

BULLETIN of the SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY
San Mateo County, California

VOL. 12 No. 3
JANUARY - FEBRUARY 1959

FIELD TRIPS
CALENDAR - JANUARY - FEBRUARY

JANUARY 10 -(SATURDAY) FIELD TRIP
along ocean shore. Meet at intersec-
tion of Skyline Blvd. and Half Moon
Bay Road at 8:30 A.M.

JANUARY 24 (SATURDAY) FIELD TRIP at
Lake Merced. Meet outside coffee
house at 9 A.M.

FEBRUARY 8 (SUNDAY) FIELD TRIP at
Cuesta La Honda. Meet at intersection
of Skyline Blvd. and Woodside - La
Honda Road at 9 A.M.

FEBRUARY 28 (SATURDAY) FIELD TRIP at
Gazos Creek. Meet at intersection of
Skyline Blvd. and Half Moon Bay Road at
8:30 A.M.

Begin to plan now to attend the
Audubon Convention at Asilomar,
Pacific Grove, March 21-24, 1959.
Registration form may be obtained
from Pacific Coast Office, National
Audubon Society, 2426 Bancroft Way,
Berkeley, California.

The Sequoia Audubon Society welcomes
the following new members:

Mrs. Edwin Fichtner
Miss Claire Barricks
Mrs. Jan Cipar.

REGULAR MEETINGS AND SCREEN TOUR
CALENDAR

JANUARY 8 (THURSDAY) REGULAR MEETING
KALEIDOSCOPE II

Mr. and Mrs. Don Valentine will share
their interesting vacation trip.

What about the rest of you who did not
show your vacation slides or movies at
the meeting last September? We'd enjoy
seeing them at the January meeting, so
please contact Ruth Breckenridge so
that arrangements for necessary equip-
ment can be made.

FEBRUARY 10 - (TUESDAY) SCREEN TOUR

by Leonard Hall on "Waterway Wildlife"
at San Mateo High School Auditorium,
Bellevue Ave. and Delaware at 8 P.M.
This lecture is preceded by a pot luck
dinner at Burlingame Recreation Center.
For reservations phone: Mabel Lee at
DI 2-2428, or Alice Steele (evenings
only) at DI 4-8317. Dinner is at 6 P.M.

The photography for "Waterway Wildlife"
is done by Karl Maslowski, accompanied
by effective sound recording of water-
way dwellers. The narrative message
is given by Mr. Hall.

FEBRUARY 12 - REGULAR MEETING CANCELED
BECAUSE OF HOLIDAY.

NATIVE PLANTS -JAN. - FEB.

The lack of fall and early winter rains has held back the appearance of new green plants this year and may delay the late winter blooming periods of some plants that normally start blooming in January and February. In 1958, however, I observed the following plants in bloom in San Mateo County during the January-February period:

TREES

Arroyo Willow
Fire willow (*Salix scouleriana*)
Red alder
California laurel
Acacia (not native but wild along Sawyer Camp Road).

SHRUBS

Wild currant
Purple ceanothus (species not determined in passing)
Gorse (not native but wild at San Andreas Lake dam)
Leatherwood
Silk tassel bush
Thimble berry
Blue witch
Broom (not native but wild at San Andreas Lake dam)
Oso berry
Gooseberry
Buck brush
Red elderberry

OTHER PLANTS

Western wall flower; German ivy; buttercup; mustard; wild blackberry, common yarrow, hedge nettle; yellow evening primrose; black nightshade; hog fennel; California vetch; hoard's tongue; Indian warrior; fetid adder's tongue (slink pod); Milk maid (*dentaria*); miners lettuce; shooting star; wild cucumber; sessile trillium; ground myrtle (not native but wild in several places).

-- J. Ed (Jed) McClellan

"RANCH OF THE PURPLE FLOWERS" SCREEN TOUR - NOVEMBER 4

At a pleasant pot-luck dinner well supplied with delicious food, Sequoia Audubon members and their friends enjoyed meeting Mr. Robert C. Hermes.

Later, as the audience "accompanied" Mr. Hermes on his trip in Venezuela, all were impressed by this land of contrasts. Mr. Hermes first took us to a "plush" hotel in Caracas. Then we went with him to the Ranch of the Purple Flowers in the basin of the Orinoco River, where we enjoyed the tranquility of ranch living in an environment almost devoid of modern equipment. Much of the cooking was done in earthen ovens, and most of the eating was done with man's earliest implements--his fingers. The manner of doing the milking was far removed from modern milking machines. In order to keep the cow happy, her calf was tied to her leg so that she thought it was feeding. Then the cow was milked while the calf looked on with a wistful and hungry expression!

