the bush. Then, after about two minutes, the "visitation" was suddenly over as the birds exploded in two narrow funnel formations from either side of the bush. We estimated 1,000 or more birds to be involved in this strange behavior. In a few minutes the birds reassembled in the same bedraggled bush. They dropped lightly into it like autumn leaves reversing nature. We approached even closer in hopes of discovering the reason for the unique attraction of this bush, one of many such scattered beside the road. They only exited the sooner in their fascinating funnel fashion.

When they had resumed their hawking above the marsh, we fingered the bush and found the plentiful blue berries comparatively untouched, but the leaves were torn and ill-used from the raspings of 2,000 feet. As we prepared to drive away five minutes later, the birds were converging on a similar bush across the road--again, all crowded into one bush.

Now - behavior students, why this strange assemblage, this visitation of swallows? Are they keeping warm on a cold day in January? Are they compulsive mimics? Is this some atavistic instinct? Or, is this what swallows have always done before the advent of convenient telephone wires? There were no wires on the refuge road.

Emelie Curtis

THEY CHANGED IT

The Washington Biological Survey puts metal bands on the legs of birds which it has captured and released. These bands used to read: "Wash. Biol. Surv." But one day the government got a letter from an enraged farmer, who wrote, "Dear Surs: I shot one of your pet crows the other day and followed instructions. I washed, biled and surved it. It was terrible. You should stop trying to fool the people with things like this." The government changed the text on the bands.

THE AVOCET is published monthly, except July and August. Copy deadline: 2 days after the published date set for the Board of Directors Meeting. Editor: Dick Knoetzsch, 1193 Somerset Drive, San Jose, California, 95132. Staff: Elaie Hoeck, addressing; Charles and Fanny Zwaal, 478 Clifton Avenue, San Jose, 95128; mailing. Please notify the Zwaal's in writing if your address has or will change.