

SANTA CLARA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY
Chapter 0515 of the National Audubon Society
2253 Park Boulevard, Palo Alto, CA 94306
Telephone: (415) 329-1811

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U. S. Postage
P A I D
Permit No. 1290
San Jose, CA



The Avocet

TIME VALUE

MR ALAN M EISNER
3538 FARM HILL BLVD #4
REDWOOD CITY CA 94061

Volume 29, Number 5

May 1982

MONO LAKE

We're nearly half way!

Thank you, thank you, thank you to everyone who has helped get our campaign off to a great start. It has been a delight to open the mail each day and see our total climb. To date we have received about \$5,000 in gifts and pledged leaving only halfway to go to our goal of \$10,000. SCVAS is again leading the way in raising money for the protection of Mono Lake.

During the Asilomar conference in early April, we handed over the first group of contributions to George Peyton, National Audubon board member who has spearheaded the Mono Lake effort. "Your chapter is just terrific; you people have done it again," said George with a broad smile. He immediately sought out NAS President Russ Peterson to share the good news of our support.

In contrast to the Mono Lake ecosystem of the past, unchanged for thousands of years, we believe that the lake's ecosystem has three new components. They are just as important as food supply and nesting habitat. The interdependence of the natural elements is now expanded to include the upcoming Supreme Court hearing, our fund raising campaign, and especially you, the contributors. Each of us becomes a very real part of the interdependent life support system by contributing to the Mono Lake campaign.

Please remember that the wildlife of Mono Lake is depending on us. The gulls, grebes, and phalaropes need your help. If you haven't already done so, please join us and send your tax-deductible contribution of \$25, \$50, \$100 or more today. Every gift will help save Mono Lake.

They cannot manage on their own.

But your check for \$25, \$50, \$100 or more will help assure them the best possibility for success.

If you choose, you may receive a gift with your donation of \$35 or more. For \$35 you will receive a Mono Lake poster, for \$50 a Mono Lake guide, for \$100 a Ray Harm unframed print of (1) White-throated Sparrow or (2) Pyrrhuloxia Crest.

Please send your tax-deductible check today to: N.A.S.—Mono Lake Fund, 2253 Park Blvd., Palo Alto, CA 94306.

YES, I'd like to help the Mono Lake creatures. Here's my contribution.

- \$25 \$35 \$50 \$100 - ^{circle please} "White-throated Sparrow"
OR
"Pyrrhuloxia Crest"
- don't forget my gift
- keep the gift and give my entire contribution to the birds

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

Please make your check payable to: N.A.S.- Mono Lake Fund.

Contributions are tax-deductible. Mail to: 2253 Park Blvd., Palo Alto CA 94306

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Please call Manette Wittgenstein, 354-9420, and Dolores Norton, 941-1666, or if no answer, call the leader *if you can give a ride* or if you want a ride.

