

T H E

Western Tanager



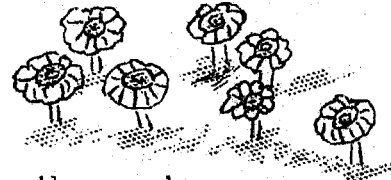
VOL. VI

NOVEMBER 1939

No. 2



GARDENERS SANS SALARY



Long before you have finished your last forty winks in the morning, your little unpaid garden helpers have been up and about, busily searching the bark on your trees for grubs and larvae, the under sides of the leaves for plant lice, and the roses for aphids and leaf-eating insects.

Fox sparrows and song sparrows scan the moist places under the bushes for bugs and worms; linnets and gold-finches tuck away quantities of weed-seeds, and when a flock of blackbirds alight on the lawn, it is just too bad for the local bug population.

The United States Department of Agriculture, seeking data on the subject of the economic value of birds, checked up on the contents of a blackbird's stomach after a full meal, and found remains of 442 insects. Hundreds of darting small flycatchers are in the air, catching unwary flies and other bugs on the wing, and the shrubs and trees are alive with warblers whose daily quota of insects would run well into the hundreds.

These tireless workers are on the job from daylight until dark with no complaints about long hours nor working conditions. All they ask is an opportunity to cleanse your garden or orchard, and thus cut down your bills for insect sprays. In addition to ungrudging labor, many of them furnish music gratis. It would be rather a drab landscape, wouldn't it, without these flitting songsters to add gaiety and interest to gardens and parks? An ornithologist with a flair for figures has estimated that if our bird population was completely wiped out, lawns and gardens, fruits and vegetables would be wiped out within three months by an ever-increasing horde of insect pests, and our land would revert to desert. No army of men spraying poisons could possibly accomplish the vast amount of work done by the feathered gardeners who ask nothing in return but security and water. Apropos of the latter, is it too much to ask of every home-owner that he supply some sort of bird-bath no matter how simple, so that every little worker may quench his thirst and rid himself of insect pests by frequent baths?

Hunting bugs all day is strenuous work, and a fellow gets thirsty and warm. A large pan or even a garbage-can lid turned upside down will answer the purpose if a more ornate bird-bath is out of the question. You will be more than repaid for your trouble by additional workers, for birds soon discover a water supply, and you will have the pleasure of watching them bathe and drink.



Helen W. Shearer
Los Angeles Audubon Society

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AUDUBON HOUSE NOTES

Mrs. Salmon and her committee have kept "Open House" at our headquarters every Friday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. So far this year, Mrs. Roselle, Mrs. Llewellyn, Miss Damert and Mrs. Brennan have served as hostesses. Beginning November 1st, SATURDAY, instead of Friday, will be our "At Home" day. Mrs. Shearer will be hostess for November.

The Gambel Sparrows and Audubon Warblers are checking in. It will be interesting to see if any of the birds banded by Mr. Duff return this year.

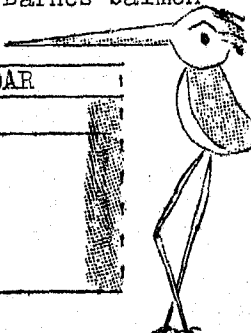
Mr. James Brennan, spending a few hours at headquarters, was inspired to write a poem on the beauty and serenity of the sanctuary.

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Our thanks to the interested members who have sent in gifts and exhibits.

NOVEMBER 1939 CALENDAR

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		



A HEARTY WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS!

- Mrs. Anna W. Snow *T*
Mrs. Seth Sprague Ferry
Mrs. Elizabeth B. Goolden
Mrs. Francis O. Yost
Mrs. Marie I. Bawer *Barker*

MEETING NOTICES

FIELD MEETING - Thursday, November 2, 1939 - Whittier Woodland Park. Our Tanner Motor Bus leaves 544 South Hill Street, Los Angeles, for Woodland Park at 8 a.m., for an all day trip in the Park where we hope to see, together with our more common birds...cardinals, various warblers, cedar waxwings and hermit thrush. Mrs. Erna Comby will give a very interesting talk on the history of Whittier Woodland Park. Price of the round trip on bus - 85¢. Please telephone or write Mrs. Jesse L. Morain, 1041 S. Gramercy Drive, Los Angeles-telephone PARKway 0339, as soon as possible for bus reservations. For those driving, turn east on Syphon Road off of Durfee Road.

