

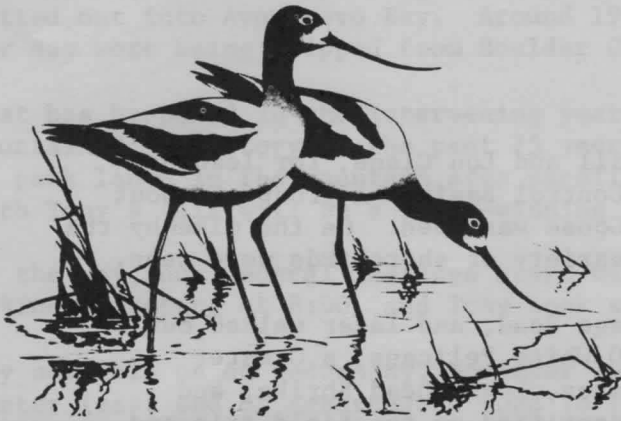
SANTA CLARA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY, Inc.

Chapter 0515 of the National Audubon Society
1176 Emerson Street, Palo Alto, Ca 94301
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The Avocet

TIME VALUE



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November, 1975

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Nov. 4 Board of Directors Meetings, We are changing our meeting day to the first Tuesday of the month, otherwise time/place is the same!
- Nov. 8 Field Trip, Saturday, 8:30 A.M Fremont Older Ranch in Cupertino, a recent acquisition of the Midpeninsula Regional Park District. Freeway 280 to Saratoga-Sunnyvale Rd. south on Saratoga-Sunnyvale Rd. to Prospect Rd., west on Prospect to Stelling Rd., we'll car pool from here so be on time. Since we're limited to 40 people, make reservations with Frank Farran at 252-3874. The trip leader will be Steve McKerrow, 253-0566.
- Nov. 11 Bird Discussion Group, Tuesday at 9:30 A.M at home of Eva Case, 20537 Verde Vista Drive, Saratoga. Topic: Owls.
- Nov. 19 Field Trip North, Wednesday, 9:00 A.M Jasper Ridge (Stanford University property) adjoining Searsville Lake. From Route 280 go west on Sandhill Road about 2 miles to the toll entrance at the lake. You will pass Whiskey Hill Road on your right; the entrance is on your left about 0.8 mile farther. Plan to stay until 12. The gates must be locked behind us. Leaders: Carol Zabel, 948-5671 and Delores Norton, 941-1666.
- Nov. 19 General Meeting, Wednesday, 7:30 PM at the Palo Alto Baylands Interpretive Center. The program: Tony Look will talk on the "Redwoods of the Santa Cruz Mountains" and follow his thoughts with a film titled "The Last Redwood" -- please see note in this AVOCET for more information.
- Nov. 21 Bird Discussion Group, Friday at 9:30 A.M. at home of Marguerite Nash, 1198 Richardson Ave., Los Altos, 967-2944. Topic: Bird migrations -- Where do your back-yard migrants go? Ione Bradley, 327-5973

Nov. 22 Field Trip, Saturday, 8:30 A.M. Coyote Hills Regional Park. East across Dumbarton Bridge, left at Jarvis Road, left at Newark Blvd. (first traffic light), about one mile, then left at the sign to the Park. Meet in the first parking lot on the right at the gate

first parking lot on the right at the gate into the park. Excellent area for White-tailed Kites, Sora and Virginia Rails, Common Gallinules, and many ducks. Leader: R. J. Andre, 257-2038

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Many thanks to Kay McCann and her co-leaders, Jill and Lou Cisne, for leading the Sept. 24 field trip to the Palo Alto Flood Control Basin. A group of about 20 persons met at the duck pond, where a Ross' Goose was seen. On the dike by the lagoon Burrowing Owls, Blue-winged Teal, and a variety of shorebirds were seen.

We carpoled to the ponds by the Bayshore Frontage Road, and later walked out the dike by the kennels. There we saw about 150 White Pelicans, a Greater Yellowlegs, a Belted Kingfisher, White-tailed Kites, Loggerhead Shrike, and American Kestrel. A total of 56 species were identified on the field trip and scouting trip.

