

T H E

Western Tanager



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No. 4

OUR AUDUBON WARBLER

We have always had Audubon warblers with us throughout the winter but never before has one adopted such a limited space as our out-door living room.

A sleek young male had been seen for some time busying himself in the buddleia bush outside of my bedroom window. The screen had been removed as it failed to fit properly any more. Traveling over the shrub, the warbler came very close to the window and saw another bird like himself. He came closer, opened his bill and flew at the intruder, banging at the glass.

Driven into a frenzy, food was forgotten, as he battered his reflection. Fearful that he might harm himself, we drove him away, only to have him fly to the large living room window and repeat the performance.

Next morning he started in before we were up, flying from one window to another. Finally we replaced the screen, at the bedroom window. He was beside himself for a while, but soon quieted down and went about his normal business. We were able to relax and feel that all was well.

Next day our warbler found a new place in the outdoor living room where we have a glass enclosed case for plants. The front window hangs down, so there he sits or flutters about, but never strikes the glass.

Now our visitor goes in and out of the case, flies to a nearby tree, eats at the food cups, then is back to look at himself in the glass! All day long his "chip" is heard in this part of the garden. He has food, water to drink and a place to bathe, all within a small radius, and seems happy and contented with his friend in the glass.

Charlotte Hamilton.

THE WESTERN Tanager

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NOTES

Our Historian, Mrs. Carl P. Smith, is delighted with the fine response to her request for clippings of interest to the Society, but has received some that do not show the name and date of the paper. Please do not overlook this all-important information.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

- Mrs. Erna Comby
Mr. Howard L. Jones
Mrs. Nellie Goodrich
Miss H. M. Mason

AUDUBON HOUSE NOTES

Miss Ella Johns was hostess for December. Mrs. E. E. Cobb will be hostess through January.

Dr. F. O. Yost presented us with two nests, a Scotts Oriole and a California Towhee.

Our thanks to Mrs. Mary V. Hood for a mounted Scotts Oriole, which has been placed by the nest.

A loan of fifteen rare birds was secured among them a Starling!

The museum was decorated for the Holidays with green boughs to give it a woodsy look and much interest was shown by the many visitors.

Three very interesting programs were given during December which brought over 300 visitors to our Audubon Rooms.

The bulletin board is up and will help us keep our dates clear.

JANUARY CALENDAR 1940
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

MEETING NOTICES

FIELD DAY - January 4, 1940 - Chatsworth Lake - a sanctuary abounding in wild life. Tanner bus leaves 544 South Hill Street, Los Angeles, at 8 A. M., sharp, and Hollywood Boulevard and Cahuenga at 8:30 A. M. Fare 80¢ round trip. - Make reservations through Mrs. Jesse L. Morain, 1041 South Gramercy Drive, Los Angeles. Telephone PARKway 0339 as early as possible.

BOARD MEETING - January 11, 1940 - 10 A. M., at the home of Mrs. George L. Veatch, 3107 Strand Avenue, Hermosa Beach. Those going by street car get off at Longfellow Station. Carry your lunch. Mrs. Veatch will supply hot coffee.

INDOOR MEETING - January 18, 1940 - at 2 P. M., State Building - Exposition Park, Los Angeles. Mrs. Mary V. Hood will talk and show her beautiful Kodachrome slides of wild flowers and mountain scenes taken in our High Sierras the past summer. Remember - Guests always welcome.

BOTANY CLASS - January 26, 1940 - 9 A. M., at Plummer Park - 7377 Santa Monica Blvd. Entrance also at 1156 N. Vista Street. Mrs. Mary V. Hood will be in charge. Bring paper and pencil. This new and interesting class will precede the

BIRD STUDY CLASS - January 26, 1940 - at 10:30 A. M. Mr. C. V. Duff will conduct.

CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL

An enthusiastic crowd of members and friends gathered to celebrate the Christmas Bird Festival held at our headquarters and grounds in Plummer Park December 7th. Mrs. William T. Shelford and a group of camp fire girls decorated trees and Mrs. James M. Brennan, noted for her cuisine, made up the banquet table for the birds.

