

T H E

# Western Tanager



MRS. RAYMOND BRENNAN, Editor

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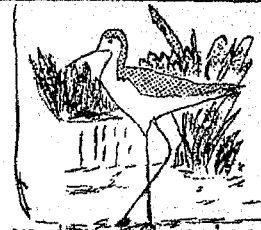
No. 4

## PRESERVATION OF AN OLD LANDMARK AND CONSERVING OUR SWEET WATERS

By -

Bertha H. Fuller

President-California History and Landmarks Club of Los Angeles



South of Los Angeles on the Harbor Boulevard (Main Street), on the extension of Figueroa, touching the almost new extensions of Normandie, Vermont, and other cross-wise streets and boulevards, lies a natural lake area that for many years now has been a disgrace to our country. Many of us old timers recall this area when it was still lake dotted--some years the water almost disappearing from evaporation, but perhaps never a year without at least a little water here and there in puddles.

Nigger Slough and Johnson Lake were almost one lake--the latter lies where the Dycer Airport now is on Western Avenue--but drainage has almost dried up Johnson. But Nigger Slough lies low and drains some 76 square miles of land. It lies approximately 7 miles from its nearest outlet, the East Basin of the Harbor. During flood times about 3500 acres may be inundated by the waters in this Nigger Slough area, with a maximum depth of 15 feet. Large areas of this lake bottom lie less than three feet above high tide. Bixby Slough lies farther south along Anaheim Boulevard, as well as Normandie, etc. These lake areas were at one time more or less connected by sloughs.

At one time most of the area was called Machado Lake. (Historic literature on this is rather scanty and therefore hard to refer to). Along one part a native Indian village was located and was called Suanga. Some maps place the village on Bixby Slough near San Pedro, although we have heard it was nearer the Dominguez Rancho, now a Catholic School. A daughter of the Sepulvedas, Mrs. Florence Dodson Schoneman, told us her father once had duckboats on old Lake Machado and from her description we took it to be what is now called Nigger Slough, but she did not know it by that name at all.

To drain this area is a very difficult problem. The proposal is to do what has been done at the mouth of Ballona Creek - make vast ditches, a canal with a bottom 90 feet wide, thus allowing tidewater to enter the canal and allowing barges and small boats access to Western Avenue, a distance of  $9\frac{1}{2}$  miles. These plans do not include an attempt to preserve any area for park use nor for a bird refuge. This is the last chance left to make such a refuge for the waders, especially. It is a very expensive plan as well and unless sufficient interest is shown by the public it is apt to lie dormant for some time. The Federal Government refused to touch it with WPA funds. However, if sufficient interest is shown, park areas might be procured and the best possible usage lowlands may be put to is for water or parks. Both can stand floods better than factories or residences. We have been told by engineers that controlled lakes are a possibility but getting these will take funds and public interest is all that will release funds for this purpose either.

The chief engineer of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District has published his disapproval of any further attempt to drain out natural swamplands, including Nigger Slough and its allied lowlands--Dominguez, Bixby, Lake Machado.

(Continued on Page 16)

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On the grounds of Gene Stratton Porter's home are many hedges and spots for the protection of birds. She intended to make it a "Bird Sanctuary" before her tragic death.

Mrs. W. E. McVoy, who lives above these gardens, told us that just at dusk a loud whir of wings is heard as thousands of California Quail fly past her home down into the Porter estate to hide themselves in the hedges, a safe sleeping place from all marauders.

A wise valley Quail is our State Bird! Mrs. Grace S. Hall

NEW MEMBERS

We are happy to welcome into membership the following persons:

- Mr. O. M. Stultz
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Michael
Mrs. Howard M. Saul

In reference to our "New Members" for December, 1937, on page 11, of THE WESTERN Tanager, please note the following correction:

Mrs. Mary B. Cawley

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.



