

T H E  
**Western Tanager**



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Mrs. RAYMOND BRENNAN, Editor  
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OUR FIRST POTTERY

From an  
Old Indian Legend



Long ago an Indian Squaw was piling wood on her fire. As she was about to place a piece of dead stump on the blaze, she noticed a bit of clay clinging to the bark. She saw that the clay had been shaped into a tiny hollow vessel.

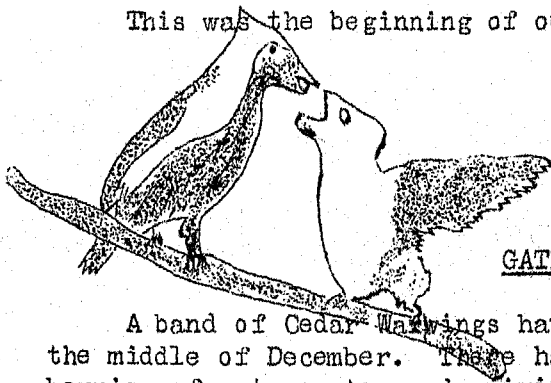
The squaw did not know that this was the clay nest of a jug-builder wasp, a little slim waisted creature. The wasp had flown from the edge of a pool to the stump with the clay in her mouth. This clay mixed with her saliva and became a cement. She formed it into the shape of a jug, when the jug or nest was finished. Then she laid an egg within the nest. Next, she stung a spider until it was helpless and thrust it inside the egg. She then closed the nest with more of the clay.

Sometime after the egg hatched and the jug builder wasp's baby had fed on the spider, chewed its way out and flew away.

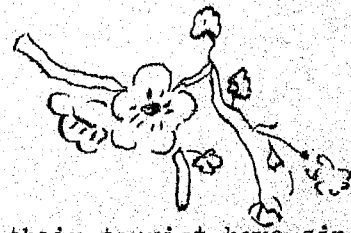
The squaw said, "I can make a jug like that for our corn that we keep in a basket." She tried by patting the clay in long strips and winding it around and around and shaping it smooth until she had a large vessel like the wasp nest. Later the squaw found if the jug was heated it would hold water.

This was the beginning of our American pottery.

Ella W. Hamilton



GATHERING OF THE CLAN



A band of Cedar Waxwings have made our neighborhood their tourist home since the middle of December. There have been about thirty in number feeding on the berries of cotoneaster and privet.

One day this flock landed in a shrub in front of our large living room window. A long low branch of this rather tall cotoneaster was filled with berries. To this all thirty birds flocked. Their combined weight brought the branch almost to the ground, giving us a thrill, for we were standing close to the window at the time.

Working in my garden one late afternoon, my ears hummed with the "seep, seep" of the waxwings. It seemed to come from all directions. Finally the band flew to a bare maple tree. As I watched them, another band arrived from an opposite direction, then another and another. I stood spell-bound in amazement, for my thirty had grown to one hundred fifty cedar birds, covering that bare tree with exquisite soft brown atoms of pulsing life. Soon one group departed to the blossoming fruit trees, another to the acacia and another to the eucalyptus, each band quietly talking among themselves as they settled on their perches. Sunset had come and all was Peace.

Charlotte A. Hamilton

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The Los Angeles Audubon Society holds two regular meetings each month - the first Thursday being Field Day, the third Thursday, a program meeting held in the State Building at Exposition Park at 2 P. M. The annual dues are \$1.25; Life Membership \$10.00 and Patron \$100.00.



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ANNUAL CONVENTION - FEDERATION OF NATURAL SCIENCES

This annual Convention, which is to be held May 19-23, 1937, inclusive, should be of interest to us all as the Convention will cover everything pertaining to natural sciences. There will be topics such as "The Romance of Shell Collecting", lectures on Entomology, "Cactus and Succulents of Lower California", "The Science of Navigation" and "Birds of Los Angeles." The Ornithology field trips will take place Saturday morning, May 22nd, at Griffith Park, Riverside entrance. Trips are at 7:30, 8, 8:30 and 9 A. M. The Entomology field trip is at 9, and the Botany field trip is also at 9 A. M. Outstanding leaders are in charge. We regret not having the program in time to give it in its entirety. For further details, telephone Mrs. Roy L. Sergeant, at Olympia 8317. The Convention Program will be read on Field Day.

FIELD DAY - MAY 6th, 1937. PLACE: Whittier, Woodland Park. Drive out Whittier Boulevard to Durfee, then north to Lexington. Audubon signs will be conveniently placed to guide you to the park. TIME: Mrs. C. Harry Eldridge will be ready to start at 9 A. M. sharp. Many birds are to be seen, including the lovely Cardinals. Guests welcome.

BOARD MEETING - May 13th, 1937, 2 P. M. This meeting is to be held at the home of our President, Miss Charlotte Hamilton, 11038 Hortense Street, North Hollywood, after which tea will be served. The new board is cordially invited. Hortense Street crosses Lankershim Boulevard between Riverside Drive and Magnolia Avenue.

When is a toad not a toad?  
 Ans. When it's a horned lizard.  
 There are no horned toads.

Do not call Gulls "sea-gulls" - just Gulls.

Callas are not lilies.

The Bird of Paradise belongs to the Crow family.

The Myna bird is a native of southeast Asia and belongs to the same family as the Starling.

The Hop-erchant butterfly lays its eggs in columns which are attached to leaves. The last egg hatches first, so that the chain remains unbroken.

AIDED BY BIRDS: When woodpeckers in southwestern states bore holes in cactus, the wound seals itself with a hard, fiber lining, which is removed by native Indians and used like a cup or glass to hold water and other liquids.

