

Western Tanager



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No. 5

LECTURE PROGRAM OF THE NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY By C. A. Harwell, California Representative

Last August the National Audubon Society chose Mr. Wayne Short, president of the St. Louis Bird Club, as its Midwestern representative and assistant to Mr. John Baker, the Executive Director. Among his other activities Mr. Short is building an expanded program of lectures all across the country. An excellent start in this has been made.

Mr. Short selected ten large Midwestern cities and sold the local Audubon Society, Bird Club or some other natural history organization on the idea of expanding their program by scheduling five nationally prominent photographer-lecturers to present a series of five lectures during the fall, winter and spring months of 1943-1944 under the title "Audubon Wildlife Screen Tours."

The ten cities and sponsoring organizations are: Columbus, Columbus Audubon Society; Chicago, Illinois Audubon Society; Minneapolis, Audubon Society and the Minnesota Museum of Natural History; Indianapolis, Children's Museum; Kansas City, Burroughs Nature Study Club; Milwaukee, Bird Clubs and Shorewood Opportunity Center; Detroit, Detroit Audubon Club and Cranbrook Institute; Cincinnati, Ohio Audubon Association; Des Moines, Des Moines Audubon Society; Omaha, Nebraska Ornithologists' Union and Omaha Nature Study Club.

And now I enter the picture, being scheduled as one of the five lecturers. The other four selected are Dr. Olin Sewall Pettingill, Mr. John R. Storer, Mr. Karl Maslowski and Mr. Alexander Sprunt. During November I appeared before excellent audiences in these ten key cities. It will serve to indicate how quickly this new venture of the National Audubon Society took hold in these communities to state that the smallest audience I had was 250 in Chicago, while at Kansas City and Omaha 1000 were in attendance. The average for all ten of these audiences was 600. The principal limiting factor seemed to be the capacity of the meeting place selected by the local committees.

This becomes of interest to the Los Angeles Audubon Society and to our other affiliates in California as possible for inclusion in the program for the fall, winter and spring of 1944-45. The question is, would Los Angeles and nine other California communities like to sponsor such a program of Audubon Wildlife Screen Tours?

Des Moines and Milwaukee raised the money to pay for this service by an advance sale of season tickets and single admissions. The other organizations financed the project with available funds and made the series open to the public, depending on increase in interest and membership to make up for it.

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THE WESTERN Tanager

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

Published monthly except during the summer
by

THE LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY

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HEADQUARTERS

Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd.,
Los Angeles 46. From down-town Los Angeles
take Santa Monica Blvd.-West Hollywood car,
Subway Terminal; get off at Fuller Ave.,
walk one block west to park entrance.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Annual, \$1.50; Sustaining, \$5.00 annually;
Life, \$25; Patron, \$100.00. Fiscal year
ends June 30.

Mr. Reginald W. Julian
608 N. Poinsettia Pl., L.A. 36
Mrs. Clara L. Splitter
28 Avenue 27, Venice
Mrs. Hassel W. Smith
112 Roosevelt Ave., Montebello
Mrs. Leroy C. Ackley
351 N. Laurel Ave., L.A. 36

With 52 new members the current
club year, the Society now has a
total membership of 273.

Mrs. Splitter, new member this
month, was a member of Mr. Geo. T.
Hastings' bird class in New York.

Miss Georgie Ware has changed her
status from "annual" to "sustain-
ing" member. A fine example to
follow!

The Society recently sold its four
hundredth bird book. One can get
along without binoculars, but a
good book is essential. Miss Greely
handles them for the Society.
Hoffman's "Birds of the Pacific
States," and Peterson's "Field Guide."

CALENDAR FOR FEBRUARY

THURSDAY, Feb. 3. FIELD TRIP. Sunland Park and vicinity. Because of transportation difficulties we are repeating on this good birding territory. Take Sunland bus at P.E. Station, 6th & Main Sts., L.A. Sunland Gate #2, 8:15 or 8:40 a.m. Round trip fare, 77c. Take lunch. Bird walks will start at 9:30 and 10 from bus stop in the park. Lunch at 12 Noon. Trip canceled if weather is stormy.

THURSDAY, Feb. 10. EVENING STUDY MEETING. Manning's Coffee Shop, 319 W. 5th St., L.A. Dinner at 6. Mrs. Harlan Eckler will show some of her fine Kodachrome slides of Southern California birds and will tell some of her experiences photographing birds. Also, a study of identification of our grebes in preparation for coming field trips and next month's pictures of them.

