

Western Tanager



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"Today is your day and mine, the only day we have, the day in which we play our part. What our part may signify in the great whole we may not understand, but we are here to play it and now is our time. This we know; it is a part of action not of whining, it is a part of love, not cynicism. It is for us to express that love in terms of human helpfulness."

David Starr Jordan

LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY, TODAY AND TOMORROW

In the uncertainty of today it is difficult to plan a program that is flexible enough to adjust itself to rapidly changing conditions. It will be our aim to carry on in as normal a way as possible those activities which we have developed over a period of years. Based upon a study of nature, with its attendant concern for conservation, we are assured that the field in which we are expending our efforts is the most vital in the background of our country.

Problems that arise from the abnormal condition of the times challenge our organization to its best efforts. An alarming rise in juvenile delinquency calls for more work with Scouts and similar groups; the unusual strain upon normal resources requires alertness to a greater need for protection of plant and animal life. From time to time our attention will be called to unusual situations where we must be ready to lend a hand.

Field trips that take us into the great out-of-doors open a realm of beauty in sight and sound. It helps to build our inner resources to find that nature is keeping on with her regular plan, that birds are still singing and nesting and that trees are yet lifting their heads towards the sky. Should extended field trips become impracticable we may still commune with nature in smaller areas close to our homes, if we have learned to "see" and "hear." Even a bit of blue sky has a message if a star is shining there. The Los Angeles Audubon Society has a definite contribution to make in sharing with others these experiences which contribute to a philosophy that is helpful to living life at its best.

Lectures illustrated with the best modern photography will bring nature indoors to us at our program meetings, and the study classes, under excellent leadership, will continue their inspiring work at Plummer Park.

A new department is being inaugurated for those who are actively engaged throughout the day and are therefore unable to participate in the regular activities of the Society. Sunday field trips with an occasional evening meeting are among the plans for this undertaking to which we want to give wholehearted support and cooperation.

It may not be easy to adjust our activities to a wartime schedule, and curtailments may have to be made. Resourcefulness and adaptability generously and unselfishly applied, will nevertheless enable our organization to do its bit. Let us plan today with courage and steadfastness, and look forward with hope to a better tomorrow.

Erna Comby,
President

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BIRD NOTES

On July 7, Least Terns were seen nesting near Playa del Rey, a family of Black necked Stilts and a Long Billed Curlew.
On July 16, Mr. & Mrs. E.H. Crane counted 61 Wood Ibis near Buena Vista lagoon.
Score one for the Blackbirds! On a lawn beset by cutworms, the owner flooded same, bringing the worms to the surface as the water drove them out, and a flock of blackbirds descended and ate every worm, wading through the water to get them.

FOR SALE BY OUR SOCIETY: Hoffman's "Birds of the Pacific States"; Peterson's "Field Guide to Western Birds"; Stebbins' "What Bird Is That?", and Lyman & Hood's "California Wildflowers in Verse and Picture." See Miss Greely, BLanchard 7-1849. If you wish to subscribe to NATURE MAGAZINE or renew, see Mrs. Shearer. All profit goes to our treasury.

OCTOBER MEETINGS

FIELD DAY - Thursday, October 1, - Redondo Beach City Park - 9:30 a.m. Take Redondo Beach Motor Coach leaving Subway Terminal, 423 South Hill St., Los Angeles at 8:05 a.m. Round trip fare 63¢. Get off at Torrance Blvd. close to City Park. Take lunch and WEAR NAME PIN. Bird walk will start about 9:30 a.m.
BOARD MEETING - Thursday, October 15, 1942 at 10 a.m. State Bldg. Exposition Park.
PROGRAM MEETING - Thursday, October 15, 1942 at 2 p.m. State Bldg. Exposition Park. Mr. John Garth will lecture and show pictures taken by the Capt. Allan Hancock Foundation over a period of years. His subject will be "Oceanic Birds of the Southeast Pacific," and will include the Red-tailed Tropic, Man o' War, Galapagos Penguin and the Guano birds of the Peruvian Islands. Members will relate vacation thrills.
STUDY CLASSES - Thursday, Oct. 22, at Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd., L.A.
Nature Study: 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. Subject: Plants of the Kearsage Pass, a study of timberline vegetation illustrated with kodachrome slides by Mrs. Mary V. Hood.
Birds: 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Geological history of birds from their reptilian ancestors down to present day birds by Mr. George T. Hastings.

SUMMER MEETINGS

Two breakfast meetings were held in Fern Dell in Griffith Park, with an attendance of 62 on July 2 and of 48 on August 6, our newly-elected president, Mrs. J. H. Comby, presiding. There was a brief bird walk each morning, with a brief bird list as is expected here in the summer months. There was nothing lacking, however, in the programs. Mr. W. Scott Lewis, well-known lecturer and a member of our Society, and Mr. R. E. Bullard, Supervisor of Maintenance of Los Angeles City Parks, were the speakers. Mr. Lewis gave us facts of great and timely interest concerning minerals essential to the winning of the war. Mr. Bullard contrasted the Fern Dell of today with the dell of long ago, when the Indians called it Moco-Cahuenga and used its waters for the irrigation of their crops. His talk was filled with fascinating information about the ferns and trees which make the Dell a haven for birds - and for members of Audubon Societies!

