



# The Sequoia

BULLETIN of the SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY  
San Mateo County, California

Vol. 11 No. 1  
MAY - JUNE, 1958

CALENDAR - MAY - JUNE

- MAY 8** - (Thursday) REGULAR MEETING, Burlingame Recreation Center, 8 p.m. Mr. Charles Hice of the San Mateo County Junior museum will give an illustrated talk on "Life Between the Tides." This is our Annual Meeting and there will be an election of officers and a report on the Screen Tours.
- MAY 10** - (Saturday) Field Trip to Searsville Lake. Meet at the gate at the junction of Sandhill Road and Mountain Home Road at 8:30 a.m. This trip was rained out in March but should be even more interesting in May. We have permission to drive inside the grounds for a fee of 25¢ per person.
- MAY 24** Field Trip to Butano Forest to see the rhododendrons. Meet at junction of Skyline Blvd. and the road to Half Moon Bay at 8:30 a.m. Lunches are advisable.
- JUNE 7** Field trip to Sawyer Camp Road. Meet at Crystal Springs Dam at 8:30 a.m. This is a new season for this trip and J. Ed. McClellan promises it will be very interesting.

A Memorandum from Wm. N. Goodall,  
Pacific Coast Representative says:  
Those wishing to attend the 1959 Audubon Bi-ennial Convention should write now to be placed on the priority list to receive the official registration blank that will be mailed in the fall. No money wanted now. At the last affair (1957) over 100 persons who had requested reservations had to be turned down due to limited housing and eating accommodations. The maximum that can be handled is about 450.

Dates: March 21, 22, 23, 24

Place: Asilomar, Pacific Grove

Theme: Outdoor introductions

Banquet Speaker: Roger T. Peterson

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Audubon Camp of California, at Norden, open June 22 to August 30. Fee for each two-week session - \$103, covers board, lodging, tuition, transportation on field trips, etc.  
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All Audubon members in San Mateo County are urged to write to State Senator Richard G. Dolwig, Senate Office Bldg., Sacramento 14, requesting that the \$750,000 annually appropriated for Wildlife Conservation <sup>Board</sup> be left in the budget. (Money comes from tax on horse race betting.) This money in the past, spent in building fish ladders to enable salmon and steelhead to reach spawning ground, improving fish hatcheries, access roads to good streams for boating and fishing. Fifty areas now under study to provide this type of public recreation. Drop a post card today.

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Note: There will be no bulletin issued for July and August.

SHORE BIRD FIELD TRIP APR. 12

After the long siege of bad weather, rainbow's end must surely have touched Old Bayshore Highway at the end of the Millbrae overpass. The 18 Auduboners and their friends who gathered there found a truly golden morning with no wind and a brilliant blue sky overhead. The bird watching proved to be a golden opportunity for the birds were close in and the bright colors of their breeding plumage showed to excellent advantage in the clear morning light. Among the shore birds that posed so willingly were the dowitcher, willet, Bonaparte gull, western grebe, black-bellied plover, red-backed sandpiper, western sandpiper, least sandpiper, scaup, eared grebe, pipit, killdeer, godwit, Caspian tern, Forster's tern, scoter, canvas-back duck, and ruddy duck.

In the fields west of Old Bayshore both an American egret and a snowy egret were seen, the smaller size and the black bill of the snowy showing to good advantage. Other birds seen in neighboring fields were the meadowlark, linnet, barn swallow, northern shrike, Brewer blackbird, and red-winged blackbird. A short visit to the yacht harbor at Coyote Point added the Hudsonian curlew and the long-billed curlew to the list. Last, but surely not least, the list was concluded with the bird "character of the day"--a red-throated loon that had taken up residence in the yacht basin, and was merrily diving and bobbing up among the boats, seemingly entirely at ease and not in the least afraid of the busy "boat people" or their colorful craft.

-- Ruth Breckenridge

Golden Crown Sparrows

Twenty Golden Crown Sparrows have been winter residents in our garden since autumn. I observed that a few days before Easter they started to eat great quantities of the feed we put out for them, and on Monday, April 7, 14 of them had gone on their way north, leaving 6 males behind. This is the same procedure they followed last season. In about a week's time, the six remaining males

will be gone. That is what happened last spring. I wonder if other members have observed the same thing about the Golden Crowns in their gardens????

-- E. Hebborn

The following appeared in the Santa Clara Valley "The Avocet" April 1958:

Insecticides

"Insecticide hazards may well rank in seriousness of adverse effects with the dangers of radioactive fallout," said Mr. John H. Baker, President of the Society. "The use of toxic chemicals for the purpose of protecting agricultural and forest crops has now skyrocketed to the point where cumulative secondary poisoning of human beings and wildlife, which already exists to some extent, may become catastrophic." Mr. Baker cited tests conducted by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service which reveal that in the second generation of exposure to insecticides in their diet, birds invariably become incapable of reproduction. "When you realize that these poisons may well have cumulative effect on the human system, it is unthinkable that widespread programs be undertaken in the absence of proof that there is no risk of such result," said Mr. Baker. "In any case, the burden of proof should rest on the agency employing the toxic substance, and not on the individual citizen," he said. "This proof should be available for public evaluation long before mass-spraying programs are undertaken." The Audubon Society recognizes the seriousness of the fire ant problem, but doubts very much if people would be eager to have their countryside doused with lethal chemicals if they knew the extent to which they, their live stock, and those who consume the crops of the area may suffer."

