

# The Quail

BULLETIN OF THE MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY  
WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA

January 1957

Vol. 3. No. 7



Happy New Year.

The next regular meeting of Mount Diablo Audubon Society will be Thursday, January 3rd, 8 p.m., Room 201, Las Lomas High School, speaker before business meeting. Don't forget that.

Ferd Ruth, program chairman considers himself fortunate to have secured Wm. "Bill" Jones, Stanford M.S., instructor in Geological physics at East Contra Costa Junior College to discuss the geology of the East Bay region, emphasis on Contra Costa County. Illustrative slides will highlight the talk.

January 6th., Field Trip to Tomales Point.

That is the day of our Field Trip to Tomales Point, and if weather permits, and the road passable we will be able to leave our cars at the McClure Ranch and hike to the tip of the point where a large variety of birds are seen. The hike is about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles to the Point where we will eat our lunch and then go down the beach for Marine life in the tide pools.

Harlequin Ducks are the rare and colorful species almost always seen on this trip. Old Squaws, American Scoters, Black Brant, Black Oyster-Catchers, Surf Birds, and Pigeon Guillemots are often seen, too, and are just a few of the birds we shall be looking for.

Meet at the usual place across from the store at Inverness 9:30 a.m. May we suggest a "paper-bag" lunch easy to carry as you will not want to burden yourself with large boxes and baskets. No water on the hiking route. Remember it will be January so dress warmly. Please, be on time as to go thru the McClure Ranch we have to go by caravan. Best driving route is over the new Richmond-San Rafael Bridge, thru Fairfax and Lagunitas to Point Reyes Station, and then to Inverness. Driving time about 2 hours. Violet and Dick Beitzel, Leaders. Phone NU 2-9588.

Next Screen Tour, Wednesday, January 16th., 8 p.m. Room 12. East Campus Contra Costa Junior College. Howard Cleaves will lecture on Animals at Night in Color. To get his animals at night Mr. Cleaves prowled forests and bayous equipped with powerful flood lights which he wore harnessed to his back. The record he will show is an amazing story of nocturnal wildlife in color.

A new Nature Study course, listed as Biological Science 226, is to be offered 24 lucky people at the East Campus Junior College beginning February 4th, and continuing for 18 weeks on Monday nights, at 7 p.m. Included will be 7 Saturday Field trips. The course will cover ecological study of vertebrates and invertebrates; animals and plants.

Instructor Ferd S. Ruth M.A. announces registration the evening of the opening day. In certain instances this course is good for credit. Usually in these courses, he says 30 sign up and 20 go the distance.

Official report of the Conn Lake trip has not been received, but unofficially Norma Warner and Elizabeth O'Meara reported a good number of Mount Diablo members participating, the weather good, the scenery beautiful in spite of unseasonable dryness and Geese honking all over the place.

Elizabeth returned with an immature Sharpshinned Hawk, deceased, in her lunch bucket. It is now in deep freeze in Ferd Ruth's biology lab awaiting the cue to play its part in a diorama for the Junior museum.

Deceased wildlife in good condition is usually welcomed in that laboratory, but "good condition" is the prerequisite. For instance the Sparrow Hawk, and Red Shafted Flicker which this Elizabeth found in kitchen at Mulfontes were both too old to matriculate.

That same day at that place she saw a good many Western Bluebirds, and showers of Oregon Juncos. That north slope of the Livermore hills rarely is too cold for the Juncos.

Western Meadow Larks have been in real concentration for some weeks in the Tassajara region between Danville the Farks Air Force Base, also along the route of Highland Ave and Beck Road into Livermore, and among the vines in the Cresta Blanca vineyards, the American or Yellow-billed Magpies have been nearer civilization than usual.

Last summer an albino Scrub Jay was reported from the southern part of the State, more recently an albino English Sparrow from a few hundred miles farther north, and now Violet Beitzel reports a partial albino sparrow at the backyard feeding tray. Their relatives of normal plumage appear to have accepted them.

In the new Richfield Wildflower Book look for the wall to wall carpet of wildflowers taken by Violet in the San Antonio Valley while on the May field trip. The Richfield Company not only accepted the picture but paid \$25.00 for it. Congratulations, Vi.

The mysterious occupant of the McGeehon basement on Oakvale Road has been identified as a racoon. Apparently he has been there off and on since August when his landlady first noticed ripening pears had been removed from the box and eaten. Quiet most of the time but occasionally so much digging and scratching that she investigated one night. He seems to live by one of the Laws of the Jungle." Remember that night is for hunting, and forget not that day is for sleep."

At the same place but in the other house a do-it-yourself Red Shafted Flicker has made his way into the attic space over the ceiling, and now lives in harmony with A. H. "Tony" Prislinger, occupant of the groundfloor, who argues with logic, that if that hole is closed the Flicker will simply make another.

This, from Glenn Shank whose broken back is nearly mended, He drove on the Conn Lake Trip.

"From our patio window we look upon a new green lawn and a bird bath full of yellow Goldfinches and Pine Siskins. Beyond are three small white birches and our neighbors large European Birch whose

catkins delight the birds. The yellow leaves, white branches, and the evergreen shrubs, washed clean by our first rain glisten in the sun as they herald the Christmas season.

Birds from the mountains are arriving to spend a few months with us. The Meadow Larks are singing as if to welcome them. We, too, welcome the renewing of old friendships, and with grateful hearts look forward to the enjoyment of friends who are near, and to those to whom these greetings are sent."

"Conservation on the March" is the title of the weekly column by C. Edward Graves, Western Representative, National Parks Association, Carmel. In a recent issue he calls attention to the fact that most of our unspoiled scenery is to be found in our national park system, certain parts of our national forests, and our wildlife refuges.

He writes: "On the State level California has blazed the trail with a set of standards for state parks that are practically the same as those that are practically the same as those that are unofficially acknowledged to apply to our National park system."

However, "very powerful interests" are seeking to tear the standards down. Be alert for a bill or bills in the 1957 State legislature. If we wish to preserve our wildlife we must preserve its habitat.

As we go to press word comes that Dick Beitzel is in Providence Hospital where he will have to spend Christmas, although he hopes to be home to greet the New Year. Mount Diablo Society shares that hope.

Among the bird counters on the 23rd of last month were our members from Lancaster, Bill and Olive Adams. Olive was first editor of the Quail. Missed, were the Smiths who were visiting relatives in Los Angeles, that is Marye and David were, Cecil, who was such a tower of quiet strength in the Society activities has gone beyond our ken. In September Bill and Diane became the parents of a daughter.

Word came via Christmas card that Jim and Wilma Hampton are happily situated sown south in a new house of their own. Jim was second president of the Society.

The count report is not complete but 99 is the number of species, 26,707 the individuals counted by 20 official participants. There were a few disappointments on the number of species, but it was a good day with a modified pot-luck dinner at the Coudens where 22 members ate, and talked, and compared notes as they thoroughly enjoyed the Coudens hospitality.

Our sympathy goes to Juliet Ruth who lost her mother the middle of December. For many months they had been making the trip to Santa Barbara.

#### Officers and Chairmen-

President - Miss Norma L. Warner, 3163 Wayside Lane, W.C., YE 4-4604  
 Vice-Pres. & Program Chairman- Mr. Ferd Ruth, 43 Cuesta Way, W.C., YE 4-8803  
 Sec.-Treas. - Mrs. Sally Steller, 939 Carol Lane, Lafayette, AT 4-4370  
 Field Trips Chairman - H. N. Couden, 1491 Sunset Loop, W.C., YE 4-8843  
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 Publicity - Mrs. Elizabeth C. O'Meara, P. O. Box 914, W.C., YE 4-4720  
 Conservation Co-Chairmen - Tommy and Mrs. Pearl Grimes, 2978 Putnam Blvd. W.C. YE 4-6467  
 Director - Harry C. Adamson, 995 Carol Lane, Lafayette, AT 3-2164  
 Acting Editor of Quail - Mrs. J. C. McGeehon, 2165 Oakvale Road, W.C., YE 4-2752

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WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA

February 1957

Vol. 3, No. 8



The February meeting of Mount Diablo Audubon Society will be Thursday the 7th., 8 p.m. Room 201, Las Lomas High School. Ferd Ruth, program chairman announces Ashley Stevens, dean of student personnel, East Campus Centre Costa Junior College as speaker. Dr. Stevens holder of a Doctor of Education degree from the University of Denver is an accomplished amateur photographer who will show his pictorial impressions of parts of California including Lassen, also some out-of State National Parks.

Next Field Trip-Sunday, February 10th. Terminus Island Area. Meet at Thornton 9:30 a. m. River Road to Walnut Grove turn right and drive to Thornton, approximately one hour and a half driving time, from Walnut Creek and vicinity. The Sand Hill Cranes should be somewhere around there flaunting their rosy plumes. Last year owing to the tragic inundation of much good farmland many hundreds of Whistling Swans, a wide variety of ducks and some gallinules were a thrilling sight as the group lunched atop the levee.

Later in the afternoon those who accepted the invitation of Edward Pickett saw the Long-eared Owl, regular winter visitant to the camphor tree in the O'Neill's garden. Mrs. O'Neill is Mr. Pickett's daughter. The cat-like appearance of this owl is so obvious that even ornithologists mention it. Well, the Owl and the Pussy-Cat.

Screen Tour, Thursday, February 28th. Room 12, 8 p.m. East Campus Junior College, Robert Hermes, lecturer, Ferd Ruth M. C. "Between the Tides", title of the tour tells the story of the in-between world which is inhabited by those creatures who cannot quite make the decision between land and water, birds and fish.

Rachel Carson's book "Edge of the Sea" published in 1955 is of this tidal area. According to Joel Hedgpeth who reviewed the book last fall for the Living Wilderness Miss Carson did many months of research between the tides of the rocky shores of Maine, the sandy Carolinas and the coral fringes of Florida.

Hedgpeth who characterizes the sea "our oldest wilderness" is with Scripps Institution of Oceanography at La Jolla, and is a former resident of Walnut Creek where his parents lived many years. His cousin Edward McGraw Rowland lives on and owns the Rowland ranch in Balice Valley.

From Richard Stallcup - "On December 2, 1956 birders from Mount Diablo and Golden Gate Societies enjoyed a wonderful day birding at Conn Lake in Napa County. It was sunny all day with little wind to speak of. Among the birds listed these rather unusual

ones were identified: Whistling Swan, Redhead, Gadwall, Say's Phoebe, Western Tanager, Rufous-crowned Sparrow.

The following 86 birds were noted: Horned Grebe, Eared Grebe, Piedbilled Grebe, Western Grebe, Farallon Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, American Egret, Green Heron, Whistling Swan, Canada Goose, Mallard, Gadwall, Red-gate, Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Shoveller, Wood Duck, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Canvas-back, American Golden-eye, Bufflehead, Ruddy Duck, Hooded Merganser, American Merganser, Turkey Vulture, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Red-bellied Hawk, Marsh Hawk, Sparrow Hawk, California Quail, Ring-necked Pheasant, Coot, Mourning Dove, Belted Kingfisher, Red-shafted Flicker, California Woodpecker, Red-breasted Sapsucker, Downy Woodpecker, Nuttall's Woodpecker, Black Phoebe, Say's Phoebe, Steller's Jay, Scrub Jay, Crow, Plain Titmouse, Bush-Tit, Slender-billed Nuthatch, Wren-Tit, Winter Wren, Bewick's Wren, Marsh Wren, Rock Wren, Mockingbird, Robin, Hermit Thrush, Western Bluebird, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, American Pipit, Cedar Waxwing, California Shrike, Audubon's Warbler, English Sparrow, Western Meadowlark, Red-winger Blackbird, Brewer's Blackbird, Western Tanager, California Purple Finch, House Finch, Pine Siskin, Green-backed Goldfinch, Spotted Towhee, Brown Towhee, Rufous-crowned Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Lark Sparrow, Oregon Junco, Gambel's Sparrow, Golden-crowned Sparrow, Song Sparrow.

Now, a few words from the American Ornithological Union on changes in nomenclature. The Red-breasted and Red-naped Sapsuckers are henceforth Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers; the Spotted Towhee is now the Rufous-sided, a more descriptive name by the way. Our old California Jay changed to Scrub Jay some years ago was so called because of habitat, not habits. We read recently that the Camp Robber, Whiskey Jack, Oregon Jay is now the Gray Jay. A gain in accuracy, perhaps but certainly a loss in romance and the picturesque.

Violet Beitzel with her husband back in Providence Hospital, sat right down and wrote up the Tomales Point Trip noting the life-list birds: Ancient Murrelet for Harry Adamson, also Surf-birds, Harlequin Ducks and Red-backed Sandpiper for the Beitzels. N.B. It was in again, out again for Dick we are glad to report.

