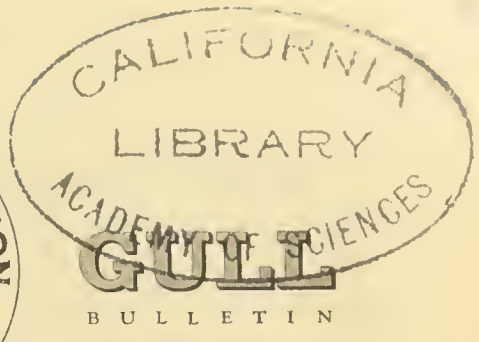


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THE MONTHLY

GULL BULLETIN

VOLUME 1

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, JUNE, 1919

NUMBER 6

JUNE MEETING: The next regular monthly meeting of the Association will be held on Thursday evening, the 12th inst., at 8 o'clock, in the lecture hall of the California Development Board, Ferry Building.

The evening will be devoted to the personal narrations of our own members of their observations and experiences in bird sport and study. In addition to those on the program, others of those present who may wish to tell of their own experiences will be afforded opportunity to do so.



JUNE FIELD TRIP will be taken to Tennessee Cove, Marin County, on Sunday, 15th inst. Take 8:45 a. m. Sausalito ferry. Purchase round trip tickets to Mill Valley, 40c. Bring lunch and canteens.

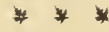


PROCEEDINGS OF THE MAY MEETING: The twenty-eighth regular meeting was held on the 8th of May in the Ferry Building, President Lastreto in the chair.

Encouraging progress in the Junior Department, under charge of Mr. Hansen, was reported. The need of volunteers to take charge and to instruct clubs being organized was emphasized.

A particularly interesting letter was read from Mr. Newsom showing how far from lonesome he is in the otherwise lonely Farallon Islands finding interesting companionship with the birds there.

The Board of Directors had met at 7:30, arranged for the next monthly lecture to the Boy Scouts and elected to membership Miss Helen Flynn and Mr. Charles S. Cushing.



ACTIVITIES OF THE JUNIOR ANNEX: The Lowell Junior Audubon Club was organized two weeks ago, and is beginning the season with a series of field trips and lectures. The Club's headquarters are at the Lowell High School. Mr. C. W. Fender, Instructor, and Collins Macrae, Secretary.

At the last lecture given to the Boy Scouts, Mr. C. R. Smith gave an interesting talk on the prominent features of different families of birds, in relation to their existence. Mr. Douglas will give the next lecture at the Headquarters of Troop 54, Thursday evening, June 5, 1919.

A number of Junior Audubon members have reported the presence of Red and Northern Phalaropes around the Chain of Lakes. A large flock of cedar wax wings have also been continuously seen until recently.



SOME BIRD NESTS OF GOLDEN GATE PARK

During the latter part of February, this year, through the good offices of Dr. F. W. D'Evelyn, about eight acres were set aside in Golden Gate Park to be used as a Bird Preserve. Nesting houses were constructed, such as flicker, linnett and chickadee boxes, and wren cans. The nesting houses were placed in the early part of March by several Scouts of Troop 13 and those of Troop 20. Very little activity was noticed about the boxes until April.

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One bright Sunday morning (April 6), some moss was noticed hanging on the outside of Scout Gutman's chickadee box. A careful scrutiny showed that a nest was in the course of construction; unfortunately the top had been nailed tight, and we were forced to make our observation through some cracks. Encouraged by our discovery we hastened to examine the cans placed for the wrens, and found that one can contained a nest in the course of construction, a third with the occupant evidently incubating. Visiting Scout Vincent's chickadee box we discovered that a pair of the birds were in possession and busily constructing their nest. The flicker and linnett boxes showed no signs of being occupied at this time. On our way home that afternoon, we visited a nest of the Hutton vireo, which contained two white eggs. This nest was built out of newspapers, moss and the like, hanging from a crotch of a branch about eight feet above the ground, in a secluded Cypress. We also said "Hello" to a pair of flickers who had just a few weeks before chiseled a nest in a semi-decayed tree near the buffalo pen. The female was most likely incubating, but upon our approach poked out her beak and made a rapid exit.

