

SANTA CLARA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY, Inc.

Chapter 0515 of the National Audubon Society
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The Avocet

TIME VALUE



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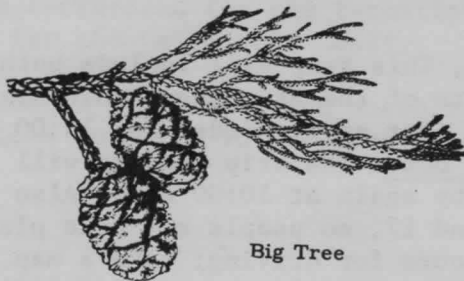
May 1975

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- May 6 Bird Discussion Group, Tues. at 9:30 A.A. at home of Eve Case, 20537 Verde Vista Lane, Saratoga. Topic: Migration. What spring migrants stopped in your garden?
- May 10 Field Trip Pt Reyes, This trip will include both birding and banding the
17 vagrants and migrants of the Pt. Reyes Peninsula. Meet at Drake's Beach Visitors Center at 7:00 A.M. (for early birds) and 10:00 A.M. for those who wish to come later. Please note: The trip leaders will meet with people at 7:00 A.M. and then will stop by again at 10:00 A.M. Also notice that this is for 2 Saturdays, May 10 and 17, so people may make plans accordingly. By the way, allow about 2 1/2 hours for driving; take a map and the best route is through Fairfax to Olema. Leaders: Bob Yutzy (968-8804) and Mike Rigney.
- May 11 Seielstad Ranch Field Trip, Sunday, 8:30 A.M., LaHonda Rd. to Skyline Blvd., right on Skyline to Bear Gulch Road on left. Left on Bear Gulch Rd., keep to right on Bear Gulch Road for about 3 1/2 miles to a gate. You will be met here by the trip leader. Leader: Howard Wolcott, 321-6694
- May 12 Board of Director's Meeting, Monday, 7:30 P.M. at the Peninsula Conservation Center (address above AVOCET logo). Members are welcome.
- May 14 Field Trip South, Chesbro Reservoir, Wednesday 9:00 A.M. Almaden Expressway South to McKean Rd., left on McKean (which becomes Uvas Rd.) and south 11 1/2 miles. Meet at c orner of Uvas and Oak Glen Ave. Hope to see Great Blue Heron Rookery, Wood Ducks and a surprise rarity. Leader: Rae Schmuck, 356-4362.
- May 18 Gilroy Hot Springs Field Trip, Sunday. South on U. S. 101 to San Martin, east on San Martin Ave. at end of San Martin Ave., right on New Ave. about 4 miles, left on Roop Rd., which becomes Gilroy Hot Springs Rd., left on Coyote Reservoir

Rd. to entrance to Coyote Reservoir Park. Leader will be at park entrance from dawn to 8:00 A.M. After 8:00 we will go up Gilroy Hot Springs Road. Leader: Emelie Curtis, 275-9157.

- May 21 Last General Meeting, Wednesday, 6:00 P.M. -- a potluck supper at the Baylands Interpretive Center. Our program will feature Mr. James A. Schmus with his own thought on his Audubon Summer Camp, 1974 and comments on wildlife and habitat in Butano State Park. Please see note in this AVOCET about our General Meeting!!
- May 22 Bird Discussion Group, Thursday, 9:00 A.M. Meet at the parking lot behind the Boat House on Lake Lagunita, next door to Roble Hall. We will bird around the Lake, so wear walking shoes, bring own lunch and binoculars. This is our last meeting until September. Call Elizabeth Green, 323-7469 if you need directions.
- May 28 Field Trip North, Wednesday, 9:00 A.M. Jasper Ridge (Stanford University) adjoining Searsville Lake. From Route 280 go west on Sandhill Road about 2.8 miles to the entrance of Searsville Lake Park on your left. Plan to stay until 12:00. The gates must be locked behind us. We will walk up to the top of the Ridge. Leaders: Carol Zabel, 948-5671 and Dolores Norton, 941-1666.
- May 31 Grant Grove & Kings Canyon Weekend Field Trip. We will be in a beautiful area of June 1 the Sierras at the height of spring. This will be an opportunity to see a good cross section of Sierra birds including, Pileated Woodpeckers, Lincoln Sparrows & many species of Warblers, Flycatchers, & other woodpeckers. Accommodations are available in a variety of cabins and in public camp grounds. All who plan to attend please call trip leaders Jean & Frank Farran, 252-3874 for details.
- June 9 Board of Director's Meeting, Same Time, Same Station