"Report of January 6 Field Trip to Tomales Point. The Field Trip to Tomales Point was an outstanding day. First, the weather was unbelievably warm. A bright sun shone in a cloudless sky. There was no fog, visibility was at infinity, and there was no wind. Thirtyone adults and children ate their lunches at the Point and watched a regular three-ring circus.

The performance of the Harlequin Ducks was perhaps, a once in a lifetime for some of us birders. The ducks flew between the reefs right below our group standing on the cliff and landed on the water showing most clearly, even with naked eye their fantastic white markings. A courtship flight sailed through the air, one female with five male Harlequins in attendance.

A tremendous flock of White Pelicans did an impressive grand march out of Tomales Bay directly below us, a sight that will long be remembered by all.

Another sight to cause excitement was a considerable number of Gray Whales surfacing and blowing in the bay and oceanward. These whales are 35 to 45 feet long and blow a spout of water 10 feet high.

Out in the edge of the sea where the waves begin to roll lay a raft of Sea Lions, presumably slumbering with their fins raised above water. They layed for hours in a compact group. Along the ocean cliff and in the bay entrance we saw the raised heads of Harbor Seals.

Deer grazed all over the Point and were almost fearless to our approach along the way. The lack of adequate ground cover of grass was very noticeable owing to our dry winter thus far.

Keen eyes picked up a regular highway of raccoon tracks along the water's edge while the busy badgers showed their activities among the bush lupin, with the many holes they had recently dug.

The total species of birds on this fine day was 76 and no one went "out of the way" to look them up. They were just there for all to see. Loon, Common, Pacific Red-throated; Grebe, Horned, Western, Pied-billed; Pelican, White, California Brown; Cormorant, Farallon, Brandt's, Baird's; Heron, Great Blue, American Egret, Snowy; Brant, Black; Pintail; Bufflehead; Old Squaw; Harlequin; Scoter; White-winged; Surf; Ruddy Duck; Merganser, Red-breasted; Turkey Vulture; Hawk, Cooper's, Red-tailed, Marsh, Sparrow; California Quail; Coot; Oyster-catcher, Black; Killdeer; Surf-bird, Turnstone, Black; Snipe, Wilson's; Sandpiper, Least; Red-backed; Gull, Western, Ring-billed, California, Bonaparte's; Guillemot, Pigeon; Murrelet, Ancient; Kingfisher, Belted; Flicker, red-shafted; Woodpecker, California; Sapsucker, Red-breasted; Phoebe, Black, Say's; Jay, Steller's, Scrub; Raven, American; Crow; Chickadee, Chestnut-backed; Wren-tit; Wren, Bewick's; Robin; Thrush, Hermit, Varied; Kinglet, Ruby-crowned; Warbler, Audubon's; Sparrow, English; Meadowlark; Blackbird, Red-winged, Brewer's; Finch, House; Towhee, Spotted, Brown; Sparrow, Savannah, White-crowned, Golden-crowned, Fox, Song; Junco, Oregon; Sterling.

Violet and Richard Beitzel, Leaders."

Paul Opler, a meticulous keeper of records reports the Tri-colored Redwing, and the Slate-colored Junco, new birds on our Christmas count. Paul also gave the number of species identified by the Mount Diablo Society on all its field trips beginning May 1953. With redfaced regret the Editor confesses to having mislaid that card. In the neighborhood of 240 is the total; corrected in the next issue.

Strays: That Slate-colored Junco and the one in the Adamson yard a few years past; also the Oregon Juncos that have occasionally shown near Louisville, Kentucky and the one reported from Springfield, Massachusetts this winter. Bird exchange.

As yet no report of Red-shafted Flickers out of bounds but this winter two Yellow-shafted or perhaps Red-Yellow hybrids. One reported in the last number of the Avocet, Santa Clara Society, the other stored in the Crosby refrigerator by son Joe was found dead in the kitchen of the house at Mulfontes in the Livermore hills, December 30th.

Seasonal observations: Elizabeth O'Meara has more Audubon Warblers than Sparrows in her garden. The McGeehan quail that refused to appear for the count are still coming down the hill. 40 or thereabouts. The Adamson hard still boasts the White-throated Sparrow, which was first seen October 18th, also a Song Sparrow, 2 Lincolns, a Fox, and the usual White-crowned and Golden Crowned, House Finches. A green Heron and a Belted Kingfisher frequently.

When Evelyn Ryckman and "Yeld" called at La Casa de los Parajos they found Harry surrounded by ducks on canvas. He has promised to bring the new one of Whistling Ducks, formerly called Tree Ducks to the next meeting. The un-duck-like ducks have been seen in California, but southern Texas to Argentina is the customary range.

President Norma Warner says she will have some copies of the revised By-Laws run off for distribution before the year is out. With one change those presented by the committee in December were accepted. The period of grace for payment of dues has been reduced to 3 months instead of 4.

The inadvertant omission of a parliamentary authority was rectified. Article VII now reads: "Proceedings of the meetings of this Society shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order when not in conflict with these By-Laws."

Article VIII provides for amending. Under that provision one is herewith proposed changing the first sentence of Article II to read: "Unless otherwise ordered by the membership this Society shall meet on the first Thursday of each month."

All members having been notified through the Quail this proposal may be voted on at the March meeting. If this change is adopted a meeting date may be changed as a regular order of business or even postponed for a month or more. That would be in effect a vacation recess.

Miss Rosslyn Phillips is a new member who has come twice as the guest of Elizabeth O'Meara.

We hope the Rufus Johnson family, new early in the fall, will come some evening. They made the Tomales trip, parents, daughter and son-in-law, Barbara and Bill Smith, and the grandchildren, aged two and four.

As we go to press we read that a bill has been introduced at the request of the Alameda County Board of Supervisors in the State Assembly which would permit Regional Parks to qualify for State funds. The bill lists parks, beaches, public campgrounds, landmarks, monuments and / or historical sites, and other state parks.

Explanation: Remarks and information on the Terminous field trip are from the Editor, but for further information get in touch with Leader Bev Wilder, 1304 Alma Avenue, W. C. Ye 4-6353.

President, Miss Norma L. Warner, 3063 Wayside Lane, W. C. Ye 4-4604  
Secretary, Mrs. J. S. Steller, 959 Carol Lane, Lafayette, At 4-4370  
The Quail, Mrs. J. C. McGeehon, 2165 Oakvale Rd., W. C. Ye 4-2752

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March 1957  
Vol. 3 No. 9.

The next regular meeting of Mount Diablo Audubon Society will be Thursday, March 7, 8 p.m., Room 201, Las Lomas High School. Ferd Ruth, program chairman, has asked John Bruce, biologist at San Ramon Valley U.H.S. to speak on the relationship between "The Control of Predatory Animals and Injurious Rodents". Mr. Bruce is a member of this Society, holds BS and MS from Utah State College and was formerly Mammal Control Agent for the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service for Utah and Idaho. He will also show some fossil fish collected in the Green River region of Wyoming.

Dillon Beach Field Trip Sunday, March 10th.

Leader John Bruce, taking the place of Mrs. J. S. Steller. Call him VE 7-2704. Meet 10 a.m. at junction Petaluma-Tomales Road, and Route 1 in Tomales. About 15 miles west of Petaluma, and 5 miles east of Dillon Beach. Allow 2 hours driving time from Walnut Creek. Best route through Vallejo and west on Route 48 to the turn north of Petaluma.

Birding from 10:30 to noon. Then lunch on the beach and to the tide pools at 1 p.m. Dress warm, have an extra pair of tennis shoes and collecting bucket if you wish to wade and collect marine specimens. Cost is 50 cents per car on the beach.

We hope to see some of the ocean and shore birds we saw on the Tomales trip and study the tide pool life. J.B.

Last Screen Tour, Monday, March 18th. Room 12 8 p.m. East Campus Contra Costa Junior College, Fran William Hall lecturer, Ferd S. Ruth M.C. Mr. Hall will tell his illustrated story of "Hawaii U.S.A.", proving that there is much to be seen on these islands besides poi, hula, surf riding, and Waikiki. Members of this Society will recall that Mr. Hall visited two years ago when coffee at the Hasslers' concluded the evening.

Audubon Biennial Convention, Asilomar, Pacific Grove, Pacific Coast Area, 1957.

Host Branch, the Monterey Peninsula Audubon Society, Dr. Robt. P. Parsons, president. Registration opens 3 p.m. April 13th. Final day Tuesday the 16th. Registration forms and all information obtainable at the National office 2426 Bancroft Way, Berkeley. The Editor will bring her blank and program sheet to meeting. The plan offers a wide variety of topics in addition to administration matters and business.



Planned before-breakfast activities include bird saunters, tide-pool viewing and always the rocks, and waves, and dunes just beyond the hedge-row.

Spots that may be visited are Hopkins Marine Institute, Carmel Mission, historic old Monterey, Butterfly Court, where hibernating Monarchs may be. Field trips planned include a boat trip to view pelagic birds, Point Lobos, Carmel Valley, Moss Landing. Sounds pretty fine.

Members of Mount Diablo Society will recall the morning at Moss Landing with that friendly Peninsula Society and the next morning when Mr. and Mrs. Charles Anderson took the trouble to arrange a visit to the heights of the of the Hopkins Institute. We are glad to learn that Mr. Anderson's health is improved after he was hurried to a hospital some weeks ago. Mrs. Anderson edits the "Sanderling."

Legislative matters of importance are pending or coming. In February the Society endorsed the efforts of Mr. Edwin R. Pickett to have introduced a bill adding certain Owls and Hawks to the protected list. When the bill is ready we hope a "flock" of letters will be sent urging passage.

Bill 666 introduced by Sen. Fred Farr of Monterey County merits support. It provides that no signs shall be placed on highways nearer than 500 feet to scenic spots. However small signs indicating services, facilities, or by-passed communities will be permitted. For Contra Costa County write Sen. George Miller, Jr.

The bill seeking to remove Doves from the game bird list is now before the Assembly Committee of Fish and Game. As the law is now the shooting Season begins before the nesting season ends. Doves are great eaters of weed seeds. One autopsy revealed at least 9000 weed seeds eaten by one dove. 10th District Assemblyman is Donald D. Doyle.

The missing card from Paul Opier was found doing bookmark duty. Sorry. "Mount Diablo Society has observed 234 species of birds since its founding." First Field Trip was May, 1953, to Tilden Park.

#### Observations.

Judith Perlman reports a Ring-Neck Pheasant foraging among the leftover walnuts on a neighbor's roof. Nuts or insects? She is not sure. Elizabeth O'Meara reports the owls occupying the same trees all winter on her garden creek bank. The Adamsons still have the White-throated Sparrow in their yard. When the call to Canada comes will it travel alone or will it go with those other winter visitants, the Gold-Crowned? Over Cedar Mountain a few weeks ago they observed a Golden Eagle. The McGechon quail drop down the hill nearly every evening. Why just at dusk? The Bewick Wren was late this winter, but a really Rufous Humming Bird dive bombed in on the 20th of February.

New Members: Mrs. Edith McGill, 20 Keswick Lane, Concord, an alumna of Audubon Camp. Miss Janet Willoughby, 3273 Gelenside Dr., Lafayette. Miss Joanne Taylor, former teacher of the 7th Grade in Walnut Creek, who gave us the Mayan Indian program a year ago is now principal of a school in Jamshedpur, India.

Good Books: "Lifelong Boyhood" by Loye Miller, recollections of a field naturalist who began as a four year old trying to catch an Oriole is informative and delightful reading. Long time member of the faculty at the University of California he started as a student in the time of Prof. Joseph LeConte. In Lifelong Boyhood he meets zoology, geology, paleontology, ornithology, and just plain birds, people, and scenery.

A fascinating book which may be purchased at the National office in Berkeley is "The Great Migrations" by Georges Blond translated from the French by Frances Frenaye, published by MacMillan : The great migrations of eels, herring, salmon, bison, lemmings, the Gray-lag Geese. ( by the way some salmon do survive spawning and live to spawn again) All these migrations are dramatic. To some readers the race to destruction by the lemmings may seem most. But, there are those Gray-lag Geese starting on foot from the Lake Chany region for the Ganges Valley, 2000 miles distant. On foot, because it is time to go, but the flight feathers have not grown in again. The mountain Chinese with clubs take heavy toll of the birds bedded for the night in the leaves, and many more succumb to the wild storms of the Himalaya passage, but at last the sky-darkening remainder reaches the winter haven.

"Water for America" by Edward H. Graham and William R. Van Dersal is recommended by C. Edward Graves of the National Parks Association. The authors are in a position to write with authority, on this timely topic which cannot be simply shrugged off.

Reports from the January regional conference held at Mills College will be received soon. Nine members represented this Society which meant from one to three at each work shop. Ferd Ruth led that on Programs and Field Trips. At the February meeting he read the findings and suggestions that resulted.

These self-explanatory enclosures were "thought-up" by Fred Evenden who conducted the work shop on Conservation. If statistics reveal that "birders" are of economic value greater consideration may be given their opinions. Conservation groups are credited with saving the Dinosaur National Monument.

