

T H E

## Western Tanager



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THE MIGRATION OF BIRDS

Between the years 322 B.C. and 384 B.C. lived Aristotle, a Greek Philosopher, who was a pupil of Plato and the teacher of Alexander the Great. He wrote that nighthawks sucked goats, causing them to go dry and blind, adding: "Whence the bird has its name - Goatsuckers." He further stated that some birds hibernated in hollow trees or mud. The latter theory persisted with some writers until 1881. More recent erroneous stories are, that Hummingbirds steal a migration ride in the feathers of wild geese, and that birds are so precise as to leave and return on the identical day each fall and spring. These theories have fallen one by one as scientific study disproves them. We must give credit to Aristotle and say that he noted that some birds migrated and some did not, as well as many other remarkable facts. In speaking of these mistakes, we had better not shout too loudly that the long-tailed, bird-eating hawks, such as Cooper's and Sharp-shinned, eat only sickly birds. Let us shout our loudest, however, for the protection of the Red Tails or rodent eating type of hawks.

Much has been learned since the U. S. Biological Survey was formed, in about 1885, to assist in the study of birds and their migrations.

The speed of flight, with different species of birds, varies from 15 to 60 miles an hour and the average distance covered by migrating birds on the Mississippi Flyway, heading North, varies from 25 to 150 miles per day, depending upon the rapidity of the advance of Spring, a condition that affects birds but little on our California Coast. Some birds, like the Downy Woodpecker and Chickadee, do not migrate; the Robin only as far as is strictly necessary. Most of our Southern California Warblers winter in our lowlands, Mexico and Central America. Our Russett-backed Thrush contents himself with a trip to Central America and the Northern part of South America. The much-advertised Cliff Swallows, that nest from Alaska to Nova Scotia, find favorite nesting places in Southern California at Swallow Bridge, Tule Bird Sanctuary and San Juan Capistrano. They migrate over land by day, feeding as they fly, through Mexico, Central America and on to Brazil for the winter, returning in the Spring by the same route. Contrasting, are the night migrating birds, like Warblers, Sparrows, Vireos and Orioles.

Birds, generally, fly at less than 3000 feet elevation, when migrating, and many shore and water birds just skim the water at times. There is so much to tell that this article is just a teaser, but if you see a Knot this Spring, just stop and think that he spent the Winter in the Southern tip of South America and is now on the way to his nesting grounds in the Arctic regions, an 8000 mile journey.

Why do birds migrate? There are many theories. Perhaps the ice age forced the habit upon them, or perhaps an over population in our tropics caused them to spread out, only to be pushed back by the winters each year. WHO KNOWS?



W. A. Kent.

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LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY  
Officers  
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President Emeritus.....Mrs. Robert Fargo  
President.....Miss Laura Greely  
904 Kendall Avenue -- South Pasadena  
Telephone: Blanchard 71849  
First Vice President and  
Club Editor.....Mrs. Maud Murphy  
5523 Berkshire Drive -- Los Angeles  
Telephone: Capitol 16533  
Headquarters and Nature Museum -- PLUMMER PARK  
7377 Santa Monica Blvd. or 1156 North Vista St.  
Los Angeles, California  
Curator and Librarian..Mrs. Mary Barnes Salmon  
1117 North Fuller Avenue -- Los Angeles  
Telephone: Granite 9312  
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Now and then it seems important to take stock of the Society's possessions and sum up values. With this thought in mind, an inventory of our Audubon belongings has been made. The following is a brief history of the Library, our most valuable possession:

We have 106 volumes, among them Dawson's BIRDS OF CALIFORNIA; Audubon's BIRDS OF AMERICA, and Comstock's BUTTERFLIES. Three biographies of Audubon; works by John Muir, Enos Mills, John Burroughs and other authorities. Also listed are National Geographic Books of Birds (two volumes); Nature Lovers' Library (three volumes); CALIFORNIA WOODPECKER AND I, by Ritter, and 29 bound volumes of "Bird Lore." Many of these fine books have been gifts to our Society, as was the book case from Mrs. G. H. Crane.

There are 7 scrap books with press notices, interesting pictures and educational articles, which have been gathered by the historians and members over a period of years.

