

# Western Tanager



VOL. XII

October, 1945

No. 2

## GEORGE WILLETT - AN APPRECIATION

By John A. Comstock, Associate Director - Science, Los Angeles County Museum

The passing of George Willett on August 2nd of this year leaves a void in our ornithological ranks that can not be filled. The loss is felt by professional and amateur alike, for there was no leader of this generation who was more respected for his knowledge and revered for his kindly human attributes than was George Willett.

As Curator of Ornithology of the Los Angeles County Museum from 1927 until the day of his death, Willett was in a strategic position to serve as a focal center around which a large amount of teaching and professional activity with respect to bird and mammal life revolved. His classes in bird and mammal study for high school students were remarkably successful, and the deep regard, amounting almost to reverence, in which he was held by his pupils was an inspiration to all his associates.

George Willett was born in Hawkesbury, Ontario, Canada, May 28, 1879, the son of George and Hannah (Sawyer) Willett. His earlier years were spent in a variety of pursuits and activities, all of which tended to build in his nature a love of wild-life and a thirst for knowledge of living creatures. During the years 1912 to 1918 he served as inspector in Alaska for the United States Bureau of the Biological Survey, and in that capacity he traveled widely throughout the coastal waters and islands of the territory. In the Spanish-American war he served with the 35th Volunteer Infantry, Company A, in the Philippine Islands, and after the close of that campaign remained as a special guard in Manila for some time. He also volunteered for service in World War I and was in Infantry Officers Training Camp at Camp McArthur, Texas, when the armistice was declared.

Willett's scientific interests were not confined to Ornithology. He was equally respected for his contributions to Conchology, and he described a number of new species of mollusks, recent and fossil. A list of his published papers reveals that between the years of 1895 and 1945, he wrote and had published 125 separate articles, including the series of popular booklets on the birds and mammals of Los Angeles County which were recently issued by the Museum.

George Willett was a Vice-President of the American Ornithological Union, and was in line for the presidency. He was a past-president of the Cooper Ornithological Club, Southern Division, and was a member of its Board of Governors. He was a member of numerous scientific societies including the Northwest Bird and Mammal Society, the California Academy of Sciences, the Biological Society of Washington, the San Diego Society of Natural History and the Southern California Academy of Sciences. Among his many outstanding accomplishments should be mentioned the editing of the "Ten Year Index of The Auk, 1931-1940." He was engaged in the continuation of that task at the time of his death.

During his sojourn in Alaska, George Willett met and married Ora A. Bellah, then of Ketchikan. Her interests and talents supplemented his in every particular, and she became an able field observer, collector and collaborator.

In addition to his widow, now of Kent, Washington, George Willett is survived by a brother, Fred H. Willett, of Menton, California; a sister, Mrs. Walter Trager, of Paso Robles, California, and a son, George Willett, Jr., the issue of an earlier marriage. He was buried with military honors in the Sawtelle Soldiers Home Cemetery, the final services being conducted by Roosevelt Camp, United Spanish War Veterans, of which organization he was a member.

THE WESTERN MANAGER

Published Monthly, October to June, by  
THE LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY  
The Los Angeles Branch of the National  
Audubon Society  
Headquarters, Plummer Park, 7377 Santa  
Monica Blvd., Los Angeles 46

THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

President-Emeritus....Mrs. Robert Fargo  
President.....Mrs. J. H. Comby  
Route 3, Box 378-F, Whittier  
Telephone: Whittier 41-4236  
First Vice-President...Mrs. O. M. Stultz  
Second Vice-President..Mrs. Mary V. Hood  
Rec. Secretary.....Mrs. Helen M. Ackley  
Exec. Secretary.....Miss Ida May Wilson  
4314 Los Feliz Blvd., Los Angeles 27  
Telephone: Normandy 1-4279  
Treasurer.....Miss Bonnie C. Green  
774 W. Heliotrope Dr., Los Angeles 27  
Telephone: Morningside 1-5537  
Curator Librarian....Mrs. Mary B. Salmon  
1117 N. Fuller Ave., Los Angeles 46  
Telephone: Granite 9312  
Historian Miss Martha C. Gilbert