JANUARY CALENDAR 1938
S M T W Th F S
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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

FIELD TRIP-JANUARY 6th. All aboard for Chatsworth Lake and Glover Park! Bus leaves at 8 A. M., from 544 South Hill Street. Fare is 75¢ round trip. The bus will stop in Hollywood at Hollywood Boulevard and Cahuenga, at 8:30 A. M. Please call Mrs. Hall, Richmond 7078, or Mrs. Allen, BLanchard 71839, for reservations not later than January 5th. Through the courtesy of Mr. Van Norman, Mrs. Daugherty has secured a permit for Chatsworth Lake, a bird sanctuary abounding in wild life, ducks, geese, Egrets, Rock Wrens, Sapsuckers, Lewis Woodpeckers and many more birds at the end of a delightful ride through the valley. Bring lunch as usual. Trip will be cancelled if it rains hard.

BOARD MEETING-January 13th. The Board meeting will be held at 10 A. M., Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Boulevard, Los Angeles.

PROGRAM MEETING-JANUARY 20th. Be prepared for one of Mrs. Squire's fine programs. Mr. A. H. O'Connor, a native of Australia, will be the speaker. He will show colored slides of the birds, trees, flowers and animals of Australia. Patsy Paullin, a whistler, will give us "Bird Secrets" and Leslie Paullin, also a whistler, will give bird imitations. Both brother and sister are pupils of Mrs. Wilson Jeffs. Come and bring a guest!

CLASS-JANUARY 28th. Mrs. Grace Hall will conduct a class from 10 A. M. to 12 A. M., Friday, Jan. 28th, at Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd. Come and bring a picnic lunch. Field identification of birds will be the principle subject.

PROGRAM MEETING - NOV. 18th.

Birds of Yosemite and Shore birds of La Jolla and wild flowers in colors delighted all the fortunate people who saw Mr. and Mrs. Charles Michael's motion pictures and heard Mrs. Michael's fine lecture. Mr. Michael also gave us some new and interesting facts about the California Woodpecker and other birds in a collection displayed by Miss Marian Faddis.

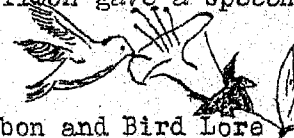
BIRD'S CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL FOR CHILDREN - DEC. 4th.

Mrs. E. E. Cobb arranged an entertainment to delight over two hundred guests besides exhibits and program held over from December 2nd. The Girl Scouts presented the "Woodpeckers Convention." Mr. Dorrance and his Eye dog demonstrated their fine relationship. Captain Obag, of the State Fish and Game, gave a fine talk. Triford's trained birds and dog gave a wonderful performance. A warm bright day made everything quite complete!

BIRD'S CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL - DEC. 2nd.

We extend our most grateful thanks to all who contributed to the success of our Christmas Festival. It would require a special edition to mention the names of all those who helped. Mrs. Grace Brown's Santa Claus apples and bird cookies, Mrs. O. L. Wait's gum-drop tree and Cora R. Basset's Christmas tree for the birds made our tables gay and inviting for 75 members and guests. Mrs. Thomas R. Shearer donated her fine nest and egg collection for our museum. Mrs. Edwards and assistants decorated the "Birds Christmas Garden." Mr. Otto Steiert's unique bread houses added fifty cents to our treasury. Mrs. Salmon's display of water birds gave us a fine opportunity for study and delighted the eyes by their natural setting. The following is a list of guests who contributed to our program: Mr. and Mrs. Charles Michael, Whitney Knox, Mrs. F. W. Paul, duck and dog, Mrs. Foss and her family with "Tweety", Jimmie Mallon, whistler, Mrs. Hintze, poem; Mrs. Morain gave a talk on "Holly"; Mrs. Edwards spoke to us on "Mistletoe"; and Miss Hamilton gave a speech on "New Ideas for Feeding Birds."

BIRD CENSUS - DECEMBER 20th.



A Bird's Christmas Census was taken for the National Audubon and Bird Lore publications, December 20th. A high wind all day prevented securing a complete census but the fine group of observers in the field brought in lists of 103 species and 10,435 individuals, which was a splendid achievement on one of the worst possible days for birding. The ten groups in the field included Mr. and Mrs. Charles Michael, Miss Charlotte Hamilton, Mrs. Ella W. Hamilton, Mrs. Thomas Shearer, (Mrs. Helen P. Goulding-Pasadena Audubon), Mrs. Grace Hall, Mrs. Clara Veatch, Mrs. Elsie Humphrey, Mrs. Roy Sergoant, Mrs. Mary Barnes Salmon, (Mrs. William Harriet Myers, California Audubon) (Miss Helen Pratt, National Junior Audubon) (Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Kent, Southwest Bird Study Club), Mrs. Bertha Fuller, of Inglewood, Miss Miriam Faddis, (Miss Bess Markson, Los Angeles Nature Club), Mrs. Anderson, Mrs. Oliver C. Edwards, Mrs. Caroline Daugherty, Miss Cora R. Bassett, and Mrs. O. M. Stultz.