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Audubon car stickers (blue and gold with a flying white egret) are available five for \$1.00 from Pacific Coast Office, Nat'l. Audubon Society, 2426 Bancroft Way, Berkeley 4, California. Place in a 7-in square in lower right windshield. Not supposed to be placed on rear windows.

REGULAR MEETING  
MARCH 13

The regular meeting of March 13 was made memorable by Jed McClellan's generous sharing of his extensive knowledge of California native plants. Jed has a remarkable talent for making his listeners realize that plants are fascinating living things with distinct personalities of their own.

The habitats of plants are varied, but within each habitat are found plants which have made most interesting adaptations to the demands and limitations of their environment. Plants living along the bay and the coast must adapt themselves to constant drying by strong winds and the limitations of poor and salty soil. Many of the plants inhabiting these areas have fleshy stems and leaves which act as water reservoirs. Here one finds brass buttons (a stray from South Africa), Mesembryanthemum, Sea Dahlia, a maritime species of mustard with fleshy leaves and stems and a maritime species of gum plant. Growing farther back but still enjoying its marine view is found the beautiful yellow bush lupine. Although we do not think of the elderberry as a marine plant, its species show definite preferences. The blue elderberry is a common plant on the eastern side of our coastal foothills, but the red elderberry always grows on the western slopes which slant towards the sea.

The desert plants must adapt themselves to conditions similar in some respects to those of the maritime species. They, too, must protect themselves from drying out and they must conserve water. To meet their difficult environment some have leaves reduced in size, such as the palo verde whose bark is always green so that the branches can help in food making. In order to reproduce their kind under difficult conditions, desert wildflowers usually have a brief but abundant blooming period. One who sees the desert in bloom will not forget the prickly poppy with its thin crepe-like petals, the

palo verde with its little yellow and orange "butterfly" blossoms, or the desert lily with its greenish-white blossoms the shape and size of small tiger lilies. Some desert plants have adjusted to their environment by becoming greatly reduced in size. There is a miniature poppy which is about two inches high when full grown and whose flowers are about the size of a grain of wheat. A small species of mustard reaches a height of about one inch.

Not only do specialized habitats have their own plants, but large geographical areas have their own distinctive plant personalities. In southern California datura, tree tobacco, and prickly phlox are a common part of the landscape. In northern California one sees silk tassel bush, pitcher plant, squaw grass, rhododendron, and skunk cabbage.

Jed explained that his three methods of studying botany involve microscope study, observation and books. His years of careful observations in the field helped to make his talk a fascinating one, and his sharing of his fine microscope and many beautiful books and pictures rounded out a most enjoyable evening.

--Ruth Breckenridge

FIELD TRIP TO BUTANO CREEK, MARCH 29

Having been rained out of the projected field trip to Searsville Lake on the two previous Saturdays, those of us who look forward eagerly every year to the Butano Creek trip indeed had our fingers crossed.

The overcast sky on the morning of March 29 threatened a continuation of our bad luck, but perhaps old Jupiter Pluvius took pity on us because it did not rain, and the road to the Butano, although muddy in spots, was entirely safe and the drive was a pleasant one.

The luxuriant growth of great numbers of trees, shrubs, wildflowers, and ferns along both sides of the road  
 (cont'd. next page)

THANK YOU NOTE

I wish to thank all members who so thoughtfully filled out and returned the post cards sent to you in the Poll of Members. Your opinions will guide in compiling of programs for the coming year. I hope the meetings will be more interesting, thanks to your suggestions.

--Eugenia Hebbbron  
Corresponding Secretary

DOVE KILLING

DID YOU KNOW THAT:

The annual dove kill in the U.S. is 19,000,000, which requires \$14,000,000 worth of ammunition.

Doves breed in every state and in Alaska. They are protected in 20 states.

Hunters complain that doves are becoming scarcer in California, but Fish and Game findings indicate that the population is not being depleted, despite an annual kill of about 2,500,000.

There are from 150,000 to 170,000 dove hunters in California, paying about \$450,000 a year in license fees.

(The above was compiled by Mr. Wm. H. Thomson, Head of Fish and Game Dept.)

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Although Mr. Thomson feels the above statistics argue against dove protection we believe they strengthen the cause for dove protection.

RESOLUTION FOR PROTECTION OF DOVES

WHEREAS, It is the feeling that doves no longer qualify as game birds, but are of real economic value to farming in the control of weeds: and

WHEREAS, Many feel that dove-killing is the most serious legalized betrayal of basic principles of animal husbandry, game government, conservation and humane considerations presently practiced in this State by reason that 20% are nesting in Sept., and the young are helpless:

(Resolution Cont'd)

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Sequoia Audubon Society of San Mateo County urges the enactment of AB 2307 (the Bill to remove doves from the gamebird list) when it comes up again in the Legislature.

