

Western Tanager



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JOHN JAMES AUDUBON
1780 ---- 1851

It seems fitting that our society should give some thought to the memory of John James Audubon, whose birth date anniversary occurs this month. The following memoir from the pen of his loving wife leaves little to say in commendation of his labors:

"That cheerful one, who knoweth all
The songs of all the winged choristers,
And in one sequence of melodious sound
Fours out their music."

I think one of the best tributes to Audubon was by an early writer who said: "For sixty years or more he followed, with more than religious devotion, a beautiful and elevated pursuit, illustrating its objects by his art. In all climates and in all weathers; scorched by burning suns, drenched by piercing rains, frozen by the fiercest colds; now diving fearlessly into the densest forest, now wandering alone over the most savage regions; in perils, in difficulties, and in doubts; with no companion to cheer his way, far from the smiles and applause of society; listening only to the sweet music of birds, or to the sweeter music of his own thoughts, he faithfully kept his path. The records of man's life contain few nobler examples of strength of purpose and indefatigable energy. Led on solely by his pure, lofty, kindling enthusiasm, no thirst for wealth, no desire of distinction, no restless ambition of eccentric character could have induced him to undergo as many sacrifices, or sustained him under so many trials. Higher motives alone enabled him to meet such discouragements and accomplish such miracles of achievement. He has enlarged and enriched the domains of a pleasing and useful science; he reveals to us the existence of many species of birds before unknown; he has given us more accurate information of the forms and habits of those that were known; and he has imparted to the study of natural history the grace and fascination of romance"

As long as the birds sing about our homes, the name of John James Audubon, the gifted artist, the ardent lover of Nature, and the admirable writer, will live in the hearts of his grateful countrymen.

-----C. V. DUFF

"As there never were a hundred years ago, there are millions of acres of land set aside for the use and protection of birds,-- sanctuaries with their armed and conscientious wardens. There are hundreds of bird clubs in America, united in the cause of birds, and bird-shooting by the young is not condoned. Laws now protect birds that once were considered useless, worthless, and to be exterminated as soon as possible. Protection has come, and if it is not yet quite enough, still it is better than before. If these things had not come to pass when they did, America by this time would have lost a vital, singing part of its personality. For in its birds lies the story of America."

---Virginia S. Eifert, in "Audubon Magazine," Sept.-Oct., 1945, p. 258.

THE WESTERN Tanager

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Membership Dues

Student (12 to 18 yrs. of age), 75¢; Annual, \$1.50; Life, \$25; Patron, \$100. Joint membership with National Audubon Soc'y, with "Audubon Magazine," \$5 (minimum). Annual dues payable July 1. Membership Chm. Miss Charlotte J. Fox, 5442 Monroe St., Los Angeles 38. Telephone, Highland 2433.

OBSERVATIONS: In Santa Monica area, Mr. G. T. Hastings reports observing for the past month a Pacific kittiwake, rare to this coast. Recently Mr. H.L. Cogswell identified a laughing gull, a new record for this region. Another rare bird, the skua, was observed Feb. 10 along the same shores. In Pt. Mugu area, Mar. 10, two flocks of black brant (174 and 70) were seen; also a flock of 22 long-billed curlew, and just off-shore a great raft of Western grebe numbering from 600 to 700. The beautiful white-tailed kite, until recently fast decreasing in numbers, seems to be coming back slowly. We hope it will have full protection by everyone. Reports of observations come in from various points, from San Francisco areas down to Southern California. One or two birds usually seen, but one Southern California observer reports a colony of 24 appearing at one time one early dawn.

WATCH NOW for black-necked stilt (lagoons and marshes), russet-backed thrush, warbling vireo, migrating warblers, orioles, Western tanager and black-headed grosbeak.

----Caroline H. Daugherty

NEW MEMBERS, WELCOME!

- Mrs. John H. Brodhead
2801 Seventh Ave., Los Angeles 16
- Mrs. Neil V. Bullion
Ear V Ranch School, Nuevo
- Mr. William L. Butler
600 W. Buckthorn, Inglewood
- Mrs. H. E. Crowe
2202 Virginia Rd., Los Angeles 16
- Mr. Clarence A. Hall, Jr.
430 Ashburton Pl., Glendale 6
- Miss Gertrude M. Hancock
1427 W. 38th St., Los Angeles 37
- Mr. Bruce Kilgore
2624 Hollister Terrace, Glendale 6
- Mrs. Robert T. Knapp
1801 N. Country Lane, Pasadena
- Mr. Elmer D. Tharp
963 El Paso Dr., Los Angeles 42

IN MEMORIAM. Mr. Clinton G. Abbott, died March 5, 1946. A nationally known naturalist, Mr. Abbott was director of the Museum of Natural History, San Diego.