- May 2 **Mines Road and Del Puerto Canyon**, Sunday 9am. This is a great area for Lewis's Woodpecker, Phainopepla, Lawrence's Goldfinch and Lazuli Bunting. Chance for roadrunner and Costa's hummingbird. Take Hwy. 680 north to 580, 580 east to Livermore Avenue, south on Livermore through town. 2 miles from the flagpole in the center of Livermore, Livermore becomes Tesla Road. In another 1/2 mile it intersects with Mines Road. Meet at Mines Road and Tesla. Carpooling is essential due to limited pulloff space. All day trip. Bring lunch, water and full tank of gas. Rain will cancel trip. Leaders can be called as late as 6:30 to 7:45am on the day of the trip. Leaders: Phil Hand (415)851-2623, David S. Moore and Vicki Silvas Young (408)293-7124.
- May 8 **Board of Directors Meeting**, Saturday, 6pm, at the home of Donna Zetterquist, 75 Mountain Springs Road, Santa Cruz. Please notice: (1) This is a Saturday, and (2) It's a potluck supper and we start eating at 6pm.
- May 8 **Audubon Canyon Ranch and Point Reyes Bird Observatory**, Saturday 7am. A bus has been chartered to take you to Bolinas to visit two of the most fascinating institutions going ! At Point Reyes Bird Observatory, former SCVASER Bob Yutzy will give a presentation on bird banding; at Audubon Canyon Ranch we can watch herons and egrets at their nests. Lots of other birds in-between. We plan to work in small groups to accomodate families, beginners, and more experienced birders. It should be a fantastic day ! \$15 for adults, \$10 for children 14 years and under. To reserve -;aces. semd cjecl ,ade pit tp Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society to Vicki Silvas-Young, 469 Shepherd Avenue, San José, California 95125. Instructions to the meeting places in San José and Palo Alto and other details will be sent on receipt of reservations.
- May 8 **De Anza Environmental Study Area**, 9am-10:30. A tour will be lead through this 10 year old 1-1/2 acre study area of 12 native plant communities with 48 families and over 400 native plant species. This is a limited trip; however, another tour at at later hour can be arranged, to accomodate anyone who wishes to go. Call leader to reserve a place on the tour. Directions to the area will be given upon reservation. Coordinator: Vicki Silvas-Young (408)293-7124.
- May 9 **Take Your Mother Birding !** Of all the people we asked to lead a trip today, most said they wouldn't because it was Mother's Day. What a tribute to Motherhood ! Good places to go are Sanborn Park, Los Trancos Open Space Preserve, any city park, or Coyote Hills Park. See past *Avocets* for directions or call Vicki or David at (408)293-7124.
- May 11 **Bird Discussion Group**, Tuesday, 9:30am at the home of Eve Case, 20537 Verde Vista Lane, Saratoga 95070. The topic: "Varied Thrush."
- May 12 **Stevens Creek Park**, Wednesday, 9am; to look for nesting birds. Take 280 Freeway and go *south* on Foothill Expressway at Cupertino, Foothill Expressway turns into Stevens Creek Boulevard. Meet in parking lot by dam. Leader: Mary Lou Burgin (408)253-7115.
- May 14 **Mt. Madonna Owl Trip**, Friday pm. Call David Moore (408)293-7124 for reservations and meeting place.
- May 15 **Grant Ranch**, Saturday 8am. Birdwalk for beginners. From Hwy. 101 take Alum Rock Avenue exit to Mt. Hamilton Road or take Tully Road exit to Quimby Road. Meet just south of the junction of Mt. Hamilton and Quimby Roads at the entrance to grant Ranch Park. Lake, oak-woodland, grassland, and riparian habitats. Leaders: Betty Wyatt (408)255-6091, Don & Audrey Stoye 249-2108
- May 16 **Los Trancos Open Space Preserve**, Sunday 8am. About 7 miles up Page Mill Road, Palo Alto, from its intersection with Hwy 280. Saratoga area people take Hwy 9 to Skyline Boulevard. The Preserve is about one mile down Page Mill Road. We will meet in the "Earthquake Trail" parking lot. Three kinds of vireos, four kinds of warblers, five kinds of flycatchers, pluch such good birds as W. Tanager, Lazuli Bunting, Lawrence's Goldfinch, and Swainson's Thrush are all possible. Beginners welcome. Bring lunch and water in a pack if you want to stay for the entire trip, but morning birders are welcome. Leader: Bruce Barrett (408)268-7097.
- May 19 **General Meeting**, Wednesday 7:30pm, Lucy Evans Baylands Interpretive Center. "Birding in Argentina" with Ted Chandik. This meeting will also include election of officers and directors. Please see note in this *Avocet*.
- May 22 **Goals Workshop**, Saturday—all day; for all old and new directors plus chairpeople and anyone else who is interested. Call Phyllis Swanson for more info: (408)274-2349.