Big Tree

A SHORT MEMORIAM

Dr. Dick Hartesveldt was a Conservationist of the first order. One of his former graduate students described him as a "gentle man", with emphasis on those two separate words. A long-time member of Audubon and a well-known Professor of Biology at San Jose State University, Dr. Hartesveldt spent countless hours among the Giant Sequoias. His Doctoral thesis was on the Big Trees, though he had worked as a Ranger Naturalist in a variety of places; Death Valley, Sequoia National Park, and even Hawaii was home to this soft-spoken man. For the last 7 or 8 years Dr. Hartesveldt and his good friend Dr. Tom Harvey have worked together to throw some new light on "fire ecology" -- elucidating the fact that fire (forest fires) is instrumental and in fact necessary in causing certain tree seeds to sprout.

The Board of Director's Meeting of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society unanimously approved a \$500 contribution to the Sempervirens Funds in memory of Dr. Richard Hartesveldt.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

The following trip reports were submitted to THE AVOCET for April:

A group of 9 persons braved the icy wind at Coyote Hills Park on March 26 to visit the salt ponds, marshes, and woods. A total of 53 species were seen on this and an earlier scouting trip. Main highlight of the day was the sighting of a Great Horned Owl roosting in a box someone had thoughtfully provided near the top of a pine tree.

Phil Hand

On April 6th, approximately 30 people observed Doug Cheeseman and 3 biology students band birds from the foothill woodland community on Kittredge Road in Saratoga. A short walk was also taken on a fire road between Kittredge and Bohlman Roads which produced 29 species of birds.

Gail and Doug Cheeseman

THAT LAST GENERAL MEETING

Our last annual meeting for the current year (before a two month summer break) will feature a Pot Luck Supper early in the evening followed by a short business meeting. Our program for the evening will feature Mr. James A. Schmus, a State Park Ranger in Butano State Park. Mr. Schmus' program will run about 45 minutes and will be divided into 2 parts: (1) his Audubon Camp experience in Summer 1974 and (2) his own comments about wildlife and habitat in Butano State Park. Mr. Schmus joined the Dept. of Parks and Recreation as a State Ranger in 1971. He trained for a year at Big Basin, and has spent the last 3 years at Butano. Butano State Park is one of those lovely Redwood Parks situated in the Santa Cruz Mountains --- in Southwestern San Mateo County near Pescadero. We hope you all come with full pots and empty stomachs; Mr. Schmus should start his presentation about 8:00 PM.

The program for the whole evening goes like this:

Time: May 21, Wednesday, Potluck 6:00 PM, Meeting 7:45, Program 8:00 PM.

Place: Palo Alto Baylands Interpretive, east end of Embarcadero Rd. in Palo Alto, CA.

Program: Audubon Summer Camp 1974 and wildlife and habitat in Butano State Park--
by Mr. James A. Schmus.

About the potluck supper thing, we recommend the following breakdown for food:

Names beginning with A - L -- salads for 10 people

Names beginning with M - R -- a casserole meat course for 10 people

Names beginning with S - Z -- pickles and cheese OR bread and olives

You might bring your own plates; I think we ran out last year or maybe somebody ate them by mistake!

For people who would like to help with this gala affair (and we do need people) please get in touch with: (1) Nancy Holmes, 948-1854 or (2) Florence LaRiviere, 493-5540.

By the way, the Baylands is a great place to bird, so you might come out a little early and walk around. By all means, do come to our last meeting and enjoy yourselves.

WHERE IT'S AT '75

May brings many migrants and vagrants passing through, while our breeders are in full color and song. Also try to get out and see the incredible array of spring wildflowers. Everything is blooming nicely. This is the time to get to know our local avian residents. Though Monterey and Point Reyes will undoubtedly be super, some of our local parks are tops for breeders. The site guide is for Stevens Creek Park, also excellent are Alum Rock and Foothills Parks, Villa Montalvo and other local sites.

