

# The Avocet

TIME VALUE



HARRY V LATHAM  
1085 394 TASMAN DR  
SUNNYVALE CA 94086

Volume 21, Number 6

June, 1974

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- June 1 Coe Park, Saturday. South on U. S. 101 to Morgan Hill, East on Dunne Ave., at Coe Park sign. Follow Dunne across Anderson Reservoir and up into the hills. Dunne becomes Mineral Springs Rd. and after 10 miles or so of mountain driving the road ends at park headquarters our meeting place. This will be a strenuous hike. If you have doubts, check with leader. Wear boots. Bring lunch and canteen. Early birders should arrive at 6:00 a.m. Leader will return for not-so-early birders at 8:00 a.m. Please remember that we are subject to the usual State Park fees. Leader has car space for 6 people. Leader: Diana Mathiesen, 867-5363
- June 4 Bird Discussion Group, Tuesday, 9:30 a.m. For this final session we will meet at Villa Montalvo for birding. Bring lunch.
- June 4 Last General Meeting, Tuesday, 6:00 p.m. at Palo Alto Baylands Interpretive Center (east end of Embarcadero Road in Palo Alto) Please see last months AVOCET about this affair.
- June 10 Board of Directors Meeting, Monday, 7:30 p.m. at the Peninsula Conservation Center (address above AVOCET logo)

## CHECKLIST REVISION

This might be a good time to mention the Checklist of The Birds of the Santa Clara Valley Region (originally compiled by H. G. Weston, Jr. and H. T. Harvey, and published by SCVAS in January, 1963) is presently being updated by Dr. Weston, Mike Brady and Bob Yutzky. Since this activity is presently in the mill, we suggest that you check with the Peninsula Conservation Center (328-5313) in August (please note -- wait til August) for information on how to obtain one.



WHERE IT'S AT -- SUMMER 1974

Summer is the time for breeding birds - everywhere. Mountain and desert spots are apt to produce the most "new" birds. The site guide this month is to Yosemite National Park.

The hottest news is that there is now a RARE BIRD HOTLINE - 843-2211. Golden Gate Audubon Society supported Assistant Editor (to their "The Gull") Bill Principe's efforts to tape the word on where it's at - each week.

The best local news is that the adult Little Blue Heron is back to the flood basin. Undoubtedly this is the same bird that was here 3 years ago (we just haven't spotted it since). Try to get out and see it. Also the Redhead (male) is still here (is it nesting?). Two Black Terns were at the KGO station on the Dumbarton Bridge and one was at the flood basin. Three Northern Phalaropes and one Red (they seem to be everywhere) were also at the flood basin. Red Knots and Snowy Plovers (usually coastal) were also at Dumbarton. Check all the Swallows for Bank and all the Swifts for Vaux's. In early May 3 Rough-legged Hawks were still between Pescadero and Nuevo on the coast. Steven's Creek Park has Dippers, Vaux's Swifts, all three of our Vireos, Solitary, Warbling and Huttonis Northern Orioles, many other nesting specialties and some probable migrating (they may nest) Western Tanagers. The Cattle Egrets, of course, disappeared. Some good news is that groups of Least Terns (endangered species in Cal.) are being seen around Alameda. The California Field Ornithologist's Monterey boat trip had some good sighting of Laysan Albatross - possibly a released bird. They also saw many of the regulars, including many breeding plumage Red Phalaropes. Monterey also has had many Fork-Tailed, Ashy Petrels and one Leach's Petrel seen from the piers. The King Eider may have departed. Solitary Sandpipers have been seen sparsely, and Fulvous Tree Ducks were at Woodland Sewage Ponds. Mount Diablo is a breeding place for Blackchinned Sparrows, and it also had a male Indigo Bunting, and a Purple Martins. There is a stakeout of Ruffed Grouse drumming grounds near Eureka. The Salton Sea (hot-hot) has had a Curlew Sandpiper, and San Diego a Yellow-Throated and a Black-and-white Warbler. Mines Road in Livermore has had a male Costa's Hummer and a Road Runner with it's regular Lewis' Woodpecker, Phainopepla, Lawrence's Goldfinch and Kingbirds. Recently 4 pro California birders saw a total of 201 species (196 seen by all) in one day covering over 500 miles (envy-envy). Much planning and scouting goes into such a successful effort.

