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# Western Tanager



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BY THE LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY

THE LOS ANGELES BRANCH OF THE  
NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

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JOHN JAMES AUDUBON  
Artist -- Naturalist

(Printed on the backs of the menus of the dining car of the new Southern Pacific train, the Sunset Limited, is the following about Audubon furnished by the National Audubon Society. The dining car is decorated with reproductions of some of Audubon's paintings.)

The birds that grace this dining car are faithful reproductions of original paintings by the great Artist-Naturalist, John James Audubon, who did a great deal of his work in Louisiana. Audubon Park in New Orleans is named after him.

The year 1951 has been designated the Audubon Centennial in memory of Audubon's death in 1851 after he had completed his monumental task to which he dedicated his life -- painting of 1065 birds in 435 separate paintings.

Such a task was not easy in Audubon's time. There were no photographs nor mounted specimens to guide him. He traversed the wilds from Labrador to Louisiana and the Florida Keys, and from Pennsylvania to Texas, enduring the hardships of primitive travel to paint his birds in their natural habitat.

Audubon lived in a pioneer era when America's natural resources seemed as limitless as the horizons to the west. Yet Audubon cried out against the wanton destruction of birds and animals that he witnessed wherever he went, and warned, "The war of extermination cannot last many years more."

It is little wonder, when in 1886 an organization was formed "for the protection of American birds not used for food," it should take the name Audubon Society. Today the National Audubon Society and its local chapters in New Orleans, Los Angeles, and other cities across the continent, constitute the largest conservation organization in the world.

Audubon's paintings remain as an enduring monument to his genius; but his name may outlive his works because it has become the symbol for love of nature, love of country.

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## A CLEAN WIND BLOWING

God, keep a clean wind blowing  
Through my heart night and day;  
Cleanse it with sunlight,  
Let the silver rain wash away  
Cobwebs and the smouldering dust  
That years leave, I pray.

Bitterness can have no place in me  
Nor grief stay,  
When the winds of God rush through  
And sweep them away.  
God, keep a clean wind blowing  
Through my heart, night and day.  
Grace Noll Crowell.

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**THE WESTERN Tanager**

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**THE LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY**

Founded 1910 -- For the Protection of  
Birds, Animals and Plant Life.  
Membership-Student (12 to 18 years) 75¢,  
Annual \$1.50; Life; \$25; Patron \$100.  
Joint membership with the National Society  
\$5.00, including Audubon Magazine.  
Membership Chairman, Miss Bonnie C. Green,  
774 N. Heliotrope Dr., L.A. 27.  
Phone, Normandie 1-5537

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**OFFICERS FOR 1950-1951**

President.....Mrs. Neil H. Lewis,  
212 N. Wilton Place, L.A. 4  
Executive Secretary..Mrs. Bess Hoffman,  
1112½ S. Orange Dr., L.A. 19  
Treasurer..... Mrs. W. Scott Lewis,  
2500 Beachwood Dr., Hollywood 28

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**OUR EMBLEMS-TIGER SWALLOWTAIL**

When you see a large yellow butterfly  
with black lines across the front wings,  
both wings edged with black, tails extend-  
ing from the hind wings, you are looking  
at our butterfly emblem. It is found  
throughout the western half of the U.S.,  
replaced by a similar Tiger Swallowtail  
in the east. From eggs laid on willow or  
alder leaves the young caterpillars hatch  
and feed till about two inches long, when  
they change to the pupae. The caterpillar  
is velvety green with large eye-like spots  
just back of the head. When disturbed it  
arches up the front end of its body and  
snorts out a pair of fleshy yellow "horns"  
in front of the eye spots, at the same  
time giving off an unpleasant odor, so  
that it has been called an "insect skunk".  
Very different is the adult male butterfly  
"The odor of this beautiful butterfly ri-  
vals that of costly Parisian perfumes",  
according to one author.

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Wonder is the foundation of all philoso-  
phy; inquiry the progress; ignorance the  
end. Montaigne's Essays.