It has been really exciting to see Loons, Grebes, and Shorebirds (especially Black-Bellied Plovers and Dunlins) in breeding plumages. Some Loons were even calling (usually only heard on breeding grounds). Almost any place except the high mountains (they'll be good in June & later) can provide good birding. Ninety-nine percent of the best birding spots are available to everyone -- the reason rare birds are found in certain areas is that these good places are birded more frequently by experienced birders. Did you know that 1) Wilson's Storm-Petrel is probably the world's most abundant species. 2) Red-winged Blackbird is probably North America's most numerous bird. 3) Red-eyed Vireo is the most abundant Eastern woodland bird while Horned Lark is the most common in the prairie country???? What's your vote for our most abundant western bird? Did you know one Barn Owl is said to be worth more than 8-12 average cats in destroying rats and mice. Many White-throated Sparrows stayed at feeders and Dippers are being reported all over. Local Reports include a Tufted X Ring-necked Duck (hybrid) at Rodeo Lagoon, while at Golden Gate Park a European Wigeon was still around (as ours was in Palo Alto). A Calliope Hummer seems to be a regular near Tilden Park. A Townsend's Solitaire was in Mt. Diablo State Park where Sage, Rufous-crowned and Black-chinned Sparrows breed on the steep hillsides. Two early Grasshopper Sparrows were on Stage Road near the regular small breeding group on Pescadero Road (they usually arrive in early May). Purple Martins are being seen along our coast (soon the pair on the top of Highway 17 will be nesting). As usual at least two Harlequin Ducks were at Ano Nuevo. Pigeon Point along the San Mateo Coast can be good for Pelagic species, if one is patient. Sometimes Red-necked Grebes (Monterey Coast Guard Pier and Bodega Head best), Sooty and Pink-footed Shearwaters, Pomarine Jaeger, and usually Pigeon Guillemots with up to 12 pair of Marbled Murrelets, Pinnacles National Monument is a good place for Canyon Wren. An Albino Willet and Ruddy Duck were in S.M. Co. Panoche Pass and Valley were still good for Mountain Bluebirds, Chukars, and Lewis' Woodpecker, while 2 Cassin's Kingbirds and 12 Lawrence's Goldfinches were recently there. The road to New Idria was still good for Vesper Sparrow's. A Lesser Yellowlegs was in the fields near Coyote Hills where they keep seeing Blue-gray Gnatcatchers (high up in Foothills Park is good). Two Mountain Bluebirds were on Grizzly Island in Solano County (many have been seen at Point Reyes). Swamp Sparrows were still in Olema Marsh. Moss Landing had an elusive female Oldsquaw. North of us on the north side of Goat Rock in Sonoma County there is 80% success seeing Marbled Murrelets; one can sometimes also see Black Scoters, and Black-legged Kittiwakes. Sacramento, I believe, is as far south as a Northern Shrike made it this winter. Excitingly at a Chico feeder was a Ring-tailed Cat digging on the suet (no end of surprises with a feeder)!! Even farther north on Trinidad Head, near Eureka, one can often see breeding Tufted Puffins out on the seabird nesting rocks -- landlubbers take note. Two European Wigeons and 4 Golden Plovers were at Eureka-Arcata. Ruffed Grouse were drumming on the Humboldt coast with a Harris' Sparrow and a Palm Warbler at a Ferndale feeder. In Washington winter goodies were down this season; few Redpolls, Bohemian Waxwings and Tree Sparrows were seen but some numbers of Gyr and Peregrine Falcons were seen. The year after a major invasion there appears a small re-invasion and true to form small numbers of Snowy Owls were in Washington (as we had one local Rough-legged Hawk again). Two Barred Owls are probably nesting just north of Seattle (one usually has to go to Eastern Washington). South of us, as usual some Gray Flycatchers and even some other Empidonax types wintered. Arizona's winter had a White-tailed kite their 3rd record (a Calif. or Texas bird?), a very vocal Ferruginous

Owl, the female Rivoli's Hummer which stayed all season at a feeder, a Green Kingfisher near Nogales, 2 Rufous-backed Robins and early (or wintering?) Red-faced Warbler and Painted Redstart.

For information on rare bird alerts around the U. S. this summer, see American Birds Feb. 1975. Western numbers are: Nor. Cal 415-843-2211 (report sighting to 654-1358 or 841-1763) So. Cal 213-874-1318 and Seattle 206-455-9722.