- May 22 **Pinnacles National Monument**, Saturday 9am. Meet at Pinnacles campground, 2 miles east of monument. Take 101 south to Hwy 25, Hwy 25 south through Hollister 30 miles to Hwy 146. Motels in Hollister for those who wish to go Friday night. Camping on first-come, first-served basis. We will be looking for such birds as Prairie Falcons, Phainopeplas, and Black-chinned Hummers. Leader: Don Stark (408)244-8575.
- May 26 **Field Trip North**, Wednesday 8:30am, the Page Mill Road area of the Monte Bello Open Space Preserve. Meet in the commuters' parking lot on the southeast corner of the Page Mill Road/Arastradero Road intersection off Hwy 280 at 8:30. We will carpool 7 miles up Page Mill Road and park in the Los Trancos Open Space Preserve parking lot. Probable Black-throated Gray Warblers. Leaders: Carol Zabel (415)948-5671 and Dolores Norton (415)941-1666.
- June 9 **Pt. Lobos State Park**, Wednesday 10am, south of Carmel on Rt. 1—Look for nesting birds: Brandt's Cormorants, Black Oystercatchers, Pigeon Guillemots, wrens, etc. Gail Cheeseman (408)867-1371.
- June 10 **Annual Membership Meeting** and Pot Luck Supper, Thursday. Please see June *Avocet* for more detail—in fact—any details !
- June 19 - 20 **Burney Falls Field Trip**, Saturday and part of Sunday; near Lassen National Park. Area is about 325 miles from San José. Camp Friday night at MacArthur/Burney Falls State Park and Saturday night at a secret place. Birds: Black Swifts, Bald Eagles, ospreys, Lewis Woodpecker and lots more. Must call leader for details as this one could be snowed out. Leader: Dave Nauer (408) 259-1283 or work (408)247-8200

MAY GENERAL MEETING

Birding in Argentina by Ted Chandik — from Igassu Falls to Tierra de Fuego, a naturalist observes birds the length of Argentina. Ted will discuss and show slides of the fantastic variety of habitats and birds from the subtropics to the sub-antarctic with the pampas and Patagonian desert in between. A fantastic ecological and ornithological experience. Please remember, this is an election meeting, so show up and make your voice heard. The date is May 19, the place is Lucy Evans Baylands Interpretive Center, and the evening starts at 7:30pm. That's at the east end of Embarcadero Road, in Palo Alto.

FIELD TRIP REPORT

There was beautiful weather on February 27 for 27 birders who visited Alum Rock Park. The participants ranged in age from 2½ year old *Monte Vander Horck* and first-grader *Matthew Lazar* to many more experienced field observers. Eight people were on their first Audubon field trip! Thirty-five species were seen including Golden Eagles, White-Throated Swifts, Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers and a singing! Orange-crowned Warbler. As a special treat, the Alum Rock Youth Science Institute released two Screech Owls which had recovered from collisions with a window and a car. Several deer were observed, but no Dipper and no White-crowned Sparrows!

Allen Royer

New Guide to Recycled Paper in the Works

The National Recycling Coalition, Inc. has begun work on a new national buyer's guide to recycled paper products. The guide will contain both state and local product listings to locate sources for recycled paper products.

The guide is expected to be completed by mid-1982. For more information contact Ben Larkey, Program Director, National Recycling Coalition, 45 Rockefeller Plaza, Room 2350; NY, NY 10111, (212)675-1920.

FIELD TRIP REPORT

About a dozen birders convened at Coyote Hills Park on a miserably drizzly morning Sunday March 14. Except for Shovelers, there were very few ducks, many of the woodland birds were absent, and the salt flats were practically empty. It was pretty soggy going at times, but what birder minds wet feet when he's seeing birds? And see them we did — 75 species, including 5 owls and 5 swallows, plus two heard only. We also saw Yellowthroats, Gallinules, Rock Wren, Greater Yellowlegs, Orange-crowned Warbler and Downy Woodpecker. Marsh Wrens were abundant, singing at the top of the reeds for all to see, while a muskrat swam by below.

Phil Hand

REMEMBER THE DEADLINE

Most people who contribute items to *The Avocet* are well aware that the deadline for copy is **the 10th of the month** preceding the month of publication (e.g., deadline is January 10 for February *Avocet*). If you have an item that's "in transit" and may be post deadline, **please call the Editor**. If you have a screaming hot item — call ! The editor is not offering to extend the deadline every month, but things do come up that really should get in this newsletter. This note is really more for people who don't submit that often, and then send in an item that has time value — like a class announcement. I see perfectly good class announcements on a variety of interesting subjects showing up the day after we go to press. This newsletter goes out to perhaps 3,200 individuals and their families, plus libraries, and whatever. It is delivered to most homes by the end of the month, or at least that's the scheme of things. When you send in copy keep it relatively short and sweet (who, what, where, when, how —), but more important, get it in on time.