Carol Zabel

The October 12 jaunt to Moss Landing/Zmudowski State Park brought out a dozen birders on a mostly pleasant sunny day. We saw 36 species of birds, and the "birds-of-the-day" were undoubtedly the many majestic flights of Brown Pelicans sailing from the ocean over to the salt flats. The group notes Common and Snow Egrets, Western, Pied-bill, and Horned Grebes, female Red-breasted Mergansers and Ruddy Ducks. Other birds seen were Great Blue Herons, Avocets, Black-necked Stilts, Marbled Godwits, and some four species of terns (Elegant, Common, Forsters, and Caspian). Gulls included Heermans, Ring-billed, Western and Herring. A Whimbrel and a Long-billed Curlew were seen close together for good comparison.

Such birds as Short-billed Dowitchers, Willets, Black-bellied Plovers, Killdeers, Least and Western Sandpipers, and Sanderlings were also present. We saw White-tailed Kites, a Kestrel, Meadow Larks, Song Sparrows, and many mixed flights of Lesser and American Goldfinches, House finches, as well as Brewer's and Red-winged Blackbirds feeding on nettles and seeds around the sheltered dunes. A Red-shouldered Hawk was also seen. Those who went on to Zmudowski beach saw a muskrat.

Esther Ollis

September 27th - Rodeo Lagoon, Point Reyes. Approximately 50 people attended this outing led by Ted Chandik filling in for Bob Yutzy. Most notable sightings were a Cape May Warbler and a Black-throated Blue Warbler, the albino Red-tailed Hawk, eight Sharp-shinned and five Cooper's Hawks from Point Diablo, a Pectoral Sandpiper, distant Elegant Terns, a female Western Tanager, and a Snipe sleeping on a log. About 15 people continued on to Point Reyes where Eugene Makashima expertly guided them to an American Redstart, three Blackpoll, a Nashville, and Black-throated Gray Warblers.

NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING

Since this item was mentioned in our calendar, we will elaborate a bit. Our speaker is long-time Audubon member Tony Look and a well-known conservationist in the Bay Area. Tony's talk will detail the Redwoods of Santa Cruz County, which has been the scene of logging for a longer time than anywhere else in California. (that is certainly a surprise since we usually associate redwood logging with the northern California coast such as Humboldt or Del Norte counties) In 1880 William Waddel had a mill on the western edge of Big Basin and a narrow gauge track to a pier that jutted out into Avo Nuevo Bay. Around 1900, more than 50 carloads of redwood lumber per day were being shipped from Boulder Creek.

What has happened in the intervening years to the redwoods of the Santa Cruz mountains? The story of the past 75 years of logging, development, and preservation of park lands in the mountain area paralleling the Pacific is intriguing. Along with Tony's talk will be a prize-winning film "The Last Redwood."

By the way, our General Meetings start with a social hour at 7:30, followed by a short business meeting at 8:00, and Tony Look should start about 8:15 or so.

Why not join us on Wednesday, November 19 at the Palo Alto Baylands Interpretive Center (east end of Embarcadero Road in Palo Alto) at 7:30 PM. Bring your friends, there's no charge and its open to the public.

Kay McCann, Program Chairwoman

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

BE PREPARED!!!! That's the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society's marching song. The 76th annual CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS is rapidly approaching. Birders - mark Sunday, December 21, 1975 on your calendars. The Christmas Bird Count will be run as it has been in year past beginning at 7:30 in the morning and running all day. The San Jose count area - a circle with a 15 mile diameter - includes many different and fascinating habitats, from the Baylands to the East Foothills and it's always a challenge to scour the country-side for the different species. Last year we noted Cattle Egrets a Phainopepla, and Evening Grosbeaks to mention a few.

Our circle is divided into ten sections and each section is the responsibility of one leader. If you have a particular section in mind where you'd like to count, you can put in your bid early by calling the count coordinator at the number listed below.

Last year's tally session, which ran from 4:30 to 8:00 immediately after the count, was so successful that we're going to repeat it again. We served a Lasagne/salad supper and generally relaxed and exchanged bird stories before we got to the task of totalling. All of the count participants and interested friends are invited to share in the dinner and "Gee-whiz" session Sunday evening at the final tally.

