

Western Tanager



Vol. VIII

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No. 7

THE FLIGHT OF BIRDS

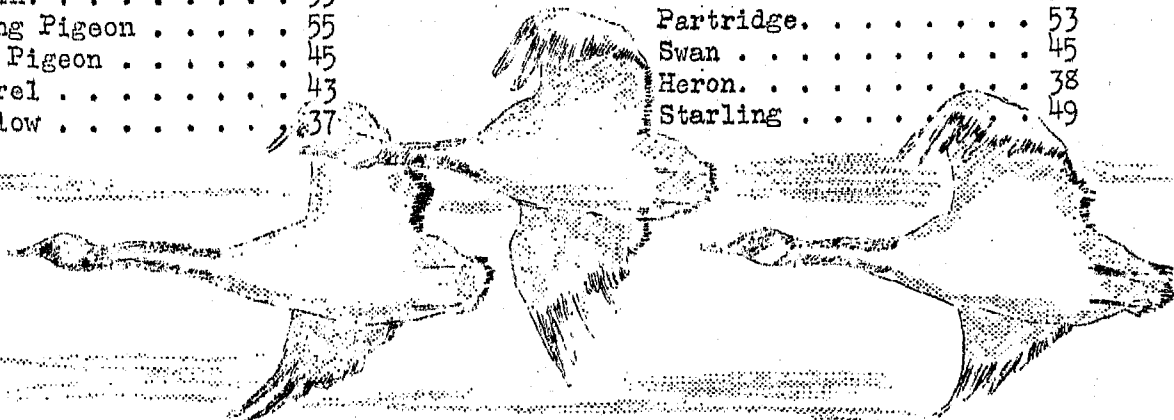
from Nature Notes.

A study of the flight of birds is recognized as an invaluable aid to aviation. These investigations have already brought out the fact that it is not the bird with the greatest wing area that flies the fastest. The shape of the wings, as well as the size, is of considerable importance. The shape of the body also has a great deal to do with speed. One bird may weigh about the same as another of a different type, and may have less wing area, but if it has a body better adapted to speed, it can fly faster.

Since it was felt that there was a special need for more accurate figures in regard to the speed of birds, several methods were used in making the tests, and the results from these different methods were checked against the other. One method was for an aviator to fly abreast of a bird and learn how fast it was going from his speedometer. Wherever possible, a similiar method was used by people on trains and in automobiles. In other experiments, trained hawks whose speed was already known were released to follow birds that were being tested. Then various birds that had been captured were released in wind tunnels where new airplane models are tested, and timed in that manner. On other occasions the progress of a bird from one place to another was followed by telephone. Still another method was to use stopwatches to check how long it took certain birds to fly between two fixed points.

As shown by the list below, the canvasback, with a speed of 72 miles per hour, was the fastest bird that was tested. The golden plover however, which was given an accredited speed of 70 miles per hour, has been ranked ahead of the canvasback by some observers who were not prepared to make an accurate test, but estimated the speed at 80 miles per hour. Some seabirds that are known to be very fast fliers were not tested, and it may be that accurate timing would show that they outrank both the canvasback and the golden plover.

Canvasback Duck	72	Golden Plover	70
Teal	70	Swift	68
Peregrine	62	Pheasant	60
Grouse	60	Wild Duck	59
Mallard	58	Quail	57
Merlin	55	Goose	55
Homing Pigeon	55	Partridge	53
Wild Pigeon	45	Swan	45
Kestrel	43	Heron	38
Swallow	37	Starling	49



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PLUMMER PARK NOTES

Mrs. Bertha Anthony has presented us with a fine specimen of oak tree filled with acorns by the California woodpeckers.

Our librarian, Mrs. Mary B. Salmon, wishes to remind members of the wealth of reading material at headquarters begging to be made use of.

In memory of Mrs. E. J. Saunders, Mrs. Vinnie R. Aborn of Whittier sent a contribution to our Society which the Board voted to use for the purchase of new books - to be selected by our librarian.

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

Los Angeles

Mrs. Lenore Shinley, 1139 E. 75th St.

San Fernando

Miss Georgie Ware, 14170 Fox St.

Montebello

Mrs. Wynona Lynch, 112 So. Taylor

Our list of life members grows with the following names: Mrs. Caroline Daugherty, Mrs. May Wait and Mrs. Mary V. Hood.