BIRD SANCTUARY

Through the cooperation of Mrs. Florence Scott and with the permission of Mr. James K. Reed, Superintendent of Recreation Camps and Playgrounds, Plummer Park was dedicated as a Bird Sanctuary on December 2nd, 1937 -- a lasting Christmas gift for the Birds!

Our sincere thanks to Miss Miriam Faddis for donating the Bonapart Gull to our museum.

TUNE IN

Listen to KBHE, Saturday from 12:15 to 12:30 P.M., to Bird Program. Letters would be greatly appreciated from all who enjoy the programs. Address letters to Radio Station KBHE, Los Angeles.

Note

See the A. Lietz Company, 913 Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, for binoculars.

PRESERVATION OF AN OLD LANDMARK AND CONSERVING OUR SWEET WATERS

Along Anaheim Boulevard are high land points where the county art museum might be a beautiful asset to the landscape close to the high-class development of Palos Verdes Hills, the Rolling Hills Estates, using water as part of the scenic beauty of the gallery where parking would not be a problem to the autoist; where there are many boulevards approaching the city from the Harbor as well.

This county lies dry and burns so many months of the year surely lakes, green paths, green wood growths (there are now some native trees) with winding roads for those who really still enjoy peaceful scenes would be valuable assets to this part of the State.

Of course to all nature lovers, with their finer perceptions and keener enjoyments of natural beauties, making a place where our beautiful and rare waterbirds may be seen is sufficient cause for this effort to save the sloughs south of Los Angeles as lakes and parks.

EULOGY FOR A DEAR FRIEND

By - Frank Wiskind

Dear Friends:

To know Mildred in her daily life was to love her. One who was so fortunate to be a close friend can easily understand why she was loved so much.

We had on many occasions been so fortunate; we knew her and loved her. Mildred was happily possessed with an abundance of love and kindness which she showered on all her friends; she radiated a joy that made one happy to be with her.

Her married life with her dear husband, Leon, was of great devotion to each other. They were in a true sense ideal companions, always together and enjoying life to the fullest.

Their love for the out-doors appealed to both and such sympathy made for great harmony. Friends, such companionship is wonderful. Her life was so closely woven with all the beauties of nature, her soul was part of it. One marveled at a soul that possessed such unceasing love of all nature's wonders.

Her great joy was her study and making friends with birds and animal life. The close harmony that prevailed with her bird friends surely exemplified the love they had for each other.

Therefore, friends, the passing of our dear Mildred should not be mourned in the sense of sadness, but to know that she left with us that appreciation, that joy in our hearts, such as we will always remember.

EXCHANGE OF FACTS AND COMMENTS

Arranged by Elsie H. Humphreys

The following is an excerpt from the October issue of NATURE NOTES, Lassen Volcanic National Park: "Return of the Egret" by Carl Swartzlow, Park Naturalist: "The American Egret *Casmerodius egretta*, which was seen for the first time in the Park last year, was observed again September 9th, 1937, on Reflection Lake and Manzanita Lake. Last year the egret remained nearly two months, but this year stayed only two weeks." Readers of NATURE NOTES are requested to note the altitude at which this bird is recorded, 5,900 feet. We believe this is a record, but if anyone knows of a greater range of this bird, we would welcome the information."

How about it, Audubon folks, what is your answer?

A CONTINUATION OF THE ABOVE "EXCHANGE OF FACTS AND COMMENTS" WILL BE FOUND IN THE FEBRUARY, 1938, ISSUE OF "THE WESTERN Tanager". Watch for it!

Mr. and Mrs. Keeley, travelers and naturalists, will return to Los Angeles after the first of the year. Their many friends eagerly await the time of their arrival.