Sorry no official report on the Terminus trip. However, the Sand Hill Cranes were many and in good voice. Those who lunched on the levee saw flocks of Whistling Swans. Those who rode with Glenn Shank observed a Belted Kingfisher on a post eating a fish. At least one flock of White-tailed Kites was seen, several individuals, Marsh Hawks and Sparrow-Hawks.

We are glad to report Mr. Shanks about to shed his harness, (perhaps he has), and ready to get back into harness.

Field Trips chairman, Harry N. Couden, Sunset Loop W.C., YE 4-8843  
 April 7, Redwood-Sequoia Regional Park, leaders Paul Covel, Alexander Lindsay. KE 6-4120; YE 5-1724  
 May 4,5 The Pinnacles leaders Isadore Perlman and Judith-father and daughter, AT 3-3021  
 June 9, Bollinger Canyon, leader A. O. Cooperrider, YE 4-6021.  
 June 23,24, Lake Tahoe, leaders Marye Smith, YE 5-5657, Dorothy Couden YE 4-8873  
 July 14, Bethel Island, Paul Opler, YE 5-5654, Miss Margaret Edmunds VE 4-8878

Society Officers -

President, Norma L. Warner, 3163 Wayside Lane, W.C. YE 4-4604  
 Vice-president, Ferd S. Ruth, 43 Cuesta Way, W.C. YE 4-8803  
 Secretary, Mrs. J. S. Steller, 939 Carol Lane, Lafayette, AT 4-4370



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APRIL 1957

Vol. 3, No. 10

April 4, the first Thursday, is the regular meeting of Mount Diablo Audubon Society, 8 p.m. Room 201, Las Lomas High School. Wm. L. Goodall, Pacific Coast Representative of the National Audubon Society will be the speaker. He will talk on general Audubon activities and show a film of birds and conservation work in Ohio, according to Ferd Ruth, program chairman.

## FIELD TRIP TO REDWOOD-SEQUOIA REGIONAL PARK, Sunday, April 7

Paul Covell of the Oakland Park Department, a thorough naturalist, Ke 6-4120, and Alexander Lindsay, head of the Walnut Creek Junior Museum Association, YE 5-1724, leaders. In this area of varied terrain, flora, silva, some fauna, much avifauna, one may hike, scramble or just saunter.

Next Screen Tour next winter. Ferd Ruth, who has served as greeter and introducer of the lecturers, announced that the Junior College trustees have again agreed to sponsor the Tours on the East Campus.

Those who enjoyed the January pictures of Animals at Night in Color taken by Howard Cleaves were sorry to learn that he had had a forced stopover in Tucson where he underwent emergency surgery from which we understand he has made good recovery. With less than twenty-four hour notice, Mr. Shackleton of Louisville, Kentucky, took over, although he was scheduled to start out on his own itinerary the first week in February. Those members of Mt. Diablo who had the privilege of roaming about Ferd Ruth's laboratory with him before the lecture began were dismayed to learn that the illness which overtook him while on the Monterey Peninsula resulted fatally very shortly after Mrs. Shackleton reached home with him.

Bev. Wilder gives us this on the trip of February 10:

"Impressions of the Terminous Island Trip. Weather just right, cool, cloudy and no heat waves, and yet no rain. Wow! what a caravan - 21 cars all parked at the once-a-year packed cafe at Thornton. Thanks Golden Gate Society, we picked up a Black-throated Gray Warbler while the party gathered. 8 scopes to pick out the distant birds. Plenty White-fronted Geese along all roads. Sand Hill Cranes at the game farm in easy viewing distance. Swans, Snowy Geese,

and Sandhill Cranes all in close overhead flight, so each new bird can have the distinctive points demonstrated. The usual flood areas not flooded this year so no swans available, but we did see plenty on the way back on Terminous Island itself. Too bad we did not schedule this area. A wounded Gallinule along the road for all to see. Two Kingfishers staying just ahead of us on the telephone wires. Saw mating activities of White-fronted Geese, Whitetailed Kites, and Sandhill Cranes. Thanks Golden Gate for identifying lone Gadwall. Watched fields being seeded by airplane and flocks of Pipits and sparrows moving over the seeded area. A Marsh Wren performs for all at lunch. Song-no sight. The sad sight of slaughtered Coots along the road on Terminous Road. Sheer Murder. Le Stallcup reported that Peterson saw a flock of Horned Larks. Will always remember the two Great Blue Herons landing through flocks of landing geese - landing across the wind. Seven Snowy Egrets trying to hide along the road by tucking their heads down, but being given away by an American Egret with its neck stretched out to take a look. All told, our count shows 57 species, and we must have had two or three Gulls no one bothered to identify, Bev."

Bird list - Pied-billed Grebe; Great Blue Heron; Egrets, Brewsters and American; Whistling Swan; Geese, White-Fronted, Canada, and Snow; Ducks, Gadwall, Mallard, Pintail, Cinnamon Teal, Shoveller, Ruddy; Turkey Vulture; White-tailed Kite; Hawks, Red-tailed, Marsh, Sparrow; Ring-necked Pheasant; Sandhill Crane; Gallinule; Coot; Killdeer; Greater Yellow Legs; Least Sand-Piper, Ring-Billed Gull; Mourning Dove; Belted Kingfisher; Red-shafted Flicker; California Woodpecker; Horned Lark; Scrub Jay; American Raven; Crow, Plain Titmouse; Slender-billed Nuthatch; Marsh Wrens; Robin; Ruby-crowned Kinglet; American Pipit; California Shrike; Black-throated Gray Warbler; English Sparrow; Western Meadowlark; Blackbirds, Red-wing, Brewers; Finches, House, Lesser; Towhees, Rufous-sided, Brown; Oregon Junco; Sparrows, Savannah, White-crowned, Golden-crowned, and Song.

N.B. The Florida Gallinule is now just Gallinule, owing to its wide distribution, old world and new. In England where they are around on lawns and roadsides as are Coots here, they are also called Moorhens. The Coot, by the way, is also an English bird. Tennyson mentions it in his poem "The Brook". And the Lesser Gold Finch is our dear little friend the Green-backed Goldfinch.

Although the proposal to remove the Mourning Dove from the game bird list failed, there appears a good chance of enactment of the bill which would add Hawks and Owls to the protected list. However, this bill A.B. #2831 provides that when caught in the act of preying on the dove cote, chicken pen, duck pond, etc., etc., etc., the owner thereof may take such protective measures as he sees fit. These birds of prey do destroy many rodents, and some insects that are costly to man.

Observations - The Adamsons report the White-throated Sparrow has extended his stay to upwards of five months. On the Dillon Beach trip Harry counted 20 Red-necked Grebes, an unusually large count for those birds, he said. Last fall the Jays were busy burying almonds in the backyard shavings

pile in Elizabeth O'Meara's garden. Now she observes them exhuming, and one day a pair at work; husband and wife she judged because the one standing by quickly grabbed the nut from the beak of the other, who made no protest. Mrs. Charles Anderson, editor of the Sanderling for the Monterey Peninsula Society writes that "Charlie" is much better but not yet equal to the full program of the Asilomar Convention. They have found as many as 20 nests of Allen Hummingbirds built low enough to be looked into in the eucalyptus trees along the Salinas River. "Audubon Western Bird Guide" by Richard Pough is a new and comprehensive book covering all of Western America. Lists 6 species of Albatross for instance. It may be had at the National office for \$4.95, 2426 Bancroft Way, Berkeley.

President Norma Warner, and Membership Chairman, Mary Smith, are making definite plans to attend at least part of the Convention. There are other members "trying to figure".

To Pete Veitch we are indebted for a copy of the February BUSINESS WEEK. We quote: "Bird watching has come in for a lot of kidding lately - you've seen cartoons and parodies, no doubt, poking fun at the bird watcher as something of a rare bird himself. Actually, there would not be so many jokes about this hobby if it hadn't become so well known. Few other hobbies offer such scope and flexibility. That's why it attracts at least 3 million people in the U.S. - including teenagers, housewives, artists, camera fans, and a great many businessmen. If you work under pressure, you may be surprised to find a day of birding refreshes as much as a full week's vacation. If you aren't a golfing, hunting, or fishing man, birding can be the ideal sport. And it can be linked closely with other interests - gardening, photography, sound recording, botany, club work, travel."

Isn't that the truth? Wish we had space to give the entire piece, but cannot resist one more paragraph.

"Most bird watchers list the birds they see, either year by year or day by day, or for a specific locality. The challenge of seeing more and more species is part of the sport. In 1939, Guy Emerson, then vice-president of Bankers Trust Company of New York, spotted 497 species during the year - many while on business trips. This was a record that stood until 1953 when it was upset by an Anglo-American team of birders that covered 30,000 miles in 100 days to soar to well over 500 species each."

That team was, of course, Peterson and Fisher who produced Wild America.

Members are reminded that the proposed amendment to the first line of Article 11 will be voted on at this coming meeting. The amendment suggested appeared in the February issue. It amends the line to read "Unless otherwise

ordered by the membership, the regular meetings of this Society shall be on the first Thursday of each month".

New members - Mrs. James Hannon, 20 Las Vegas, Orinda, who came to the last two Screen Tours, both of which she thought very fine.

Judith Perlman reports that James Garvey, biologist at Acalanes High School is definitely about to join. That will make the Society 100 per cent in local biologists. Last official count, released by secretary, Sally Steller, gave 87 as the total membership.

We hear that Pete looked for May Ann on the beach but found only Black Oyster Catchers. Perhaps he will find Maria in Arizona when he and the Adamsons go there in May.

Officers - President Norma L. Warner, 3163 Wayside Lane, Walnut Creek, YE 4-4604  
Vice-President - Ferd S. Ruth, 43 Cuesta Way, Walnut Creek, YE 4-8803  
Secretary-Treasurer - Mrs. J. S. Steller, 939 Carol Lane, Lafayette, AT 4-4370  
Director - Harry C. Adamson, 995 Carol Lane, Lafayette, AT 3-2164

# The Quail

BULLETIN OF THE MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY  
WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA

May 1957  
Vol. 3, No. 11



The next regular meeting of Mount Diablo Audubon Society will be held May 2, 8 P.M., Room 201, Las Lomas High School. Ferd Ruth, program chairman, announced last month that this will be Hobby Night. All members are invited and urged to trot out their hobbies, to display, explain, or "talk about". With so many talented members having varying special interests we should have a meeting both interesting and lively, especially if Judith Perlman brings along some of her pet snakes, or Joe Crosby turns loose his Alligator Lizards. We hope the Adamsons and Pete Veitch will not be too busy making ready to leave for Arizona a week later, nor Glenn Shank on shift that evening and so unable to talk rocks.

## PINNACLES FIELD TRIP, Saturday and Sunday, May 4th and 5th

Meet 1 P.M., Saturday at Pinnacles National Monument Headquarters. Pay 50¢ entry fee at Entrance Station. The Pinnacles is 35 miles south of Hollister, just off Rt. 25. Best route from the north is: leave U.S. 101 2 miles south of Gilroy, proceed to Hollister, then south. Time from Walnut Creek about 3 1/2 hours. The area is characterized by rugged scenery, produced in the first instance some 30 million years ago when a volcano blew its top. Weather changes and erosion did the rest. About 95 species of birds have been seen here, among which is a good collection of birds of prey. The nearest stores and motels are apparently 20 miles away, so camping is suggested. Wood scavenging not permitted and we cannot count on being able to buy any there, so take your own or your gas burner. There are several camping sites with toilet facilities. Hiking clothes and a canteen if you expect to do much hiking. Could be warm and dry.

The program for Saturday afternoon will be hiking and cave exploration. Bring flashlights. The far-flung acquaintanceship of our Harry Couden includes Bernard Feinberg of Hollister who graciously offered to be our guide through the caves. He says there is a nice valley accessible only through a cave. Those who can only come on Sunday, plan an early start. Someone will be at the Headquarters to meet you at 9:30.

Isadore and Judith Perlman, Leaders,  
AT 3-3021

Report of Dillon Beach trip, March 10th - John Bruce, Leader

About 25 people tried out for the Field Trip to Dillon Beach. The weather was very nice until after lunch when the rain began. Judy and Alice Periman collected some excellent marine specimens and several garter snakes for school. Thanks to Harry Adamson and his 'scope for the excellent view of the Red-necked Grebes. The total bird count was low (39) but the thrill of seeing starfish, jellyfish, barnacles, and sea anemones was wonderful.