APRIL MEETINGS

FIELD TRIP, Thursday, April 2, 1942 - San Gabriel River Bird Sanctuary. The Cardinals are singing; Warblers and Western Tanagers are arriving. We should also see Cedar Waxwings, Russet-backed Thrush, Tree Swallows, Long-tailed Chats, Arizona Hooded and Bullock's Orioles, Black-headed Grosbeaks and Red-bellied Hawks. Our Tanner Motor Bus will leave 544 South Hill St., Los Angeles, for the sanctuary at 8 a.m. returning to Los Angeles about 4 p.m. Special rate, round trip fare, 85¢. Take lunch. Please make reservations by Tuesday, March 31, if possible, with Mrs. Jesse L. Morain, 1041 South Gramercy Drive, L. A. Phone Parkway, 0339.

BOARD MEETING - Friday, April 10, at 10 a.m. at the home of Miss Charlotte A. Hamilton 12251 Hartsook St., North Hollywood. Board members will be Miss Hamilton's guests at luncheon.

BIRD WALK - Sunday, April 12, 1942 - in San Gabriel River Bird Sanctuary. Leader Mr. Arthur L. Berry. Meet at Durfee Road entrance at 9 a.m. Bring lunch.

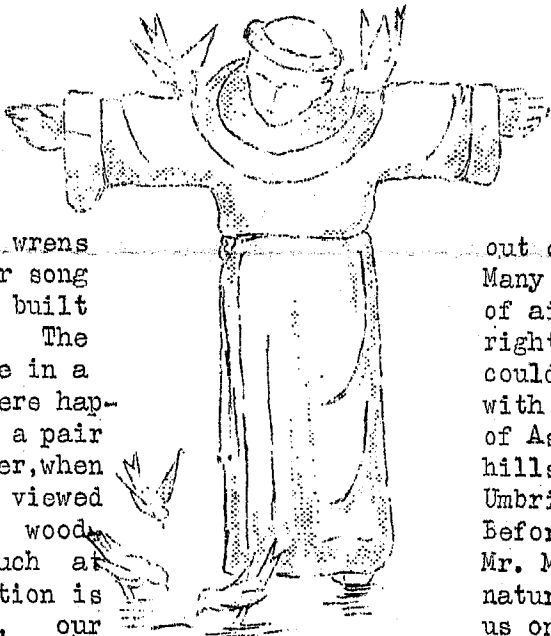
PROGRAM MEETING - Thursday, April 16, State Bldg., Exposition Park at 2 p.m.

Laurel Reynolds, Nature Photographer, presents "FUN WITH BIRDS." The pictures have been taken with telephoto lens in natural color, with close-up views. In a delightfully informal way you will hear how a husband's hobby became a family's common interest. You will join the Reynold's family in having fun with birds, attracting them to their garden, making pets of them, pursuing them with the camera in California, around San Francisco Bay, an inland lake, a lovely garden. You will be amused and highly entertained by close-up views of those master-builders, the Bush-tits, constructing their pouch-like nest before your very eyes. You will be alarmed when you see the sword-swallowing act of young hummingbirds, will visit the nesting colony of the great White Pelican and will see his young sans even pin feathers, emerging from the shell. This program pointing out the beauty and interesting peculiarities of the birds about us can be enjoyed by all ages and by all types of people. These are motion pictures and a speaker you will never forget. Accompanying Mrs. Reynolds will be Mrs. Dorothy Dean Sheldon, also a member of the Audubon of the Pacific.

MARCH FIELD TRIP

The field day at Sunland Park, Mar. 5 will long be remembered. It began with a glorious spring morning as we gathered at the park to start on our jaunt; fruit trees were blossoming, tiny leaves and catkins were emerging and birds were singing and nest building.

Three nests were important notes of the day, one being the perfect, flower-decked creation of the bush-tits. A pair of cactus wrens thrilled us with their song and activity as they built their home in a yucca. The most amusing was a hole in a pepper tree which we were happy to find occupied by a pair of plain tit-mice. Later, when others of our party viewed the nest, California woodpeckers were very much at home in it. The question is to whom does it belong, our guess that of the woodpeckers.



From the gentle eyes of this quiet man in blue looked forth the spirit of Francis the Saint of Assisi. He told of Saint Francis preaching to his little sisters the birds; of their confidence and love in him; of the birds covering the sleeping saint with leaves when night turned chill. It was as if St. Francis himself was with us telling of the caterpillar that was lifted out of harms way on the path. Many other tales were told of aid to the poor and the rights of the common man. We could see it all as we walked with him through the streets of Assisi and the woods and hills of Francis' beloved Umbria.

Before returning to his home Mr. McGroarty placed his signature with that of each of us on a card which was then presented to Miss Greely, our beloved president, in commemoration of her birthday. The trip was over but the refreshment and peace of the day will remain in the joy experienced in God's world, away from man's chaos and confusion.