From the Ranch of the Purple Flowers, Mr. Hermes took us on a number of side-trips to the Venezuelan jungle. Here, we saw many interesting plants and animals. Among the interesting mammals were howler monkeys, deer, ant-eaters, and squirrels. The birdlife was interesting and varied. Mr. Hermes showed us beautiful pictures of the Scarlet Ibis, Caracara, Flycatcher, White Ibis, Cattle Egret, Green Parakeet, Blue Manakin, Golden Pheasant, Jilguero Goldfinch, Anhinga, Toucan, Picapica, Great Crested Grebe, Whistling Haron, Guacamayo Macaw, White Kite, Crested Plover, Roseate Spoonbill, and Wood Ibis. --R.B.

Observed at our feeding tray as regular customers: 12 Gold Crown Sparrows, 1 White Crown Sparrow, 2 Song Sparrows, 8 House Finches, 1 Fox Sparrow, numerous English Sparrows, and 2 Western Jays. In the garden, 1 Mocking Bird, Robins, 2 Audubon Warblers, a Hermit Thrush, and an Ana Humming Bird. -- G. Hebborn.

FIELD TRIP TO CUESTA LA HONDA - NOV. 8

On this delightful little "circle tour" which included a tree-bordered running stream, a pond, open fields, and woody yards of country cottages, the birds literally came to meet us. Hordes of vivacious little warblers, vireos, kinglets, and chickadees were so curious to see the strange two-legged creatures that had invaded their domain that they swarmed above us on branches less than 2-feet above our heads.

The variety of conditions made for excellent birding not only among the tiny denizens of the stream-side trees, but also in other neighboring habitats. The list for the day included: Red-wing Blackbird, Brown Towhee, Rusty Song Sparrow, Acorn Woodpecker, Brewer Blackbird, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Townsend Warbler, Hutton Vireo, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Chestnut-back Chickadees, Common Goldfinch, White-crowned Sparrow, Golden-Crowned Sparrow, House Finch, Scrub Jay, Ruddy Duck, Green Heron, Pied-bill Grebe, Coot, Wren-tit, Red-shafted Flicker, California Quail, Green-back Goldfinch, Plain Titmouse, Fox Sparrow, Varied Thrush, Vulture, Mourning Dove, Black Phoebee, Hermit Thrush, Red-tail Hawk, Junco, Risset-back Thrush, and Robin.

An interesting native tree which grows in this region is the Price Oak. This is a somewhat rare native oak with a limited range. --R. B.

NORTHWEST INDIANS - NOVEMBER 13

The meeting opened with a short film, "The Loon Necklace," which employs authentic masks made by Canadian Indians to enact an Indian Legend.

Mrs. Dorothy Lilly, speaker of the evening, chose for her subject, "The Northwest Indians -- Native Art and the Potlatch." Mrs. Lilly has been studying the Northwest Indians for many years, and has a wealth of worthwhile information. Her extensive field research has given her first-hand knowledge of interesting Indian customs, such as the use of cedar bark for clothing and blankets, and the strange etiquette of the potlatch. In earlier days a potlatch was a type of fiesta. An invitation to a potlatch had

to be accepted, and the invited guests were practically obliged to buy the articles offered by the host!

Mrs. Lilly's exhibit of Indian arts and crafts proved of much interest to the audience, and the beauty of her original reproductions of Indian designs and symbols was greatly admired.

Sequoia Audubon chapter has indeed been fortunate to number Mrs. Lilly among its members. She has contributed much to the organization, and it is with sincere regret that its members must say a temporary farewell to her. All of us wish you well, Dorothy, on your move to Southern California, and we all look forward to your eventual return. -- R.B.

FIELD TRIP TO STOW LAKE

The morning of November 15 dawned clear, cold, and windy--just the kind of day to sleep or curl up by a roaring fire. To the few who did not succumb to such domestic temptation, the trip to Stow Lake was a real treat. What matters a few freezing digits when one is met at lakeside by a White-fronted Goose? Our new friend joined our admiring circle, not the least afraid of us. His pink bill, white patch on the front of the face, yellow feet were unmistakable at one and one-half feet viewing range!