Several weeks later another visit was made to the experiment grounds. On our way over the nest of an Anna Hummer was discovered, which contained young. A later examination showed that the bird had built her nest over one of last year; this gave the nest a peculiar cone-like shape. Except in one instance little activity was observed around the boxes, and we surmised that most of the birds were incubating. This exception was Scout Haskell's linnett box, which had been placed Friday and now contained a rapidly growing nest of the Vigor's wren. All the boxes made by the boys, and most of the wren's cans were occupied. Sunday, May 18, we found that our vireo nest had been deserted, that young in several of the chickadee boxes were ready to leave, and in one case flew out of the box upon our approach. The wren's eggs in the linnett box had hatched, and the young were keeping the adults busy.

Out of a score of boxes that were placed, twelve were, or had been occupied, the occupants successfully bringing forth their broods in every case. The linnett and flicker boxes up to this writing have failed to attain their object. So for the first time in San Francisco, a systematic placing of bird houses in our public parks by our junior members had been attempted, and met with greater success than we had hoped for.

HAROLD E. HANSEN.

[The success of this first work of our juveniles stands out in marked contrast with this season's experience of two of our members, Mr. Bickford in Napa, and Mr. Lastreto in Menlo Park, who report a very low house occupancy by their birds this spring.—Ed.]



"CALIFORNIA FISH AND GAME"

"The above is the title of the quarterly magazine dedicated to the "Conservation of Wild Life through Education" and published by the California Fish and Game Commission. The last issue, the April number, contains many very interesting items appealing to sportsmen and especially to bird lovers and conservationists. We here give an epitome of articles related to birds.

A very interesting communication on the Herring Gull quoting observers attesting to their usefulness as insect eaters and the possible utilization of the California Gull in combating the grasshopper plague.

Undesirable legislation pending at Sacramento.

How a "joint" (junta?) in Colusa County arranged to sell duck "limits" to sportsmen and were caught with the goods just before the opening of the season.

The need for a new migratory bird treaty with our southern sister republics to protect their winter visitants, and describing bird killing practices in Mexico that remind one of the wholesale killing inventions of our late Hun enemies.

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Recommending the manicuring of the nails on the fore paws of cats to disable them from catching birds.

How birds fly, in controversy against Mr. Loomis' theory of how migrating birds achieve orientation, ascribing it to hereditary instinct and offering specific examples of homing pigeons.

On the use of propagated Mallard ducks in gardens to suppress undesirable weeds, grasses and snails, slugs, etc.

We recommend our members to apply to the Commission to have their names placed on the mailing list, even if, as contemplated, a fee is later charged to meet the increased cost of the publication. As Californians we have reason to be proud of this high class contribution by our State Commission to practical wild life conservation, and it will be specially gratifying to our members to know that our Past Honorary President, Dr. Bryant, is the editor in charge.



OIL UPON THE WATERS

Through the courtesy of the U. S. Naval Service the following service message was sent to our charter member, Mr. Samuel Newsom, on the Farallon Islands:

"Regarding floating oil that vicinity gather full information extent frequency and duration also estimate bird destruction each species period Mr. Kunder [the lighthouse keeper] reports very serious period your interesting letter received sig. Lastreto."

Following is the letter received from Mr. Newsom in reply:

"Farallon Islands, May 11th, 1919.

Dear Mr. Lastreto:

In response to your attached radiogram of May ninth, Mr. Kunder and I made a very careful estimation of all things asked for, and I take pleasure in submitting the following report. These facts, being gathered at first hand are fairly accurate, and while having to confine ourselves to round numbers, will be found accurate enough to base any calculations or complaints upon.