PASSED, At a regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Sequoia Audubon Society of San Mateo County on this 6th day of March, 1958.

The Committee on Conservation asks that members write to Senate Interim Committee on Fish and Game Report to 1957 Legislature Re Bill Room, Capitol Building, Sacramento, Calif. in favor of the passage of Bill AB 2307.

NATIVE PLANTS : MAY - JUNE

Many of our most interesting wild plants bloom in late spring and early summer. Some plants to watch for in May and June in San Mateo County are:

Australian tree-tea (not native), creek dogwood, red-stem ("smooth") dogwood, buckeye, ninebark, rhododendron, azalea, bush poppy, pea chaparral, blue elderberry, chamize, sticky monkeyflower, wood rose, Calif. wild rose, cream bush, wild honeysuckle, pitcher sage, yerba santa;

Wild cucumber, psoralea, yerba buena; Milk thistle, scarlet thistle, brown-eyed thistle, blue star thistle;

Bellardia (not native), thermopsis, filaree, wyethia, colinsia, yellow potentilla, phacelia, meadow rue, woodland star, star flower, cow parsnip, fiddleneck, fairy lantern, yellow monkey flower, salsify ("star of Jerusalem") (not native), canyon blue lupine, white yarrow, valerian (plectritis) columbine, white layia, showy madia, aster, coral root, coast larkspur, blue larkspur, royal larkspur, wild onion, linanthus, prunella, farewell to spring, fuller's teasel, harvest brodiaea, mariposa tulip, soap plant, scarlet mimulus, monardella, sneezeweed, eriogonum.

--- J. Ed (Jed) McClellan

## (FIELD TRIP, BUTANO CREEK - CONTINUED)

is always breath-taking, no matter how many times one has seen it. The brilliant yellow skunk cabbages, each one glowing like a bit of transplanted sunlight, seemed to us to be the first real promise of spring. The bleeding hearts were in full bloom and seemed to be more abundant than last year. Among the wildflowers which we saw blooming beneath the beautiful coast redwoods were redwood sorrel, wild ginger, false Solomon's seal, fairy bells, coast trillium, sessile trillium, yellow violet, thimble berry, checker lily, hound's tongue, milk maid, and black nightshade.

Most of the bird population had apparently decided that such a protracted rainy spell called for a quiet sit-down strike, so they were not in evidence. However, one little winter wren decided to defy the dampness and reward his friends in Sequoia Chapter. He sat on a snag overhanging the road and sang his tinkling song for us - a wee brave mite overshadowed by towering redwood trees and a leaden sky.

--Ruth Breckenridge

SCREEN TOUR - RANCH AND RANGE - Apr. 10

Mr. Al Wool, leader of the final screen tour, was ably introduced by Sequoia Chapter's Vice President, Dr. Neil Dickinson. Mr. Wool owns a stock ranch adjoining Calaveras Lake, and most of his excellent pictures were taken on his own property. Mr. Wool's sincerity and his obvious enthusiasm for the work he is doing added much to the enjoyment of the evening.

The significance of Mr. Wool's presentation went far deeper than a mere pictorial of interesting wild creatures to be found on his ranch. He is acutely aware of nature's scheme in maintaining a balance among its species, and he takes pride in doing his part not to upset this balance. In his pictures he showed how the blackbirds followed the plow and exterminated large numbers of the destructive army worm, thereby making unnecessary the use of chemical

sprays which often do great harm to wildlife, and thereby upset the balance of nature.

Among the mammals which Mr. Wool has photographed on his ranch are the long-tailed weasel, pocket gopher, bob cat, gray fox, skunk, and opossum.

His pictures of birds and his unusual knowledge of their habits were specially enjoyed by his audience. Among the birds he has photographed at his ranch are the burrowing owl, great horned owl, vulture, prairie falcon, American egret, Caspian tern, ruddy duck, horned lark, rufous-crowned sparrow, western grasshopper sparrow, lark sparrow, golden eagle, wood duck, and American dipper.

Among the few pictures not taken on his ranch were his scenes of the magnificent California condors taken in their last stronghold in the rugged and remote mountains of southern California.

Those who attended the potluck dinner before the screen tour enjoyed chatting with Mr. and Mrs. Wool and with Mr. Bill Goodall, director of the Berkeley office, National Audubon Society.

-- Ruth Breckenridge

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 JUNCO LULLABY

Rock-a-by babes  
 In your nest on a hillside,  
 Safe from all harm  
 Neath a blackberry vine,  
 In a hole in the dirt  
 Of a roadcut embankment,  
 Mother will feed you.  
 Your worms cut up fine.

-- Dorothy Lilly

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 California Woodpeckers have taken an apartment and raising a family in their snug quarters - a sawed off limb of an oak - B Street, between 6th and 7th San Mateo. Mother Woodpecker seen feeding young while daddy clung to bark near by. Then he looked in his doorway to say "hello" and cried, "B r u t h e r - Bruther!"

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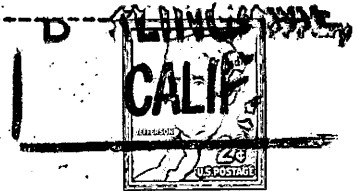
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