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CALENDAR		MAY		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)	



NOTICES OF MEETINGS

FIELD DAY - Thursday - May 2, 1940 - The Dorothy May Tucker Memorial Bird Sanctuary at "Oakwood" - Modjeska Canyon ... Mr. B. F. Tucker has invited our group to again visit his lovely home and grounds and those famous Hummingbirds. Many other species of birds feed and nest there also. This is always one of our finest trips of the Season. The Tannor Bus leaves 544 South Hill Street, Los Angeles, at 8 A. M., sharp, and runs through Whittier, Fullerton, Anaheim, Orange and El Modena, through beautiful Santiago Canyon and past the big Santiago Reservoir. Round trip fare - \$1.25. Take a lunch as usual. Make reservations with Mrs. Jesse L. Morain, 1041 South Gramercy Drive, Los Angeles--Telephone Parkway 0339--if possible not later than April 30th, PLEASE.

BOARD MEETING - May 16th, 1940 - Thursday - 10 A. M., in the Directors' Room of the State Building, Exposition Park, Los Angeles.

INDOOR MEETING - May 16th, 1940 - Thursday - 2 P. M. State Building, Exposition Park, Los Angeles. Speaker - Mr. Donald Charles Meadows. Subject: Mysterious Butterflies and Moths - illustrated with mounted specimens. Mr. Josiah Keely will speak on "Some Odd and Unusual Bird Behaviors." Guests always welcome.

FIELD DAY - Thursday - June 6th, 1940 - Charlton Flats-Up Angeles Crest Highway. The last Field Trip of our spring season. We should see many of our mountain birds in this beautiful spot. Our Tannor bus will leave 544 S. Hill St., Los Angeles at 8 A.M., sharp, running to La Canada via Foothill Blvd. to Angeles Crest Highway. Fare, 85¢ round trip. Please make reservations with Mrs. Jesse L. Morain, 1041 S. Gramercy Dr. Los Angeles-Telephone Parkway 0339. Take lunch as usual. Following lunch, Mrs. O. M. Stultz will install the newly elected officers for the 1940-1941 Audubon Year.

NO BOTANY OR BIRD STUDY CLASS AT PLUMMER PARK DURING MAY. Informal Bird Study group will be held at Fern Dell, Griffith Park, Western Avenue entrance...May 31st, 1940, 10 A. M. Bring lunch as usual.

APRIL FIELD TRIP

Our April 4th Field Trip to Buena Vista Lake, under the leadership of Mr. W. A. Kent, was an unusually interesting one due to our very scenic journey to and from the Lake, the wild flowers and the birds seen in great numbers in their own habitat. White Pelicans were seen in flights of from thirty to hundreds and one great flock on the ground numbered in the thousands. Many large flocks of Tricolored Blackbirds were seen along ponds and irrigation canals. American Egrets were stationed in groups of forty or more on their feeding grounds along the canals. Caspian Terns seen are probably nesting. near the Lake. The day yielded 58 species of birds and Miss Ruby Curry listed 68 species of wild flowers. Our appreciation and thanks to you, Mr. and Mrs. Kent, for our very wonderful day!

Caroline Daugherty

APRIL PROGRAM MEETING

Mrs. Erna Comby spoke on the interesting history of the section of country which is now our San Gabriel River Sanctuary.

Mrs. Mary V. Hood substituted for Dr. Henry Smith Williams, who was called East unexpectedly. Mrs. Hood showed her new kodachrome slides of the San Gabriel River Sanctuary, Audubon House in Plummer Park, highlighted by views of Death Valley where a profusion of wild flowers cover the ground surrounding salt beds with majestic mountains forming the background.

Lois Booker, a charming twelve-year-old pupil of Mrs. Milton Jeffs gave a whistling solo and some unusual bird calls.

Honored guests, Mr. and Mrs. F. F. Pellisier, whose large holdings are part of the San Gabriel River Bird Sanctuary, were warmly received by the many members and friends.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Mrs. W. B. Johnson

Miss Pearl M. Bruner

Mr. Herbert W. Fox



BRIEFS

Booklets of bird pictures in color are available by writing a request to the Gordon Bread Company, 457 East Santa Barbara Street, Los Angeles.

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It is hoped that everyone interested in birds will read the fine article "Pageant in the Sky" - by Raymond S. Deck, which appeared in the April 20th issue of THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

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Our own member, Mr. W. A. Kent, will substitute for Dr. H. S. Williams on the program of the Federation of Natural Sciences of Southern California, on May 12th, at 11 A. M. at the University of California. He will talk on "Bird Migration."