Birds: Loons, Common, Pacific, Red-throated; Grebe, Holboell's, Horned, Western; Brown Pelican; Cormorant, Brandt's and Baird's; Herons, Great Blue, American Egret; Ducks, White-winged Scoter, Surf, Red-breasted Merganser, Bufflehead; Turkey Vulture; Hawks, Red-tailed, Sparrow; Coots; Black Oystercatcher; Surf Bird; Black Turnstone; Sanderling; Gulls, Glaucous-Winged, Western; Killdeer; Mourning Dove; Belted Kingfisher; Black Phoebe; Horned Lark; American Raven; Crow; Wren-Tit; Western Bluebird; California Shrike; Western Meadowlark; Blackbirds, Red-wing, Brewer's; House Finch; Brown Towhee; Sparrows, Savannah, White-Crowned.

Editorial Comment: The Coots have been added to the check list. They were plentiful along the Sears Point Road. Somewhere before that the Killdeer was observed. In a pond near that Cutoff was the duck tentatively identified as Buffle-head. Harry Adamson said it was possible to find them there. This one was near enough for the head to be conspicuous. However, The Editor confesses to a superficial knowledge of ducks. She does very well with Coots.

During the breeding season Holboell's Grebe sports a red neck. According to H.C.A. about 20 Red-necked Grebes were seen that day, an unusually large count.

Redwood Regional Park Trip, April 7th

The 28 or so individuals who set out through magnificent Redwood Regional Park could not have asked for a finer day. Not a cloud in the sky, a fresh little breeze that dwindled to nothing about noon and unlimited visibility to permit fullest enjoyment of awesome views of the countryside in spring. Best of all was the inspired leadership of Ranger-Naturalist Paul Covel. He knows the flora and fauna of the park better than most of us know the backs of our hands, and all of us are the richer for having toured the trails with him, especially the five or six stalwarts who stuck with him to the end, i. e., the uphill half of the trip. (Oh, those aching legs!) As Paul predicted, we observed a much larger variety of wildflowers than of birds. We undoubtedly heard more birds than we saw; they seemed disinclined for the most part to step forward and be counted. Somebody spotted a Marsh Hawk while waiting for the group to assemble on the parking lot, and the Red-tails in view most of the morning were having great sport in the winds high above the ridges. All hands had a good look at the pretty doe whose tranquillity we disturbed shortly after starting out. Plenty of butterflies, particularly in the wooded canyons - Checkerspot, Orange Tips, Mourning Cloaks, Blues, and the familiar Cabbage Butterfly. More than enough Poison Oak to go round, too, and again we were grateful to Paul Covel for the loan of his Fels Naptha for a good!



scrub at lunchtime. This was an outstanding trip - one to be repeated year after year.

Alex Lindsay - Co-leader

Birds - Turkey Vulture; Hawks, Red-tailed, Marsh; Anna's Hummingbirds; Downy Woodpecker; a single Band-tailed Pigeon; Tree Swallows; Jays, Stellar's Scrub; Black-capped Chickadee; Plain Titmouse; Red-breasted Nuthatch; Creeper; Bewick's Wren; Western Robin; Hutton's Vireo; Lutescent Warbler; Black-headed Grosbeak; Finches, California Purple, Pine Siskin, Goldfinch; Rufous-sided Towhee; Oregon Junco; Song Sparrow.

More from the Editor - Paul Covel is now president of Golden Gate Society. Under the head of flora special mention to the little wild Violets, the clumps of Mahonia Californica and Hazel, and the recurrent patches of golden Suncups, one of the many wild primroses. Polly Perlman was equipped with a specimen box which she filled with sharing material for kindergarten next day, and Violet Beitzel took her pictorial record in color.

OBSERVATIONS - April 16th. Paul Opler saw 18 Ospreys at the mouth of the Russian River, a Goshawk in Van Damme State Park, and at Penngrove a Rough-shouldered Hawk. Elizabeth O'Meara reported her first Bullock Oriole April 10. The Adamsons have had fifty-five or more American Goldfinches eating walnut meats at their backdoor terrace. Such a display of gold waist coats is a striking sight they aver and we agree.

President Norma Warner and Membership Chairman Marye Smith report a very fine two days at the Convention at Asilomar. They left betimes Saturday morning so had time for tide pool explorations before registering. Marye, who is becoming a tide pool expert, was happy to find the special Jellyfish that comes in but once in two years and at that in April. She even nibbled a bit of raw urchin fresh hauled from the depths. The convention was well attended. Eleven Societies were represented by the president. The speakers were "higher echelon", everything moved with clock-like precision, and they even remained for the banquet, driving home in the early hours of Monday.

In the May Reader's Digest is John Steinbeck's entertaining account of "My War With the Ospreys". The fake Whooping Crane that he placed on a nest not only deluded the Ospreys, but a woman in kahki pants. He detected her creeping across his lawn, camera in hand, intent on getting a picture of the Whooper.

We know Starlings have invaded California. Concentrations of 100,000 have been reported from the Lodi area.

A new Audubon Center has been opened this year similar to the one functioning at El Monte, California, and in Western Connecticut. The 70 acres of land near Dayton, Ohio, and ample funds for maintenance were a gift. These centers serve as plant and wild-life sanctuaries, conservation and education centers, particularly for children. About 20,000 were welcomed last year.

"Autumn Across America" by Edwin Wayne Teal is new, and takes the reader with the Teales on a zig-zag trip from the East to the West Coast. John Kieran writes "a revelation of the seasonal wonders that lie around us and the reflections they caused in the searching soul and genial mind of the author".

Long time ago Evelyn Mann gave us this bit entitled:

STUDY YOUR BIRD

"Gray-cheeked Thrush; identified when seen very well by its grayish cheeks and conspicuous white eye-ring. Similar species; Olive-backed Thrush has buffy cheeks and conspicuous buffy eye-ring. Study your bird very carefully, it is sometimes not safe to try to distinguish them."

Peterson "A Guide to the Birds" (2nd edition pp. 172-3)

"Quick with the Peterson, quick with the glasses  
Quick while the dew ensparkles the grasses  
Quick to the meadows and hedgerows; time passes.  
You must study your bird, study your bird.

"A male-in-eclipse do I see in the bush?  
Or some different species? A Warbler? A Thrush?  
The size is it big as a Robin? or smaller?  
Is it a curlew, a knot, or not?  
Sanderling? Stilt? Godwit? Godwot!  
Study your bird, study your bird.

"Look at the wing bars; distinct? indistinct?  
Look at the eye-ring; what do you think?  
The rump; is it grayish, or would you say white?  
Remember how color's affected by light!  
The wings, do they form a dihedral in flight  
Or mere horizontal? Look quickly it might  
Be a kestrel!

The glasses!

Too late - out of sight.

You must study your bird, study your bird, study your bird."

New member - Barbara Bonnicksen of Brentwood. Miss Bonnicksen works in Antioch but manages to get over to the meetings. Her first Field Trip with the Society was that to the Redwood Regional Park. (We saw her at Asilomar too! N.W.)

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# The Quail

BULLETIN OF THE MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY  
WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA



June 1957  
Vol. 3, No. 12

The next regular meeting of Mount Diablo Society will be held at 8 p.m., Room 201, Las Lomas High School, Thursday the 6th. Ferd Ruth, program chairman, promises the John Muir story as told by E. C. "Monte" Monsees, a teacher from Richmond. The pictures which illustrate the story were taken by Mrs. Barbara Lachelt, the former Barbara Cross, daughter of the Laurence Cross family in Berkeley, and until her marriage a biology instructor at Acalanes High School. Although her home is now in Seattle, she spends summer months on Mount McKinley while her husband is on ranger duty. These are the pictures that Mrs. Jean Hanna deLipkau took to show the crowds gathered for the dedication of the memorial park near Montello not far from the site of the first American home of the Muirs where the "father of the National Park System" spent his boyhood. He was Mrs. deLipkau's grandfather.

## St. Mary's-Bollinger Canyon Field Trip - Sunday, June 9th.

"Meet 9 a.m., St. Mary's campus in the parking area just beyond the gymnasium around to the left, and in back of the chapel. The hike up the canyon-wooded canyon on one side and down by the road on the other side is not very far and should be leisurely. We return to our cars and drive to the college picnic area for lunch, (arrangements still to be made, however, because it's commencement time), after which you are on your own. Brother Lawrence of St. Mary's biology department will co-lead if he can get away from his commencement responsibilities in time. This favorite birding hike is to provide an outing for those who can't make the big one to Tahoe, and to acquaint us with the birds we find in our own area. Harry Couden."

The meeting on the 6th will be the last of the present administration. The nominating appointed by President Norma Warner a month ago will bring in a list of proposed new officers. According to the revised By-Laws there will be a treasurer as well as a secretary henceforth. The committee; Sally Steller, Harry Adamson, and Pearl Grimes. New officers and chairmen will assume their duties July 1st.

Legislation: Controversial is the matter of Stehekin Valley in the State of Washington. C. Edward Graves who has explored it characterizes it as "incomparably beautiful", and an area that should be preserved for the people for all time. It is now threatened. Glacier Peak, one of the most famous in the Northwest's peaks, is in this area and beautiful 50-mile long Lake Chelan.

Next Screen Tour: October 3rd, Bert Harwell, FORGOTTEN COUNTRY  
Other Screen Tours: Nov. 19th, Murl Deusing, ADVENTURES IN AFRICA  
Jan. 24th, Cleveland Grant, YUKON INDIAN SUMMER  
Feb. 13th, Olin Pettingill, Jr., PENGUIN SUMMER  
May 5th, Telford Work, MONSOON MOSAIC

The Hobby program of the May meeting was so successful that more than one member urged a repeat performance. The member response was excellent. Special mention should go to Robert Cornelius of the Fourth Grade who read a paper he had painstakingly prepared on Hawks. Harry Adamson generously replied to leading questions about his ducks and geese on canvas; Dick Beitzel arranged a dramatic display of his black and white salon prints, several in the blue ribbon class; Violet (his spouse) showed on the screen a number of her best colored pictures explaining as she did so the new film she is using; John Bruce brought his framed fossil fishes which have scientific value (naturally) but framed as they are make an interesting and artistic wall ornament; Glenn Shanks, the versatile "rock hound" displayed many varieties of rock in addition to drawing a profile on the board which showed how rocks are born; Ferd Ruth produced cases of butterflies saying that he had chanced to watch a teacher preparing some when he was a youngster and became so interested that he has "wound up" as an instructor in biology; and Janet Willoughby arrived with a huge piece of pockmarked lava from Lassen, despite its porous appearance heavy as lead.

Janet invited the Society to have a potluck picnic supper at her home on Las Trampas Creek, Thursday evening, August 1st, 6 p.m., preceeding the regular meeting. Children should find this three-acre place a good spot, but Janet asks that the family dogs and cats be left home. Address, 3273 Glenside Drive, Lafayette, phone AT 3-3761, her mother; Mrs. John H. Paylor. Janet graduate from Acalanes High School this month, leaving shortly on a trip to Ranier, Lake Louise, Banff, etc., a gift from her paternal grandmother.

Another traveling member will be Tom Grimes who has just been awarded a two week scholarship trip by the Morley Committee of the Sierra Club. We have not yet heard which is the trip of his choice but his mother is quite sure he will take one that goes into Canada. That is in August. In July he will spend three weeks at Valley Forge, a participant in the National Boy Scout Jamboree. He is an Eagle Scout.

Doris Crosby and son, Joe, have reservations for a rubber boating trip through Lodore Canyon of the Upper Colorado system. They will be able to report how the water comes down a Lodore.

Mrs. Grimes was recently a guest at a two-day seminar on Forest Genetics, headquarters at Placerville. She said that much research is being done in an effort to develop more resistant pines, but good timber varieties withal. Of the 90 known species of pines, 70% are in the arboretum near Placerville.

Alice Carver Cramer is the author of those clever lines Study Your Bird. Evelyn Mann does not want credit given to her just because she sent them in. That we consider a worthy act, nonetheless.

OBSERVATIONS - A pair of Ash-throated Flycatchers are nesting in the Mann's Bluebird house, the entrance having been reamed out by a Flicker last year. Mourning Doves are nesting in the grape arbor over the patio in the spot examined but not taken a year ago. Norma Warner reports that since she has stopped destroying Jaybird nests the number of smaller birds nesting in their garden and orchard has decreased. Recently an Anna Hummingbird was observed dive bombing a well behaved Plain Titmouse until the Titmouse sought safety on the ground under an elderberry tree in the McGeehon garden. A Hummer's nest nearby? The Brown Towhees considered a fixture in that jungle have not been seen nor heard for some weeks, although the Rufous-sided is about; one seen flitting through the Fremontia branches with a fat green grub dangling from its beak.

The Adamsons, Peter Veitch, Frances Blake and others are observing in the Chiricahua Mountains. We hope they will bring an illustrated itinerary for the benefit of the armchair contingent.