Desert Christmas flowers, birds and butterflies were the motifs used to decorate the tables at which luncheon was enjoyed. Miss Harriet C. Damert and committee were in charge of decorations.

Following luncheon, our President, Miss Laura Greely, spoke of the wealth of birds to be found in the southwest and Mrs. Mary B. Salmon went more into detail about the birds seen in Plummer Park.

In the auditorium our newest member, Mr. Howard L. Jones, nature photographer, showed breath-taking motion pictures of mountain and desert, rarely seen nesting birds in Yosemite National Park, and close-ups of Hummingbirds building nests and feeding their young.

* *

The festivities were carried over to Saturday afternoon when the Society had the pleasure of entertaining, among others, a group of Boy Scouts and their leaders, from Southgate's Troop 400. It was decidedly pleasing to note the intelligent interest of these boys as they were guided through the rooms of our little nature museum. The boys gave their impressive flag-raising ritual and a number of rousing camp songs, after which, through the generosity of Capt. G. Allan Hancock, there were presented motion-sound pictures of one of his expeditions to southern seas.

* *

EVENING MEETING WELL RECEIVED

A most delightful program was planned by Mrs. Helen Shearer, assisted by Mrs. Mary V. Hood and several chairmen of committees for the evening of November 29th, 1939, at Plummer Park, having as its subject the "Relation of Bird Life to Trees."

Mr. C. V. Duff told some of his exciting and unusual experiences in banding birds.

Mrs. Alma Mason spoke and Miss Miriam Faddis read a paper written by Mr. Charles Michael on the Coniferous trees of Yosemite - both illustrated with specimen of trees and mounted birds and gave us much valuable information on the interdependence of birds and tree life.

Mr. Frank Schilling showed beautiful pictures of woods, forest trees and individual specimen.

One of the very attractive features was a table on which were beautifully arranged mounted birds and their nests, with branches and cones from the pine, cedar and evergreen trees, thus relating the Christmas season with subjects that were discussed.

The evening was entirely too short to properly study this exceedingly educational display. This pleasing program was well attended and greatly appreciated. Sincere thanks are due to the fine speakers and those who planned it.

Mary B. Salmon.

NOTICES OF THE CALIFORNIA AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

Mrs. Harriet Williams Myers,
President.

Mrs. Merta White, Secret.
Telephone: Cleveland 6-6702

JANUARY MEETINGS

January 11th, 1940 - at 7:30 P. M., in the Los Angeles Central Library, 5th and Grand Streets, Los Angeles. Speaker, J. R. Pemberton, of Altadena, who will give his wonderful pictures and films, some of them colored, on the "Life History of the California Condor." Mr. Pemberton is giving many lectures for the benefit of the California Condor Research - which is being carried on by the National Association of Audubon Societies and the University of California.

Field Day - January 27th, 1940 - at 8:30 A. M., to 10 A. M. Fern Dell - Griffith Park. Public invited.

OIL POLLUTION

Mr. C. L. Towers, located at Terminal Island and in charge of Pollution for the Division of Fish and Game, is taking steps to eliminate the menace to water fowl, caused by the drainage of waste oil into "Frog Pond" at Long Beach. That deplorable condition has caused the death of hundreds of birds.

* *

We recently wrote Mr. Ira W. Gabrielson, Chief of the Biological Survey, Washington, D. C., asking that the Department of Interior take steps to obtain a mile square of land, heretofore unprotected, situated in the midst of the Salton Sea Refuge. His reply was most encouraging. It is hoped that the Refuge birds will be protected from the hunters.

Mrs. Harriet Williams Myers.

NIGHT ON THE MOJAVE

The pale blue ranges fade into the night; And as from out some barren-seeming husk.
The dark and empty spaces of the sky A radiant flower of the night escapes,
Are frosted now with myriad points of light; The sullen hills and gaunt distorted shapes
A cool and noiseless wind flows softly by. Of trees are softened in the deepening dusk.