**A NEW YEAR'S GREETING FROM OUR PRESIDENT**

At the beginning of a New Year it  
seems natural to pause and look for  
guide posts, to see if we are travelling  
in the right direction toward our goal.  
Our Executive Board has approved of  
erecting a Guide Post and are taking  
steps to have our Society incorporated.  
The question of incorporation has been  
debated for some time, so our financial  
committee, with Mr. R. W. Julian as  
chairman, thoroughly investigated the  
proposal and recommended that the So-  
ciety be converted into a non-profit  
corporation. The obligations that fall  
upon an organization that has grown to  
such a size as ours can thus be more ju-  
diciously carried by our executive of-  
ficers, as well as stability and perpet-  
uity being given the Society. We are  
coming "of Age".

Being a non-profit organization, we  
are dependent on our members and friends  
for their contributions in time, talent,  
and money to keep our work progressing.  
Because of donations received by our  
Laura Greeley Educational Fund, we are  
able to erect another Guide Post which  
will be helpful to students of Nature.  
Three articles prepared by Mrs. Mary V.  
Hood for use with the Nature Study Work-  
shop are being printed. These are "Cone  
Bearing Trees of California - a Field  
Identification Chart"; "What Birds Eat  
and How it Affects Man"; "Life Zones of  
California". As soon as these are off  
the press they may be obtained from our  
Chairman of Sales, Mrs. Celia Christian-  
son.

These are new guide posts - but all  
our members are aware of and grateful  
to our Chairmen of Standing Committees  
who are constantly and faithfully being  
posts for the direction of our Audubon  
Society.

Alice Lewis

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If you have never seen a newly-hatched  
hummingbird you still have something for  
which to live. Not for one moment could  
one imagine that so beautiful a creature  
as a mature Hummingbird could develop  
from the black shiny bugs that hatch  
from those eggs.

Harriet W. Myers - Western Birds

## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Miss Harriet J. Allyn,  
1157 N. Vista St., Hollywood 46  
Mr. Frank M. Amerman,  
5148 Argus Dr., L.A. 41  
Mrs. Sarah C. Britton,  
2758 Henrietta Ave., La Crescenta  
Miss Ellen del Rio,  
3009 Riverside Dr., Burbank  
Mrs. Mary B. Mason,  
P.O. Box 32, Big Bear City  
Miss Marie C. Van Ingen,  
1448 W. 46th St., L.A. 37  
And especial welcome to an old member who  
has become a Life Member - Miss Rose Kahn.

GOOD NEWS: The Secretary of the Interior has refused the request of the Mt. San Jacinto Winter Park Association for permission to build the aerial tramway over the Primitive Area at the base of the mountain. We, and practically every organization in Southern California interested in conservation and wildlife, had opposed the building of this tramway.

## A REQUEST OF ALL MEMBERS

Whenever you notice anything unusual in bird behavior, write it up and send it to the editor. Such notes may be of great interest.

And if you move, send your new address to the editor or the membership chairman. Since September 28 Tanagers have been returned undelivered because of the members moving.

One of the earliest members of our Society, Mrs. Harriet Williams Myers, died at her home in Los Angeles on December 6th. She was present at our Birthday Party in May and told us about the founding of the Society in 1910, how, when the president elect became ill she had taken over the work of the organization. Mrs. Myers was the organizer and president emerita of the California Audubon Society. She was the author of two well known books, The Bird's Convention and Western Birds, as well as of many short articles. Her books contain many references to her personal observations and are worthy of reading and study by us all.