MRS. ENOS MILLS, of Estes Park, Colo., visited our headquarters recently with Mrs. Salmon (they are old friends), and was so favorably impressed by what she saw that she has presented us with a number of Government bulletins on nature subjects, chiefly birds. They make valuable reference material.

THE YOUTH LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE is using two excellent bird study helps compiled, one by Mrs. O. E. Pratt, chairman, the other by Mrs. Mary V. Hood. One is a four-page leaflet arranged for use in a 6 x 9 loose-leaf binder and designed to guide and record one's observations, one leaflet for each bird identified. The other is a "Study List" of common birds of Los Angeles County, listed according to habitat and general distribution, selected with a view to identification without field glasses. Both forms are attracting much favorable comment.

A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT--

The words of John Muir, when he said that it makes such a big hole in the sky when a tree is removed, came to our minds as we viewed the results of the fire that swept through the southern end of the San Gabriel River Wildlife Sanctuary March 3rd, when high winds blew over a tree, breaking electric wires. Tangles of grapevine, brush and some of the trees were speedily destroyed in spite of heroic efforts of the fire departments, aided by a Division of Forestry. Scattered trees in the burned area are unhurt, and those, with the fine soil and abundance of water, will enable Nature to renew the landscape. One cannot view without keen regret the destruction of a nature community that has been many years in the making, but we shall look forward nevertheless with courage and eager interest to see what plant and wildlife conditions will take place in the new adjustment. The freshness of a beginning will challenge our imagination.

----ERNA COMBY

IN MEMORIAM. Mrs. Charlotte McKay Edwards has been and always will be a sweet, loving, living personality. Her love of beauty and of the natural world about her was a source of joy and peace to her. Exploring the mysteries of Nature, she passed on her knowledge to others, enriching them with her love. She did not confine her searching to Nature, but sought the understanding and truth of Divine Being, always demonstrating the truth by her expressions of kindness, love and thoughtfulness of every one whom she knew. Each life she touched has been made a bit better by the enriching love of her great spirit. Her material body has gone, but the fineness of her will remain as long as Time itself.

----Charlotte A. Hamilton

MR. AND MRS. J. H. COMBY, after one of their excursions, passed on to others word of a pair of American rough-legged hawks observed near one of the costal marshes. The writer was fortunate to be included with a group of friends on a trip, with a main purpose, and there was ample reward in the joyous experience of watching those majestic birds in flight, so near that we could see all the beautiful, characteristic marks on both upper and under surfaces of body and wings. Only three authentic records of previous visits of this species to Southern California are known. And while on the subject of recorded visits, we would like to believe that the cliff swallows observed rolling up little pellets of mud at the edge of a streamlet, then flying to a nearby bridge, had established an early spring-arrival record, - March 11. Under the bridge floor were fifteen nests at the initial stage of construction... Various kinds of birdlife were studied along the coast and inland throughout the sunny day. As we started the return trip in late afternoon, a short-eared owl came out of brush on a hillside, flying low across the road and back to shelter, - a good finis to our bird trip.

----Mrs. Elsie Humphreys.

CONGRATULATIONS TO MR. AND MRS. R. A. POWELL, who are celebrating their fiftieth wedding anniversary Sunday, March 31. All members of the Los Angeles Audubon Society are cordially invited to attend a reception in their honor at the Woman's Clubhouse, Seventh and Olive Streets, Burbank, that day. The hours are three to six.

Plans of the Los Angeles County Planning Commission for the development of Arroyo Seco Park include additional recreational and parking areas in that part of the Arroyo lying within the city of South Pasadena. A counter proposal has been made by the Beautification Committee of South Pasadeans, Inc., which has in view a naturalistic park exclusively of native planting and a bird sanctuary. Our members, Donald H. Fry and Mrs. Alva Graham, who are members also of the National Audubon Society, are chairman and secretary, respectively, of the committee. At our field trip in the Arroyo March 7 the plan was explained to some fifty members in attendance, Mr. Fry describing the general plan and the proposed sanctuary, Mr. Theodore Payne speaking of the plantings which would go far toward restoring the former beauty of the area. Needless to say, the plan met with instant approval and the authorities concerned are to be so informed.