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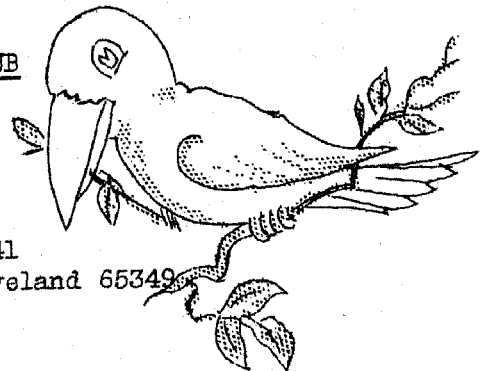
The wild flower exhibit, now being shown in the Museum Building at Exposition Park, is to be viewed by members and friends of the Los Angeles Audubon Society on May 16th, from 1 until 2 p.m. Miss Bonnie Singleton of the Museum will be there to answer questions. It will be of interest to our members to know that Mrs. Mary V. Hood has played an important part in this exhibit, which will be on until May 26th, and is free to the public.

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1940

SOUTHWEST BIRD STUDY CLUB

- May 6 - 10 A. M. Echo Park Library
- 13 - 9 A. M. Stough Canyon, near Burbank
- 20 - 9 A. M. Chantry Flats
- 27 - 9 A. M. Mineral Wells - Griffith Park



President - Alma W. Mason - Telephone: Capitol 3441

Secretary - Miss Evelyn McDowell - Telephone - Cleveland 65349



NOTICES OF THE CALIFORNIA AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

Mrs. Harriet Williams Myers,  
President

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

MAY MEETINGS

May 9th, 1940 - at 7:30 P. M. Central Library. 5th and Grand Streets, Los Angeles. Speaker, Clinton B. Abbott, Curator, Natural History Museum, San Diego. Subject: "Glimpses of Non-California Birds," illustrated with slides.

May 25th, 1940 - Field Day - at 8:30 A. M. to 10 A.M. Fern Dell - Griffith Park - Western Avenue entrance. Visitors welcome.

May 23rd, 1940 - The 34th Annual Meeting - 311 North Avenue 66, Los Angeles. Birding in the neighborhood until 10:30 A.M. Annual Reports of officers in the garden. Luncheon at 12:15 - bring your own. At 1:15 P. M. Greetings from other Audubon Societies and Bird Clubs. Any interested friends are welcome.

HONORED

Mrs. Harriet Williams Myers, President of the California Audubon Society, Inc. for 16 years, has been elected to the Nominating Committee of the National Association of Audubon Societies - 1006 Fifth Avenue, New York, at its 36th annual meeting. The other members are Mr. C. Russell Mason, Secretary and Treasurer of the Massachusetts Audubon Society, who is Chairman, and Mr. J. E. Stillwell, of Dallas, Texas.

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The California Audubon Society's leaflet No. 14, on the Dorothy May Tucker Memorial Bird Sanctuary is now ready for distribution. This lovely spot attracts so many visitors that Mr. B. F. Tucker needs assistance on Saturdays and Sundays in receiving them and answering their questions about the Hummingbirds and other birds seen there. Any Audubon members who can give a day, please get in touch with Mrs. O. M. Stultz, 2223 Sunset Boulevard, Los Angeles.

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LOS ANGELES AUDUBON LIBRARY

In 1917, a committee of three - Mrs. W. H. Martz, Mrs. Robert Fargo and Mrs. Marie P. Brownlee - gathered together the Society's properties, which consisted then of magazines, particularly Bird Lore, and some Government Bulletins.

Librarians serving through the years were Miss Anna Burns, Miss Ninta Vaughn, Miss Ruth Spencer, Mrs. George L. Veatch and Miss Jennie Winchester, who served continuously for the longest period of years.

When headquarters were established in Plummer Park, the library was moved from Exposition Park to our new home, where we now have a pleasant reading room. From the windows one may observe the birds feeding at the trays and bathing in the fountain.

In 1938, the office of Librarian and Curator was combined and a new cataloging system was installed, which simplifies the records of the lending library.

We owe a debt of gratitude and express appreciation to those who have built our library and to those who have, over the period of years, cared for our books.

Mrs. Mary Barnes Salmon.

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SIGNING OFF!

With this last issue of THE WESTERN Tanager for the Club Year 1939-1940, I am writing finis to my four years as Editor. I wish to express deep appreciation and sincere thanks to the members and friends who have contributed articles, and assisted in the assembling, typing and mimeographing of the material.

With such wholehearted support of the entire organization, I am sure that my successor will find the venture as happy and interesting as it has been for me.

Mrs. Maud Murphy.