Yosemite National Park. Birding Yosemite - or what to do while they sight-see. Yosemite is certainly one of the most beautiful of any mountain area - or of any area for that matter. This park in summer is a joy to bird and quite productive, especially in the upper and secluded lower areas. Bridalveil Campground and adjoining meadow is often the best place in the park. Between the meadow and the campground entrance road is a good place to search for Williamson's Sapsucker (note sexual dimorphism). Behind and to the right of the campground, especially Loop C, is the place to look for Black-backed Three-Toed Woodpecker. Earlier in the season is better for spotting these two. Across the road from the Sapsucker Area Great Gray Owls have repeatedly nested and can sometimes be found hunting the meadows of the higher areas. Also Crane Flat and White Wolf areas have their Great Gray's - ask the naturalists for more information (that's our own Mike Brady at Crane Flat).

Badger Pass is often a good place for Western Tanager, Evening and Pine Grosbeaks, Fox Sparrows, Hermit Warbler, Purple and Cassin's Finch, Red Crossbill, and White-headed Woodpecker. All of these should be looked for in any of the upper areas. Pileated Woodpeckers are sometimes at the park's two busies lower areas, Yosemite Falls and Mirror Lake (in Sequoia National Park we found them behind the main store). They are often extremely quiet and don't necessarily need large trees (dead wood on the ground seems more preferable). Mirror Lake is also good for Nashville, Black-throated Gray and MacGillivray's Warblers. One should listen for Canyon Wrens and look for Calliope Hummers on the edges of the valley. The common Swift just above the valley treetops is Black. Note the longer wing-shorter tail appearance and the more languid flight than the White-Throated - more common on valley edges and upper areas. Glacier Point affords an unbelievable and breathtaking view of the world (and the White-Throated Swifts). Some of the upper edges of the Chaparral are good for Green-Tailed Towhees. This is as good a place as any to search (and listen) for Blue Grouse. The trail down from Glacier to Bridalveil affords good general mountain birding (and view) during it's first part. Tioga Pass area is a good place for Rosyfinches (look for snow remnants). This year Coyotes are somewhat brazen and photogenic (we saw 10 in three days). Heness Ridge Fire Lookout is hard to find but worth it, get directions at the park. If feeders are out, this is an excellent Hummingbird spot, other's to look and listen for are Mountain Quail, Lazuli, Bunting, Hammond's and Dusky Flycatchers (good luck), Green-Tailed Towhee, Fox Sparrows, and many of the aforementioned Warblers.

Yosemite is approximately 5 1/2 hours drive via the beautiful Merced River Arch Rock Route. Gas is very available including Sundays and not too expensive.

REMEMBER THE  
RARE BIRD HOTLINE  
-----  
843-2211

May the birds and bees,  
All the flowers and trees,  
And the you's and me's  
Have a productive summer --

(so much for my years' poetry)

Bob Yutzy

#### FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Gilroy Hot Springs Trip, April 27th -- Early arrivals at the meeting place found a chilling mist slithering over the swollen creek, amongst the riparian growth, and into one's very bones. Clear sentinel calls of the Calif. Quail punctuated the stillness and a female Wood Duck circled persistently despite disturbances from quiet fishermen. As the tiny droplets dissipated and the warmth prevailed, birds in welcome variety began to pursue insects, and each other. There were Warbling Vireos (plus); Hutton's Vireo; Wilson's and Orange-crowned Warblers; Tree; Rough-winged, and Barn Swallows vying for the same food supply; Bullock's Orioles in generous numbers; omnipresent Scrub and Stellar's Jays; and a cooperative Green Heron gingerly maneuvering its big orange feet along the top branches of a dead tree. Later a Western Kingbird showed us her net, a Canyon Wren sang the scale, and a Chipping Sparrow trilled distantly. Ash-throated and Western Flycatchers, Solitary Vireo, House Wrens, Cooper's Hawk and a lingering Varied thrush filled out the list to 46. Two Nashville Warblers seen 2 days previously refused to be counted.