First—As regards frequency of the flocs of oil in the vicinity of the Farallons. During the months of January, February, and March these occurred on an average of every two or three weeks. During the latter part of February, and in the middle of March, these flocs were quite heavy, two especially killing hundreds of birds. Mr. Kunder reports making a trip to the western part of the islands during one of these periods, and found it difficult to walk but a few yards without disturbing some unfortunate bird that had become coated with oil. The source is the ballast of the tankers, pumped out just before the vessels enter the bay.

Second—Duration of the flocs. From close observation these flocs do not generally last more than two tides. If an extra high tide is followed by low water, most of the oil will adhere to the rocks. This, however, does not prevent the birds from becoming covered with the oil as quite a long period passes before even one tide rises and falls. Although the flow may last but half a day, hundreds of birds will undoubtedly be killed, as the diving birds, and as before mentioned, especially the Murres, are continually alighting on the surface of the ocean about the islands.

Third—Destruction of birds by oil. During the above mentioned heavy flocs of oil, the destruction of birds was appalling. Hundreds if not thousands of Murres could be seen about the islands trying in vain to free themselves of the oil. Many could be seen splashing in the water, trying to wash the oil from their plumage, while most perched dejectedly on rocks and pecked at their black, oily breasts and wings. It certainly is a pitiful sight to see a handsome bird in the prime of its life slowly die of starvation because someone was thoughtless enough to pump this oil on the sea, and this happens not only in isolated cases, but hundreds and hundreds of these poor birds have been killed in this manner. As to the species destroyed, the Murres undoubtedly come first—large quantities of these being destroyed during each flow. The cormorants come next, and the puffins come

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last, but few of the latter two species being destroyed, on account of their limited numbers on the islands. These are the only birds that are affected.

Fourth—In conclusion, we may summarize the situation as follows. Oil flocs are occurring on an average of at least once a month, if not oftener, hundreds and perhaps thousands of birds are being destroyed by this oil, and every means possible should be taken to stop this exceedingly harmful practice.

Hoping this will prove of help in any such effort, I remain,

Sincerely yours,

S. NEWSOM."

The joint committee of the Audubon Association of the Pacific and the Cooper Ornithological Club may report slow but promising progress in their intercession with the oil companies in inducing them to discontinue their destructive practice of pumping oil on the waters of the ocean. It is almost certain that this important matter will be discussed in an appropriate meeting during the coming convention at Pasadena of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.



THE MAY FIELD TRIP took us again to charming Lafayette, with its assurance of a long list and a most interesting one. The weather was clear and warm but the birds claimed our attention the instant we alighted from the train and, as the ground is all level, the comparatively short walk imposed no burden. One section of the party located a place where coffee might be made, but the others lunched on the creek bank, as usual, surrounded by songsters and nesting families. The chat sang for us in full view during the entire luncheon hour. The party left Lafayette shortly after four o'clock, but a few enthusiasts remained over for a later train.

San Francisco members saw California, Western and Bonaparte gulls, a Hudsonian curlew and Western sandpipers. In Lafayette were found meadow larks, red-winged and Brewer blackbirds, cliff and bank swallows, Western flycatchers, green-backed goldfinches, linnets, bluebirds, black-headed grosbeaks, quail and mourning doves; warbling vireo, California and Nuttall woodpeckers; Bullock orioles, ashy-throated flycatcher, Anna hummers and slender-billed nuthatches; titmouse, lutescent and yellow warblers; wood pewee, lazuli bunting, chipping and song sparrows; red-tail and sparrow hawks; cedar waxwings, San Francisco and California towhees; long-tailed chats, house and Vigors wrens; pine siskin, flickers, bush-tits and willow goldfinches; shrike, lark sparrow, russet-back thrushes and California jays; forty-seven species.

Members present were the Misses Ames, Ayer, Flynn, Griffin and Gunn; Messrs. Bell, Michael, Webb and George Wright; Mr. and Mrs. Smith and Mr. and Mrs. Kibbe. As guests, we were accompanied by Mesdames Allen, Freeborn and Mead; Miss Brown and Miss Mackay.

AUDUBON ASSOCIATION OF THE PACIFIC

FOR THE STUDY AND THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS

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