TWO REQUESTS: First, we need Section Leaders; it's not a very strenuous job; and Second we need help with the food and serving at the tallying. If you can lend a hand either way, I'd appreciate a call.....

Phyllis Swanson
Count Coordinator
(408) 274-2349

WHERE IT'S AT -- NOVEMBER '75

Most of our regular winter birds - shorebirds, landbirds, gulls and ducks are already here in large numbers and most of the geese and loons will be arriving this month. Small numbers of the last migrating hawks may still be seen (Point Diablo in Fort Cronkite) and some of our wintering hawks - Rough-legged, Swainson's Ferruginous, and Harlan's race of Red-tailed are apt to be found near their usual haunts. This is also the time to begin thinking about Christmas Counts. We include a final summary of a week on the Farallons.

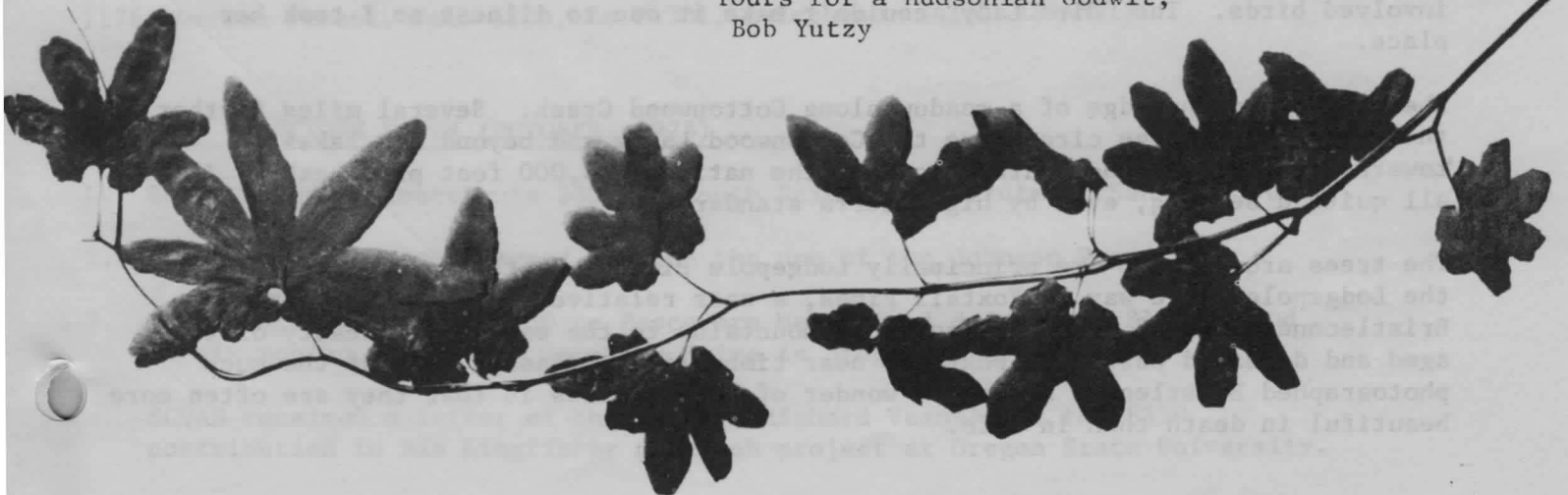
So far the last of September through mid-October were only from below average to average in number of species and number of individuals. But, as usual, some fine birds were seen. Northern California has had 34 species of warblers this Fall, with most active birders seeing nearly 25 (a few to 30 plus). On October 1st, we saw 21 species on the Farallons including 12 species of Eastern vagrants. The best recent sightings included - the probable first North American record of Streaked or White-faced Shearwater off Monterey. This bird breeds off the coast of China and Japan and winters in the south tropical western Pacific near Australia, with only one record from the Hawaiian Islands. A probable Long-toed Stint (the British say Stint for little sandpiper or "peep") visited the Farallons for a few days. This would be the first Continental record for this species which is not uncommon in Alaska. It normally frequents Japan, Australia, and New Zealand. It is somewhat difficult to identify, but notably different from both Least and Western - our common Stints. Other top sightings from the Farallons (with approximately 12 State records each) include a Connecticut Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, Least Flycatcher, and a repeat of a bird at the same time and place as last year, a Horned Puffin. A Common Grackle (normally strictly an Eastern resident) appeared briefly in Arcata for the second California records. The first record was just last Spring in Death Valley (it was So. California's top birder - Guy McCaskie's 500th species in California - a first for the U. S. - no other individual has had 500 species in one state). Point Reyes had California's second and third records of Veery, and the tenth record of Prothonotary Warbler. Southern California has had a Philadelphia Vireo (8 records), a Least Flycatcher, while Death Valley's best was a Worm-eating Warbler which has previously appeared only six times in the state. A Bendire's Thrasher was in Sacramento for the second confirmed record for Northern California although this bird breeds in east San Bernardino County. A Bar-tailed Godwit stayed briefly at Point Reyes (only 4 previous records).