In American Birds each year the National Audubon Society publishes its blue list, to warn us of species to keep a special eye on -- for they may be heading for or in difficulty. The 1975 list had 5 new listings. These new threatened species are Canvasback, Purple Martin, Reddish Egret, Mountain Quail, Upland Plover, Common Nighthawk, Lewis' Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker and Lesser Goldfinches.



Stevens Creek Park is just a few miles west of the intersection of 280 and Foothill Expressway. Caspian Terns can often be seen fishing the reservoir, while sometimes Spotted Sandpipers are feeding around the edges. At the far end of the dam parking lot on the north side of the road Lazuli Buntings, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers (on nest) and Warbling Vireo can be seen and heard on the hillsides. The trilling song (with a slight undulation near the end) of the Orange-crowned Warbler seems to be everywhere. Just past the quarry a sharp turn up to the right takes you up Montebellow Road, where near the top is an incredible view of much of the bay area (spectacular at night). On into the park a ways just past a white bridge over Stevens Creek to a paved (cabled off) also were we sometimes see Vaux's Swifts. Continue past the group area, staying right at the fork (on Stevens Canyon Road), to the picnic areas on both sides of the road. Both of these areas and around the wooden bridge are good for more Orioles, Yellow Warbler, Black-headed Grosbeak. This is one of the few places to see and hear three Vireos: Hutton's, Solitary and Warbling. Sometimes Western Tanagers, Purple Finches, and Western Flycatchers are here (or up the road) too. While in the park one should always look up for Golden Eagles, Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks. Dippers can sometimes be seen at the wood bridge or above along the creek. We recently saw a pair of Townsend's Warblers so you never know what migrants you might see.

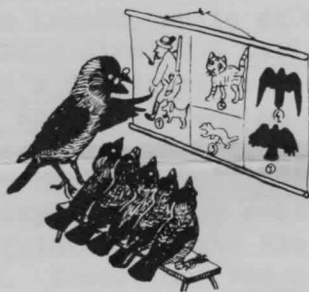
Good Parking
Bob Yutzy

SOME SUMMER CLASSES

The following three Field Studies Classes are being offered this summer through the extension services at San Jose State University -- N.S. x156D Plumas-Eureka State Park: Feather River Country, June 14-19, 1975 --- The meeting point of the Cascades, the Sierra and the Great Basin Desert is Plumas-Eureka State Park. The area features river canyons, glacial lakes, tree-covered mountainsides and chaparral slopes.

N.S. x156B Eastern Sierra: Mammoth Lakes, June 21-26, 1975 -- Seven thousand feet high in the Eastern Sierra, the pine juniper belt known as Mammoth Lakes region offers glacial lakes, volcanoes, and extreme variations in vegetation. Devil's Postpile, an area of unique geological formations, and the White Mountains with their Bristlecone Pines will be visited. N.S. x156E Pt. Reyes National Seashore, August 3-9, 1975 --- North of San Francisco, Point Reyes Peninsula is separated from the mainland by the San Andreas Fault. Study areas will include the exposed coast, the bays and the mountains.

Each field study course will acquaint students with the natural history of a particular area so that they may gain an understanding of its environmental, ecological, and aesthetic aspects. The programs require no previous experience or prerequisite except a desire to learn about the out-of-doors. Both the experienced naturalist and the beginning student are welcome.



Staff ----

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Arnold Applegarth, Ph.D
Wanna Pitts
Edward King

Credit -- two uppers of upper division natural Science credit (degree applicable) each course.

Accommodations -- are various; rustic, but available at all study areas. Campgrounds, motels, stores, restaurants are generally within a short drive.

Cost -- \$56/registered student and \$17.50/child; meals and lodging NOT included in cost.

Please call or write the field studies secretary, Ms. Maria DeHart, Extension Services, SJSU, San Jose, CA 95192. Phone: (408) 277-2211

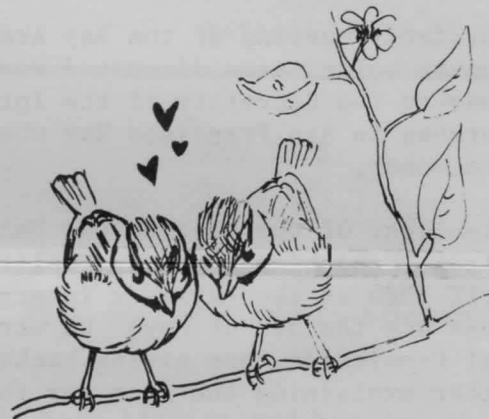


NORTH AMERICAN NEST RECORD PROGRAMS

A few months ago we mentioned the Nest Record Program, and urged participants to submit their nest cards to our area coordinator, Diana Matthiesen. For those who are not familiar with the program, this study was instituted in 1965 by the Cornell University Laboratory of Ornithology. We have finally rounded up all of the cards and the summary is listed below.