Emelie Curtis

San Francisco Watershed Field Trip to Pilarcitos Dam and Stone Dam, April 24th  
Ten members enjoyed a beautiful five mile walk through woods of Douglas Fir, Bay Tree, Black Alder, Big Leaf Maple and Buckeye to Stone Dam from Pilarcitos Lake. We ate lunch at Stone Dam where we could hear the waterfall. Thirty-eight species of birds were seen and heard on this trip and the scouting trip. We always look forward to hearing the Winter Wrens singing at their nesting areas. We enjoyed many species of wildflowers. They included: Bleeding Heart, Wallflower, Paintbrush, Forget-me-not, Indian Warrior, Zygadine, Mission Bells and Bronzebells, Blue-eyed Grass, Wyethis, Blue Iris, Bellflower, Hound's Tongue, Brodiaea, Star Flower, and Woodland Star. We started out in rain which ended shortly with a perfect day.

Leader, Kay McCann

#### REPORT FROM THE SIXTH GRADE

##### Ecological Balance

Isn't it nice to wake up to a robin chirping or to have a pigeon eat from your hand?

Well birds as well as animals aren't just for show and companionship, or to kill when you tire of them. Animals and birds are very important to our ecological balance.

Man needs animals and birds to deal with problems that man wouldn't know how to solve without them. For instance lets say there were no birds. What would we do with our worm population? You see, birds solve the problem of an over-abundance of worms.

So next time you go out hunting for sport think of what you are doing for man's ecological balance.

Sharon Vinick, 6th Grade  
DeAnza El. School - Sunnyvale

#### LOS GATOS CREEK PROJECT

It would seem that conservation organizations such as the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society are forever reminding local, state and federal governing bodies and their associated agencies to mend their ways, quit polluting, don't allow that incredibly ugly development to proceed, slow down growth, etc. Therefore it was with a great deal of pleasure that the Society received word from the Santa Clara County Water District that we were needed in an advisory capacity on the Los Gatos Creek Project. It seems that the stretch of the creek from just south of Lake Vasona to Camden Avenue is going to be "face-lifted", but this time with a thought to aesthetics and people. For those who are familiar with this area, this is of course the site of a series of percolation ponds. The project is quite ambitious and we have been called in to sort of help build a freshwater marsh. So far a few of our members (Frank Farran, Dave Nauer, Diana Mathiesen and Dr. Cliff Schmidt) walked over the area as guest of Ed Ferguson of the Water District. Its a strange place, rather grim-looking really, but there was a rather wide variety of ducks, terns, gulls, shore birds and small birds. Since this is just in the initial stages, that's about all we can say, but its something a little different.



THE CONTINUING SAGA OF OUR LIBRARY

Every month it seems we run a little squib about the Society's library which is housed at the Peninsula Conservation Center. We really would like our members to use our book collection, and besides, the Center is a lovely place to visit. We mentioned last month that the Society was in a buying mood. Here are some of our latest acquisitions:

The Ducks, Geese & Swans of North America, Kortright; Words for Birds, Gruson; Bird Ambulance, Thomas; Wildlife in Danger, Fisher, Simon & Vincent; At the Crossroads, Dpt. of Fish & Game; The Life of the Hummingbird, Skutch; Owls of the World, Burton; The Habitat Guide to Birding, McElroy; Audubon Water Bird Guide, Pough; Field Guide to Mexican Birds, Peterson; The Wind Birds, Matthiessen; World of Birds, Peterson.

We might add a small note on Thomas McElroy's Habitat Guide to Birding; this book was sent to us as a complimentary copy by the publisher (Alfred E. Knopf, Inc., 1974) and represents a somewhat different approach to birding. McElroy uses the term "habitat" here in a very broad sense as we can see from some of his chapter titles which include separate treatments of birds found in say, hardwoods, evergreens, fields, meadows, brush, borders, pond and streamside, freshwater marshes and swamps, seashore and beaches, etc., but he also includes chapters on tropical birds, birds in winter, and birds in the night. He has also included a chapter on binoculars and maps and also one on field techniques. The book is low-key and in the author's own words, "scientific names have been purposely avoided in most cases and used only when necessary for clarity". He also includes a nice concise bibliography. A good book for beginners or those who've been at it for a while. One note of caution for Californians though; this tends to be an "eastern" book, that is from the Great Plains east to the Atlantic.