The Golden Gate Audubon Society's observations editor received reports of at least 47 Baird's, 11 Pectoral, 4 Solitary, a Stilt Sandpiper, and 17 Lesser Yellowlegs this Fall. Rodeo Lagoon had a Cape May, two Black-throated Blue Warblers, and an American Redstart (the first two were seen on the SCVAS field trip). A Palm Warbler was in Golden Gate Park and a Stilt Sandpiper was at Alameda's South Shore. A Chestnut-sided Warbler was at the Point Benito Lighthouse, an Eastern Kingbird was at Benicia, Evening Grosbeaks were heard calling in Nicasio, while a Saw-whet Owl was calling in Samuel P. Taylor State Park. In San Mateo County, Ano Nuevo had an American Redstart, three Harlequin Ducks, 10 Yellow-headed Blackbirds, and a Tropical Kingbird (one was also seen at Moss Beach). Half Moon Bay had a Palm Warbler while a Black-throated Blue Warbler was at Princeton, and a Yellow-breasted Chat was observed taking a bath in a backyard in Portola Valley. Recently, a good friend has birded the Santa Cruz coast actively and came up with Ovenbird, Northern Waterthrush, American Redstart, Chestnut-sided, Palm, and Black-throated Blue Warblers (many of which were first county records). In Yosemite a Great Gray Owl was repeatedly seen near Crane Flat and at least three Black-backed Three-toed Woodpeckers were near White Wolf and Yosemite Creek campgrounds. The past month's sightings on Pt. Reyes included: a Broad-winged Hawk (few have been seen at Pt. Diablo), at least 25 Golden Plovers; 2 late Pectoral and 1 Baird's Sandpipers, and a few Black Scoters and Red-necked Grebes near the Fish Docks as usual. Warblers sighted were at least 17 Blackpolls (one banded at PRBO), 13 Palms, 10 Redstarts,

9 Tennessees, 6 Black-throated Blues, 4 Magnolias, 3 Ovenbirds, 2 each Black and White and Bay-breasted, and 1 each N. Waterthrush, N. Parula, Chestnut-sided, Virginia's, and Prothonotary. Other good birds were at least 13 Lapland Longspurs at the Hall Ranch, a Tropical Kingbird, 3 Pectoral Sandpipers at Carmel sewage ponds, 2 Golden Plovers at Salinas Rivermouth, a male Calliope Hummer, at least 2 Tropical Kingbirds, a Swamp, Sharp-tailed, and 2 Clay-colored Sparrows. Warblers included 9 Palms, 7 Blackpolls, 2 N. Waterthrushes, a Cape May, and a Chestnut-sided. Pelagic sightings in Monterey Bay were apparently only one sighting of a Laysan Albatross, 2 Wilson's and 2 Fork-tailed with a mixed flock of Black and Ashy Petrels numbering 5,000+ (the usual grouping), 3 Skuas, 2 Manx and at least 600 New Zealand Shearwaters (they far out-numbered Sooties). The best marine mammals were two Blue Whales (two were also seen in October of '73). Humboldt County had a Blackburnian, Prairie, Chestnut-sided, Black-throated Blue, Tennessee, and Blackpoll Warblers, an Orchard Oriole, and a Rose-breasted Grosbeak. American Oystercatchers have been seen for at least eleven years running off Anacapa Island in Southern California. A Brown Booby was at the Salton Sea. The Death Valley area had four Redstarts, a Palm (quite rare in eastern parts of California), and most notably, a female Hooded Warbler, Northern Shrike, Brown Thrasher, 3 Vermillion Flycatchers, a Rose-breasted Grosbeak, 3 White-throated, a Swamp, and a Harris' Sparrow, 7 Chestnut-collared Longspurs, and albino forms of a Barn Swallow and a Yellow-rumped Warbler. Arizona had some exciting events not the least of which was a Berylline, male Violet-crowned Hummingbird, Green Kingfisher, Ferruginous and Flammulated Owls, and first state records of both Yellow-green Vireo and Tropical Parula. Last Year we had the first sighting of a Yellow Grosbeak in the U. S., and this year there were two separate unconfirmed records from Patagonia.