In the last number of the Roadrunner, habitat Phoenix, Arizona, is an interesting account of a trip to that same area, and an objection to having the Roadrunner called "California Roadrunner". Just plain Roadrunner, or Chaparral Cock, seems name enough; both appropriate. That bird does inhabit both states, chiefly south in California. However, those long legs and rather slantwise tail are not unknown on Central California roads. More than once children on their way to the school on the Arroyo Del Valle in the Livermore hills saw them, and once one was seen in the Mulfontes vineyard, elevation about 1,600 feet. And The Editor twice observed a single bird, once running along the road, near town; the second time in her own yard which forty years ago was not the jungle it now is.

In the Observer, bulletin of Sacramento Audubon Society, is a bit on the Oracle Oak, Quercus Morehus, which is a rather rare hybrid of Quercus Agrifolia (Coast Liveoak) and Quercus Kellogi (Black Oak), according to information from the arboretum at Golden Gate Park. Fred Evenden of the Sacramento Society, an authority, gives Quercus Wislizenii as the evergreen parent. Although not common, that oak has been found on Mount Diablo in several places. Some of those trees have displayed some leaves bearing striking resemblance to those of the Black Oak. Just offhand one would think "just another Liveoak". Ten of these hybrids are growing and thriving in the Walnut Creek City Park, in the Leech Memorial planting of natives adjoining the building of Mount Diablo Chapter ARC.

Reading the Exchanges has been the Editor's hobby the past year, an enjoyable perquisite of office.

WHO IS WHO - Dr. Isadore Perlman, whose three daughters are avid collectors of specimens on field trips - delicate wildflowers to wriggling snakes, has recently been named head of the department of chemistry in a reorganization of the School of Chemistry at the University of California. Dr. Perlman is one of the world's foremost authorities in the field of nuclear spectroscopy.

Do you know that the first place in the United States touched by the sun is Mt. Katahdin, in Maine, or that the only National Park in New England, is Acadia National Park, in Maine.

Officers and chairmen -

President - Norma L. Warner, 3163 Wayside Lane, W.C. YE 4-4604  
Vice-President, Ferd S. Ruth, 43 Cuesta Way, W.C. YE 4-8803

Secretary-treasurer, Mrs. J. S. Steller, 939 Carol Lane, Laf. AT 4-4370

Director, Harry C. Adamson, 995 Carol Lane, Laf. AT 3-2164

Membership chairman, Mrs. Cecil J. Smith, 79 Oak Knoll Loop, W.C.,  
YE 5-5657

Publicity chairman, Mrs. E. C. O'Meara, P.O. Box 914, W.C. YE 4-4720

Field Trips chairman, Harry N. Couden, 1491 Sunset Loop, W.C. YE 4-8873

Conservation chairmen, Pearl and Thomas Grimes, 2719 Richard Ave., Concord  
MU 5-9492

Editor of The Quail, Mrs. J. C. McGeehon, 2165 Oakvale Rd., W.C.,  
YE 4-2752

#### ADDENDA

From Isadore and Judith Perlman this account of the trip to Pinnacles National Monument - "The weather was ideal and a good turnout from Golden Gate Society as well as our own group helped to fill up the canyon (with the help of an assortment of Boy and Girl Scout Troops). Unfortunately no head count was taken but there must have been about 45; grown-ups, moppets, and in between. A few members of the leisure class got a head start by coming in on Friday. Some of us had the pleasure of winding our way through those untidy heaps of boulders called 'caves' for the first time, and were much impressed with the cool cozy atmosphere. Contemplating the forces which could move such rocks makes one feel rather small.

"Sunday morning a large fraction of the group moved up through the new Pinnacles cave and over the High Peaks Trail. Birding was good and particularly delightful were the morning bird songs in the narrow parts of the canyon. We were proud of 6 year old Polly Perlman who negotiated the 4 mile trail (Hah) on her own power. (Editorial note - she slept most of the way home.) The spectacular rock formations seen from the top of the trail was a new thrill for a number of the group and a renewed pleasure for those who had been there

before. The rare falcons did not disappoint the hiker and their graceful flight provided further esthetic background for lunch at the top of the trail. A few members of the group 'sat out' the hike by going lizarding. We understand they did an equal amount of walking and climbing. Among the number of species found in this region are beautiful specimens of Whip Tails. Oh, yes, on Saturday night the comet put in a good appearance and the Adamsons and Sathers did the owling. All told 74 species of birds were seen."

From the Editor - These addenda have to be sent to San Francisco by Special Delivery to meet the press. We regret that time does not permit preparing the bird list, but we shall have it typed up ready for the next Quail.

And from Dorothy Couden

June is such a fine month for birding and enjoying spring that we've planned two field trips, one near at hand, St. Mary's College Campus, June 9; the other a week-end jaunt to Lake Tahoe, June 22-23.

Emerald Bay is one of the loveliest Lake Tahoe areas. Our week-end headquarters will be the Couden cabin at Emerald Bay Resort, rustic cabins right on the shore. The resort has several types of accommodations, cottages with hotel service, housekeeping cottages and tent cottages. There are a dining room, soda fountain, filling station, general store, post office and boat house at the resort itself. There are numerous other motel accommodations nearby as well. Adjacent to Emerald Bay is D. L. Bliss State Park, 118 camp sites with the usual state park facilities for comfortable camping.

We will meet at the parking circle, Emerald Bay Resort, 1 p.m., Saturday, June 22, for an interesting, instructive, and relatively easy hike to the end of the bay, possibly led by the park naturalist. This same hike was a highlight on the Coudens' vacation last year. Saturday evening we'll dine together on a pot luck basis at the cabin which the Coudens plan to have for the week-end. Our best birding should be on the Sunday morning hike.

Emerald Bay is about 170 miles from Walnut Creek, via Highway 50. Five hours driving time should do it. If you plan to pot luck with us, bring your own dishes, silver, cups. Call Dorothy, Yellowstone 4-8873 to let her know what food you plan to bring. You're welcome to use the cabin facilities to cook your Sunday breakfast or at any other time. No guarantee on the weather, but the ranger says it never (?) rains after June 15. Emerald Bay Resort, Emerald Bay, (Lake Tahoe), California.

# THE QUAIL

## BULLETIN OF MOUNT DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA

July 1957  
Vol. 4 No. 1

The next meeting of Mount Diablo Audubon Society will be Thursday, July 11, 8 p.m. Room 201, Las Lomas High School. Note: the date is one week later than customary, the first Thursday being the Fourth.

John V. Bruce recently elected vice-president and program chairman announces a trip to the Chiricahua Mountain region led along the pictorial route by the Adarsons.

Next Field Trip will be on the date announced last fall-Sunday the 14th. However, Peter Veitch will lead instead of Paul Opler, and the area visited will be Mount Diablo State Park, not Bethel Island.

Rock City 9 a.m. with lunch. binoculars and families. Water "available". Rock City is easily reached from either North or South Gate. Small entry fee per car.

Recently "Pete" and the others identified 40 species of birds on the mountain, among them Lazuli Bunting, House Wren and Bell's Sparrow. This area is particularly interesting because owing to the varying altitudes species characteristic of the different elevations are found.

"Rock City is one of the most historic and beautiful sites in the Park. The kids will love the wind tunnel formations in the sandstone. It's a short walk to Lookout Point, from whence the Indian Sentinels watched for the Spanish soldiers. The Indians' huge ceremonial oak is nearby as are fossil deposits." DC.

The August meeting will be on the regular date, which is the 1st. Be sure to write or telephone Janet Willoughby or her mother Mrs. John H. Taylor if you plan to go. Pot luck picnic supper on the bank of Las Trampas Creek, 6 p.m. 3273 Glenside Drive, telephone AT 3-3761. Lafayette.

Birds of the Pinnacles Trip -

Turkey Vulture, Hawks, Red-tailed, Coopers, Duck, Sparrow; California Quail, Mourning Dove; Owls, Barn, Screech Horned; Pygmy; Poorwill; White-throated Swift; Hummingbirds, Black chinned, Annas, Allens; Red-shafted Flicker; Woodpeckers, California, Lewis's, Hairy, Nuttall's ; Western Kingbird; Flycatchers, Ash-throated, Black Phoebe, Western, Western Wood Peewee, Olive-sided; Swallows, Violet-green, Tree, Rough-winged, Cliff, Scrub Jay; Yellow-Billed Magpie; American Raven; Crow; Plain Titmouse; Bush-Tit; Slender-billed Nuthatch; Wren-Tit; Wrens, House, Bewicks, Canyon, Rock; Mockingbird; California Thrasher; Russet-backed Thrush; Western Bluebird; Western Gnatcatcher; California Shrike; Vireos, Hutton's Cassins,



## 2 The Quail

Warbling; Warblers, Lutescent, Calaveras, Audubon's, Pileolated; English Sparrow; Western Meadowlark; Blackbirds, Red-wing, Brewer's; Bullocks Oriole; Western Tanager; Black-headed Grosbeak; Lazuli Bunting; Finches, California Purple, House, Pine Siskin, Goldfinch, Lesser Goldfinch, Lawrences; Towhees, Rufous-sided, Brown; Sparrows, Bell's, Song; Oregon Junco.

Observations: The Adamsons saw a Spotted Owl near Inverness recently, the first one for Harry in twenty years of birding. This is not especially surprising for these largish hooters are rare even in their own range. A Massachusetts visitor under the Adamson guidance added 29 birds to his life list in one day.

In reply to the question, "What for are Jays?" Elizabeth O'Meara reports that one was good for chasing English Sparrows from her yard.

June appeared to be the month of fledglings in the McGeehon garden-jungle; Scrub Jays, Bullock Orioles, Mockingbirds, Western Bluebirds, the two varieties of Towhees, House Finch, Plain Titmouse, and in all that horde of tittering Bush-Tits there must have been some fledglings, and applies, also, to the many California Woodpeckers active among the oaks farther up the hill.

Paul Opler is spending the summer working in Lassen State Park, we hear. The Beitzel's are leaving a few days hence for the Hawaiian Islands going by Matson Line, but returning by air. They expect to meet the Guy Spencers of Walnut Creek in Honolulu. President Harry Couden made a flying trip to Washington D. C., and Junior Past-president Norma L. Warner made her annual trip to Reno, with the usual car full of books.

New members; Mrs. Blanche Clear, College Womens' Club, Bancroft Way, Berkeley.

Mrs. Miriam Hockett, 224 Douglas Lane, W.C. YE 4-3708.

William Petty, 3158 Wayside Lane. W.C. YE 5-0447

The Quail has lost his topknot but temporarily.

### Officers - 1957-58

President, Harry N. Couden, 1491 Sunset Loop, W.C. YE 4-8873

Vice-president, John V. Bruce, 348 Verona Ave, Danville, VE 7-2704

Secretary, Mrs. Myla Austin, 2970 Consuela Road, Concord, MU 5-8137

Treasurer - Miss Judith Perlman, 1158 Glen Road, Lafayette, AT 3-3021

Director, Glenn H. Shanks, 3849 Maplewood Ct. Concord, MU 5-6134



# The Quail

BULLETIN OF THE MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY  
WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA

August 1957

Vol 4 No. 2

The next meeting of Mount Diablo Audubon Society will be the long planned pot-luck picnic supper at the home of Janet Willoughby, Thursday, August 1st, 6 p.m. reservations not later than Monday noon.

Janet says food can be kept warm in the barbecue oven, or cold in their second refrigerator. Members are asked to bring their own dishes and silverware, and to avoid complications with the family pets to leave their own at home. That, however, does not include the children, for whom there are swings, and trees, and Las Trampas Creek.

The Coudens who have visited the spot and met Janet's mother, Mrs. John H. Taylor, report the site really beautiful.  
Address - 3273 Glenside Dr. Lafayette. Phone: AT 3-3761

Next Field Trip - Golden Gate Park, Sunday, August 4th. Meet 8:30 a.m. in vicinity of Japanese gardens. Group will wait until nine for those belated. (no pun intended).

Right in that area are the Steinhart Aquarium, the Arboretum, the Planetarium, The Natural History Museum, and the African Room in the Stinson Museum to list some of the interesting places all within a "stone's throw". Bring lunch.

With her husband, Society president, Harry N. Couden still traveling through the Pacific Northwest as far as the Canadian border, and the Beitzels in Hawaii sending word they cannot serve as Field Trips chairman Dorothy valiantly pinch hitting, 1491 Sunset Loop, W.C..

Lake Tahoe Trip - June 24th.

"Perfect weather (as promised) added the ultimate touch for the 14 of us who hiked from Emerald Bay Resort to Vikingsholm, Eagle Falls and return via shore. Bird count was not high partly because of the early afternoon hour and the absence of an expert ear who might have identified many of the heard-but-not-seen calls. The brilliant Western Tanagers were stars of the show, with Evening Grosbeak, Oregon Junco, Song Sparrow, Redwing Blackbird, Cowbird, California Gull. Steller's Jay, Robin, and Mountain Chickadee also seen.