STANDING COMMITTEES

Birds.....Mrs. Caroline H. Daugherty  
Evening Program.....R. W. Julian  
Hospitality.....Mrs. Roy M. Barnes  
House.....Mrs. Mary Barnes Salmon  
Membership.....Miss Charlotte J. Fox  
Nature Study.....Mrs. Thos. R. Shearer  
Program.....Mrs. Carl P. Smith  
Protection.....Miss Dorothy E. Groner  
Publications.....Miss Laura Greely  
Publicity.....Miss Alberta Hodge  
Youth Leadership.....Mrs. O. B. Pratt

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Student (12 to 18 yrs. of age), 75¢; An-  
nual, \$1.50; Life, \$25; Patron, \$100.  
Joint membership with the National Audu-  
bon Socy., including "Audubon Magazine,"  
\$5 (minimum). Annual dues are payable  
July 1, except for those who have taken  
a joint membership. These will be noti-  
fied at the proper time by the National  
Audubon Society.

OBSERVATIONS: Band-tailed pigeons and  
Western robins seem to be changing their  
preference for higher altitudes and to be  
moving to town. Many were seen all thru  
the summer in Los Angeles, Glendale and  
Elintridge residential areas; robins nest-  
ing in Glendale areas.

WATCH NOW FOR: Returning migrants and win-  
ter residents,- shore birds, ducks, Gam-  
bel's sparrows, Audubon's warblers, etc.

--C.H.D.

NEW MEMBERS, WELCOME!

Miss Violet Appeman  
220 S. Catalina St., Los Angeles 4  
Miss Madge Burnham  
Torrance  
Dr. R. M. Crumrine  
3304 W. 83rd St., Inglewood  
Dr. & Mrs. Clarence W. Dail  
802 S. Acacia St., San Gabriel  
Miss Florence L. Gee  
272 S. Euclid Ave., Pasadena 5  
Mr. Otto A. Gerth  
422 S. Canon Dr., Beverly Hills  
Mrs. Florence H. Harner  
301 N.E. 87th St., Miami 38, Fla.  
Mrs. Joseph Harper  
2000 De Mille Dr., Los Angeles 27  
Mr. Fred C. Hartman  
5433 Harold Way, Los Angeles 27  
Mrs. Niles B. Hasbrouck  
606 N. Roxbury Dr., Beverly Hills  
Mr. Guy D. Haselton  
7936 Santa Monica Bl., Hollywood 46  
Mrs. John McK. Hecker  
604 N. Linden Dr., Beverly Hills  
Miss Mary Bess Henry  
1636 Buckingham Rd., Los Angeles 6  
Mr. Wm. Russell Hubbard  
2071 Balmer Dr., Los Angeles 26  
Mrs. F. C. Hutchins  
Ray Thomas Fanch, Camarillo  
Mrs. Della Larkin  
1117 Manzanita St., Los Angeles 27  
Miss Florence E. Martin  
922 S. Windsor Bl., Los Angeles 6  
Mr. Harold A. McClain  
8702 Second Ave., Inglewood  
Dr. Ross Moore  
523 S. Lucerne Bl., Los Angeles 5  
Mr. and Mrs. Harvey S. Mudd  
1240 Benedict Can'n Dr. Beverly Hills  
Mr. Geoffrey L. Parkford  
9500 Santa Monica Bl. Beverly Hills  
Mr. Harold E. Perry  
1841 Colina Dr., Glendale 8  
Miss Lois Rayner  
5184 Caspar Ave., Los Angeles 41  
Mrs. Ethel E. Richardson  
2610 S. Durfee Ave., El Monte  
Mrs. C. M. Seward  
2700 Budlong Ave., Los Angeles 7  
Mrs. F. F. Strong  
6129 Fountain Ave., Los Angeles 28  
Mrs. C. H. Watson  
603 N. Rexford Dr., Beverly Hills  
Mr. Wilber F. Willis  
4759 Ambrose Ave., Los Angeles 27