SUNDAY BIRD WALKS CONTINUE

On Sunday, September 27, at 9 a.m. there will be a bird walk at the San Gabriel River Bird Sanctuary. Meet at entrance, 2578 Durfee Road. Leader, Mrs. Caroline H. Daugherty. The San Gabriel River Bird Sanctuary is maintained by the National Audubon Society and Mrs. J. H. Comby is chairman of the local committee in charge. In a recent letter to Mrs. Comby, Mr. Guy Emerson, President of the National Audubon Soc. expressed his pleasure over the development of the sanctuary. "It is a fine birding spot and in its excellent environment forms one of the outstanding small sanctuaries that I know anywhere so near a city. It has given many groups a common meeting ground and promoted good will, as well as interest in birds and conservation."

One August afternoon Mrs. Stultz, Miss Dorothy Groner and Mrs. T. G. White found a beautiful Common Loon at Redondo Beach. The lifeguard had taken it from the water as it seemed to be drowning. The big bird was in full breeding plumage; fat and apparently uninjured, but had a little oil on its breast. When we put him back in the ocean he drank deeply and began hunting for food, but as he could only swim feebly Miss Groner paddled along beside him, all around the harbor, accompanied by shouts of "Lookut the lady with the duck."

Alas! that the story has no happy ending. In vain we procured tiny live fish and we attempted to feed our patient. We tried to cleanse his matted breast feathers with warm salad oil. He was remarkably gentle but lived only a short time.

As the museum did not wish him for a mounted specimen, we had the wings and feet preserved, thereby discovering that he was not a young loon. He had probably made the long trip to and from some northern lake many times, and may have succumbed, this season, to the baleful effects of the oil on his thick lovely plumage.

Laura C. White

In the July-August number of Audubon Magazine is an article by Roger Tory Peterson which tells of the increasing numbers of sea birds being destroyed by oil discharge from ships.

In the same number is the "Season" report compiled by Mr. Howard L. Cogswell, a member of our society, which deserves special mention.

How many birds are there in the United States? Roger Tory Peterson spent several years studying census data trying to find the answer and concluded the American bird population is approximately 5,570,000,000.

"Tree shadows, straining, to be first to greet the sun."

A RARE FIND

On the part of Point Lobos called "Pebble Beach" we found five Oyster Catchers with the help of Mr. Wiland, the genial superintendent of Point Lobos State Park. His opinion is that they nested there and that three of the birds were this year's family - and the two larger ones the parents. The Oyster Catcher feeds on mussels found there. They are large black birds (17½ inches) with a bright red bill, three inches long, and short pink feet. Their song (?) is very interesting and ripples like a laugh. They soar gracefully out to the rocks and return to the same spot on shore where they sit in sociable groups on the warm rocks. We were told that only seven have been seen at one time, so to see five was a great treat. Mr. Harwell had just been there, we were told, and had taken some pictures of the Oyster Catchers. We may be able to see these later.

The Nuthall Sparrow dashed in and out of some bushes nearby while we watched.

Mrs. Mary B. Salmon

NESTING UNDER DIFFICULTIES

On the afternoon of May 6, Mr. George Dowker, Warden of the San Gabriel River Bird Sanctuary, while working on a housing project on West 3rd Street, found a killdeer's nest with four eggs in it. Realizing that in the morning several trucks would be passing over the very spot he took a shovel and carefully lifted the nest a few feet at a time until it was out of danger. Each time the mother bird would return and sit on the eggs and when she would leave the male bird would take his turn. The location was between a toolshed and a cement mixer which was working most of the day, so Mr. Dowker put stakes all around the nest and asked the workmen to keep away. One day a large truck broke down a few inches from the nest. Mr. Dowker took the eggs in his handkerchief, placed them in a box in the sun and about three hours later took them back to the same spot but had to make a new nest for them. Each day he watched the nest and on the afternoon of the 25th the eggs hatched and in about three hours the birds were on their feet and walking in and out of the weeds while the parents were close by. The next day they travelled about 500 feet along the dirt road and that was the last seen of the family.

Mrs. Ida B. Rich

SAVE OUR NATIVE AZALEAS

The California State Park Commission is issuing an appeal to all nature lovers for aid in preserving 30 acres of native azaleas in Humboldt County. The total cost of the area to be preserved is \$6,000 and the State will contribute half that amount if and when matched by an equal amount from other sources. The Save-the-Redwoods League has undertaken to act as treasurer of a fund which it is hoped will make up the full amount required and will be glad to receive any contributions for this specific object. In the proposed Azalea Reserve are thousands of azalea shrubs (*Rhododendron occidentale*) between 8 and 15 feet high, presenting a magnificent area of bloom from May until July. They are a marvel of beauty then, with deep rose-tinted buds and blossoms, each with an orange petal, and stamens that catch the eye.

The League has received the testimony of botanists that so far as known no native azalea plantation compares with this in size and luxuriance of the flowering shrubs, or in location. This natural garden, with a stream flowing through it, is a wilderness undisturbed. From glades interspersed through the thickets the views reach out over the Mad River valley. When purchased, this area will be made an integral part of the California State Park System, safeguarded forever.