PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Fifteen members of the Golden Gate Audubon Society, including seven members of the board, attended the National Audubon Society convention in Corpus Christi, Texas, in November, the largest representation of any out-of-state branch. The convention itself, with paid registrations of about 1200, was also the largest in Audubon history, with 46 states and Canada represented.

There were many national concerns discussed. Carl W. Buchheister, president of the NAS, outlined some of them in a forceful speech that covered three major goals—adequate safeguards for our remaining wilderness areas; the addition of important areas to the National Parks system; and positive action on the chemical pesticides problem. He also said, and wonderfully well, that NAS is "prepared to do battle if necessary" against the proposal from certain quarters to permit hunting in National Parks. He stressed that these areas are traditionally sanctuaries for all. I'm sure that none of us can visualize as a wilderness sanctuary any place that bars part of our living world from protection; otherwise, the word "sanctuary" has no meaning.

Stan Picher, president of the Marin Audubon Society, gave a fine talk on Audubon Canyon Ranch, and we showed the film—the only local effort on the program. This, plus the recent excellent article in the Christian Science Monitor, an international newspaper, has given our project wider publicity than we dared dream when we launched our campaign last spring.

So, with hope and happiness, our own society begins a new year. And most warmly I wish each of you, too, personal hope and happiness in 1963.

AILEEN PIERSON, President

FIELD TRIP TO WATER FOWL REFUGES

On the weekend of November 3 & 4, some 32 members and guests of the Golden Gate Audubon Society enjoyed the annual spectacle of the hordes of waterfowl which winter in the Sacramento Valley. The weather was almost too balmy for comfort and the number of geese and ducks was far below what we sometimes see at this time of year, the lack of cold winter storms being one factor that had kept many of the birds at Tule Lake Refuge as well as points farther north.
Saturday was spent touring the Gray Lodge State Game Refuge near Gridley where the lack of geese was particularly noticeable. The Air Force had a group of nine huge transports circling through the area from time to time and the first time around they aroused a flock of approximately 375 Sandhill Cranes. The sight and sound of the cranes milling around was worth the trip.

Saturday evening about two thirds of the people had dinner together at the Blue Gum Inn north of Willows.

Sunday morning we met at the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge near Willows where members of the staff gave us a talk, illustrated with some really excellent slides, on matters pertaining to refuge work, which involves a good deal of farming know-how as well as ornithological knowledge.

Larger-than-usual numbers of Tree Swallows, White Pelicans, Cinnamon Teal and Gadwall reflected the unseasonal warmth. One European Widgeon and several Ross Geese were seen. Perhaps the trip highlight was an immature Bald Eagle which coursed low over the marshes hunting for either small mammals or crippled water fowl.—Harry C. Adamson, Leader & Historian

FIELD OBSERVATIONS

From William M. Gilbert, Davis California—“On December 2, I saw a single male Barrow's Goldeneye on Putah Creek about one mile south of Monticello Dam in Yolo County. The oblong patch and a blue, rather than green, sheen to the head were distinctive, separating the bird from the American Goldeneye. I have checked with ornithologists here at the University of California, Davis, and none apparently has seen this species in this area or elsewhere.

According to the field guides the species breeds sparingly along streams in the Sierras of California. In winter it is found mainly on the ocean, rarely south to Central California. Apparently, Putah Creek, narrow, rocky trout stream, was preferred by this bird, to Lake Berryessa a short distance away. Possibly the creek resembles the bird's breeding habitat.

Elsie Roemer tells us that during November and for a period of about three weeks a Tropical Kingbird was observed on Bay Farm Island. Feeding up and down the fence, it was first seen there by Mrs. Hebert. Also, a Western Kingbird, rare this time of year, was identified at the golf course on Beach Road, Bay Farm Island. There is no previous record of this bird in this area.

WARNING—Since November, Sharp-shinned Hawks have been preying daily on songbirds at several feeders in the Oakland hills. Open-shelf feeding and other unconcealed feeding of birds should be discontinued in the Oakland-Berkeley hill area.—Vi Homem.

San Francisco, December 18—"There’s a Nashville Warbler in our backyard.” Valeria DaCosta

CORRECTION—In our November issue a contribution to the Audubon Canyon Ranch Fund as a gift of appreciation to Dr. Donald R. Pratt from Dr. and Mrs. Samuel Susselman, was listed as a gift of remembrance. Since
Dr. Pratt is much alive and able to enjoy the appreciation which the gift bestows we are happy to correct the error at this time.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WILD LIFE FILMS—On Monday, January 21, at 8:00 P. M., Land of the Sea, a film on Nova Scotia by Robert C. Hermes, will be shown at the Berkeley High School Theatre, Allston Way and Grove Street. If you do not have a season ticket, single tickets may be bought at the door for $1.00 Doors open at 7:30.

