

June 1, 1966

TO THE BOARD OF THE SANTA BARBARA AUDUBON SOCIETY

In May 1964 I accepted with humility your election as President. At that time I had been in Santa Barbara less than a year but had already been impressed by not only the variety of the birds but also by the vitality of the Board of this organization. Our membership at that time was about 125 and today it is over 200. The first Board, many of whom still serve officially and unofficially in the organization and who still do most of the work, deserve our great thanks for bringing this organization into existence and seeing it through these first critical years. However, your Board has found that there is a very real need for more hands to help on the many routine and special tasks which have to be done on a weekly, monthly or annual basis. The turnover of our membership has fortunately been little, at least our new memberships have continued to exceed our losses. That in itself is a sign of a healthy organization, but we do not have enough members in the 25 to 40 age group, and we must do more toward attracting young families to participate in the rewards of Audubon membership and to participate in the work of this Society.

This report is a year overdue, with respect to my first term of office, but I will try to cover two years. I do not attempt to "sum up" anything; I would like only to give you a few brief glimpses of where we have been, where we are and where we should go. I repeat, we could not have gone anywhere without the tremendous work on the part of all past and present Board members.

Field Trips:

We have been able to average a field trip every other week for the last two years. The scheduling and management of such a large program represents a tremendous amount of labor on the part of those few individuals who do all the arranging and much of the bird finding for us. Such an active schedule is also evidence of the enthusiasm on the part of members to go look in specific places for birds at the best time of the year. A detailed analysis of the trips we have made indicates the wide variety of habitats which we have at our disposal. (See Appendix.)

Bird Finding:

Members of the Board have been working for some time on a booklet of the Santa Barbara region, which will be essentially an annotated field list. Our present plan is to have this booklet published in association with the Museum of Natural History in the near future. We are following a pattern of other lists of this type by classifying the habitat and indicating the specific region and frequency of occurrence throughout the year, as well as offering detailed instructions to get

to the places. It is also expected that we will include brief descriptions of other flora and fauna in the number of specific habitats we have at our disposal.

Since each one of us, although we are members of a group, is still an individual bird watcher, it would be impossible for me to record highlights of the past two years on which we would all agree. I think it is, however, proper to list some of the more notable experiences which most of us had. The buff-breasted, pectoral and solitary sandpipers, the wood ibis and the little blue heron in the Goleta area; the bald eagle and ospreys at Lake Cachuma; the famous "problem" gull, which turned out to be a glaucous gull, on East Beach; the old squaw and wood duck on the Stow Ranch; our two trips to the Sespe; and the American oyster catcher on the Channel Islands. The fact that there is seldom a trip on which some person does not see a new bird, is clear witness to the variety of our experiences and to the interest of our members.

Christmas Count:

We have learned, as has every other group in the country, that the organization of a Christmas count pays off. It appears that 15 to 20 parties with about 50 participants produces a species count which puts us consistently in the top 10 area nation-wide. We don't fly in our experts, nor do we import special rare birds; usual and unusual birds are here if we can only find them, and we have done a marvelous job of finding them. I recommend to the Board that they seriously consider taking a second Christmas Count, particularly since the California Condor should be on the Christmas Count List. We should be able to get a California Condor, as well as a number of other interesting birds, by covering the Sespe and upper Santa Clara River area during the Count, in addition to our regular immediate Santa Barbara region.

Conservation:

Santa Barbara, and indeed most of southern California, is faced with today's prevalent problem: there simply won't be any birds to see unless we do something about the maintenance of the habitat. From the mountain peaks, valleys and canyons, to the foothills, sloughs and beaches, the natural environment of the geography is under unremitting attack. Meadows and marshes disappear overnight and much of the bird population either disappears or relocates far from its original home. The Audubon Society got into the conservation "business" many years ago, when we began to learn more about ecology of our natural environment. Many of us may want to be only bird watchers but we cannot escape our responsibility to our community by preserving our land and water resources so that our bird, plant and animal resources are not destroyed. Man cannot survive for long in an urban asphalt society, if the natural society around us disappears. As a group we have therefore become actively involved in the passage of the 150 million dollar State Parks Bond Issue in 1964, the California Fish and Wildlife Survey and Plan, the Wilderness Act in respect to San Geronio and the San Rafael, to say nothing of the tremendous amount

of effort we have all put into the program to protect and preserve the Condor.

There is hardly a week that goes by that something new comes up in Santa Barbara County or in an adjacent region: whether it be tote-goats, or roads in the forests, or the maintenance or creation of trails, or the preservation of a park, or an island of green, these are all challenges to which we must be alert and to which we must respond. Every visitor to this area is impressed by its natural beauty and the variety of its natural resources. We are on the spot to protect and preserve these natural resources, not only for ourselves and our guests from other parts of America, but also for future generations.