## From Our Exchanges

Quite often reports are received at Audubon house of birds which show an unusual amount of white in the plumage and at long intervals an albino bird is placed on record. Since many observers report partial albinism, which some geneticists now assert does not exist, it seems desirable to clear up the terminology by quoting from material published in the News of the Eastern Bird Banding Association, contributed by Merrill Wood of State College, Pennsylvania. "Birds which are completely white with pink eyes should be called albinos. Albinism is a hereditary lack of melanin (dark color), apparently caused by the absence of an enzyme, or by its inability to be active because of a recessive gene. Birds that are entirely white or spotted with white and have pigmented eyes, a condition not normal for the species, exhibit leukism. This is known to be caused by a variety of genes and (or) in some cases by a physiological disturbance of the thyroid glands. Birds which have a dilute color or paleness in some or all of their feathers, a condition not normal to the species, exhibit schizochromatism. This is known to be caused by a variety of genes.

The Bulletin of the Massachusetts Audubon Society for November.

The December number of the Audubon Warbler, published by the Oregon State Game Commission has distributed circulars at public shooting grounds for the edification of the public. One of these is to show the differences between Snow Geese and Whistling Swans. The circular compares the size, markings, cry and flight of these birds, concluding "It is hoped that the distribution of this circular will save swans as well as stiff fines on the part of embarrassed hunters."

At all times of the year several (California Towhees) may be seen in my garden, coming continually to my bird table and bath, flying into the house, ... and going leisurely out when they get ready. I know of no other bird that is so at home in the abode of man.

Western Birds - by Harriet W. Myers

### THE COURTING OF A KING

William Lasky reports seeing a pair of Golden Eagles near Ferris on Nov. 27, giving a remarkable courtship performance. The female was flying along steadily when the male shot up in the air above her to a great height, apparently about 1000 feet. He then turned over in a barrel roll, closed his wings and plummeted down till almost on her back, when he opened his wings, leveled off, then shot up again to repeat the performance. This was done four times before the pair flew away over the mountains. It was a wonderful display of power and mastery of flight.

A Golden Eagle was seen over the Point Mugu Gun Club marshes on Dec. 10, carrying something of good size. While William Lasky and Wallie Green watched it dropped something which proved, when recovered to be the wings of a Green-winged Teal. Undoubtedly the duck was either a dead one picked up on the edge of one of the pools, or one badly crippled in the recent hunting season, as it is highly improbable that the eagle could have caught an uninjured bird.

Mrs. Mary Hood sends a note from Yosemite. District Ranger Evans reports that the Great Grey Owls returned to the Bridal-veil Meadows area and as many as 3 were seen in one day. Ranger During reports that the beaver dams in the Wawona area were all washed out during the recent flood. However the beavers have already repaired the dam across from the Wawona Hotel and other dams along Big Creek show some evidence of beaver working there.

### THE BALD EAGLE IN ALASKA

Let us not, for fifty cents, slaughter and throw away such a creature as this bird of the upper clouds, a bird the sight of which is an event to ninety-nine percent of the people of the land he represents. Let us hold his image in reverence not only on our coins but in our hearts.

Arthur Newton Pack

### OBSERVATIONS

LOONS and GREBES, Pacific and Common Loons, Western, Eared and Horned Grebes in the ocean between Santa Monica and Malibu, Nov. 27. Eared Grebes numerous at Playa del Rey. Robert Pyle reports 6 Western Grebes so oil soaked as to be entirely black, swimming with difficulty off Playa del Rey breakwater. One in similar condition picked up on beach at Santa Monica, too weak to struggle.

HAWKS and OWLS. William Lasky on Dec. 10 counted near Point Mugu or between there and Santa Monica, 1 Golden Eagle, 13 Red-tailed Hawks, 9 Marsh Hawks, 1 Peregrine Falcon and 46 Kestrels (Sparrow Hawks). An Osprey flying over at Malibu on Nov. 19 (Pyle). A Great Horned Owl perched on a television aerial in Eagle Rock (Curry).

SHORE BIRDS and GULLS. Wilson's Snipe 2, at Hansen Dam, Nov. 10, and 1 at I.A. River Settling Basin Nov. 11 (Daugherty). In the marshes at Playa del Rey Dec. 2, large numbers (100 or more of each) Black-bellied Plovers, Willets, Godwits, Dowitchers, small sandpipers (Western and Least) and Avocets. Smaller numbers of Semi-palmated Plovers, Yellowlegs, Long-billed and Hudsonian Curlews and Black-backed Stilts. (H) A large number of Bonapart's Gulls, some in the pool, some on the flats, at least 1000. Many were swimming in small pools with jerky motions and jabbing of the bills much like phalaropes.

