



The Sequoia



BULLETIN OF SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY

Volume 18, No. 5

January 1969

Sequoia Audubon Society is a branch of National Audubon Society. Its purpose is to enjoy and safeguard the wildlife of the Bay Area. All interested persons are welcomed at field trips, bird walks and monthly general meetings. President, Dr. Howard Gurevitz, 1505 Oak Rim Dr., Hillsborough 342-3620 - Editor, Mr. J. L. Morrill, 505 Costa Rica Ave., San Mateo, 344-5497.

MEETINGS

- January 2 BOARD MEETING at the home of President Howard Gurevitz, 1505 Oak Rim Drive, Thursday Hillsborough. Members are welcome to attend. 8:00 PM
- January 9 REGULAR MEETING at the Burlingame Recreation Center, 850 Burlingame Avenue. Thursday The program will be a color slide show, "AUTUMN ACROSS AMERICA", an account of a 12,000 mile trip taken by four of our members: Ruth Hass, Jean Maxwell, Gertrude Medler, and Hazel West. Emphasis will be upon some of the less well known beauty spots visited. From previous shows they have given, we can look forward to a most interesting evening. 8:00 PM
Light refreshments will be served after the program by our Social Committee co-chairmen, Anne Hall and Estelle Maggini.

FIELD TRIPS (Chairman: Jean Jones 344-9339)

- January 11 GOLDEN GATE PARK, Middle Lake Saturday LEADER: Gene Hebborn (347-8366) 8:30 AM
Meet at the parking lot at Middle Lake, 41st Street between South and Main Drives, inside the Park. Lunch optional. We can expect to see Wood Ducks and others at close range.
- January 25 FOSTER CITY Saturday LEADER: Jean Jones (344-9339) 9:00 AM
Meet at the lagoon on East Hillsdale Blvd. We hope to have a close view of shorebirds and ducks in the Bay.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

LAKE MERCED -November 16: Fourteen birders turned out for this annual trip. They were rewarded by a count of 43 species, including Red-breasted Merganser, Common Loon, Ring-necked Duck, and Redhead Ducks. A Barn Owl was seen, the first time here on one of our trips. We had lunch at Thornton Beach, while watching Sea Lions, Pelicans, and shorebirds.

Nick Kroll

LAKE HENNESSY (Conn Dam) - November 30: A tremendous day of birding was enjoyed by the 25-50 birders who turned out. A total of 74 species was logged, including Hooded Mergansers, Nuttall's Woodpeckers, Bluebirds, and Lark Sparrows, as well as both species of Yellowlegs. A flock of over 20 Whistling Swans provided an extra treat. Some who stayed late saw a Rufous-crowned Sparrow and a Red-shouldered Hawk.

Mark Zumsteg

MERCED AND SAN LUIS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES - December 6 & 7: With Bill Anderson as leader and the refuge managers as guides, two days of exciting birding were enjoyed. A variety of geese, including about 1000 Ross' Geese at Merced, and many species of ducks were seen. Among the more exciting observations were Golden Eagle, Pigeon Hawk, Long-eared Owl, and several more common hawks. Many Sandhill Cranes were seen, and more often heard through the fog. Altogether, a count of some 71 species was recorded at the San Luis Refuge.

Alice Steele

AUDUBON CANYON RANCH

HOSTS NEEDED: Now that Sequoia Audubon has become an active partner in the activities of Audubon Canyon Ranch, we have been asked to help man the Ranch during the busy summer by furnishing four hosts per day for a total of nine days (June 14, 15, 21, 22, 28, 29, and July 4, 5, and 6). Those serving will be expected to be at the Ranch all day, assisting in handling and guiding visitors. Volunteers are requested to contact Howard Gurevitz as soon as possible.