SUNDAY, Feb. 13. FIELD TRIP. Seal Beach to Huntington Beach, covering intervening mud flats, marshes and gun club ponds in Bolsa Chica area. Take P.E. Balboa bus leaving Main St. station, L.A., at 6:15 or 8:15 a.m., arriving at Seal Beach (Central & Main) at 7:25 or 9:23, respectively. Those driving cars will meet the busses and double-up on passengers, if necessary, until we get to the birding areas and to Huntington Beach, where we will meet for lunch. Those wishing to go to San Gabriel River Bird Sanctuary February 13 will find a leader there.

THURSDAY, Feb. 17. Board Meeting, 9:30 a.m. Los Angeles County Museum.

THURSDAY, Feb. 17. PROGRAM MEETING. 1:30 p.m., Los Angeles County Museum, Exposition Park. Mr. J. B. Dixon, of the Escondido Mutual Water Co., will show Kodachrome pictures titled "Life History of the White-tailed Kite" and "Life History of the Red-bellied Hawk." These pictures are the history of the birds from the nest-building period, through incubation and raising of the young. They were taken from

(Continued on next page)

A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT:

We pause for a moment as we look into the new year, to consider those fundamental influences which will play a part in the guiding of our destinies, and we look, as ever, to Nature for inspiration and encouragement. The whistle of the Mallard's wing as he rises from the water, the quiet strength and majesty of a leafless Oak against a winter sky, - thus Nature communicates her eternal ways, and striving for a deeper understanding we are grateful for her generosity.

February Calendar, Continued.

behind blinds just a quarter of a mile apart, by Mr. Dixon and his son, Ralph E. Dixon.

THURSDAY, Feb. 24. STUDY CLASSES. Plummer Park Club House. See note on first page on how to reach the park. Bring notebook and lunch and spend the afternoon in our interesting headquarters.

10:00 a.m. Mrs. Harlan Eckler will discuss "Eye and Vision" of the bird.

11:00 a.m. Botanical briefs. Short talks on favorite trees and shrubs, presented by different members.

SUNDAY, Feb. 27. Combination hike and chaparral bird study in nearby San Gabriel mountains. Details at February 10th meeting, or telephone SYcamore 6-5563.

DR. WILLIAM L. LLOYD, Director of the Marine Museum at Cabrillo Beach, reports that on January 1, significant of a New Year promise, he witnessed three groups of gulls flying in perfect "V" formation, like geese. The first flight contained about sixty birds, forming a perfect "V," the next group about thirty, and behind these were three birds, all in the same formation.

EDUCATIONAL FUND. The Executive Board has voted to establish a special "Educational Fund," for the general purpose of furthering the Audubon cause, particularly among young people. Mrs. Comby is selecting a committee with the immediate past-president, Miss Greely, as chairman, to study and suggest to the Board ways and means of augmenting the fund and specific uses to which it may be applied. Meanwhile, the Board has given it a fine start with the patron-membership dues, \$100 each, of Mickey Audubon Bishop and Mrs. P. C. Ridgley, and these dues have now been invested in War Savings Bonds. Mrs. W. J. Holden, past-president, has made the first donation. It is certainly hoped that every member of the society will feel a personal interest in this project and participate in building it up to where it will serve a truly worth-while purpose.

THE PLAYA del REY field trip January 6th paid well the 23 courageous Audubon folk who ventured out that day, following a stormy night. The count totaled 68 species, mostly shore birds. Unusuals, - great rafts of Pintail Ducks numbering in the thousands, riding the ocean just off shore; Baird's Cormorant, Ruddy and Black Turnstones and Avocets. Because of the small number of persons present, those fortunate folk driving transported all the group to the Recreation Gun Club area, where White-faced Glossy Ibis and more species of ducks and shore birds were seen. Why not go there again some day soon?

OUR EVENING MEETING January 13 was attended by about 35 persons, several participating in the discussion program. Descriptions of their parts in the Los Angeles and Big Bear Lake Christmas bird counts were given by Mrs. Enid Michael, Howard Cogswell and James Murdock. All members were urged to make notes on their observations the year round. Mr. George Willett suggested that more original observations would be worthwhile for discussion, rather than merely reports from publications. Mrs. Hood presented an outline for symposium study of groups of birds. A talk on nesting habits of terns closed the meeting.