BOARD MEETING - November 9, 1939 - 10 A. M. at the home of our President, Miss Laura Greely, 904 Kendall Avenue, South Pasadena, after which we will be her guests at luncheon. Telephone your reply to BLanchard 71849.

PROGRAM MEETING - Thursday - November 16, 1939 - 2 P. M. State Building, Exposition Park, Los Angeles. First showing of Zane Grey's travel pictures of Australia - Great Barrier Reef, bird and animal life and big game fishing. This will be an unusually remarkable set of films and a capacity attendance is expected, so come early. Public invited.

BIRD STUDY CLASS - Friday - November 24, 1939 - 10 A. M., at Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Boulevard, Los Angeles - Mr. C. V. Duff conducting. Bring a lunch and plan to stay for the dedication of two new trees in the Park. Mrs. Mary B. Salmon and Mrs. O. M. Stultz are to be honored. The tree committee of which Mrs. Shelford is chairman will be in charge of the program.

THE SOUTHWEST BIRD STUDY CLUB holds its study class the first Monday of each month at 10 a.m., in the Library at Echo Park. Call the President, Mrs. Alma W. Mason, Capitol 3441, for information on the Field Trips.

ANNOUNCEMENT EXTRAORDINARY

Copies of the pamphlet "101 Wildflowers of Yosemite" are now available through our Society. The illustrations were all drawn by Mrs. Mary V. Hood, through whose untiring efforts this publication has been made possible. Mrs. Hood is one of our active members, and we take pride in bringing to your attention such a valuable piece of work for study and enjoyment. The price - only 25¢ plus tax.

Our President is asking the members of the Society to keep a record of the birds seen in their yards.

We now have the California Audubon Society check lists in neat, printed form which will simplify greatly this pleasant task. By compiling these lists at the end of the year, we will have an interesting census of our own.

OCTOBER FIELD DAY

About sixty members and friends gathered at Cabrillo Beach for a two-hour boat trip as guests of the Harbor Board. After luncheon, there were brief talks on our "Living Emblems."

Mrs. Caroline Daugherty spoke on our bird emblem, THE WESTERN Tanager, adopted June 8th, 1918, describing its beautiful markings of red, yellow and black, and its song, as being similar to the Western Robin during the winter months in the mountains of California. It earlier frequented the United States from Louisiana to the Pacific Coast, and was known as the Louisiana Tanager, but now is seen only in the West, so is rightly called, the Western Tanager.

Mrs. William T. Shelford, Tree Chairman, spoke on the California Live Oak, which was adopted as our tree emblem, December 2nd, 1922, describing this oak as the most common of our native species, and often called the "holly leafed Oak."

Mrs. Donald Charles Meadows, Butterfly Chairman, had some cases of beautiful specimen with which to illustrate her talk. In speaking of our Western Tiger Swallowtail, the Club Emblem, she gave a new interest to this common but beautiful butterfly. It was adopted as our Emblem in May 11th, 1933.

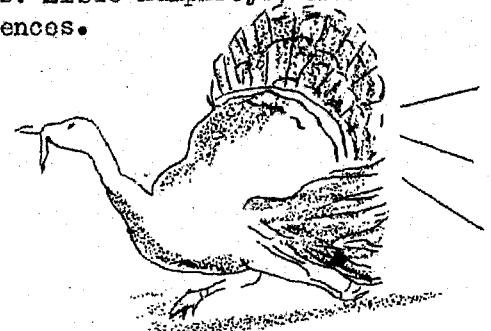
Miss Ruby Curry, Wild Flower Chairman, spoke on our wildflower emblem, the Mariposa Lily, adopted December 12th, 1922, describing it as a beautiful, cup-shaped flower, its color shading from white to rose or lilac. Mariposa is Spanish for butterfly.