The Editor

FIELD NOTES

Bill Bousman

May weekends will drive out all memories of the rain, I hope, and give us the opportunity to see the landbird migration at its peak. Our rarer resident species will be more conspicuous this month than any other time of the year as they defend their territories and raise their young. If you could make only two trips in May then the first should be the Diablo side of the valley, perhaps starting at Alum Rock and finishing along Mt. Hamilton's flanks, perhaps at Jos. Grant CP or Smith's Creek. If you have the time a day at Henry Coe SP would also provide an opportunity to see some of our rarer birds. In late May a visit to Monte Bello OSP and along Skyline would show some of the west side specialties.

Golden Eagles are fairly common in the Diablo Range, but one on Stanford land March 27 is not expected (Steve Hedland). Wintering *Glaucous Gulls* were seen through March 9 when two were at Charleston Slough, one with a broken wing (Mary Lou Burgin & Rae Schmuck). This winter has been exceptional for *Townsend's Solitaires*. The one visiting Mercedes William's bird bath in Ladera was last seen Feb. 5, but a new report was received of a bird in Los Altos March 1 (Dolores Norton). An additional bird was in Cupertino from Feb. 20 to March 10 and fed on *pyracantha* (Steve Schoech). Two *Blue-gray Gnatcatchers* were at the

Foothills OSP April 8, a normal arrival date. Wintering *Golden-crowned Kinglets* were in oak habitat on Monte Bello OSP April 8, perhaps the last of winter's influx. The first report of *Black-throated Gray Warblers* was also from Monte Bello OSP on April 8 (Phil Hand), they are a breeding species here in the canyon live oak forest. A *Hooded Oriole* in late March in Los Altos (Sue Liskovec) was an early arrival. Another surprising winter bird is the male *Rose-breasted Grosbeak* that was in Phyllis Browning's yard in Palo Alto March 9-13. More surprising still was a second male that showed up March 23 and was clearly a different bird as it was still showing its immature plumage. Although the Rose-breasted Grosbeak is usually found along the immediate coast in early summer, recent records in Santa Clara County have been from October to January. A *Sage Sparrow* in Monte Bello OSP April 8 responded strongly to a Pygmy Owl imitation. The status of this species is poorly known on the west side of the Santa Clara Valley. The *White-throated Sparrow* in Menlo Park was present through the period and was joined by a second bird on April 2.

If you see an "uncommon to rare" please drop me a note or give me a call: Bill Bousman, 321 Arlington Way, Menlo Park, CA 94025 (415)322-5282.

The Year That Was

I have had another enjoyable year of sharing the reports of many observers in the local area, and again I will attempt a summary of the avifauna of Santa Clara County for the past year. I must add a disclaimer as to the completeness of what follows. Rare or uncommon species often escape detection by knowledgeable field observers, and even if seen are often not reported. An example of this is the Green Heron. Until the end of the year I had only two sightings for this uncommon or rare species. Then on the San José CBC *eight* were found. What is the real status of this bird? Other than Christmas Bird Count data which shows that it is more common on the east side of the valley, it is really difficult to be conclusive.

The 1975 Checklist for Santa Clara County lists 251 species seen in the county. As of last year's summary the total was 304. Four additional species of past years are added to the list as my records are updated. Clark Blake reports that a *Northern Fulmor* was seen at the Palo Alto Baylands about 15 years ago following a winter storm. This is our only Proceliferiforme for the county and one of the few pelagics we have had. When the Monte Bello OSP first opened up Bob Garcia was a ranger there and he found a covey of *Mountain Quail* in Stevens Creek Canyon. He also found a skeleton which is now at San José State. I erroneously reported that *Back Swifts* in Monte Bello OSP this year were new for the county, but a record in Alviso in 1970 has precedence. Simi-

larly I erred with the *Indigo Bunting* in Palo Alto this summer as there was one reported from Foothills Park in 1975. These adjustments bring the checklist total to 308 species. Two new species to the checklist were found in 1981. Three *Elegant Terns* were found with Caspian and Forster's Terns in Charleston Slough on Sept. 11, the consequence of a heavy flight year. On Dec. 5 a *Black-legged Kittiwake* was reported on the Rare Bird Alert tape from the Palo Alto Duck Pond. This brings our checklist total to 310 species.