Continued on Page 8

---

A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT --

Beginnings appeal to our imagination; they challenge our capabilities, as we have before us the future, in which we may exercise our finest effort toward the attainment of our objectives. We launch our program this time in the beginning of an era of peace, in the building of which we hope we have a part. We know of no better way to express our gratitude for the preservation of our land than to devote ourselves with enthusiasm to the perpetuation of our forests, streams and wildlife, and to the education of our young people in this field, that they may enjoy greater enrichment of life and a higher degree of good citizenship through this understanding.

-----EENA COMBY

---

THE WESTERN Tanager comes to us this year with the compliments of Mickey Audubon Pishon, one of our patron members. On receipt of the first issue after the summer vacation he wrote: "How nice to receive the Tanager again. I see that the largest single item under Disbursements last year was the cost of its publication, so to help out a little I am enclosing my check for \$200 to pay for it for one year." What could be more encouraging, more inspiring than this? Our warmest thanks, Mickey!

COMMENTING ON THE DANGER which threatens the San Gabriel River Wildlife Sanctuary through the proposed building of a dam at Whittier Narrows, Mr. John H. Baker, president of the National Audubon Society, writes: "Whatever happens, we want you to know that Mrs. J. H. Comby, president of the Los Angeles Audubon Society, and her crew, have done a fine diplomatic piece of work in presentation of our case and the cementing of good relations, apt to have beneficial results in many directions." (Audubon Magazine, July-August, 1945, p. 251.)

MISS NORA PREISKER found excellent birding at Lake Gregory, in the San Bernardino Mountains, this summer. She writes of finding ten species of birds at her feeding table one morning, and within a radius of twenty-five feet she saw a Cassin vireo, junco, lazuli bunting, Western bluebird and San Diego towhee building their nests. "The lazuli bunting was laying the foundation for her nest in a gooseberry bush only a foot or so from the ground. It was an all-white nest, the materials being bleached grasses, roots, etc. The male danced attendance on her, following her and singing, but never a bit of help did he give. The vireo's nest was about done, but Mrs. Vireo added a decorative insect wing while I watched. Mr. Vireo was very vocal, but offered no other assistance."

CONGRATULATIONS to Mrs. Morain. She has found a way to frighten stray cats that wander, uninvited, into her dooryard bird sanctuary. She fills a tin can with enough small stones to make a good rattle and keeps it handy to throw in front of such unwelcome visitors. It does not hurt the cats, and it has proved effective.

SGT. ROBERT L. PYLE has been transferred to the Weather Bureau at Palm Springs. On a recent trip to Salton Sea he added an Abert towhee to his list, and now he is looking for a vermilion flycatcher...Cpl. Francisco Holguin, of the Army medical corps, is at San Francisco. He returned from the Philippines on a hospital ship, helping care for the sick and wounded.

SUMMER CAMPS of Girl Scouts and Campfire Girls called on the Los Angeles Audubon Society again this year for help in their nature study. Miss Clara E. Pflager served as Nature Counselor at the Campfire Girls camp on the Santa Ana River. Mrs. W. L. Humphreys had a bird study class of 35 Campfire Girls in the Alhambra City Park one day in July. There were 225 girls enrolled at the Girl Scout camp in Flummer Park this summer. Mrs. Mary Barnes Salmon, our Curator, arranged nature walks and indoor programs twice a week for all the girls who were interested. The final program was given by Mrs. O. M. Stultz. She illustrated her talk with her own kodachromes, and was assisted by Mrs. Bertha Caroline Stockwell, who whistled bird songs and calls.