Projects:

It is proper to record some of the specific projects which the Board or our members as individuals have put forward in the last two years.

Clark Bird Refuge: We have not proceeded as rapidly on this as we wish to, largely due to the negotiation of an appropriate interface relationship with the Childs Estate Foundation. It is expected that the summer of 1966 will see a resolution of this relationship and we will be able to move forward in the direction to which we are committed.

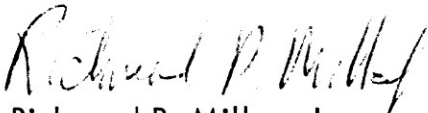
Education: Members of the Board and individual members have made many speeches and presentations to clubs, schools and service groups throughout the community, talking about birds and plants and conservation and the need for preserving our rich natural heritage. In addition, several other activities are most noteworthy: T. Nelson Metcalf's adult education course; Mrs. Roger M. Gildersleeves's Condor Exhibit at the April 1965 Horticultural Show; Mrs. Edwin Parkinson's model of the Bird Refuge Redevelopment Plan at the April 1966 Horticultural Show. We must find more members who will devote the energy to talk to schools and young peoples groups. Your Board has felt the need to approach the City and County schools with the offer of educational materials and talks but has felt that we need much greater strength before we undertake such a formidable task. We believe there is a great demand for childrens' nature study, only a portion of which is filled by the schools and the splendid work of the Museum of Natural History. As noted above, increased membership is required to undertake a program of increased childrens' education.

Research: We must not forget the Museum of Natural History contains a vast amount of data collected through individual and group research on the birds and natural history of this region. Everyone of us as individuals should make sure that our bird observations are recorded not only for the Audubon records but also for the Museum. It is only through the collection and analysis of such data that we will be able to identify in a coherent manner the changing population as well as the effect of a changing environment.

If everyone of us would bring into the Society a new member in the 1966-67 year, then membership would become a more rewarding experience both for ourselves and for our projects. We must also grow so that our witness grows in the midst of an expanding community population. Although the membership of the National Audubon Society exceeds 40,000, it is my conviction that it ought to be twice that in California alone. That is probably one of the greatest challenges which faces us.

The recently published State Fish and Wildlife Plan has a great deal to say about the increase in demand on our natural resources by both the "consumptive" users and the "non-consumptive." Now whether we like it or not, we are non-consumptive--that is, we don't pick it or catch it or kill it or eat it--we just look at it and obviously enjoy it. It is pretty easy to find out how many consumptive users there are, because they are sold licenses to hunt and fish. I am sure we wouldn't want to license bird watchers, hikers, horseback riders, nature lovers in general, or those people who just want to get away from it all. We must discover more meaningful methods to express to our local and State governments the demand that exists for the non-consumptive use of our resources.

Our public relations within the community are good, and we can keep them that way if we remember that bird finding and bird watching is not only an enjoyable hobby, but a hobby with a real purpose. We must retain the recognition of our community so that the ethics of conservation is not an empty phrase.


Richmond P. Miller, Jr.
President

ANNUAL REPORT

APPENDIX

June 1, 1966

<u>FIELD TRIPS</u>	<u>1963</u>	<u>1964</u>	<u>1965</u>	<u>1966</u>	<u>1967</u>
Goleta-Isla Vista-Devereaux	1/27	9/13	8/15, 11/6		
Refugio Pass and Beach		5/10, 10/25	4/25		
Santa Ynez Valley (Oso, Paradise, L. P., etc.)	10/27	11/8		3/13	
Santa Ynez Valley (Nojoqui, Cachuma, etc.)		11/15	9/26		
Foxen, Colson & Tepusquet	4/28		4/11	4/24	
Zaca Lake		4/26	5/2	5/1	
Hollister Ranch			10/24		
Dos Pueblos Ranch			1/23, 10/10		
Sandyland	9/30	11/29	9/19		
Botanic Garden		4/19, 7/26	7/25, 11/21		
Santa Clara River estuary		10/11	8/29	(8/14)	
Santa Paula Canyon - Stekel Park				5/29	
Sespe Corridor		3/16		3/27	
Mt. Pinos		6/7		(6/12)	
Reyes Peak		9/27	6/6		
Jalama Beach	3/31		4/3		
Santa Rosa Park			3/21		
Morro Bay	2/22		2/6, 12/4		
Los Baños			2/20		
Pt. Mugu Gun Clubs		2/16	1/10	2/13	
Channel Islands		5/24, 8/30	5/16	4/17	
Carrizo Plains		1/19		1/29	
Dune Lakes				2/27	

This list is drawn from data which several members have kept. It is probably not complete. Please give me additional and corrected dates, as well as those for 1961 and 1962, so that we may have correct records.