A WEEK ON THE FARALLONS - September 27 thru October 4. As visiting researchers we arrived to find that the first good wave of migrants had just hit the island. During the week we were daily serenaded by Elephant Seals and nightly chorused by the Cassin's Auklets. We were lucky enough to have mild weather along with incredible birding, including 21 species of warblers on October 1st, a Long-toed Stint (which we failed to band), a Horned Puffin, Scarlet Tanager, Least Flycatcher, and Connecticut Warbler. The week's sightings were 2 Black and White, 4 Magnolia, 2 Blackburnian, 5 Chestnut-sided, 13 Blackpoll, 2 Bay-breasted, 5 Tennessee, 14 Palm (12 on one day), and 2 Black-throated Blue Warblers, 3 Ovenbirds, a Yellow-breasted Chat, 5 Redstarts, a Northern Waterthrush, 2 Red-eyed Vireos, a Peregrine Falcon, 2 Hammond's Flycatchers, 5 Pectoral Sandpieprs, 1 Golden Plover, an Orchard Oriole, 2 Bobolinks, 3 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, 2 White-throated, a Swamp, and a Clay-colored Sparrow (most of the previous were banded). Other exciting events included passing Finback Whales, a shark that chased a salvage diver back to San Francisco, Ashy Petrels here and there, and such island oddities as Woodpeckers, a Marsh Wren, and a pelagic Coot. Regardless of the birds it's an incredibly beautiful and pristine refuge from the all too fas moving world of civilized (?) people.

Yours for a Hudsonian Godwit,
Bob Yutzy



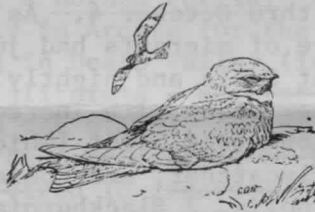
AUDUBON GOLDEN TROUT CAMP, by Frank Farran

The last week of this past July I attended the first session of the Audubon Golden Trout Camp. It is an experience I'm sure many of our local members would enjoy, and at \$75 for the week it was an unbelievable bargain.

The Golden Trout Camp is at 10,000 feet in the Cottonwood Creek Basin of the Southern Sierras. Access to the trail head is via a most spectacular (but reasonably safe) road which snakes its way up the precipitous face of the Sierran escarpment a few miles south of Lone Pine. The view from the road of the Owens Valley, the Sierras, and the desert ranges east to the fabled Panamints would itself justify the trip. Almost directly below the road is the dry, dead bed of Owens Lake as well as the cause of its demise, the thin black line of the Los Angeles Aquaduct striking off across the desert to the city far to the south.

The climb up is not an easy one, but any car in reasonably good shape can make it. From the parking place the hike in is a short 2 1/2 miles. For a nominal fee a packer will transport one's belongings to the camp.

The accommodations at the camp are rustic but quite adequate. Two to four people shared a tent cabin. A few of us slept out or in our own pack tents. Two meals a day were served in the mess hall and a bag lunch was provided for the noon meal. The mess hall was something less than the El Morocco, but I certainly had no complaints about the food. The hot water system is wood fired so we were rationed to two showers during our stay. Hot water was normally available at the outdoor wash stand. Needless to say, the toilets were of the non-flushing variety.