BOOKS  
World of Its Own

AN APPEAL TO AUDUBON MEMBERS TO BOYCOTT JAPANESE AND RUSSIAN PRODUCTS UNTIL THOSE NATIONS HALT 'NEEDLESS' SLAUGHTER OF WHALES

The Board of Directors is calling on the 300,000 members of the National Audubon Society and the general public to boycott goods from Japan and the Soviet Union until those two countries stop their needless slaughtering of whales. A background statement on this decision, prepared by Audubon President Stahr, has been sent to presidents of all Audubon chapters and affiliated organizations.

Action Was Taken

When other conservation organizations first suggested such a boycott National Audubon decided, instead, to step up its efforts on behalf of the whale in other ways. The Board recognized that a boycott can entail hardship to the Society

As A Last Resort

and its members, and to persons inside and outside the two nations whose livelihood depends on sale of these products. But after a series of appeals to Japan and the U.S.S.R. by Audubon, the U.S. Government and others proved fruitless, the Board has reluctantly come to the conclusion that a general economic boycott is the only viable alternative for effective action. Meanwhile, the Society is making an effort to identify conglomerates in the two nations specifically engaged in whaling, in hopes more specific boycotts can be levelled against them.

Japan and Russia are the only two whaling nations that have refused to abide by whaling quotas set by the International Whaling Commission. Widespread world opinion stands against their refusal. The U.S. Government, which is among the protestors, in 1970 banned whaling and the importation of whale products.

Society Drops Ads, National Audubon, as first steps in its boycott, is dropping all advertising for Japanese and Russian products in Audubon Canceled Trips magazine (which means loss of a substantial number of ads for Japanese cameras and binoculars), and has cancelled the two International Ecology Workshops to Russia and one to Japan which were scheduled for this year. The Board asks Audubon members -- in addition to not buying Japanese and Russian products -- to tell merchants about the boycott, write letters to editors of newspapers, and in other ways spread the word about the plight of the whales and the reason for the boycott, and to ask their friends to do the same.

Modern whaling technology and huge factory ships have brought five of the world's eight species of great whales (including the blue whale, largest animal that has ever lived on earth) to the brink of extinction, and the other three species are dwindling alarmingly. Whale oil is used for making margarine, cosmetics, shoe polish and various other products -- for all of which there are adequate substitutes. The more effective we can make the boycott, the quicker it can bring a halt to the needless slaughter, and the sooner the boycott can end.

#### CLASSES, VOLUNTEERS, AND A TRIP

Field Studies in Natural History -- sponsored by the Extension Service at San Jose State University.

Designed for the experienced naturalist as well as the beginning student, SJSU Field Studies in Natural History travels this year to Sequoia National Park, Sierra Gold Country (Columbia) and Santa Cruz. Each two unit session explores a location's natural history and steps for its conservation.

Daily field trips and evening programs are organized to help students gain an insight into a region's geology, zoology, botany and ecology. Accommodations range from campgrounds and trailer spaces to motels and lodges.

Restaurants and stores are usually within a short drive of the field headquarters to meet basic supply needs. Two semester units of upper division university extension credit are offered for each session. Students may register for up to five units of credit at five different locations each year. Special Feature: For those who wish to include their family, Junior Programs are scheduled for children ages 6-16. Juniors are divided into groups with activities designed to provide both recreation and learning experiences suitable for each age level.

Summer '74 Programs \*Sequoia National Park, Nat. Sci. x153B June 15-20;

\*Sierra Gold Country: Columbia Columbia State Park, Nat. Sci. x153C June 22-27

\*Santa Cruz: Mountains to Sea Henry Cowell State Park Nat. Sci. x153A Aug. 12-18  
Tuition and Fees \$52 for each session; Junior Program: \$17.50 per child.

For further information please contact Ms. Marcia DeHart, Secretary, Field Studies in Natural History, (Extension Services -- SJSU), San Jose, Calif. 95192. Better yet, call: (408) 277-2211.