Vikingsholm, a picturesque house with sod roof designed to resemble the solid, decorative structures of medieval Scandinavia was acquired recently as part of the Emerald Bay State Park property, and was a high point of the hike. Of great interest, too were the ravages of beavers and their submerged home at lakeside.

The weather held for the duration of the Coudens' week during which we identified in the same general area the following birds; American Merganser, Turkey Vulture, Spotted Sandpiper (nests around Emerald Bay) Red-shafted Flicker, Red-breasted Sapsucker, White-headed Woodpecker, Western Wood Peewee, Barn Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Clark's Nutcracker, Slender-billed Nuthatch, Creeper, Marsh Wren, Brewer's Blackbird, Red Crossbill and tentatively, Calaveras Warbler, and Calliope Hummingbird.

## 2 The Quail

To further prove the abundance of birds in the area the Marms-Vic and Evelyn- spent the previous week just a bit south of us (Richardson's area) and reported seeing masses of Yellow-headed Blackbirds; a Hermit Thrush's nest with first, 2 eggs, then 3, and finally 4 with the mother on top a Warbling Vireo's nest; and pretty much in addition to the above, Hammond's Flycatcher, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Tree Swallow, Townsend's Solitaire, a family of Golden-crowned Kinglets, Green-tailed Towhee, and Fox Sparrow. Harry and Dorothy Couden."

We were misinformed as to the summer occupation of Paul Opler who has written an interesting letter from Shafter where he is spotting insect pests in the cotton and alfalfa fields and then recommending treatment to the growers.

"The average temperature is about 95 although it has been only that cool for three or four days when a breeze came up. The thermometer rises to 110 often in the shade."

In spite of camping three days near Frazier Mountain he had not yet seen any Condors but plans to try again at Sespe. Those who read Wild America will recall that Petersen and Fisher almost missed, in fact were about to give up all hope of a glimpse of those giants of the bird ways.

"Birds-commoner ones excluded - Western Grebe: one freshly killed, and one in the canal - this is far from their breeding ground -; Great Blue Heron, Brewster's Egret; Black-crowned Night Heron; Cinnamon Teal; Mallard Ruddy Duck; American Rough-leg; Sparrow Hawk; Cooper Hawk; Gallinule; Coot; Black-necked Stilt; - common near water - Avocet; Burrowing Owl, Barn Owl; Texas Nighthawk Roadrunner; Black-chinned Hummer; Red-shafted Flicker; California Woodpecker; Nutall's Woodpecker; Downy Woodpecker; Black and Says Phoebe; Western Kingbird; Ash-throated Flycatcher; Wood peewee; Trail Flycatcher; Horned Lark - abundant; Violet Green, Cliff, and Barn swallows; Steller's and Scrub Jay; Titmouse, Mountain Chickadee; Slender-billed Nuthatch; House and Marsh Wren; Mockingbird; Robin; Shrike; Western Bluebird; Phainopepla;; Least Vireo and Warbling Vireo; Black-throated Gray Warbler; Bullock's Oriole; Yellow-headed, Brewer's, Bicolored, Tri-colored Redwings, and Redwing Blackbirds; Cowbird; House Sparrow; Western Tanager; Blue, and Black-headed Grosbeak; House Finch; Arkansas, Lawrence's Goldfinch, and Cal. Purple Finch; Oregon Junco, Brown and Rufous-sided Towhees; Lark Sparrow, Song Sparrow.

These birds were seen in the Greenhorn and Tehachapi Mountain, and the southern San Joaquin Valley."

Chairman: Membership and Hospitality, Norma L. Warner; Program, John V. Bruce; Conservation, Ferd S. Ruth; Publicity, Mrs. Elizabeth C. O'Meara; Quail, Mrs. J. C. McGeehon.

Observations: Rambling around Las Trampas Creek back of the Adamson place Harry found 3 Green Herons, and a Belted Kingfisher, but the highlight of the month was the White-Crowned Sparrow, about two months ahead of schedule. Glen Shank and wife while camping near Lake Pillsbury found a nest of Ospreys, and have been having barn swallows in their yard. Frances Blake told of two Sparrow-Hawks released on her place after a long period in captivity. They were dive bombed by Orioles and Black-birds. Came scratching at the screen door for admission. Among the twenty species of birds checked in the McGeehon jungle this month were two Bewick Wrens, which is the earliest that variety has been seen there. John Bruce reported catching live mice to feed a young captive Red-Tailed Hawk.



# The Quail

BULLETIN OF THE MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY  
WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA

September 1957

Vol 4 No. 3

The next meeting of Mount Diablo Audubon Society will be held in room 201, Las Lomas High School, Thursday, September 5, 8 p.m. John V. Bruce, program chairman, has persuaded Mr. and Mrs. Richard S. Beitzel - Lick and Vi - to show the story of their summer visit to the Hawaiian Islands. They went on the Matson liner, The Lurline, but returned by air clipper. They visited Oahu, Hawaii, Maui, and Kauai, taking pictures all the while, no doubt. Their pictures rate so well that Violet is listed in "Who's Who in Color Photography in America", and Lick, with his dramatic black and white work, has done his part in bringing home awards. His picture of a Mexican taken last summer earned \$15.00 at the Alameda County Fair exhibit.

## Bay Farm Island Field Trip - Sunday, Sept. 8th

"Meet at Lincoln Park, junction of High Street and Santa Clara Avenue, in Alameda. If you wish to have a picnic lunch in the park, meet at 12:30, otherwise at 1 p.m. High tide is at 1:20. As soon as the receding tide begins to expose the mud flats the shorebirds will arrive to feed. Several varieties of Sandpipers, Plovers, Terns, Avocets, Turnstones, etc. may be observed. Mid-September is regarded as the best time of year for "Shorebirding" in the Bay Area. Some individuals (birds) will still be in breeding plumage. For instance, Black-bellied Plover doesn't mean much if the bird is observed for the first time in grey winter plumage. We should be able to see that bird in both winter and summer garb.

Bring lunch if desired, telescopes, binoculars, footgear suitable for a short walk, and friends you think might be interested. Pough's "Audubon Water-bird Guide" is a very good book to have along as well as your copy of the western Petersen.

Leaders: Harry and Betty Adamson  
Atlantic 3 - 2164

By-the-way, Harry's picture of "Mallards in Snow" rated first by popular choice at the Oakland Garden Show last spring....award, \$500.00 He works in oils when not working in their garden.

The August picnic supper meeting in the deep tangled wildwood as Janet Willoughby's guests was a delightful occasion, with upwards of 40 members and guests present. The spot has to be seen to be believed. The three hostesses, Janet, her mother and grandmother, opened wide the doors of the house, the outdoor rumpus room, the horseshoe pits in the creek bed and the barbeque area. Several Barn Owls rewarded those of the junior contingent who roamed the hillside.

The Golden Gate Field Trip, unfortunately, came on a day of so many previous commitments that the Couden family and Janet were the only ones out.

"Due to unexpected out-of-town guests, the Sathers were unable to lead the August 4th field trip. However, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Couden submitted the following list: Mallard Duck, Lesser Scaup, California Quail, King-billed and Western Gulls, Mourning Dove, Allen's Hummingbird, Cliff Swallows, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, House Finch, Gold finch, Bushtit, English Sparrow, Brewer's Blackbird, Rufous-sided Towhee, Oregon Junco, Nuttall's Sparrow, and Song Sparrow"  
The Sathers.

Observations: The Adamsons have seen five Cowbirds in their yard, one of the juveniles the foster child of a Song Sparrow reared right there. Harry has again seen three Green Herons in Las Trampas Creek at the back of their place where there is water all year.

A Marsh Hawk fiercely pursued by first one, then two Mockingbirds flew over the McGeehon hill one morning. Just as an oak intervened, a third bird joined the pursuit - unidentified, but the Hawk was identified by the white rump.

From the President's Desk - Field Trips!

"Congratulations, Everybody! For lack of a Field Trip Chairman we have three, anyone of whom is tops for an Audubon group. Larry and Betty Adamson will cover September thru December (Bay Farm, Briones, Willows Gridley, Lake Merritt and Conn Lake). Dick and Vi Beitzel take the next four months, January thru April (Tomales, Asilomar and Cascade Lake, San Pablo Dam, Calaveras Dam and Columbia). Bev. Wilder is anchor man for May thru August (Gulfontes, Mount Diablo, Wright's Lake and Moss Beach.) Leaders and co-leaders have been appointed and will be contacted soon. This will be a rewarding experience for many. What some of us already know - and others will learn - our field trips are our most personally rewarding activity.....and we just hit the jackpot!" H. Couden

In a postscript the president observes "most overnight trips are accompanied during the same month by a second field trip near at hand". Any questions, call Harry N. Couden, Ye 4 - 8873, 1491 Sunset Loop, W.C.

From the National Audubon office in Berkeley, 2426 Bancroft Way, we have received a sample of the new Daily Field Card; Birds of the Pacific States, larger, more comprehensive, and slightly higher in price than the old style. Revised nomenclature is one of the good features and the inclusion of a few birds omitted last time. Price for 25, which is the minimum order, \$1.25; 50 for \$2.00; 100 for \$3.50.

Included also was a selected list of books to be had at that office, recommended as helpful to teachers and youth leaders. We suggest them as gifts: "Web of Life," a paperback, 35¢; "The Rainbow Book of Nature" by Donald Culross Peattie, \$4.95; An illustrated "Guide to Fossil Collecting", \$1.50. That should be a timely purchase with fossils being exhumed daily as the freeways go through. These, but three of the many to be found in that office where Mary Jefferds presides so cordially.

With our members: We were glad to welcome James Garvey, one of our newer, biology instructor at Acalanes High School, at the picnic with his wife and two children; and to see Rufous Johnson, able to go without crutches, in there pitching horseshoes in spite of his cane.

Sorry to know that Mrs. John "Erna" Irving has had two bad falls in recent weeks. The second one spoiled her plan to attend, for the second time, Audubon Summer Camp. At last conversation she reported herself doing very well.

John Bruce has been steeped in Science all summer as a recipient of a very fine scholarship from the National Science Foundation, classes at the University of California. He hopes he may be able to bring some of his summer associates to speak to this Society.

When we asked Marye Smith what her college sophomore was doing, she replied: "David is at Girl Scout Camp." He served as a general handyman, with some counseling, at Camp Deer Lake, near Soda Springs so that he was able to call on the Audubon campers.

"David was one of the recipients of a scholarship given by the Folk Dance Federation of California. He was sponsored by the local folk dance group and spent a week at the College of the Pacific Folk Dance Camp where he danced morning, afternoon and evening. He is a member of the local Quadrilles under the fine folk dance teacher Beverly Wilder." From M. Smith.

Conservation: The Hawk and Owl Bill introduced into the California State Legislature last spring was passed so that there will be an addition to the list of "protected" birds. However, if caught red beaked and/or taloned, the injured party has the usual redress.

Norma L. Warner, our junior past president and now membership chairman, sends a clipping with the information that the Supervisors of Marin County have appropriated \$25,000.00 to be matched by Audubon funds and, it is hoped, by a bond issue of \$50,000.00 by the City of Belvedere to acquire 639 acres of Richardson Bay tidelands for a wildfowl refuge. Such a refuge would be invaluable to the County, State, and Nation. Marin County certainly deserves a salute.

The movement to increase the wilderness area, preserved and conserved, is gaining momentum; but there is yet much to be done to insure saving for this county areas that are truly wilderness, where no freeways may be cut, no public parks established, where virgin conditions may continue to exist.

The Wilderness Bill which has bi-partisan congressional support needs more than that. It needs the support of the people of the nation. We might heed the advice of James Fisher who deplored the loss of such areas in his own country and implored Americans to act before too late.

Now is the time to write our representatives in Washington - Senate and House - urging the passage of the National Wilderness Preservation Bill. Although neither of the California senators is on the sponsorship list, both vote in the Senate - Wm. F. Knowland, and Thomas Kuchel. Address: U. S. Senate, Washington D. C. will reach them. From Contra Costa County in the House is John F. Baldwin who is one of the strong proponents of this and other measures seeking preservation and conservation of natural resources. George P. Miller and John J. Allen represent Alameda County - U. S. House of Representatives, same city.



# The Quail

BULLETIN OF THE MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY  
WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA

October 1957  
Vol. 4, No. 4

Complete list of 1957/58 Field Trips is attached to this issue.

The next meeting of Mount Diablo Audubon Society will be held Thursday, the 10th, 8 p.m., Las Lomas High School, Room 209. Note the change of date, the locale.

The date has been changed because of conflict with the first Screen Tour of the season. The room has been changed because the Society's program will be "Tidepool Story" given by Mario Menesini, M.A. in Science, member of the Las Lomas faculty. Room 209 is the Science Room.

John V. Bruce, Program Chairman, and Mr. Menesini were both recipients of science scholarships at the University of California the past summer. They are making a specimen collecting trip to Dillon Beach the week before the meeting. Remember, guests are always welcomed.