NEW MEMBERS, Continued from Page 6

Mrs. F. H. Archer,	1835 E. First St.	Long Beach 3
Miss Florence Archer	1515-A Monterey Blvd.	Hermosa Beach
Mrs. Daisy Sinclair Baird	407 S. Hope St.	Los Angeles 13
Mr. W. P. Balderston	1341 Rossmoyne Ave.	Glendale 7
Mrs. W. Jarvis Earlow	1185 Wentworth Ave.	Pasadena 5
Mr. Bruce Belt	2201 Fern Dell Place	Los Angeles 28
Mrs. Charles M. Boyer	Box 309, RFD 1	Garden Grove
Mrs. Charlotte Browning	717½ W. 23rd St.	Los Angeles 7
Miss Anna M. Cary	P.O. Box 455	Tujunga
David V. Chambers	793 Terrace 49	Los Angeles 42
Mrs. Cyril Chappellet	901 Airole Way	W. Los Angeles 24
Dr. Leslie E. Christensen	1126 W. 28th St.	Los Angeles 7
Miss Mary F. Coble	1428 N. Genesee Ave.	Hollywood 46
Mrs. Jean C. Crouch	1834 El Camino Real, Box 155	Hermosa Beach
Dr. Roberta Crutcher	3875 Wilshire Blvd.	Los Angeles 5
Mrs. Rilla Custer	Box 532	Lancaster
Miss Genevieve Dexter	231 N. Blaine	Bellflower
Mr. Wm. Dieterle	6224 Matilija Ave.	Van Nuys
Mrs. Edwin Fallas	220 S. Catalina St.	Los Angeles 4
Miss Mae Fitzgerald	3221 Imperial Highway	Lynwood
Mrs. R. F. Goudey	3845 Aloha St.	Los Angeles 27
Mrs. Samuel M. Haskins	354 S. Kingsley Dr.	Los Angeles 5
Mrs. H. N. Henderson	578 Sunset Dr.	Whittier
Mr. I. Leroy Kent	1369 Kent Place	Glendale 5
Mrs. Ada E. Mangson	860 S. Lorraine Blvd.	Los Angeles 5
Wm. Arthur Miller	4889 Axtell St.	Los Angeles 32
Miss Jean Hart Platner	.....	East Herkimer, N.Y.
Miss Bessie G. Rouse	2801 San Marino St.	Los Angeles 6
Mr. Raymond E. Smith	1142 Beachwood Drive	Hollywood 38
Mrs. F. T. Stoddard	229 S. Greenleaf St.	Whittier
Mrs. M. C. Van Doren	1849 Spruce St.	South Pasadena
Mr. George G. Young	124 Ninth St.	Manhattan Beach
Mr. John A. Zublin	414 St. Pierre Road	Los Angeles 24

A CHUCKER PARTRIDGE -----

By Mrs. Elsie M. May

A chucker partridge stood on a little knoll near the water tank, his checkered coat camouflaged into the rocky background. He was very angry. With each "chuck, chuck," his black wattles glistened in the brilliant sunlight. Back of him was his family,-- eleven young chucks and the demure little mother. The cause of so much turmoil was that a mere human being had invaded their sanctum. Under the cottonwood's cool shade was the life-giving drip of the water-box, so kindly placed by the hand he so vociferously scolded.

Last winter the State of California furnished 150 banded partridges and the game warden placed them at the quarry of the Southwestern Portland Cement Company at Victorville. The company men and the Desert Fish and Game Association have cooperated in the care of these birds. They have placed water tanks and feed tables for them. No hunting is permitted on the company property.

There are many rock crevices for shelter. Clumps of giant yucca and Joshua trees, creosote bush, a beautiful perennial aster shrub and many other desert plants shelter wildlife from the mid-day sun and birds of prey.

The partridges are inclined to remain with us throughout the year, whereas the quail, which abound in the summer until the rains come, leave at that time and do not return until the next season. At present, during the month of August, there are numerous quail families of all sizes,-- one with tiny little ones recently hatched. Much is being accomplished here toward the preservation of wildlife.