Charlotte A. Hamilton

(Program continued)

STUDY CLASSES - April 23, - Long Hall, Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd. Bring text book, note books and lunch. 9:30 a.m. Botany. Leader, Mr. George T. Hastings. Subject: "Some cultivated ornamental plants; where they came from." 10:30 a.m. Birds. Leader, Miss Ruby Curry. Subject, "Hummingbirds". This subject will be of special interest in view of the proposed trip to the Tucker Sanctuary in May.

BIRD WALK - Sunday, April 26 - San Gabriel River Bird Sanctuary. Leader, Mr. Howard Cogswell. Meet at Durfee Road entrance at 9 a.m. Bring lunch.

The address of the sanctuary is 2578 Durfee Road. To reach there take Alhambra Motor Coach at 6th and Los Angeles Sts. in L.A. at 7:20 a.m. Get off at Garfield & Main Sts. in Alhambra at 7:50 a.m. Walk across tracks to northwest corner and take Long Beach bus which will arrive at Durfee Road at 8:43. Entrance is 1/2 block north.

CONSERVATION EXHIBIT

For several years the Southwest Bird Study Club has placed an exhibit in the rotunda of the Main Public Library. Each year the subject represents a great deal of planning on the part of the committee. This year's exhibit, which was on display from March 7 to 21 inclusive, consisted of a chart of the birds that are rapidly becoming extinct, among them being the American condor, white-tailed kite, vermilion flycatcher, California blue grosbeak, red-bellied hawk and western least bittern. Mr. & Mrs. W. A. Kent and Miss Ruby Curry were responsible for the arrangement and everyone who went to view it declared it very much worth the trip.

IN MEMORIAM

Miss Nettie B. Chase passed away on March 18. She became a member in 1925 and though deeply interested in nature study, ill health in recent years prevented her from attending many of our meetings.

Mrs. Grace S. Hall also passed away on March 18. She joined the Society in 1915 and was the only member to keep up an active regular attendance through the years. She served continuously as a member of the Executive Board since 1916 with the exception of one year when she was ill and while confined to her room studied birds from her window sill, banding 500 of them for the Biological Survey. Our field leader for years, many boys and girls owe their knowledge of bird life to her earnest and accurate observations. She has lead as many as a hundred walks in a year, with groups outside the regular field trips of the society, was official speaker for some time and was always ready and willing to help. It was she who started the Study Classes and carried on the work for a year, was the first chairman of our Committee on Trees and had a fine knowledge of trees, both native and imported. When she first began her study in California there was no text book of western birds so it required careful and thorough observations. She was much loved by everyone who knew her and we are all grateful for her faithful, steadfast service which has meant so much in the growth of our organization and which has brought to us all a deeper appreciation of the beauty and loveliness around us.

BIRD AND ARBOR DAY

Sunny weather, March 7, added to the enjoyment of the day for 31 members who gathered at South Park to celebrate the occasion. Mr. George T. Hastings led a Tree Walk at 10:00 a.m. and kept us interested by his wise remarks and clever stories. We hope to remember part of the 70 different kinds of trees in the park. Many trees being deciduous were bare and did not appear at their best and some of us have a great urge to return later and see them in their full beauty. The birds did their share in adding to our pleasure. A Varied Thrush appeared three different times and seemed to approve the remarks of Mr. Gilbert L. Skutt, Supt. of Parks, as much as we did. A song sparrow delighted us with its song while Mr. R. E. Bullard, Supervisor of Park Maintenance was speaking. All are delighted with the bird fountain, the gift of Mickey Bishop. Mrs. Alma Stultz, Mrs. Harriet Williams Meyers and Mrs. John H. Bishop assisted in the dedication of the fountain. This is the tenth fountain presented to the parks by Mickey Bishop and sponsored by the Audubon Societies.

-Linnian Blind

MARCH INDOOR MEETING

A large audience was on hand March 19, to hear Mr. Victor von Hagen lecture on the Quetzal Bird, that famous tropical bird with the brilliant plumage. His motion pictures recording the "Quest of the Quetzal" were a thrilling adventure for most of us. Afterwards, Mr. von Hagen answered numerous questions from the audience and autographed copies of his books. He has graciously consented to be with us again and we are looking forward to hearing more of his exciting experiences.

BIRD NEIGHBORS ON A MOUNTAIN TOP

One of our members, Mrs. H. A. Hinshaw, who lives at the end of the Angeles Crest Highway has been sharing her bird observations with us. She tells of white-breasted Nuthatches who come to partake of food she puts out for the birds and animals, and how they utter a sound very much like "skat" when chickadees and juncos fly too near. At the water cups on the ground Mrs. Nuthatch lets the chipmonks know they are to wait until she has investigated the food on the trays. A great variety of birds are her daily visitors, and chipmonks and squirrels come in numbers to her front porch for sunflower seeds. Mrs. Hinshaw extends a cordial invitation to members to visit her mountain home and stop for a cup of coffee and a visit.