The rocks that quivered till the night's release,
And all the intolerable waste of sand
Become the abode of beauty and of peace,--
The desert changes into fairyland.

* *

ANTICIPATION

One of the birds we are expecting to see on the trip to Chatsworth is the Rock Wren of which Ralph Hoffman writes in BIRDS OF THE PACIFIC STATES: "There is no difficulty in identifying this active little creature which plays hide-and-seek with the observer in and out of the rocks. It is a small grayish brown bird, with a whitish line over the eye; the lower back is reddish brown, the outer tail feathers black near tips and broadly tipped with tawny; under parts dingy white."

It may be seen bobbing energetically on some solitary rock. If disturbed it pours out of its long slender bill, trills and sweet notes that suggest the perfect technique and joyous vigor of a mocking bird.

This is just another reason for you to make an extra effort to get to Chatsworth on Field Day, January 4th.

WHY and HOW

BIRD-LORE'S Annual Christmas Bird Census

There have been many inquiries as to the reason for a bird census being taken during the busy Christmas week. From the National Audubon Society comes the explanation which we are passing along - knowing it will stimulate interest in this worth while project.

WHY: "It is not many years ago that sportsmen were accustomed to meet on Christmas, 'choose sides,' and then, as representatives of the two bands resulting, hie them to the fields and woods on the cheerful mission of killing practically everything in fur and feathers that crossed their path - if they could.

"These exceptional opportunities for winning the laurels of the chase were termed 'side hunts' and reports of the hundreds of non-game birds which were sometimes slaughtered during a single hunt were often published in our leading sportsmen's journals, with perhaps a word of editorial commendation for the winning side. We are certain that the side hunt is wholly a thing of the past, but we feel assured that no reputable sportsmen's journal of today would venture to publish an account of one, unless it were to condemn it; and this very radical change of tone is one of the significant signs of the times.

"Now, BIRD-LORE proposes a new kind of Christmas side hunt, in the form of a Christmas bird-census, and it is very interesting to note that the censuses have grown from two or three pages to a supplement of 56 pages in the course of 39 years."

HOW: 1st-Planning and working up a suitable territory that in our estimation will give us as great a number of our land and shore birds as possible.

The area must be within a fifteen mile radius - radiating seven and one-half miles around a given point. BIRD-LORE preferring the same area and the same observers each year in order to make possible a more correct check up and comparison by our biological science research.

2nd-The setting of a day which is one of a certain number specified by BIRD-LORE (and then hoping against hope for fair weather that day), allotting territory to a certain number of groups representing the different bird study societies, checking on any change of rules given out by BIRD-LORE and then contacting the various persons who will act as observers - which means talking or writing to from 20 to 30 different people.

3rd-Working on Census day from early to late just as hard as we possibly can so that we may have a good report, delivering or mailing same immediately at end of Census day to Field Leader or Chairman in charge.

4th-Upon receipt of all reports the work of checking and compiling these reports in the A.O.U. Check-List order specified by BIRD-LORE is started and while we want to record just as great a number of species as possible in our final report, if any questionable specie is among those sent in - then we have to check very carefully before making sure of including or excluding the one in doubt. Finally, after every report is worked up and compiled, we type our finished report and mail it to the BIRD-LORE Editor, in New York City, so as to be sure to reach there by December 31st in order for it to be written up (if we are among those preferred) in the January-February issue of BIRD-LORE. And, our past Christmas Census reports - 1937 and 1938 have both been in that preferred list, and, we hope our 1939 report will be, also.

MY APPRECIATION AND THANKS TO ALL THOSE OBSERVERS PARTICIPATING FOR THEIR FINE WORK AND COOPERATION.

(Signed)Caroline H. Daugherty
Field Leader.

1939 and BIRD-LORE'S Fortieth Christmas Bird
Census

List of Birds as sent in by the Los Angeles Audubon Society---December 21, 1939,
Christmas Census returns.