OCTOBER PROGRAM MEETING

A large and appreciative audience enjoyed a varied program at the first indoor meeting of the Audubon year. Miss Ruby Curry's color pictures of North Coronado Island, Mexico, and the birds and wildflowers in Mt. Lassen National Park, were breathtaking in their beauty. Mrs. Thomas Shearer, Mrs. Elsie Humphreys, and Miss Charlotte Hamilton spoke on their vacation experiences.



HAPPY
THANKSGIVING
HOLIDAYS
!



NOTICES OF THE CALIFORNIA AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

Harriet Williams Myers
President

Mrs. Merta White, Secretary
Telephone-Cleveland 6-6702

November Meetings

Meeting - November 9th, 1939, 7:30 P. M., in the Los Angeles Central Library, Fifth Street and Grand Avenue, Los Angeles. Speaker, I. H. Johnston, West Virginia State Commissioner of Conservation and author of "Birds of West Virginia" and "Crooked Bill." Mr. Johnston's address "Thrills In Bird Life" will be illustrated with films.

Field Day - November 25th, 1939, at 8:30 A. M., to 10 A. M., - Fern Dell Griffith Park. Public invited.

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MRS. MYERS' VACATION NOTES

This year I remained at my home in Tulare County, in the Sierra Nevadas, later than usual, coming down September 21st, when we were having unusually warm weather. Staying so late in the month gave me an opportunity to see which birds remained in the mountains, and which were migrating through in September.

Robins, California Towhees and Slender-billed Nuthatches were coming continually to my bird table. Large flocks of Chipping Sparrows were everywhere about--feeding in roadways and open places, rising in a cloud if anyone came too near. With them were often the lovely Lark Sparrows, large flocks of them being about also. A few Juncos were seen and I wondered what had become of the immense flocks that were everywhere about last fall? Could some misfortune have overtaken them during the winter? Western Bluebirds were flitting about, some still having speckled breasts.

On the morning of September 18th, I was especially delighted to see a male Gambel Sparrow come from among the bushes and hop about in the open. It was the first one I had seen for some years. That same morning a lovely Fox Sparrow also came out for review. It was my first record of those birds.

As if to prove that this was a red-letter day, I soon spied a Black-throated Gray Warbler in a near-by shrub, my first for the season, although these birds usually pass through there, as do the Audubon and other Warblers. The Yellow Warblers nest in my garden. Linnets, San Diego Towhees, Plain Titmice, Flickers, California and Willow Woodpeckers, Crested and California Jays, Turkey Vultures, Mourning Doves and Quail were still about -- altogether about nineteen species to be seen from my home. On my way down to the valley I saw many Lewis Woodpeckers and I wondered if they were wending their way up to my place to spend the winter as they did about two years ago. My record shows 84 species of birds which I have seen in my Sierra Nevada home.

Harriet Williams
Myers

AS WE ROLL ALONG AND HIKE THE TRAILS

From a Travel Diary

By - Elsie Humphreys

(Continued from Page 4 - October, 1939, issue of THE WESTERN Tanager)

July 5th - Morning - Knowing only of their ground feeding habits, it is a novel experience to see a small flock of Western Chipping Sparrows feeding, chickadee fashion about the twigs of a juniper. We are deeply grateful to Mr. Watson for help with identifications and a copy of "Check-List of Birds of Mesa Verde National Park." Of the several species listed as we ascend and descend Wolf Creek Pass, none is new to our list. In the valley below, a Prairie Sharp-tailed Grouse acts domesticated enough to suggest some sort of barnyard fowl, although miles from any ranch. We drive on and come to hay and grain fields, irrigated by artesian wells. Here, Yellow-headed and Red-winged Blackbirds bring forth exclamations!

(This article will be concluded in the December, 1939, issue of the WESTERN Tanager. Don't miss it.)