AUDUBON CANYON RANCH FILM—From the first week in January until further notice the San Francisco copy of Laurel Reynolds's Audubon Canyon Ranch film and a set of slides will be in the custody of Mrs. Budd Smith, 555 Dewey Blvd., San Francisco and no longer with Mrs. Brooke Clyde.

YOUTH LEADERS' EDUCATION—Our Education Chairman, Janet Nickelsburg, will meet with persons interested in her Youth Leadership program in the library at Rotary Natural Science Center, Lake Merritt, Oakland, on Saturday, January 19, from 10 to 12 noon. Plans will be made at this meeting for a field trip to be followed by a meeting to evaluate the field trip. For further information, please, phone Elsie Roemer, LA 2-0941.

Mrs. Nickelsburg will organize other classes during the year at the request of any group of eight or more persons.

AUDUBON CANYON RANCH BENEFIT—Mrs. Daniel Boyd, who has so generously contributed to Audubon Canyon Ranch, has a group of photographs of Western Marin County on sale at Monkey Business, 3509 California Street, San Francisco. Proceeds from the sale of these pictures will go to Audubon Canyon Ranch. Go in. Be tempted. Succumb.

WRITE—On November 29, the State Highway Commission took under consideration a plan to make a scenic freeway out of more than 20 miles of coastal highway in Marin County—the highway that passes Audubon Canyon Ranch. Meantime, the Legislature is considering adopting standards for scenic highways. The question, therefore, is whether a decision as important to the Bay Area's future as this should be made before the standards are adopted. In a democracy the will of the people, not just a few groups interested in more tourist dollars, should be the deciding factor. We urge you to write and have your friends write individual letters to the State Highway Commission, Sacramento, expressing your opinion. If possible send a copy of your letter to Governor Edmund Brown.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members to our Society: from Alameda, Miss Nancy Martin; from Berkeley, Mr. W. Vincent Evans, Mr. & Mrs. Warren B. DeLancey, Mr. Franklin Fitz, Mrs. Esther Newhall, Mrs. June Walker; from El Cerrito, Dr. Donald Freedman; from Hayward, Miss Elsie Obergerfell; from Oakland, Mr. Robert M. Davis, Mr. David L. Lindstrom, Mrs. Margaret F. Nelson, Mr. Harold W. Rodeck, Miss Ann T. Wagner; from San Francisco, Miss Dolores Dodd, Mr. & Mrs. Clarence Gervais, Mrs. H. V. Montgomery, Mr. Ron E. Patterson, Miss Amelia Pretka, Miss Lucie I. Renner.

—VALERIA G. DaCOSTA, Membership Chairman
ALLIGATORS—Alligator hides are worth up to $4.75 per foot on the market and as a result alligator poaching is a problem in the South. Two men were arrested recently with 32 alligators in their possession at the Sabine National Wildlife Refuge in Louisiana. Refuge workers were fired on but escaped injury when they encountered an alligator hunter in Okefenokee Swamp in Georgia. The assailant fled leaving his boat and equipment and three dead 'gators. FBI agents were called in to track him down.

Constantly hunted for the market, the alligator is becoming an endangered species surviving in numbers only in protected areas. Alligators inhabit three National Audubon Society sanctuaries: the great Corkscrew Swamp in southern Florida, the new Wakulla Springs sanctuary in northern Florida, and the 26,000-acre Rainey Wildlife Refuge in Louisiana.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER—The November 6 elections produced one thumping victory for conservation that should not go unnoticed. Citizens of St. Louis, Mo., voted 5-to-1 for the biggest sewage treatment bond issue ever approved by a single ballot—a $95 million issue. As a result the Missouri metropolis, which has always dumped its raw sewage into the Mississippi River, will have modern treatment plants in operation by 1964 and a cleaner downstream.

INSECTICIDES—Dieldren is going to be used in a massive spraying program in the third futile effort by the Michigan Department of Agriculture to "contain" and "eradicate" the Japanese beetle said to be moving in from Ohio. "This is not going to be one of those indiscriminate spraying programs," according to State Agriculture Director George W. McIntyre, "but a carefully conceived eradication program."

In 1959, some 15,000 acres were sprayed in Michigan to "contain" the Japanese beetle; in 1960, some 40,000 acres were treated; the plans this winter call for spraying 80,000 acres in Monroc and Lenawee counties. A lot of dieldren will be paid for by the taxpayers. a lot of wildlife will die, and the beetles will continue to spread.