Although the variety of birds was not great, the close viewing gave an excellent opportunity to recognize field marks. Baldpates, Widgeons, Coots, Mallards, Ring-neck Ducks, and Greater Scaups vied with hordes of vociferous gulls for our tossed popcorn. Keeping at a more discreet distance, but still close enough for excellent viewing were little Ruddy Ducks and Pied-bill Grebes. Farther out on the wind-ruffled water, the dignified Snow Geese scorned our proffered tidbits. Among the land birds seen in adjacent areas were the White-Crowned Sparrow, Brewer Blackbird, Downy Woodpecker, Hermit Thrush, California Quail, Belted Kingfisher, and Black Phoebee.

---- R.B.

FIELD TRIP TO LOS BANOS
NOV. 23, 1958

Mere words are inadequate to describe the breath-taking beauty of this, our annual pilgrimage to Los Banos. No matter how oppressed we may be by the urgency of day-to-day affairs, or by the uncertainties of facing our troubled world, here such unbelievable grandeur prevails that we are all spiritually refreshed. The hours fly by and we are always regretful when it is time to leave, but we return to our daily tasks with new inspiration and with a renewed belief in the fundamental rightness of our world.

Even the weather was perfect on Nov. 23, and a warm sun shone down upon the strange beauty of the sloughs and lakes where trees of picturesque shape give variety to the landscape and protection to many kinds of birds.

The great flocks of migrating water fowl, each kind flying in its own characteristic flight pattern, are a sight never to be forgotten. All day we were entranced by the long streamers of Sandhill Cranes, each bird in dignified flight supported gracefully by its great wings. When we were able to approach a group of these stately birds on the ground, and observe them as they searched for food, we knew that we had been accorded a bonus granted only to the very lucky!

Flights of "honking" Canada Geese, Cackling Geese, White-fronted Geese, and Hutchins Geese settled to form long dark "waves" along the margins of the lakes, and for contrast, were followed by white "waves" composed largely of Snow Geese, Ross Geese, White Pelicans, and Whistling Swans.

Stalking their prey along the edge of the ponds were American Egrets, Snowy Egrets, and Great Blue Herons, while above them Black-crowned Night Herons napped in the trees.

Other visitors to the ponds and sloughs were: Wilson Snipe, Pintail Duck, Florida Gallinule, Golden Eye, Coot, Cormorant, Sora Rail, American Bittern, Dowitcher, Killdeer, Western Sandpiper,

Ringneck Duck, Pied-bill Grebe, Ruddy Duck, Western Willet, and the Avocet.

The varied conditions of food, protection, and water, abundant in the Refuge, attract many birds in addition to the more spectacular water fowl.

Birds were not the only animals seen enroute and at the refuge. Jack rabbits, deer, and ground squirrels were observed along Pacheco Pass, and in the sloughs was a number of crayfish and turtles. R.B.

"A TOUCH OF THE TROPICS"

SCREEN TOUR DEC. 2

Mr. William H. Wagoner of Homestead Florida was introduced as the "man who paints with his camera," and, with his color motion picture, alive with wildlife of the subtropical Everglades he revealed: "shadowy aisles formed by moss-draped cypress trees --habitats of alligator, ibis, and egret;" great Mangrove forests (that live only in salty water) and in So. Florida, the finest specimens of their kind in the world. The noisy Barking Toad, tree-climbing Corn Snake, Pigmy Rattlesnake, Tree Frog, and the Slider Turtle added their varied personalities to the teeming habitat. As a finale, Mr. Wagoner took us to the coral reefs amid the Florida keys where a new underwater world unfolded. Parrot Fish, West Indian Angel Fish and Spade Fish swam leisurely among beautiful coral formations and cup sponges. The charm of Mr. Wagoner's pictures and perfectly synchronized narration will long remain a treasured memory. --- R.B.

REGULAR MEETING DECEMBER 11
UGANDA, AFRICA

Our speaker, Mr. Donald H. Fry, Jr. had his dream come true when he accepted a position which took him and his family to Uganda, Africa, for a year. Uganda (about the size of Arizona) is of varied topography--areas of grassland near the lakes, verdant jungles on the hillsides, the towering Rwenzori mountains rising to 16,000 ft.

(continued on page 5)

(Uganda, Africa, Cont'd)

From the natives the Frys learned how to protect the metal roof of their home from unbearable heat with a thick thatch of bamboo. Other problems were the necessity of hauling their drinking water from 25-miles distance, and the constant trampling of their garden by elephants, hyenas, and hippos. It was indeed a blow when a roaming elephant ate all but one of their treasured and almost-ripe water-mellons! In spite of their size, the elephants did not prove nearly as dangerous as the hippos, that are responsible for more human fatalities in Uganda than any other animal. In addition to animals observed near their home, Mr. Fry showed pictures of Giraffes, Wildebeests, Thompson Gazelles, Impalas, Water Bucks, Wart Hogs, Babboons, and Lions, a great variety of birds including the Ostrich, Egyptian Goose, Weaver Bird, White Pelican, Open-bill Stork, Maribou Stork, Yellow-billed Stork, Sacred Ibis, White-bellied Stork, Hammer-head Stork, Brown Ibis, White-headed Vulture, kingfishers of many kinds, and the Buffalo Crane which is the national bird of Uganda. --- R.B.