What about other sightings? There are now 71 species in the category of casual or accidental. Twelve were reported this year, down from last year's 16. As discussed last year three of the species appear to be becoming more common: *Little Blue Heron*, *Ferruginous Hawk* and *Least Tern*. Again I had reports of all three with the number of Least Terns very encouraging. If we lose Bair Island I'm afraid that this trend will change. In the category "uncommon to rare" there are 89 species and 67 were reported this year. Of these 85 species 13 have not been recorded since I took over this job 2½ years ago and I think these species are worth discussing. Six of these are coastal birds and their absence is not unexpected: *Brandt's* and *Pelagic Cormorant*, *White-winged Scoler*, *Black Turnstone*, *Red Knot* and *Common Tern*. The White-winged Scoler, Black Turnstone and Red Knot are reported as far south as Dunbarton nearly every winter. I have a record for *Golden Plover* in Alviso in 1970 ("at the usual

spot'), but none since. The eighth on my list is the introduced *Turkey*, but I'll leave its status to Fish and Game. The ninth is the *Calliope Hummingbird*, a rare migrant on the east side of the valley. It was netted on the Wool Ranch Transect in 1972 as a spring migrant, but only an average of three a spring were caught which makes it very rare. The *Willow Flycatcher* once bred in riparian areas of the county, but it is now only found as a spring and fall migrant, more common in the fall. I have no records since the Wool Ranch transect. With care it should be possible to separate migrant Willow and Western Flycatchers (see Roberson "Rare Birds of the West Coast"). The *Bank Swallow* at one time nested near Sargent and Betabel in the Pajaro River area, but there are no recent records. Does anybody bird this area on our southern border? The *Yellow-billed Chat* was also a riparian breeder in the county, but now apparently a very rare spring and fall migrant. Wool Ranch Transect records indicate only 2-3 birds a season. My last entry is the *Red Crossbill*, an irruptive species that we should not expect every year. Sibley in "The Birds of the South San Francisco Region" notes dry spells up to 16 years.

I will finish my summary with some new things we have learned about our local habitats and avifauna this year. The new Open Space Preserves have created a great deal of excitement for many of us. Monte Bello OSP was actively explored for the second year and there was considerable enjoy-

ment in such breeding species as *Pygmy Owl*, *Black-Throated Gray Warbler*, *Solitary Vireo*, *Lawrence's Goldfinch*, *Lazuli Bunting*, *Western Tanager* and *Chipping Sparrow*. As previously grazed land reverts to weedy field a possibility exists that Grasshopper Sparrows may breed here (they were found 3 miles north in 1981). Many of the other OSP's haven't been covered as well as Monte Bello. Peter LaTourrette's find of juvenile *Sage Sparrows* on the Foothills OSP suggest that many surprises are in store for us. Another discovery this year was the quantitative knowledge we obtained from the first Palo Alto Breeding Bird Count Dave Houle organized. This is the same count circle used for the Palo Alto CBC and the 140 species recorded provide some very interesting data. Clark Blake will continue this BBC in 1982. Probably the single most exciting ornithological event of the season was the reporting of a nesting colony of *California Gulls*. Found by Peg Woodin in 1980 it was actively investigated by Mike Rigney and 40-plus nests were found. This is particularly significant considering the catastrophe nesting failures at Mono Lake. Last on my list of new things learned is due to owlers, especially Dave Moore and Vicki Silvas-Young. The *Saw-whet Owl* which winters in the county in small numbers was found in June near Smith's Creek Ranger Station and at Mt. Madonna County Park. This indicates a potential breeding population on both sides of the Santa Clara Valley. I look forward to sharing your observations in 1982.



Total Immersion

No, I am not advocating some religious practice; total immersion was my impression of Audubon's Asilomar Conference. Looking back on the experience, (and it was an EXPERIENCE!) we spent all our waking hours devoted to 'Protecting the Conservation Ethic.' Sessions on the Clean Air and Endangered Species Acts, energy and Coastal politics were among the topics discussed. The presentations on old growth timber and Mt. St. Helens were fascinating. Closer to home, Mono Lake was the object of numerous formal and informal discussions. And, as if that wasn't enough; Asilomar was: sharing problems; exchanging information; a breakfast chat with Chris Palmer from National's Washington office; a dissertation on Public Trust from Scott Reed, former National Audubon director AND..... George Peyton, wine connoisseur extraordinaire, praised my humble wine!