AUDUBON AND CONVENTION DATES

MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	(6)	7	8
9	10	11	12	(13)	14	15
16	17	18	(19)	(20)	(21)	(22)
(23)	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

INDOOR MEETING - MAY 20th, 1937

3 P. M.

The Indoor Meeting will be held in the Lecture Room of the Museum Building instead of the State Building, at Exposition Park, at 3 P. M. Our Society and the Convention will meet together at that time. A talk on Marsh and Shore Birds found near Salton Sea will be given by Mrs. Ben Clary, of Coral Reef Ranch at Coachella.

APRIL FIELD DAY

The Los Angeles Audubon Society met at the Bird Sanctuary in Griffith Park for the April bird walk. During luncheon, members and guests discussed the treasures discovered. Mrs. Eldridge spoke on the birds which she listed and Mrs. O. E. Edwards gave a delightful talk on the various types of poppy.

APRIL INDOOR MEETING

Mr. C. N. Rudkin, of San Marino, gave an interesting talk on butterflies. He has spent years collecting and mounting hundreds of specimens. These were passed through the audience to admire as he told of the trips taken for the interesting project.

Mr. John Vosburg, of Germain's Van Nuys nursery, brought many beautiful blooms which he described and gave practical hints as to their planting in the patio and regular gardens. Mr. Vosburg very graciously answered questions asked by the members.

Mr. C. V. Duff, one of the members, presented the retiring president, Miss Hamilton, with a gavel made from a tree growing on the farm where Abraham Lincoln spent his boyhood days.

May Wayte



Among our six species of humming birds the Anna is always with us. Rufous and Allen arrive late in February, and being migrants, leave in April, to return in July to September. The Costa prefers the cactus regions and comes in March; the Black-chinned in April, and both remain until September. The Calliope is a summer visitor to the high mountains.

Seven species of Fly catchers we find arriving in April and what busy little creatures they are helping to devour insects, working for conservation--five months or a little longer.

The Black Phoebe, about homes, and Say Phoebe in open spaces, (the latter nests near cliffs at the shore), are residents.

Orioles arrive near St. Patrick's Day. There are three records of early arrivals, March 5th.

The Scott is found only on desert slopes among the yuccas, pinyons, etc. This one resembles the Orchard Oriole which does not come here. The Bullock goes to the cotton-wood districts while the Arizona-hooded (Yellow head), prefers the fan-palms in your own yard where he calls sweetly and patiently for a mate. The females arrive a few days later, and Oh what a commotion! A choice is made. The disappointed ladies move on to other palms hoping for better luck. Nest building begins at once. They are expert architects and weavers. The material used is the threads on the leaves of our native Palm - *Washingtonia filifera* - in honor of our first President. The specific name *filifera* - that is, 'Thread-bearing', has reference to the abundance of long twisting, white threads that dangle from the edges of the leaf divisions." (Charles F. Saunders).

(Continued on Page 28)

April gladdens the hearts of bird lovers for it ushers in four colorful birds. Lazuli Bunting is a bit of Heaven's own blue. Western Blue Grosbeak is larger and of a darker hue. The Western Tanager, yellow body and red head, carries on his way to the mountains and the constant, cheerful song of the Black-headed Grosbeak may be heard everywhere.

Our six species of Swallows and Western Martin usually arrive in April. Some are here now, and remain until September or October.

In April, or earlier, we look for Vireos and Warblers which add bright bits of color among the dark green foliage, especially of the oaks and feed almost entirely on insects until September.---True leaf searchers.

The Alaska Hermit Thrush thrills us by his clear song and liquid notes before he leaves for the far North, but the Russet-backed Thrush takes his place from April to September.

The fern-leaved grevillea trees are golden in queer sweet blossoms in early May and an excellent place to look for Tanagers, Orioles, and many other species in search of insects on the sticky flowers. Fifteen kinds of birds have been observed at such a feeding station.

Many of the birds seen in lower altitudes in winter will be busy with family duties in mountain resorts.

The Pine Siskin, Cassin and Purple Finches, Western and Mountain Bluebirds, Nuthatches and Creepers, Robins singing and sociable, Chickadees that will eat nuts from your hand. The Audubon Warblers are quite different in their gay courting costumes from the somber gray with flashes of yellow as we see them in winter about our gardens.

The winter sparrows go far north for nesting, but are replaced by a few summer visitors. The 17th of April is the day of departure for Gambel White-crowns. Only a few remain longer.

Trips to the seashore in May are well worth while, as many waders and shore birds may be seen and fortunate are those who find the interesting Phalaropes on still water, back from the ocean mostly, whirling and swimming. Little "sea-ducks" in perpetual motion. Remember: it is the Phalaropes (three species) whose husbands do all the work of incubation and the rearing of the young.

The ladies are the larger and more gaily dressed. They tarry here for rest and food, then travel on, very far north to their chosen nesting grounds in the Arctic regions.

The Bonapart Gull, the smallest of our twelve common gulls, will wear his Easter head-dress of black. These are the last of the gulls to nest, as they see no reason for leaving sunny California for Northern Alaska until the days are longer!

It is worth a trip to the desert to see the Vermillion Flycatcher.

Keep your drinking fountains filled and feeding trays well supplied, as we have over 100 resident land birds and about 20 wading and water birds in Southern California.

Grace S. Hall

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#### DID YOU KNOW THAT

Mrs. Salmon has not only seen the Hermit Thrush in her yard but has also heard its lovely song!

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(Editor's Note:)

We are grateful to Ruth Forbes Sherry for her poem "The Pine" which appeared in our April, 1937, issue of THE WESTERN Tanager. The Editor regrets the error made in omitting her name.