October 6th, Field Trip - Bev. Wilder, leader.

"Place: Sewer Farm and Briones Hills  
Time: Meet at Sewer Farm, 9:15 a.m.  
Meet on Reliez Valley Road at Gloria Terrace 11:30 a.m.  
Equipment: Good hiking clothes, lunch, binoculars ('scopes, too)  
Items of Interest: At the Sewer Farm we should see various pond and wading birds. With good luck we will see the resident Cinnamon Teal, Snipe and White-tailed Kite. We will walk down the drainage canal about a half mile.

If you cannot join us until after church, bring a lunch and hike up the Briones Hills with us, where we will eat by the windmill up at the top. We will see the typical chaparral and dry oak forest birds and probably some deer. On the last trips here at least 30 species were counted including California Thrashers."

About 3 years ago Paul Opler led us on a trip about the Sewer Farm and the slough beyond it. Altho the ponds had but a scattered population that first day of Duck Season, the slough was rewarding, to use the fashionable adjective. A tawny Green Heron, Greater-Yellow-legs and a flock of Avocets made the whole day worthwhile.

October Quail - 2

Bay Farm Island Trip - Harry Adamson reporting.

"Approximately 35 persons turned out for the September 8th field-trip to the rapidly diminishing salt-marsh habitat of Bay Farm Island. Once a large area of tidal mud flats and "Pickle-weed" (Salicornia), it has gradually filled in until there is little resemblance to the former area. Twenty-five years ago we used to think nothing of seeing 9 or 10 Short-eared Owls and 2 or 3 Burrowing Owls in-the fields now occupied by houses, airport facilities, and garbage dumps. The California Clapper Rail, the majority of which live in the San Francisco Tidal marshes, was a common sight (and sound), but today we are lucky to glimpse one individual as three of the Mount Diablo group did on this field trip.

Nevertheless, it is still an excellent place to become familiar with shore birds, and there were good numbers of them about for us to study. For example, Avocets arriving in groups to feed on the newly exposed mud are always a striking sight. And a Wandering Tattler, truly rare on Bay Farm, was seen. It is a winter inhabitant of wave-washed rocks and seldom ventures into such quiet waters as these. Ruddy Turnstone was another bird seen and worthy of special mention; 2 or 3 of these spotted in an assorted group of Terns and Sandpipers resting on a sandy bar. The Caspian Tern, largest of its family in the entire world, flew over us giving fine views of the great coral red beak.

The following 41 species were observed: Brown Pelican; Double-crested Cormorant; Great Blue Heron; American Egret; Snowy Egret; Black-crowned Night Heron; Pintail; Sparrow Hawk; Calif. Clapper Rail; Coot; Killdeer; Black-bellied Plover; Ruddy Turnstone; Long-billed Curlew; Whimbrel; Wandering Tattler; Willet; Greater Yellow-legs; Least Sandpiper; Long-billed Dowitcher; Western Sandpiper; Marbled Godwit; Avocet; Northern Phalarope; Western Gull; Calif. Gull; Ring-billed Gull; Forster's Tern; Caspian Tern; Mourning Dove; Anna's Hummingbird; Belted Kingfisher; Barn Swallow; House Sparrow; Meadowlark; Red-winged Blackbird; Brewer's Blackbird; House Finch; Brown Towhee; Savannah Sparrow; Song Sparrow.

First Screen Tour of the season, Thursday, October 3rd., Room 12, East Campus, Contra Costa Junior College.....Bert Harwell, lecturer, Ferd S. Ruth, "Emcee".

Bert Harwell, for years chief ranger in Yosemite National Park, has been for fifteen years with the National Audubon Society full time. He does his own photography and offers some exceptionally fine scenes in "The Forgotten Country" which is that section of the United States between the Rockies and the Sierra. Harwell pictures have been purchased by Walt Disney. Members of Mount Diablo who attend should feel compensated for the inconvenience of postponing their own meeting one week.

Observations: Harry Adamson called to report five White-crowned Sparrows in their garden the morning of September 9th. Three of these were immature. Ten days later a bird that flipped into the shrubbery in the McGeehon garden was probably immature of that species.

Please tell the Quail what has been done and seen by our-members. We know there must be more observations than these reported.



The Labor Day and Admission Day weekends must have been fruitful, or birdful. The Crosbys, Adamsons, and some of the McGeehons spent the first September weekend in the Northern part of the State. Joe Crosby with his mother, on his way to usher at a cousin's wedding in Red Bluff, encountered the Adamsons twice as they were en route to Lassen.

On their way to Alturas from Susanville the McGeehons went by the road that skirts Eagle Lake where a few birds were seen, not many in yet. In the Alturas meadow region every little pond had a few ducks, Mallards, so far as identified. In the Tulelake Wildlife Refuge Ring-necked Pheasants in various stages of plumage were numerous. Water birds on the lake, but many more over the hill on Lower Klamath Lake in that refuge.

Gridley-Willows trip! Because reservations for this trip should be made this month, Betty Adamson sends this pre-view.

"On the weekend of November 9 and 10 there will be a joint field trip of the Golden Gate and Mount Diablo Audubon Societies. Those wishing to make the overnight trip should make reservations at once at one of the motels or hotels in or near Willows such as the Willows Motel. This year the route will be reversed. Saturday we will meet at 10 a.m. at the Gray Lodge State Waterfowl Refuge southwest of Gridley and after touring the refuge drive west to Willows for the night. To reach the Gray Lodge Refuge from Gridley, drive west on Colusa Road approximately 4 miles, then south on Pennington road to sign on right directing traffic to the refuge. It can also be reached from 99E by turning west at Live Oak and driving until the Sutter Buttes are reached, then turn north. But local directions are advisable in this case.

[ Sunday morning at 9:30 we will meet at the Sacramento Federal Waterfowl Refuge some 7 miles south of Willows on Route 99W."

Leader: Earl Albertson  
Co-leader: Betty Adamson

Society President: Harry N. Couden, 1491 Sunset Loop, W.C. Ye 4-8873

Quail Editor: Mrs. J. C. McGeehon, 2165 Oakvale Rd., W.C. Ye 4-2762

MOUNT DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY 1957 - 58 FIELD TRIPS

<u>1957</u>	<u>Trip Area</u>	<u>Leader, or Co-Leaders</u>
Sept. 8	Bay Farm Island	Harry & Betty Adamson, At 3-2164
Oct. 6	Briones Hills, Sewer Farm	Bev Wilder, Ye 4-6353
Nov. 9-10	Willows-Gridley	Earl Albertson (Sacramento) Betty Adamson, At 3-2164
Nov. 23	Lake Merritt	The Geo. Schads, Mu 5-7897
Dec. 8	Conn Lake	Carlyle Sather (Colma) Tom Grimes, Mu 4-9492
Dec. 22	Christmas Count	Harry & Betty Adamson, At 3-2164
 <u>1958</u>		
Jan. 5	Tomales Bay	Dick & Vi Beitzel, Mu 2-9588
Feb. 9	Cascade Lake, San Pablo Dam, and area	Pete Veitch, Cl 4-2419; The Geo. Schads, Mu 5-7897
Mar. 9	Calavaras Dam, Water Temple area	Richard Stallcup (Oakland); Ingra Lusebrink, Mu 5-8732
Apr. 5-6	Columbia and the Sierra Foothills	Erna Irving (Concord); Harry & Dorothy Couden, Ye 4-8873
May 3-4	Mulfontes	Isabelle McGeehon, Ye 4-2752; Elizabeth O'Meara, Ye 4-4720
June 7-8 or 8	Mt. Diablo	Alan & Myla Austin, Mu 5-8137 The Jos Keithly's (Concord)
July 12-13	Wright's Lake (high Sierras)	John Fitzpatrick (Berkeley); Earl Albertson (Sacramento)
August 10	Moss Beach	James Garvey, Ye 5-2958; R. W. Johnson, Mu 2-0812

Field Trip Committee:

Harry & Betty Adamson	At 3-2164	Responsible for trips	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	1957
Dick & Vi Beitzel	Mu 2-9588	"	"	"	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.
Bev Wilder	Ye 4-6353	"	"	"	Apr.	May	June
					July	Aug.	1958

Prex Couden's Comment: — Wow! What a Horoscope for a Bird-Watcher!



# The Quail

BULLETIN OF THE MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY  
WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA

November 1957  
Vol. 4 No. 5

Next regular meeting of Mount Diablo Audubon Society will be held Thursday, the 7th, 8 p.m., Room 201, Las Lomas High School. John Bruce, Program Chairman, promises a visit to Yellowstone National Park led by Wallace J. Hennessy, Biology Instructor at Castro Valley High School, who led the 1957 Science Expedition to the Park.

He served as a ranger-naturalist there for nine summers, received the 1956 NSTA Achievement Medallion, and has a valuable collection of photos of his own taking, in addition to other trophies of his service, which he will display.

The November Field Trip was given in detail in the October Quail, but by way of reminder, Betty Adamson gives the dates - Saturday and Sunday - 9th and 10th. Meet Saturday morning at Gray Lodge Waterfowl Refuge, southwest of Gridley, and after touring that area, to Willows for the night. To reach Gray Lodge from Gridley drive west on Colusa Road approximately 4 miles, then south on Pennington Road to sign directing traffic to the refuge. If reservations for lodging have not been made there is small-chance of securing any at this date, so great the influx of hunters.

Sunday morning meet at 9:30 at Sacramento Federal Waterfowl Refuge some 7 miles south of Willows, Route 99W.

Lake Merritt Field Trip, Saturday, Nov. 23 - Mr. and Mrs. G. E. Schad

Mr. Schad writes that this date was advised by Mr. Keith, Ranger - Naturalist on duty when they "scouted" in August. Meet at the Recreation Center where either Paul Covell or his assistant, Ranger Farrow, will be on hand at 1:30. Those who wish to go earlier will find much to occupy their time and pleasant spots to lunch.

The duck ponds are cleaned Saturday morning which means not many ducks in until afternoon. In the smaller pens one can usually see some of the rather rare birds, although now they may have been re-located in the Geodesic cage which looms large and apparently completed at the north end of the lake.

November Quail - 2

Screen Tour - Tuesday, Nov. 19th, Room 12, 8 p.m.; East-Campus Junior College; Murl Deusing, lecturer; Ferd S. Ruth, "emcee". The topic, "Africa - Animals and Birds", promises to be 'fabulous'.

Murl Deusing made a 10,000 mile safari to secure the material for his story of these mass migrations which frequently "begin as a march, but end in a mad rush for survival," as the grass dries and the water-holes fail. Born and reared in a photographer's studio, he has made his camera an educational medium. His films are used throughout the United States as he directs a program that reaches six million schools every year. His motion pictures have appeared in four Oscar winning nature films including "Beaver Valley" and "Vanishing Prairie."

Sewer Farm and Briones Hills -Bev. Wilder reporting October field trip

"A small but enthusiastic group of birders braved a blustering and threatening day to make this local area trip. Eleven members took the first part of the day's outing-at the Sewer Farm. Thirty-two species were observed at this locality. We recall the following impressions: the White-tailed Kite flying away as we approached; the magnificent view of the Marsh Hawk that stood at the water's edge across the pond; the flight of unknown shore birds which finally lit among the Avocets and revealed themselves as Dowitchers; the pheasant flying across the canal; the close-up view of three Lesser Yellow-legs feeding in the canal; the sound and then the sight of the Marsh Wren; and the antics of the Violet-green Swallows flying over the ponds. Among the less happy sights was that of two boys with shotguns firing at shorebirds along the canal, also the destruction of the well-kept sewer farm grounds by the new construction.

Later in the day ten of the sturdy party began the ascent of Briones Ridge, but part of the group decided to turn back and do some birding in the thicket near the Junior College. (No report from them yet.) The remaining six hiked all the way to the windmill and were well rewarded for their efforts. Twenty additional species were observed as well as nine duplicates of the Sewer Farm list. Among the rewards of the hike were: the magnificent view with towering cumulus clouds; a family of seven deer including a six point buck jumping over a barbed wire fence within a hundred feet of us; the beautiful park-like woods on the ridge with the lovely red wildflowers; the cool water at the windmill; the two Hermit Thrushes playing hide and seek with us at the windmill; our wonder why we saw no goldfinches, (we finally saw some); our prolonged observation of Say's Phoebe which we promptly mis-identified; and the songs of the Thrasher and Wren Tit in the ravine. And too, we got back to the cars just as it started to sprinkle. A-whole day and no recorded observations of Robins or English Sparrows."

Species list: Sewer Farm - Horned Grebe; Great Blue Heron; Snowy Egret; Shoveller, Redhead and Ruddy Ducks; White-tailed Kite; Red-tailed Hawk; Marsh Hawk; Sparrow Hawk; Ring-necked Pheasant; Coot; Killdeer, Wilson's Snipe; Lesser Yellow-legs; Least Sandpiper, Longbill Dowitcher; Avocet; Mourning Dove; Black Phoebe; Violet-green Swallow; Barn Swallow; Mockingbird; California Shrike; Western Meadowlark; Redwing Blackbird; Brewer's

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Blackbird; House Finch; Savannah Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Marsh Wren.