FIELD TRIP SPRING VALLEY LAKES

On December 6, 1958, we met at the Water Temple (on Canada Road) and moved from there northly along the Spring Valley Lakes as far as the dam at the foot of San Andreas Lake opposite Millbrae Road. An early ground fog cleared rapidly, and we saw many birds, including Canada goose, robin, scrub jay, cedar waxwing, black phoebe, flicker, Brewer blackbird, golden crown sparrow, fox sparrow, brown towhee, red-tailed hawk, song sparrow, eared grebe, bufflehead duck, pintail duck, coot, ruddy duck, shoveller duck, mallard duck, baldpate duck, pied billed grebe, buzzard, cormorant, loon, wrenit, chickadee, crested jay, junco, hermit thrush, canvas-back duck, killdeer, kingfisher, horned grebe and sparrow hawk. While still at the water temple we were thrilled to have a flock of Canada geese fly noisily right over our heads and to find the madrone trees filled with waxwings.

--J. Ed. (Jed) McClellan

BIRD COUNT HERE IS NEW RECORD

Eighteen observers from the Sequoia Audubon Society scored a new record in number of species found during the annual Christmas bird count. The 132 species noted exceed by six the previous high for the society, and compares favorably with the best counts all over the U.S. Some 12,000 individual birds were estimated during the count, ranging from house finches, present in thousands, to a furtive pair of soya rails glimpsed in a coastal marsh and the shy, varied thrushes hiding in the densest woods. It was disquieting to observe for the first time that starlings are wintering in San Mateo County. These invaders often create great havoc through their competition with native birds for food and nesting sites.

REPORT BY W. C. HARMAN ON HEARINGS
ON THE WILDERNESS BILL (new S-4028)
BY SEN. RICHARD L. NEUBERGER OF ORE.,
ON NOV. 10, 1958, IN S.F., BEFORE A
FULL HOUSE IN THE HEALTH CENTER

The Senator pushed the meeting along through over 50 witnesses, and left at 4 p.m., leaving six more to be heard from by his assistant. Lumber, mining, cattle, Chambers of Commerce and bureaus, forestry, science, oil, education, recreation clubs, conservationists, individuals, labor, and Garden Clubs were represented by interested witnesses. Most had turned in prepared statements and when called upon gave 5-minute briefs of their opinions. Naturally most opposed were lumber, mining, cattle, forestry, chambers of commerce, and oil interests. We heard from Calif., Nev., Ore., Ida., Wyo., Alaska. Other states were included in Western Assns. It seemed that the opponents were not so much against the wilderness, as such, but mailing putting restrictions on a bill that would in anyway curtail their activities in the wilderness.

(continued on page 6)

Wilderness Bill Hearings Contd.

Such statements came from witnesses opposing the Bill as:

"Present laws are adequate.

Present administration of public lands is satisfactory.

We are opposed to locking up mineral, oil and lumber resources.

The increasing demand for lumber makes development of the wilderness areas imperative for future lumber sources.

Multiple and sustained use must be a part of any wilderness legislation.

It requires years to develop a mine or oil pool after discovery, and to prohibit access to those regions means that the necessary prospecting and "wild-cattin'" cannot be carried on as it should be.

Roads must be built and maintained and mechanical transportation into these unexplored regions is vital to the development of future mineral sources.

Illegal administration practices would accrue. We have adequate laws now.

Gives no recognition to promotion of wildlife. Only a few would benefit.

Prohibition of multiple use will seriously deprive many of employment."

The above are only a few of the remarks that were expanded in much detail as time permitted the speakers; however, they give an idea of the pattern of objection which will be carried out when the Bill is submitted to Congress.