Environmental Volunteers -- The Environmental Volunteers Program needs you if you have time, energy and a desire to work with children to develop in them a sense of environmental awareness. Beginning September 17 a Baylands Training Program will treat a new group of volunteers to lecture and "hands on" sessions about the birds, mammals, plants, geology, fish, and weather of our Baylands. A special feature of the class will be a trip on the Research Vessel, Inland Seas. Classes will be held for ten Tuesdays from 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Palo Alto Baylands Interpretive Center. Following the training, volunteers will give one half day a week to class presentation and field trips for upper elementary grades in the mid-Peninsula. Volunteers with creative skills are also most welcome. The EV Program has an office at the Peninsula Conservation Center, 1176 Emerson

Street, Palo Alto. Also available at the Center are materials on environmental education and a variety of books which may be checked out of the Center's library. Prospective volunteers are invited to call the EVs at 327-6017 and to attend a short orientation meeting on Thursday, June 20 at 10:00 a.m. at the Center.

Mac's Albatross Expedition -- June 10, Monday, 7:30 a.m., sponsored by the Santa Cruz Bird Club. A Stagnaro sport fishing boat (Coast Guard inspected) will leave from Stagnaro's landing on the Santa Cruz Municipal Wharf at 7:30 a.m. for a destination 12 miles out on the Pacific Ocean, returning about noon. Wear warm clothing. Bring binoculars, camera and lunch (optional). Free parking at Stagnaro's lot at approach to the wharf. For reservations and tickets send self-addressed stamped envelope and \$2.50 for each ticket to Viola Anderson, 227 Linden Street, Santa Cruz, Ca. 95062.

A WELL DESERVED THANK YOU

Somehow or another we never seem to get our "thank you's" said; some people do so much volunteer work that a mere "thanks" seems almost insulting. Mrs. Kay McCann is a long-time Audubon member, a former Board member, officer and over the years has done a variety of jobs for the Santa Clara County Audubon Society. Lately Kay has been wearing two hats for the Society, General Meeting Program Coordinator for North County and for many years she has handled the North County (weekday) Field Trips. Kay is going to retire her Field Trip Hat (Carol Zabel and Barbara Allen will pick up the task) but she will continue as Program Coordinator when we take up in the fall again. Kay!!! A very large THANK YOU for all of your past Field-tripping is hereby tendered from all of your friends in the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society.

(STAMP)

Mrs. Nancy Holmes

843 Moana Court

Palo Alto, California 94306

THE AVOCET is published monthly except July and August. Copy deadline is the 15th of the month, but nobody is going to worry about it for a couple of months. Editor: Dave Nauer, P. O. Box 4501, San Jose, Calif. 95126, phone 295-9917.

THANKS AND HELP HELP!!!!

Thank you to all the Directors and Officers and Chairpersons for performing admirably in their duties this year. Compliments to Courtney Dawson-Roberts for her work on the Bulletin Board. Several Board members are working on the Los Gatos Creek Project with the Santa Clara County Water District and others are revising the SCVAS checklist (Call PCC in August for your copy). Of course the field trips and programs were excellent.

Tony Look will be Conservation Chairman of what I hope will be an extremely active committee, and that's where I can use some help. Please mail back the lower portion of this page with any suggestions and offers of help you can give. This is when I can hear from members I have never had the pleasure of meeting and learn your thoughts about the Society. One area I would really like to get some ideas on is the San Jose meetings, which have been poorly attended by our members. In fact most of the people at South County get together have been from the general public and learned of the meetings from the newspaper publicity. That is fine except I would like to have some thoughts from members on why they did not attend and firm suggestions for future South County meetings, or are we to give them up? I feel strongly that our Society should be served from Morgan Hill to Palo Alto, but its ridiculous to go to all the work to get good speakers and films if the members don't care to come to the meetings. Let me know, and thank you in advance for your help.

N. Holmes

-----

Conservation _____	Give Programs _____
Palo Alto Screen Tours _____	Program Refreshments _____
Lead Field Trips _____	Publicity _____
Ideas for Filed Trips _____	
Program Ideas _____	
South County Program ???????	If so where _____
Will you run the Program _____	
Will you help with Refreshments _____	

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ OCCUPATION \_\_\_\_\_