Phyllis Swanson

THE LEGAL BATLE TO SAVE MONO LAKE

On February 19, 1982, the California Supreme, by a vote of 5 to 1, agreed to hear National Audubon Society's appeal to decide the issue of CA Public Trust Doctrine vs. California Water Rights law. In simple terms, Public Trust Doctrine states that the State of California holds major bodies of water in trust for the public good, and the state cannot allow a major natural resource to be destroyed even in an indirect way. The California Supreme Court is the best place to agrue the case and have those arguments accepted and put into California law.

It is hoped the hearing will be sometime this spring or summer and a decision made by fall, at which time the case will go back to Federal Court where a favorable decision could lead to an injunction to restrict Los Angeles Dept. of Water & Powers' water diversions from Mono Lake by fall.

Now is the critical time in the struggle to save Mono Lake. In the next few months the legal process will decide the fate of the lake — whether it will become a sterile, alkaline pond, or return to a life-giving ecosystem for nesting California Gulls, migrant Wilson's Phalaropes and Eared Grebes.

The SCVAS Board of Directors has voted to continue the long struggle to save the lake. You must realize the SCVAS is the leader in the statewide appeal to save Mono Lake, and has stimulated other chapters to join the campaign. Thus the battle has continued, but NOW IS THE TIME. The information on how to donate is in the accompanying article; for info on the Lake itself:

The Mono Lake Committee
P. O. Box 29
Lee Vining, CA 93541

SIERRA CLUB OFFERS ROGUE RIVER NATURAL HISTORY PADDLE RAFT TRIP June 25 - 29, 1982

For the first time, the Sierra Club will feature a Rogue River Paddle Raft trip plus an extraordinary naturalist-boatman, John Kipping, Audubon Canyon Ranch Resident Biologist. Under expert guidance, four passengers to a raft, we will paddle through exciting rapids and serene river stretches, with leisure to hike, bird, photograph, meditate and dine on superior camp cookery. Also available are inflatable kayaks for solo trips, or the gear raft for those who do not wish to paddle. The five day trip price is \$395. For more information please write or phone (415)981-8634 the Sierra Club Outing Department, 530 Bush Street, San Francisco, CA 94108. The Sierra Club representative on this trip will be Martin Friedman, 353 Montford Avenue, Mill Valley, CA 94941.

Lecture Series: Water Policy and Its Effect on California

Last month *The Avocet* ran a somewhat general article on the "Water — what's the solution?" series which is being presented by the Peninsula Conservation Center. The series has been running on Thursday evening from 7:30 - 9:30pm. Though some of the programs have already been presented, here is some information on the last two in the series; then on May 20 (*The Avocet* last month said May 30 — sorry!) is the Peripheral Canal pros and cons.

May 6 7:30-9pm. Menlo Park City Council Chambers
Agricultural Water Use and Its Cost

Eighty-five percent of California's water is used by agriculture. Can water be conserved by increasing its price? Speakers: E. Phillip LeVeen, West Coast Director of Public Interest Economics, Berkeley, and B. Delworth Gardner, Director of Giannini Foundation of Agricultural Economics, University of California

May 13 7:30-9pm Menlo Park City Council Chambers
The "Right" to Water

Development of water law and water rights in California, and how that development has influenced the State's water distribution system. Speaker: Harrison Dunning, Professor of Law, University of California at Davis.

Peripheral Canal Pros and Cons:
Panel Discussion on the SB 200 Referendum

May 20 7:30-9pm Menlo Park City Council Chambers. Moderator: Malka Kopell, Peninsula Conservation Center. Speakers: Barbara Eastman, Water Quality Control Board, San Francisco Bay Region, Mary Anne Mark, Deputy Director, State Department of Water Resources, Tom Graff, General Counsel, Environmental Defense Fund, Ronald R. Esau, General Manager, Santa Clara Valley Water District, William T. Davoren, President, The Bay Institute of San Francisco.

For information on all this, please contact: The Peninsula Conservation Center at (415)328-5313. Same address as over *Avocet* logo!

CONDOR COEXISTENCE

Two months ago a pair of California Condors, squabbling over who would incubate their precious egg, met with disastrous results. Biologists watched in horror as the rare pair knocked the egg from its nest, and it shattered on the rocks below. However, a second egg was laid in April; let's hope the parents can straighten out their differences, and sit on it !