MRS. WILLIAMS' TEA. It would take many times the space allotted to describe the late Dr. Henry Smith Williams' collection of etchings, paintings and ornithological specimens, which Mrs. Williams recently invited the local Audubon societies to view at her home. His paintings of prehistoric man and beast are of special interest and value. His process of colored etchings evolved on copper plates gives the pictures a shadowy beauty hard to describe. His bird pictures are masterpieces of color combinations, while his oriole nests, composed of many yards of woolen strands, make us wonder at the ingenuity of our beautiful bird friends. There was a happy vibration amongst the representative groups attending the exhibit. After a most interesting talk about Dr. Williams' life work, tea was served, the Los Angeles Audubon Society acting as host, through Mrs. Williams' kind invitation.

---Mrs. J. L. MacSwiggen

THE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT. In the Los Angeles area, the count was organized, as in the preceding six years, by our Field Leader, Mrs. Daugherty. Result: 123 species and sub-species, 13,646 (est.) birds. The complete report is included in this issue of the Tanager. Watch next month for Mr. Cogswell's report on the Big Bear Lake area and one by Mr. Frank G. Watson on Lake Elsinore. These three counts in our immediate vicinity netted 152 species and sub-species and approximately 42,632 birds. From San Diego comes a report of 122 species and 39,427 birds. "The census-takers," says the report, "agreed they had never before seen such 'scads' of certain birds, particularly waterfowl." The Audubon of the Pacific reports for the San Francisco area 107 species, 12,840 birds. Note that, with San Diego in the lead as to the number of birds and Los Angeles as to the number of species (by one!), the five reports, combined, show a total of 94,899 individual birds counted on this one day, - December 26, 1943.

BIRDING IN THE RAIN. Two parties of observers, unable to contact or be contacted by the chairman, worked on the Christmas count on that rainy Sunday, Dec. 19, which the rain canceled for the official count day, Dec. 26. However, these four observers enjoyed birding in the rain. Miss Ruth Price and Miss Wynona Clements listed many birds dashing around between showers in Coldwater and Franklin Canyons. Miss Nora Preisker and Mrs. Dora Lane worked the Inglewood area, listing 38 species, including great flocks of, mostly, Ring-billed gulls, numbering around 5000. Our appreciation to these observers; we are sorry these fine lists could not be used.

THE PROGRAM MEETING, Jan. 20. Mr. J. T. Porter's exceptionally fine Kodachromes of autumn colors in the High Sierra and the Hoff pictures of the Broad-tailed Hummingbird, together with Mr. W. Scott Lewis' clever quiz on birds and trees gave us an afternoon which will long be remembered.

NOTES. Miss Faddis, after ten weeks in bed with a broken leg, is now able to take a few steps each day, with assistance. -- Mrs. Christine Bickel is home from the hospital and on her way to recovery. -- Miss Helen S. Pratt is at the Glendale Research Hospital with a fractured femur. She thanks her many friends for their cards and messages. She receives visitors from 2:30 to 4:00 P.M. -- If you want to borrow a bird-song phonograph record from our library, get in touch with Mrs. Salmon. -- WESTWAYS has a full page article in the January issue on "Feeding the Firefighters" by the Red Cross at the time of the recent Malibu Mountains fire. The County Forester, Mr. Spence Turner, gives credit to the Los Angeles Audubon Society for working out the plan which resulted in bringing the Red Cross Canteen Corps to the rescue at a time when the Department was finding it increasingly difficult to find manpower for this vitally necessary work. -- Mr. Floyd Forker, president of the Los Angeles Area Council, B.S.A., in a letter to Mrs. Hood, thanks her and the society for the Scout bird study classes. "This is a technical side of the Scout program in which very few are capable of giving leadership," writes Mr. Forker. "The large attendance which you had at the courses is an indication of the need which our boys have for leadership in this field." Attendance at the "graduation," which included parents and leaders and was addressed by Mr. C. A. Harwell, numbered 200.

THE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

The Christmas Bird Count for 1943 was taken December 26th, by 21 observers in 12 parties, representing the Los Angeles Audubon Society, Pasadena Audubon Society and Southwest Bird Study Club. Territory: Section of Los Angeles radiating $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Alvira Street and Fico Blvd., taking in short stretch of seashore (10%), sloughs (15%), University Campus and 5 city parks (15%), canyons (30%), foothills (20%), open country (5%), golf courses (3%), reservoir (1%), and cemeteries (1%). Wind NW all day, 19-30 m.p.h., at times heavy gusts.