JANUARY MEETING

The 535th meeting of the Golden Gate Audubon Society will be held on Thursday, January 10, at 7:30 p. m., in the First Unitarian Church, Geary and Franklin Streets in San Francisco.

Dr. Robert Y. Orr, Curator of Ornithology and Mammalogy at the California Academy of Sciences and Professor of Biology at the University of San Francisco, will present an illustrated lecture on California Mushrooms. Dr. Orr is the author of Mushrooms of the San Francisco Bay Region. Mrs. Orr shares this interest and will assist in the program.

Dinner will be served at the church at 6:00 p. m. This is a fine opportunity to become acquainted with members and their friends. If you plan to attend—and please do—call Valeria DaCosta in San Francisco, WE 1-5257, or Myra Browne in the East Bay. LO 8-1921.

—MYRA BROWNE, Program Chairman
FIELD TRIPS FOR JANUARY

On Sunday, January 6, to San Francisco Bay Salt Marsh Sanctuary near Newark, for a search for Rails, Clapper, Virginia and Sora. Black Rail could also be found. Mr. John Larson, Jr. and Mr. Elwood Bunting, Audubon Wardens, patrol this area at this time who will fill us in on where to find them. We plan to be on the levees during a plus high tide. There will be some walking on rough ground. Bring waterproof foot wear, lunch, binoculars, telescopes and friends. Meet at 8 a. m. at the post office in Newark.

On Sunday, January 13, to Dillon's Beach. Meet at Point Reyes Station at 9 a. m. This trip has been planned to study the bird life on the east side of Tomales Bay. The wintering species are probably all in so large groups of water and shore birds should be seen. Harlequin Duck, Red-necked Grebe, Black Brant and Bald Eagle have been seen here. Co-leaders, Grace Miller and Alice Williams, phone 669-1218.

On Tuesday, January 15, to Golden Gate Park. This trip will start at 9:30 a. m., from the Aquarium in Golden Gate Park which can be reached by taking the No. 10 Municipal bus. Such interesting species as Varied and Hermit Thrush, Orange-crowned, Myrtle, Audubon and Townsend Warblers may be seen. Anna's Hummingbird nests might be seen as they start nesting activities as early as December. Leader, Miss Florence Plymell, PR 6-61208.

Saturday, January 26, to Lake Merritt and Joaquin Miller Park, Oakland. This is a good place to observe many species of water birds at close range. Some unusual birds may, also, be seen in the pens and on display in the dome. A visit to the Rotary Natural Science Center is interesting and educational. This nationally known wildlife refuge is becoming more important to this community every year. Many groups use its facilities to learn more about nature and wildlife. Meet at the Rotary Natural Science Center in Lakeside Park near the feeding areas, at 9 a. m. Bring lunch, warm clothing, binoculars, telescopes and interested friends. Leader, Paul F. Covel, KE 6-4120.

Those wishing to go to Joaquin Miller Park and the Robin Roost, meet again at the Rotary Science Center at 1 p. m. From there travel will be by auto. If the weather permits and the robins cooperate, a demonstration of bird banding will be given by members of the W.B. B. A. at the above designated area. In the event of bad weather, Paul Covel will show a movie in the science center.

On Sunday, February 3, to Richardson Bay and other Marin Peninsula points. We will visit the Richardson Bay Wildlife Refuge established through the efforts of the Richardson Bay Foundation and the National Audubon Society. This area was patrolled by an Audubon Warden, Mr. John C. Larson, Jr., during the last waterfowl hunting season. He will be present to give us a talk on the history of the Victorian house restored by Mrs. Donald Dickey, and the bird population occupying the sanctuary during winter months.
Belvedere, San Quentin and San Pedro Points, (McNear’s Beach) will, also, be visited if time permits. Meet at the parking area just north of the Richardson Bay Bridge on U.S. Highway 101, at 9 a.m. Bring lunch, warm clothing, binoculars, telescopes, and interested friends, Leader, Elizabeth S. Lennon, ED 2-1641.

—HAROLD G. PETERSON, Field Trips Chairman

IN MEMORIAM

Gift of Remembrance to the Canyon Ranch Fund

In memory of

Howell D. Perry

GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

Established January 25, 1917

A Branch of the National Audubon Society since 1948

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Claims for missing numbers of THE GULL should be sent to the Assistant Editor. Changes of address should be sent to the Membership Chairman.

Monthly meetings second Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint Membership, Local and National, $5.50 per year, includes AUDUBON MAGAZINE and THE GULL. Subscription to THE GULL separately $1.50 per year.

Visit the Conservation Center of the NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

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