KUDOS FOR SUNNYVALE

The City of Sunnyvale has started a curbside recycling program, with help from a grant from the State Solid Waste Management Board. Think of that: starting May 17, Sunnyvale residents will have curbside pickup of cans, bottles, and newspapers. Sunnyvale is doing a large public awareness program during April and May so that residents will know just what to do; this includes presentations to schools to introduce the idea, posters around the neighborhoods, and in general just getting the word out. They even have a hot-line staff to answer questions about recycling. Since the San Francisco peninsula is running out of garbage space, and we may one day be up to our ears in the stuff, it's about time! Let's hope other cities can get on the bandwagon (or garbage wagon as the case may be) — we need to RECYCLE. For more info call: (408)738-5425. But again — Hurray for Sunnyvale.

Pornography and the *Avocet*

Back in the March issue there was a short blurb on the bottom of page 3 which stated somewhat baldly: "Oysters can change sex." I needed a little item to fill that hole, couldn't find an appropriate picture, so cut that out of an article and pasted it in. Now that item was taken from a National Science Teachers Assn. publication *Science and Children* which is written for teachers of K-8 students. The article was entitled "Mess Management for Gifted Children" (*Science and Children*, March 1979; the authors were Gary Awkerman and Paul Keller) and the "mess" in this case was simply *what is it we eat when we order "Seafood Platter" in a restaurant?* The kids

did all sorts of neat research, even went on a beach field-trip and, in effect, dug out stuff on oysters, crabs,, lobsters, abalones, scallops, shrimp, and all those things which might come under the heading "Seafood Platter." They drew pictures of the various animals and plugged in such notes as: "oysters can change sex" or (a better one, I think) "a soft shell crab is only between shells, caught with his pants down."

Now, let's get back to the oysters, which started all this anyway. *The Avocet* Editor received a note from Bill Kirsher of Menlo Park which read:

Dear Dave,

I was surprised to see at the bottom of page three in the current *Avocet* a scrawled headline saying that "Oysters Can Change Sex." Just that; nothing more. A stark announcement that even our callous contemporary sex mores is somewhat shocking, and deserves, even requires, some explanatory text. So to this end I am offering the following quatrains which we might title

A Kiddies Introduction To Abberant Sex Via The Protandrous Hermaphroditism of *Ostrea Lurida*

Come, gather 'round me kiddies
I've a story to relate,
of the titillating sex life
of the oyster and its mate.

A shocking sex life lies concealed
Inside its horny shell,
with such erotic vagaries
That makes me blush to tell.

Within that grey amorphous blob
A fierce libido lurks,
And you will be amazed to learn
The miracles it works

The little oysters start as males
And when they've done their thing
Immediately they change their sex
To have a different fling.

And then as female oysters
They can exercise their lust,
But only temporarily
For change again they must

And so it goes on, continuing
from "boy" to "girl" to "boy".
Their love life is, as one might say,
an ambidextrous joy.

But kiddies, there's a lesson
In this story that I tell;
There's more to life than having fun,
So mark the moral well.

It's in between their passions
When they're neither "boy" nor "girl"
That they find the time and energy
To generate a pearl.

Bill Kirsher



Once upon a
time there was
a river. It ran
and ran all
day long. One
day....

it got very cold,
and the river
stopped. What
happened to the
fish?

NEWS RELEASE

The National Audubon Society has come out in opposition to S.B. 200 - the Peripheral Canal referendum.

Writing Letters To Your Elected Officials: Some Pointers

- 1) Use personal or business letterhead when possible, and include your full return address on both letter and envelope.
- 2) Clearly identify your issue. Stick to one subject per letter. Give the name and number of the House or Senate bill if you know it.
- 3) State your reason for writing. Express your personal feelings. Explain in your own words how the issue in question affects you, and why your Representative or Senators should be concerned.
- 4) Keep it brief. A letter of 50 to 100 words is easier to write — and easier to read than a long letter.
- 5) Ask your Representative or Senator to state her/his position when they reply. And if they're equivocal in their response, write again for clarification. Don't hesitate to ask questions — your elected officials work for *you*.
- 6) Time your letters carefully.
- 7) Thank your elected officials when they do something that pleases you.

IT'S ABOUT BIRDS

OFFICERS		CHAIRPERSONS			
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