RED-NEPES SAPSUCKER in Burbank on Oct. 20, closely observed for some time (D).

CHICKADEES, a flock of about 10 in Burbank yard on Nov. 10 and frequently since. House Wren close to a window in Santa Monica, Dec. 12 (Lasky).

ROBINS and CEDAR WAXWINGS in larger flocks than for many years past, observed at Mount Washington, L.A. (Ruth McCune).

SPARROWS and FINCHES. Purple Finches numerous at Mt. Washington (McC), Bells Sparrows at Hansen Dam, Dec. 14 (D and Wait). Chipping Sparrows, flock of 20 in Santa Monica, Dec. 6 (H).

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Membership Chairman..Miss Bonnie C. Green, 774 N. Heliotrope Dr., Los Angeles 27

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Calendar for JANUARY, 1951

Thursday, January 4. FIELD TRIP. Cabrillo Beach. A good place to study shore and water birds. We will go via a Pacific Electric Motor Bus, boarding it at 5th and Olive Sts. (park side), opposite the Biltmore Hotel at 8:30. Round trip fare \$1.25 (please have exact change). Take lunch. We will stop at Nigger Slough and along the way to bird. After lunch (11:30 in the picnic area) we will visit the Marine Museum under the guidance of Dr. Wm. Lloyd, Director. Bus will leave for Los Angeles about 2:30 P.M. Make reservations with Miss Edith Crane, 4925½ Cimarron St., Los Angeles 37, Phone AXminister 2-8458. Mrs. Caroline Daugherty, Leader: Charleston 6-1747.

Thursday, January 11. EVENING PROGRAM MEETING. Colors through the Seasons, an illustrated lecture by Robert Pyle, a member who has followed nature throughout the year, both east and west. Also a short talk by Allen Berry on Common Rocks and Minerals. Room 10, Union Avenue School, 150 S. Burlington Ave., 7 P.M. Take Beverly Blvd. bus to Burlington, walk south ½ block.

Thursday, January 18. AFTERNOON PROGRAM MEETING. Mr. Wyatt A. Kent, President of the Southwest Bird Study Club, will take us on a trip to McKinley National Park by way of Kodiak Island, showing kodachrome pictures he took on a recent trip and telling of the bird life of the region. Fine pictures with an interesting and instructive talk. Los Angeles County Museum at 1:30 P.M.

Thursday, January 25. MORNING STUDY CLASS. Flummer Park at 10 A.M. First Hour - The Families of Birds: The orders of Long-legged Waders, Herons, Bitterns, Ibis, and Cranes. (Pages 33 to 36 in How to Know the Birds). Second hour - Cone bearing trees and their close relatives. The use of a key to determine species. Specimens of a dozen or so trees will be used. This is a continuation of the subject begun in the November class. If you can, bring lunch and eat with others outdoors or in Audubon House. Take P.E. trolley, Santa Monica-West Hollywood Line to Fuller Ave., Walk west one block.

Sunday, January 28. FIELD TRIP. Sunland Park. A favorite spot for the Varied Thrush and other birds. Let us see what we can find there. Bring lunch. Drive out Foothill Boulevard through Tujunga to Sunland, or take Sunland Bus at Hill St. Station.

THE SAN GABRIEL RIVER WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

664 N. Durfee Ave., El Monte Telephone FOrest 0-1872

Mrs. O. M. Stultz, Director Mrs. M. Gertrude Woods, Assistant Director  
Maintained by the National Audubon Society, with the cooperation of its Southern California affiliated societies and branches. Regularly scheduled field trips the second Sundays of each month, starting from the entrance at 9 A.M.