BOOKS NEEDED: The Ecological Library at the Ranch is soliciting donations to its shelves. Of particular interest are many of the Sierra Club Series. Other books pertaining to wildlife, ecology, and related subjects, as well as many periodicals can be used. The books donated will be kept in dry and fire-proof facilities, and book plates will indicate the donor of each. If extra copies are available, the Point Reyes Bird Observatory would find them useful. They may be sent to John Ralph at P.R.B.O. Anyone who has books or periodicals to contribute should contact one of our representatives to the Ranch, listed in the November bulletin.

CONSERVATION NOTES

SEQUOIA AUDUBON OPPOSES "VENICE WEST"

The following letter signed by President Gurevitz was sent on December 12 to the City Council of the City of San Mateo:

"Gentlemen:

Sequoia Audubon Society, representing approximately 300 members of National Audubon Society who are residents of San Mateo County, many of whom reside in the City of San Mateo, takes this means of expressing emphatic opposition to the City of San Mateo's proposed plan to fill 635 acres of San Francisco Bay for the purpose of creating real estate for the construction of facilities which are not water-oriented and for enclosing by dikes 2,000 acres from the tidal action of the Bay.

Audubon members have followed with interest, and some have participated as citizens in, other public attempts to plan the future of the Bay. We staunchly endorse the stated objectives of the Bay Conservation and Development Commission: "(1) to protect the Bay as a great natural resource for the benefit of present and future generations; (2) to develop the Bay and its shoreline to their highest potential with a minimum of Bay fill." These objectives were formalized after three years study at public expense by environmental specialists in the interest of guarding the unique quality of Bay climate and ecology. The BCDC was established as a result of public concern over excessive filling of the Bay. We believe that fact should be considered to be significant by local governments. The citizens of San Mateo County rejected, through its city councils, the Westbay Community Associates plan for massive Bay fill which would have a damaging effect on the environment and, consequently, was contrary to public interest, but was to have been involuntarily financed by taxpayers. The plan proposed by the City of San Mateo seems to be derived from the rejected Westbay plan.

We wish to recommend that the City of San Mateo plan be reconstructed to provide parks along the present shoreline without diking or artificial lagoons. Please consider: (1) a convention center built in the flight pattern of an increasing volume of jet aircraft would be enveloped in noise beyond endurance; (2) a golf course built in an area most often fogged in or blown by hard gales is hardly desirable; (3) the construction of crowd-attracting features would compound the present traffic congestion, noise, and air pollution problems of Bayshore Freeway.

We urge that your earnest consideration be directed to the aspects of the proposed plan as they affect the total Bay area environment. All studies to date by highly qualified specialists declare that Bay fill is detrimental to environmental quality and hence not in the public interest."

Prepared by:
Marian Lockwood, Chairman
Conservation Committee

LATE BULLETIN

The above plan was presented to the San Mateo City Council by the Planning Department on December 16. It was indicated that sixteen letters in opposition to the plan had been received, and none in favor of it. A most significant letter was from the State Lands Commission, asking that consideration of the plan be deferred until their report on the subject of Bay ownership was completed, estimated to be about April 15. Several people attending the hearing, including representatives of the State Land Commission presented additional arguments against the plan. There were also a few advocates of the plan.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the City Council voted to postpone any action on the plan until their meeting in May, at which time they would have the benefit of not only the State Land Commission's report, but also a report from the University of California on the value and usage of the Bay. This report, in the making since 1960, is scheduled to be released about March 15.

Between now and May, the City Council agreed to hold three or four public hearings on the subject, to determine the public attitude regarding it. It is therefore important that everyone concerned, and that should mean everyone who lives anywhere near the Bay, should study the plan carefully, and make his feelings known by writing to the City Council and appearing at the hearings. This is a very critical matter, since it could establish a precedent for action by many other communities about the Bay. Once the Bay is filled it is lost forever. If a mistake is made, there will be no second chance.

J. L. Morrill, Editor

NATURE TRAIL PLANNED

At the request of the Principal of Hoover School, in Hillsborough, Sequoia Audubon is planning to make a nature trail around the school. Ruth Hass and Monty Montgomery have been appointed co-chairmen of a committee to develop this very worthwhile project.

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BURL

Mr. & Mrs. A. E. Montgomery
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