Additional observations at Briones: California Quail; Anna's Hummingbird; Red-shafted Flicker; Say's Phoebe; Steller's Jay; Scrub Jay; Plain Titmouse; Bush Tit; Slender-billed Nuthatch; Bewick's Wren; California Thrasher; Hermit Thrush; Western Bluebird; Ruby-crowned Kinglet; Lesser Goldfinch; Rufous-sided Towhee; Brown Towhee; Oregon Junco; Golden-crowned Sparrow; White-crowned Sparrow.

Observations: Birds of the month - Sparrows in variety. Elizabeth O'Meara reported the White-crowned in her yard the 20th of September, right on time, she said. About the same date they appeared in the Warner, Cornelius, Couden and McGeehon gardens. About that time the Adamsons reported the Golden-crowned and a Song Sparrow, but it was the Lincoln-Sparrow that showed in their garden to greet the new season on the 21st. Frances Blake observed a Nuttall's Woodpecker bathing in her yard the latter part of the month and her first Flicker on the 30th, the same day one first squawked through the McGeehon oaks. Early in October two Red-breasted Nuthatches disported themselves for some hours in the McGeehon Deodar and Redwood. Harry Adamson was fortunate in finding a Golden Eagle and a Belted Kingfisher the day he escorted a girl from Massachusetts.

Guests: Richard Pough, author of Audubon Western Bird Guide (to be had at the National office in Berkeley) formerly head of Nature Conservancy, and still active in that field, stopped to visit and dine with Betty and Harry on his way to meet a friend at the Walnut Creek Walnut Festival.

Visitors are welcomed at the meetings of Mount Diablo Society. Norma Warner, Membership Chairman, will be happy to greet and introduce them if they will make themselves known to her.

A warm welcome to Robert, third son of Jack and Sally Steller, a mid-September arrival to this Audubonning family.

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President: Harry N. Couden - 1491 Sunset Loop, W.C. - Ye 4 8873  
Vice President: John Bruce - 348 Verona Ave, Danville - Ve 7 2704

Secretary: Myla Austin - 2970 Consuela Road, Concord - Mu 5 8137  
Treasurer: Judy Perlman - 1158 Glen Road, Lafayette - At 3 3021

Conservation: Ferd S. Ruth - 43 Cuesta Way, W.C. - Ye 4 8803  
Membership: Norma Warner - 3163 Wayside Lane, W.C. - Ye 4 4604

Publicity: Mrs. Elizabeth O'Meara - P.O. Box 914, W.C. - Ye 4 4720  
Quail: Mrs. J.C. McGeehon - 2165 Oakvale Road, W.C. - Ye 4 2752

Field Trips Committee: Mr. and Mrs. Harry Adamson  
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Beitzel  
Mr. Bev Wilder



# The Quail

BULLETIN OF THE MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY  
WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA

December 1957  
Vol. 4, No. 6

Next regular meeting of Mount Diablo Society will be 8 p.m., Las Lomas High School, Room 201. Thursday, December 5th. John Bruce, Program Chairman, in accord with his plan to have programs on various sciences, promises a speaker from the Mount Diablo Astronomical Society of which Wm. F. Greenwood is the head. "How and Why of Satellites" will be the main topic, although "Sunspots" may be discussed by a member of this Moonwatchers group.

The program scheduled for November had to be postponed, but will be given in January. Although the change had to be made with very short notice and hosed with flu, our Chairman got in touch with R.S. Beitzel who displayed and talked on his hobby, "Bottles". Thanks to John and Dick for an interesting evening that was far from being a mere filler.

Dick has the January trip well planned for the 5th. The complete story in the January issue of the Quail will be out the last week in December. However, the regular meeting has been scheduled for the 9th of the month.

## Two December events:

Field Trip on Sunday the 8th - Carlyle Sather of Colma, leader, assisted by Tom Grimes of Concord - the Conn Lake area the objective. "Meet at the bridge about one mile north of Napa on the Silverado Trail. Turn off for the lake about sixteen miles farther north. Bring lunch, binoculars, telescopes and interested friends", writes Mr. Sather.

This is always a productive trip (sorry, no pun intended). As many as sixteen different kinds of ducks have been seen, and a total count of 60 or 70 species of birds. Among the land birds always seen in the oaks are the handsome Lewis Woodpeckers. For further information telephone Mr. Sather, Pl 6-0581 or Tom, Mu 4-9492.

And the annual Bird Count or Census - the Adamsons, leaders. That will finish their months as Field Trip Chairmen. Thereafter Dick and Violet Beitzel begin their stint.

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"Our annual Christmas Count will be from dawn to midnight of December 22, (Sunday). Actually we will meet at 7 a.m. at the Greyhound Bus Depot near the Monument, Pleasant Hill. Our leaders and their respective territories are as follows:

Paul Opler: From Avon to a point midway between Pittsburg and Antioch on the north.

Pete Veitch - Lower southeast slope of Mt. Diablo to the top.

Bev Wilder - Pacheco, East Contra Costa Junior College, and the hills in the back on the West.

Harry Adamson - Saranap, Tice Valley, Marsh Creek Road and Clayton.

Anyone wishing to join us, please meet at 7 a.m. sharp to go with one of the groups. That evening the final list will be compiled at the Adamsons after dinner. There is a charge of 50¢ per person for those participating who wish their names published in the Christmas Count issue of the Audubon Field Notes magazine.

Let's break the record for our territory this year by seeing more than a hundred species in the prescribed 15 mile radius circle. For those who cannot join us, be sure to watch your backyard and report the result to us.

All participants are invited to meet for dinner at the Adamsons, 995 Carol Lane, Lafayette at 5:30 p.m. Please make reservations by calling At 3-2164 no later than December 20th. There will be a charge of \$1.00 per person. Please do not dress up, but come in your birding clothes."

---Harry and Betty Adamson

Backyard watchers frequently make valuable contributions. Even though a species may not be added, numbers will be. Could be the 100th species!

No screen tour until the 24th of January. Muri Deusing's "Adventure in Africa" enthralled his audience. More than one comment on the astonishing size of the animals, deer, antelope, etc.

Those who undertook to complete the 1957 Birders' Individual Questionnaire are asked to turn them in by the end of the year to the Society Secretary, Mrs. A. L. Austin, 2970 Consuelo Blvd., Concord. Fred Evendon compiled the questionnaire in the hope that with your help in keeping accurate records for 1957, some worthwhile information about the economic value to California of our hobby can be developed and utilized for the best interests of all of us.

Glen Shanks brought word to the last meeting of sanctuaries being built by the children in the Orinda Schools with assistance from nearby residents in setting out native plants. He has given several bird talks in those schools, and is a promoter of Junior Audubon groups.

Janet Willoughby telephoned to say that last August someone had left a plastic plate at their house -- that her mother hopes the Society will return next summer.

Betty Adamson, assistant leader of the Gridley-Willows trip sends this. Owing to previous commitments and-illnesses, but two families from Mount Diablo Society participated.

"This trip, which is always one of the best, was exceptional this year. There were lots of birds, lots of people and spectacular cloud formations on Sunday. But where were the people from the Mount Diablo Audubon Society? Of course, with seventy people from Golden Gate and Sacramento Audubon Societies and guests plus 23 cars on Sunday to maneuver on the levee roads, we weren't looking for more people. On Saturday we met at the Gray Lodge near Gridley where John Cowan, Refuge Manager, greeted us and where we spent the balance of the day. Before arriving at the Refuge a Lewis Woodpecker was seen near Sycamore and a White-tailed Kite west of Live Oak. While on the Refuge one of the party had a quick glimpse of a Sora Rail. A Blue Goose was seen by a few of the party and many Ross Geese among the Snow Geese. An especially wonderful sight was about 300 Sandhill Cranes which were close enough so the red on the head could be seen."

Saturday evening most of the group stayed at Willows, but with the motel booked solid, some stayed at Live Oak and others at Yuba City. That evening 33 dined together at the Blue Gum Restaurant north of Willows.

"Sunday morning, after a light rain during the early hours, was cool and damp, but within a short time the sun came out and during the day we had ever changing cloud formations with skeins of ducks or geese against the clouds. Earl Albertson took his carful of birders home to Sacramento Saturday night, but next morning was at hand with a new group when we met at the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge. Gene Kridler, Federal Biologist, gave us a very informative talk concerning the raising of crops and distribution of birds on the Refuge. That week end it was estimated that there were a million and a half ducks and geese on the Willows Refuge alone. Mr. Kridler went with us for the morning. Besides the ducks and geese other birds were seen such as Dunlins and Least Sandpipers and finally the Yellow-headed Blackbirds which had been evading the group most of the week end. No Whistling Swans had been reported at the Refuge, but I finally spotted one which some of the group saw. The bird even took off, circled and finally landed again some distance away. All in all, it was a wonderful week end of birding and photographing". The species count will be in the next issue.

Guests who came last meeting night with Mrs. Austin were her daughter, Lani, and Alan Bradshaw (fifth grade) who is greatly interested in all outdoors. In his own words he "collects everything". With him he brought a box of his favorite stones and a mounted defunct tarantula.

For Halloween in her dining room the Editor found a small one, far from defunct. Probably came in with the wood for the fireplace that evening. It was coralled, put in a jar, and given to the eight year old granddaughter who was happy to display it to the neighbor "kids" and school.

Harry N. Couden, 1491 Sunset Loop, Walnut Creek, Ye 4-8873, is President of this Society and is ready to supply information or referrals. If not available, his secretary-wife Dorothy will.



1. The Muir Home project was vetoed by Governor Knight at the request of the Muir family. Their objection to the idea of the State establishing the house as a Historical Monument was based upon the fact that John Muir himself disliked the house as a "white elephant" and lived in it only because his father-in-law wished it. His real home preference was the upper valley ranch house near the present grave site.

Now, the Muir Home Association is attempting to interest other groups in acquiring the property in order to establish a park and educational tour program. Groups interested are said to be the Historical Society and the City of Martinez. Perhaps this plan will succeed.

2. Flood control in Central Contra Costa County is being studied by the Army Engineers. It looks as though this branch of the Federal Government aided by local bond issue later will take up the major portion of our watershed flood problem. It is hoped by some that the program will include replanting the watershed with shrubs, and trees which will aid in holding back the run-off water. It must be understood by all that flood control would not be needed as much as it is had people not purchased homes constructed on a flood plain. We should learn to reside in the hills and carry on our agricultural pursuits in the lowland river valleys that contain our very best soil. We should not be living in these valleys nor destroying our fruit orchards and vegetable crop land in favor of residences. In so doing, we are hastening the day when we have food shortages due to crop land shortages. Oh, this isn't tomorrow, but it is going to come at some future time.
3. The sewage disposal plant is under expansion. This work is aimed at having every house connected to sanitary sewage disposal plant at some future date, thus eliminating the septic tank as a source of soil and water contamination.
4. It is expected that gradual acquisition of the facilities of the California Water Company will be accomplished by East Bay Mud in order to provide more reasonable water supply for the valley communities south of Walnut Creek.
5. The Junior Museum group has purchased the old Sportsman Club and has it at present resting on the Phil Bancroft Property adjacent to Heather Farm Lake. We hope to have this building ready for summer 1958 use. We hope to build the permanent facility on Heather Farm property above the lake when this property clears escrow and the City of Walnut Creek secures the deed to this land for park purposes. This is what is holding us up now and has been for over a year.

6. Park Council Activities include:
  - a. promotion of parkways and plantings
  - b. promotion of San Pablo Reservoir as a state park site
  - c. trucking of quarry matter be stopped in Redwood Canyon
  - d. establishment of Muir Home as a historical site
  - e. that the Cowell Estate be made a County Park
7. Briones Park is being purchased over a ten year period. It will become a County Park.
8. A tax rate should be established for purchase of park areas in Contra Costa County. Perhaps 5¢ on \$100.00 as in effect in East Bay Regional Park District. (my own idea F.S.R.)
9. Smog continues to increase. Industry should attempt to solve this problem in earnest. We will have to help by limiting burning of garbage and refuse.
10. Pollution regulations should be enforced on our rivers to make these rivers and sloughs more desirable recreation areas. It is my feeling and that of others that pollution has done more to reduce striped bass populations than has commercial fishing.
11. Billboards should be suppressed entirely on freeways. Keep alert and do your part to promote this. Do not patronize the advertisers and write protests to them.
12. The Boy Scouts are in need of conservation projects such as tree planting, shrubbing, and general watershed control. If you have projects that need boy power, let me know. F.S.R. You supply the plants.

Ferd. Ruth  
December 10, 1957