On the other side, several strong speeches were made in favor of the bill. Of course, the sponsors Senators Neuberger, Humphries, Murray, Morse, and Kuechel are all behind it in Congress, and beside them there at this meeting were many prominent men and women highly interested in conservation. A large number of the following quotations came from such conservationists as Charlotte E. Mauck, U.C., Dr. Wayburn, Trustees for Conservation; Ardis Walker, Calif. Wildlife Fed.; Mr. Capeross, Amer. Nature Studies Soc.; David Brower, Sierra Club; John Thune, Central YMCA, Oakland; Mrs. Livermore, Marin Conservation League, Lee Talbott, Studies in Conservation, U.C., Mrs. Reed, Chairman State Garden Clubs; Olive Mayer, San Mateo Co. Citizens Com. for Parks; Dr. Russel Varian, Chairman of Board, Varian Associates, Dr. Ralph Hawkins, U.C. Medical Department.

"Science is continually trying to correct the ravages of man, especially in biological areas.

A vacation in the wilderness is the least expensive one can take; it is open to all regardless of age.

Exploitation of our natural resources is serious enough now that this bill sets the principle for Congress to act with as little delay as possible.

My experience as a doctor shows definitely that people must get out into the wide open spaces.

For 25 years I have been trying to protect the beautiful timbered areas of the Kern Plateau from the ravages of the lumber industry; I may lose yet. 98 percent of the wilderness area of the nation has already been exploited; if the opponents of this bill are depending on the last little 2 percent of wilderness for our resources, then we are indeed in a bad fix.

The bill does not cause interference with stock as many claim.

Our public lands are vanishing, we must carefully plan to save and hold onto what is left.

The eagerness of the exploiters make it necessary that we get quick action. I am convinced that Bill S-4028 is much needed legislation and is wisely drawn up."

(Space does not permit recording many other similar comments in favor of the bill).

Judging from the objections offered by the opponents it appears that there will be considerable of a battle in Congress when it comes up for action. To gain its passage is going to take the efforts of all who are interested and we all should be, in the saving of our open spaces for conservation and recreation. One way to help will be to write to the senators handling the legislation to give them all the support and encouragement you can. They will need it. Audubon is a large enough organization that its voice can aid materially in bolstering the forces in favor of the bill's passage. Those opposed will be loaded with arguments, lobbyists and money. We were happy to represent Audubon at this hearing.

--- Will Harman

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

Reference is made to the report of the Special Agent in Charge, New York, dated 1/15/54, and the report of the Special Agent in Charge, New York, dated 1/22/54, both captioned as above.

It is noted that the report of the Special Agent in Charge, New York, dated 1/15/54, contains information regarding the activities of the Communist Party, New York, and its efforts to recruit and train members.

(CONFIDENTIAL) - This information is being furnished to you for your information and is not to be disseminated outside your office.

Very truly yours,
Special Agent in Charge

Approved: _____

Special Agent in Charge



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OFFICERS

President, Mrs. Mabel Lee (Di 2-2428)
346 Lexington Way, Burlingame
Vice President, Miss Ruth Breckenridge
(Di 344216) 135 Lorton Avenue,
Burlingame, Calif.
Secretary, Methyl Shearer (Di 3-0375)
8 - 2d Ave., San Mateo
Treasurer, Wm. C. Harman (LY 3-6040)
656 Cedar St., San Carlos
Corres. Sec., Eugenia Hebbron (Di-0415)
1055 Black Mt. Road, Hillsborough

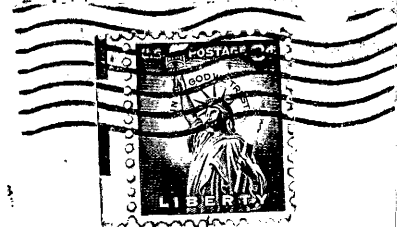
Editor's Note - In behalf of the Soc.,
I extend appreciation to Ruth
Breckenridge (R.B.) who contributed
so many fine reports for this number
of the Bulletin, as well as to all
the others who gave their time to
preparing the reports. Thank you!
and A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR.

PUBLICATION STAFF

Editor and Stencils, Mrs. Eliz. Baker
(Fi 5-5335) 457 - 26th Ave., San Mateo
Asst. Editor - Mrs. Eugenia Hebbron,
(Di 3-0415) 1055 Black Mt. Road,
Hillsborough.
Reporters - Chairmen of Committees.

NOTE -- Reports for the MAR - APR.
issue of the Bulletin should be in
my hands no later than February 20.
Thank you. -- Elizabeth Baker

Return to Sequoia Audubon Soc. Bulletin
c/o Mrs. Jack Hebbron
1055 Black Mountain Road
Hillsborough, California
(Form 3547 requested)



Mr. & Mrs. Neil Dickinson
554 Oak Park Way
Redwood City, Calif.