Red-throated Loon, 4; Horned Grebe, 2; Hared Grebe, 27; Western Grebe, 10;
Pied-billed Grebe, 23; California Brown Pelican, 6; Farallon Cormorant, 17;
California Blue Heron, 10; American Egret, 27; Snowy Egret, 19; Black-crowned
Night Heron, 34; American Bittern, 1; Lesser Snow Goose, 2; Mallard, 8;
Baldpate, 10; Pintail, 455; Green-winged Teal, 37; Cinnamon Teal, 17;
Shoveller, 311; Redhead, 4; Ring-necked Duck, 4; Canvas-back, 1; Greater
Scaup Duck, 1; Lesser Scaup Duck, 88; White-winged Scoter, 216; Surf-Scoter,
220; Ruddy Duck, 72; American Merganser, 29; Red-breasted Merganser, 29;
Turkey Vulture, 1; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 6; Cooper's Hawk, 3; Western Redtailed
Hawk, 15; Golden Eagle, 1; Marsh Hawk, 4; Duck Hawk, 1; Desert Sparrow Hawk, 24;
California Quail, 230; Light-footed Rail, 1; American Coot, 716; Killdeer, 129;
Black-bellied Plover, 553; Wilson's Snipe, 5; Hudsonian Curlew, 8; Western Willet,
190; Greater Yellow-legs, 3; Least Sandpiper, 106; Red-backed Sandpiper, 8;
Long-billed Dowitcher, 87; Western Sandpiper, 235; Marbled Godwit, 165; Avocet, 54;
Glaucous-winged Gull, 32; Western Gull, 47; Herring Gull, 10; California Gull, 283;
Ring-billed Gull, 764; Bonaparte's Gull, 180; Heerman's Gull, 31; Forster's
Tern, 59; Western Mourning Dove, 125; Chinese Spotted Dove, 61; Road-runner, 1;
Burrowing Owl, 2; White-throated Swift, 5; Anna's Hummingbird, 72; Western
Belted Kingfisher, 5; Red-shafted Flicker, 46; California Woodpecker, 12; Southern
Red-breasted Sapsucker, 3; Willow Woodpecker, 1; Nuttall's Woodpecker, 2; Ash-
throated Flycatcher, 1; Black Phoebe, 70; Say's Phoebe, 3; California Horned
Lark, 11; California Jay, 63; Western Crow, 1; San Diego Titmouse, 15; Coast
Bush-tit, 539; Pallid Wren-Tit, 70; Western House Wren, 3; San Diego Wren, 18;
Tule Wren, 23; Western Mocking Bird, 241; California Thrasher, 26; Western Robin,
43; Alaska Hermit Thrush, 25; Western Bluebird, 3; Western Gnatcatcher, 19;
Western Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 26; American Pipit, 14; Cedar Waxwing, 114;
California Shrike, 38; Lutescent Warbler, 1; Dusky Warbler, 4; Audubon's Warbler,
651; Townsend's Warbler, 1; Western Yellow-throat, 2; Tule Yellow-throat, 18;
English Sparrow, 1114; Western Meadowlark, 34; San Diego Red-wing, 20; Brewer's
Blackbird, 1553; California Purple Finch, 30; House Finch, 613; Willow Goldfinch,
129; Green-backed Goldfinch, 43; Green-tailed Towhee, 1; San Diego Towhee, 22;
California Towhee, 119; Western Savannah Sparrow, 40; Belding's Sparrow, 86;
Large-billed Sparrow, 5; Thurber's Junco, 29; Western Chipping Sparrow, 21;
Gambel's Sparrow, 315; Golden-crowned Sparrow, 3; Valdez Fox Sparrow, 4; Lincoln's
Sparrow, 2; San Diego Song Sparrow, 129.
Total.....121 Species.....12,325 Individuals. (est).

Observed several flocks of from 30 to 50 Coast Bush-Tits working through the
"Wild Lilac" covered slopes of the foothills.

Shrikes are more numerous and three observers saw one shrike flying with a small
bird in its claws.

The Ashthroated Flycatcher mentioned above is spending its fifth winter on the
same porch in an Inglewood home.

(Signed).....Caroline H. Daugherty