THURSDAY, APRIL 4. Field Trip, Tania Park, in Santa Monica Mountains, 35 miles from Los Angeles. Hurrah! We have our wonderful pre-war transportation back, - our Tanner Motor Bus! Leave Los Angeles from 6th and Olive Streets, park side, at 8:30 A.M., returning to Los Angeles by 4 P.M. Round trip fare, \$1.50. Have exact fare ready. Take lunch. Please make advance reservation promptly with Mrs. W. F. Willis, 4759 Ambrose Ave., Los Angeles 27. Telephone, Morningside 1-6350. Those driving go our Ventura Blvd. to Brent's Junction, turn left to Tania Park. Leader, Mrs. Caroline H. Daugherty.

THURSDAY, APRIL 11. 7 P.M. Central Library, Fifth Street and Grand Ave. First floor. R. W. Julian presiding. Speaker, Paul W. Colburn, former ranger-naturalist, Sequoia National Park. Subject, "Some Interesting Birds of our National Parks." Illustrated with kodachrome slides.

FRIDAY, APRIL 12. Audubon Screen Tour. See special Screen Tour announcement.

SATURDAY, APRIL 13. 9 A.M. to 12 Noon. San Gabriel River Wildlife Sanctuary Museum. (See notice below for directions.) An illustrated talk on birds for Student Members and other young people, presented by the Committee on Youth Leadership, Mrs. O. B. Pratt, chairman.

THURSDAY, APRIL 18. 1:30 P.M. Program Meeting, Los Angeles County Museum, Exposition Park. Second floor. Speaker, Mrs. J. H. Comby, president, Los Angeles Audubon Society; subject: "Audubon, Who Saw Paradise." Mr. Carl Thomsen will show a travel moving picture, in color, around Vancouver Island. Mrs. Carl P. Smith, chairman of the Program Committee, presiding.

THURSDAY, APRIL 25. Study Class, Marine Museum, Cabrillo Beach. Take Los Angeles-San Pedro Pacific Electric train, leaving station, 610 S. Main St., Los Angeles, at 8:15 A.M. Arrive in San Pedro, 5th St. Station, 9:25. Transfer to Point Firmin bus; get off at Cabrillo Beach. At 10:30 A.M., Dr. W. L. Lloyd, Director of the Museum, will speak on "Shells of the World," illustrating with specimens. Afterward there will be an opportunity to study his fine collection of shore and ocean birds and many forms of marine life, and do a little birding along the beach. Take lunch. Note: The Los Angeles-San Pedro train runs every 20 minutes. Fare, 69¢ round trip.

SUNDAY, APRIL 28. Field Trip: Dalton Canyons (Big and Little), starting from junction of Big Dalton and Glendora Mtn. Roads, 2.8 miles north and east of Glendora, and covering the lower parts of both canyons within about 1½ miles of starting point. This is a well wooded foothill and canyon area that will likely abound in migrating warblers, vireos, flycatchers, grosbeaks, buntings, etc. Come on out early and enjoy the thrill of a real dawn song chorus. After the morning's birding, meet for lunch and discussion at the public camp near Angeles National Forest boundary in Big Dalton Canyon. Leader, Howard L. Cogswell. Those driving who can take a passenger, and those needing transportation, telephone Mrs. Julian, WA 7853.

SAN GABRIEL RIVER WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

Owned and operated by the National Audubon Society

SUNDAY, APRIL 14. Field Trip, starting from the entrance, 2610 S. Durfee Ave., El Monte, at 9 A.M. Leader supplied by the local committee, Mrs. J. H. Comby, chairman. Telephone, Whittier 41-4236. Sanctuary telephone, Whittier 6-3748. Take lunch. Pasadena-Long Beach (Pacific Electric) bus, four trips each way daily, stops at Temple School, opposite Sanctuary entrance. From downtown Los Angeles go to El Monte by P.E. bus or train and transfer to Long Beach bus leaving El Monte at 8:38 A.M. Telephone information, Tucker 7272, for best schedule. If driving, go east on Third Street to Beverly Blvd., continue on Beverly to Durfee Avenue, thence north to Sanctuary.

VISITORS WELCOME AT ALL MEETINGS. For desired information, telephone NOrmandy 1-4279 or Morningside 1-6350