LOONS: Pacific, 1; Red-throated, 1.
 GREBES: Horned, 6; eared, 36; Western, 25; pied-billed, 28.
 PELICANS & CORMORANTS: Brown pelican, 25; Farallon cormorant, 41.
 HERONS, etc.: California heron, 15; American egret, 21; snowy egret, 17; black-crowned night heron, 38; American bittern, 2; white-faced glossy ibis, 15.
 DUCKS, GEESE, Etc.: Mallard, 5; baldpate, 16; pintail, 421; green-winged teal, 23; cinnamon teal, 1; shoveller, 310; redhead, 2; canvas-back, 12; lesser scaup duck, 363; bufflehead, 2; white-winged scoter, 85; surf scoter, 197; ruddy duck, 121; American merganser, 150; red-breasted merganser, 16.
 HAWKS: Sharp-shinned, 6; Cooper's, 2; red-tailed, 21; ferruginous roughleg, 2; marsh, 6; sparrow, 70.
 QUAIL: Valley, 125.
 CRANES, RAILS, Etc.: Light-footed rail, 1; coot, 701.
 SHORE-BIRDS: Semi-palmated plover, 2; killdeer, 221; black-bellied plover, 147; ruddy turnstone, 5; black turnstone, 4; Wilson's snipe, 4; long-billed curlew, 1; Hudsonian curlew, 7; spotted sandpiper, 3; willet, 417; greater yellow-legs, 11; least sandpiper, 208; red-backed sandpiper, 2; long-billed dowitcher, 93; Western sandpiper, 50; marbled godwit, 368; sanderling, 27; avocet, 35; glaucous-winged gull, 89; Western gull, 64; herring gull, 2; California gull, 367; ring-billed gull, 755; Bonaparte's gull, 184; Heermann's gull, 26; Forster's tern, 15; Caspian tern, 2.
 DOVES: Mourning, 10; Chinese spotted, 42; ringed turtle, 1.
 ROAD-RUNNERS: Road-runner, 1.
 OWLS: Pacific horned, 3; short-eared, 1.
 SWIFTS & HUMMINGBIRDS: White-throated swift, 91; Anna's hummingbird, 134.
 KINGFISHERS: Belted kingfisher, 4.

WOODPECKERS: Red-shafted flicker, 47; California woodpecker, 22; red-naped sapsucker, 1; red-breasted sapsucker, 1; Nuttall's woodpecker, 8.
 FLYCATCHERS: Cassin's kingbird, 1; black phoebe, 81; Say's phoebe, 6.
 JAYS: California jay, 102.
 TITMICE, BUSH-TITS, Etc.: San Diego titmouse, 25; bush-tit, 283; wren-tit, 128; house wren, 1; San Diego wren, 14; tule wren, 19.
 THRASHERS, THRUSHES, Etc.: Mockingbird, 65; California thrasher, 64; robin, 57; hermit thrush, 9; Western bluebird, 1;
 KINGLETS, GNATCATCHERS, PIPITS: Western gnatcatcher, 6; ruby-crowned kinglet, 52; American pipit, 7.
 WAXWINGS, WARBLERS, Etc.: Cedar waxwing, 63; California shrike, 29; Hutton's vireo, 2; dusky warbler, 3; Audubon's warbler, 1258; tule yellow-throat, 14.
 ENGLISH SPARROWS: English sparrow, 90.
 BLACKBIRDS, Etc.: Western meadowlark, 87; San Diego redwing, 150; Brewer's blackbird, 1635.
 FINCHES, SPARROWS, Etc.: California purple finch, 35; house finch, 2074; willow goldfinch, 45; green-backed goldfinch, 118; spotted towhee, 31; brown towhee, 111; Savannah sparrow, 16; Belding's sparrow, 54; large-billed sparrow, 7; lark sparrow, 6; rufous-crowned sparrow, 1; Thurber's junco, 30; chipping sparrow, 43; Gambel's sparrow, 366; golden-crowned sparrow, 6; song sparrow, 47.

Total number, species and sub-species,..... 123
 Approximate number of individuals.....13,646

Compiled by Mrs. Caroline H. Daugherty,
 Field Leader, Los Angeles Audubon Socy.