Seventeen participants returned an impressive 304 cards. Over one-half of the cards received were from one phenomenal contributor, Robert G. Schneider of Los Altos. He not only discovered approximately 150 nests, he made multiple visits to each site throughout the breeding period to compile much valuable information on breeding success. Most observers were able to revisit nest locations, which is highly encouraged by the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. Some nests were observed more than 10 times so that a second card was needed to record additional visits. Participants and number of cards turned in:

Robert G. Schneider	153
Andrea LaJoie	29
M. Firenze	18
L. Richard Mewaldt	16
Janis Ringuette	15
P. W. Swanson	15
Robert E. Gill	11
Ted Graf	10
Manette Wittgenstein	9
Robert R. Charles	7
Gail Cheeseman	7
Diana G. Matthiesen	5
S. D. Mackerrow	4
B. W. Emlen	2
M. T. Hart	1
B. D. Green	1
Doug Cheeseman	1



Approximately 75% of the nests reported were in Santa Clara County and 85% within the State of California. Some 52 species were recorded.

Some common resident species of our area such as Coots, Cliff Swallows, Red-winged Blackbirds, Song Sparrows, Juncos, and Killdeer, were not recorded in numbers. There is plenty of room in this valuable program on breeding birds for more recorded observations. We hope to have more SCVAS members filling out cards this year. Although the 1975 nesting season is well on its way, breeding birds will provide lots of action this month and into the summer. If you wish to become involved in the Nest-record Card Program this season, write or phone either of the following 2 people who are the coordinators in our area this year (1975 nesting season). We would like to thank, and we also speak for the people at Cornell, everyone who has participated in the program. We should especially thank Diana Matthiesen who introduced this program 2 years ago to our chapter. She has coordinated and encouraged us to compile more data on active nests so that statistical analyses can be made for California as has already been done in the East.

Mrs. Gail Cheeseman, 867-1371
20800 Kittredge Road
Saratoga, CA 95070

Mrs. Esther Ollis,
P. O. Box 786
Los Gatos, CA 95030

BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOTES (April, 1975)

Board approved a \$500 contribution to Sempervirens Funds in memory of Dr. Richard Hartesveldt. (See memorian note in this AVOCET)

Three candidates have been selected to receive half-scholarships to Audubon Camp of the West: Daniel Friend, Steve Treanor and Judy Frosch.

Board approved donation of \$250 to Warm Springs Dam Fund.

May 21 meeting (final meeting) will be a pot luck supper (see note in this AVOCET).

Board voted 6 to 4 in favor of recognizing retriever training at the Flood control basin as a legitimate conservation effort.

BAY AREA AUDUBON COUNCIL (BAAC) MEETING

The quarterly meeting of the Bay Area Audubon Council was held on April 5 in Burlingame. The items discussed were many, such as the appointment of Stanley Hathaway to the Secretary of the Interior and the expenditures of Whittell Fund for marshes in San Francisco Bay when they become available -- both the marshes and the money.

The highlight of the meeting was BAAC first preview of the movie made by NAS entitled: "Vanishing Treasure: California Tidelands". (This movie was shown on April 30th at the Baylands Interpretive Center 8 P.M., the first Coastal Hearings are the 5th of May) We were privileged to hear two men from the Coastal Commission, one giving background for the formation of the commission, the other explaining the plan for the California Coast.

Though Santa Clara Valley's Audubon's jurisdiction doesn't extend to the coast our understanding of the problems involved in the coastal situation is dear to all of us.

THE AVOCET is published every month except July and August. It is sent without additional charge to members of the National Audubon Society who live in this area. Subscription for non-members is \$2.00 per year, payable to the Treasurer. The Editor: David Nauer, P. O. Box 4501, San Jose Ca., 95126, Telephone: (408) 259-1283. Changes of address should be sent to: Mrs. C. V. Horton at 390 N. Winchester Blvd., Building 2, #4H, Santa Clara, Ca., 95050 243-6384