The camp nature program was informal. Participation was optional. Anyone was welcome to do "his own thing" if he so desired. Each day there was a guided nature walk or hike and in the evening a lecture, normally with slides. Pat Brame, of the sponsoring Pasadena Audubon Chapter, had done an excellent job of lining up talent for this program. Several of her co-workers from the Los Angeles County Nature Center were on hand and covered such diverse areas as wild flowers, amphibians and spiders. For a number of days Genny Shumaker Smith and her husband were guests at the camp. Genny was editor of "Deepest Valley", the outstanding Sierra Club guidebook for the area. Dr. Smith is a geologist and he was a most competent leader in this field. The only questionable link in the nature program involved birds. The "Bird Lady" couldn't make it due to illness so I took her place.

The camp is on the edge of a meadow along Cottonwood Creek. Several miles further up the valley in a large cirque are the Cottonwood Lakes and beyond the lakes towers Mt. Langley, the southernmost of the nation's 14,000 foot plus peaks. It's all quite a setting, even by high Sierra standards.

The trees around camp are principally Lodgepole Pines. On the ridges above camp the Lodgepoles give way to Foxtail Pines, a near relative of the 4,000 year old Bristlecone Pines of the White and Inyo Mountains to the east. The beauty of these aged and deceased patriarch Foxtails near timberline surpasses that of the much photographed Bristlecone Pines. A wonder of both species is that they are often more beautiful in death than in life.

Oh yes, birds! We saw the usual high mountain species such as Nutcrackers, Rosy Finches, Sierra Hermit Thrushes, Mountain Bluebirds and Williamson Sapsuckers. The wildflower gardens were alive with hummers - mostly female and immature Rufous Hummers on their return migration from the Northwest. Their travels are so arranged as to follow the flowers. Swainson Thrushes and Warbling Vireos, species which I associate with lower levels were common in the willows. The Vireos appeared to be nesting. The bird, however, which best fitted the scenery was a Golden Eagle.

The one sad thing of the whole experience was that we were told that the last weekly session of the camp was only half booked and that this year the sponsoring chapters might fall short of breaking even on the operation. If things finally turned out this way, it is indeed a pity since I know of no place where the price would have bought a week of more enjoyment for any nature lover capable of the trip.

THURSDAY NOON AT THE FLICKS

We received a note from Mary Hallesy at the Peninsula Conservation Center; it seems the Center is now going to offer movies. By the way, keep in mind that the Center's delightful Gift Shop will be open too, and Christmas is coming. If Christmas doesn't suit your fancy just yet ---- well ---- why not practice the art of selfishness and get something for yourself!!

<u>Date</u>	<u>Film</u>	<u>Guest Speaker</u>
Nov. 6	"The Bay That Wasn't Saved"	Nancy Holmes
Nov. 13	"Vanishing Coast -- Calif. Coast-Sunset Shore"	Enid Pearson
Nov. 20	"San Francisco Bay"	Kent Dedrick
Dec. 4	"Off Road Vehicle Controversy"	George Barnes
Dec. 11	"Use It Up! Use It Up!"	Fred Martin Rose Beatty
Dec. 18	"Save the Stanislaus"	Ken Koehler Doug Allen

Please remember, bring a brown bag lunch and things start about 11:45 A.M. Also, in case there is anyone who doesn't know, the Peninsula Conservation Center is at 1176 Emerson Street, Palo Alto, Ca 94301, telephone: (415) 328-5313.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOTES (OCTOBER, 1975)

1. Board voted to contribute \$300 to Youth Science Institute of San Jose, Ca.
2. A committee has been formed to plan the use of the Johnson Property.
3. Board voted to donate \$150 to Pescadero Marsh fund drive, and \$150 at end of six months, depending upon how drive is progressing.
4. SCVAS received a letter of thanks from Richard Vessel for the \$350 contribution to his Kingfisher research project at Oregon State University.

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*Don't forget!
Deadline on AVOCET
items is 15th of month!
The Editor*