## CALENDAR FOR OCTOBER, 1945

THURSDAY, OCT. 4. Field Trip, Playa del Rey. Shore and back bay areas for shore birds. Take Redondo Motor bus via Playa del Rey, Olive Street deck, Subway Terminal Bldg., 423 S. Hill St., Los Angeles, 8 A.M. Get off at Playa del Rey and Vista del Mar St. Round trip fare, 40¢. Take lunch. Bird walk will start from bus stop at 9 o'clock. At 11:30 meet on the bridge near shore south of restaurant. Return bus leaves Playa del Rey at 1:13, 2:13 and 3:13. Check for possible motor bus change by calling Information, TUCKER 7272. Leader, Mrs. Caroline H. Daugherty.

THURSDAY, OCT. 11. 7 P.M. Los Angeles Central Library, Fifth Street and Grand Avenue. First floor. Address, "Trees, Flowers and Birds of Our City," by Mr. George T. Hastings; illustrated with kodachrome slides and motion pictures. Prologue: Reports on summer observations. Mr. R. W. Julian, presiding.

SUNDAY, OCT. 14. 9 A.M. San Gabriel River Wildlife Sanctuary, 2610 S. Durfee Ave., El Monte. Telephone, Whittier 6-3748. Located opposite Temple School, on the Pacific Electric Pasadena-Long Beach bus line, which makes four trips each way daily. From downtown Los Angeles go by El Monte bus or train to El Monte P. E. Station; change to Long Beach bus leaving El Monte at 8:38. Get off at Temple School. If driving, go east on Third Street to Beverly Blvd., continue on Beverly to Durfee Avenue, thence north to Sanctuary. Take lunch. Leader, Mrs. Ann B. Young, president of the Pasadena Audubon Society.

SUNDAY, OCT. 14. 2 to 4 P.M. San Gabriel Wildlife Sanctuary. (See preceding notice for directions.) An illustrated talk on birds, for Student Members and other young people under 18 years of age, will be presented by the Committee on Youth Leadership, Mrs. O. B. Pratt, chairman.

THURSDAY, OCT. 18. 1:30 P.M. Los Angeles County Museum; assembly hall on second floor. The Program Committee, Mrs. Carl P. Smith, chairman, presents Mrs. Mary V. Hood, Second Vice-President of the Los Angeles Audubon Society, in "Sequoia Side-lights," - six weeks of pictures taken this summer on the foot-trails of this lovely park.

THURSDAY, OCT. 25. 10 A.M. Long Hall, Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd. Study Class, conducted by the Committee on Nature Study, Mrs. Thomas R. Shearer, chairman. 1. Discussion of year's work, 1945-46; 2. Identification of winter visitors; 3. Symposium: Should undesirable species be controlled? Mrs. Daugherty, Mrs. Willis, Mrs. T. G. White; 4. Question Box. Bring notebook and pencil. Bring lunch also, and spend the afternoon in our headquarters with our books, pictures, mounted specimens, bird song phonograph records, etc.

SUNDAY, OCT. 28. Field Trip, Playa del Rey. Take Redondo Motor bus via Playa del Rey, Olive Street deck, Subway Terminal Bldg., 423 S. Hill St., Los Angeles, 8:50 A.M. Get off at Vista del Mar Street. Bird walk will start from there on arrival of bus (9:36 A.M.). Take lunch and meet at 11:30 on the bridge near the shore, south of the restaurant. Check for possible bus change by calling Information, TUCKER 7272. Leader, Arthur L. Berry.

AUDUBON SCREEN TOURS, Burdett Hall (Philharmonic Building), 427 W. Fifth St., Los Angeles. Presented by the Audubon Screen Tours Club of the Los Angeles Audubon Society and the National Audubon Society. Membership open to the public. Dues, \$2 to June 30, 1946. Purchase tickets of Walter Scott, 967 S. Sydney Drive, Los Angeles 22.