

# Western Tanager



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## VANDALISM IN OUR PARKS

In the June number of *Natural History*, the magazine of the Museum of Natural History in New York, is an article every one should read and ponder:—Who is Choking Yellowstone's Geysers? Over a million people visit Yellowstone National Park each year. This was the first tract of earth ever set aside by a government to preserve its loveliness. The great majority of these people appreciate the unique beauty of the geysers and hot springs. Many stand in awe of the wonders of the place and are grateful for the work of our Park Service in making it easy to visit and enjoy it all. But there are thoughtless people, thousands of them, who ignore the rights of others, people of childish mentality, who have done great damage to the park. Tons of mineral specimens are picked up, pried loose from the mounds, broken from the borders of pools and carried home in pockets and handbags. Worse - tons of material are thrown into the geysers and pools each year.

Handkerchief Pool was rendered functionless over twenty years ago by having its small vent deliberately plugged with a section of tree and miscellaneous rubble. Morning Glory Pool - the middle word in the name deserves emphasis - has lost much of its beauty because of the denuding of the delicate incrustations of geysers from the border and the throwing into the pool of thousands of objects. In an effort to clear the pool of rubbish two years ago 112 different kinds of objects, only a small part of the total, were removed. There were 8,627 pennies, nickels and dimes to a value of \$8.10, beer cans, bottles, cigarette packages, handkerchiefs, and scores of other objects as well as stones and sticks. And every other pool and geyser easily reached by visitors has suffered in the same way.

The visible rocks and other debris that have been thrown into the crater of a hot spring are but of minor importance compared with the irretrievable rubble that has found its way deep into the spring's throat. During the short period the hot springs have been the subject of vandalism, a number of the smaller ones have already been destroyed - their pipes filled with rubble, completely shutting off the escape of water. The article concludes "This has to stop if the American public is to have anything that it can be proud of in Yellowstone Park. Can't we find enough pride in this wonderland of ours to put an end to this destructive nonsense."

But we do not have to go as far as Yellowstone or our other national parks to see the same lack of appreciation of the beauty of nature. In the Tar Pits of Hancock Park in our own city we could see, before high wire fences were put up some distance back from the edges of the pools, all kinds of things thrown into the pools by curious visitors, beer cans, bottles, sticks, stones, paper, - floating on the tar, distracting the thoughts of visitors from the prehistoric animals that once roamed the region. The fences detract from the scene but are vastly better than the litter that once was so abundant. All of our city parks - set aside for the enjoyment of all the people - suffer in a smaller degree from this same lack of appreciation and disregard of the rights of all of us, in the scattering of wrappers and other papers on the lawns and paths. Should not each of us do what we can to make "litterbugs" take some thought of what they are doing?

### THE WESTERN Tanager

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LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY, Inc. To promote the study and protection of birds and other wildlife, plants, soil and water.

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We are happy to welcome the following new members:-

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152 So. Van Ness Ave. L.A. 4  
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Miss Roxie A. Vesper,  
532 Marguerita Ave., Santa Monica  
Mrs. M. B. Yerkes,  
1895 N. Ave. 52, L.A. 42

In partial recognition of her gifts to the Society and of her outstanding interest in nature education and conservation, Mrs. Elizabeth Burnell Smith, of Englewood, Colorado, has been made an Honorary Member of the Society.

### NEW HOME FOR THE NATIONAL SOCIETY

The National Audubon Society has purchased an 8-story building at 1130 Fifth Ave., New York and will shortly move there from its present building at 1000 Fifth Avenue. The new headquarters will give needed space for the expanding work of the Society.

Mr. John C. Baker, our president, states, "Although the Society is primarily associated with bird protection in the public mind, our scope of work embraces advancement of public understanding of the value and need of conservation of soil, water, plant and wildlife and the relation of their intelligent treatment and use to human welfare."

At commencement this past spring Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster Pennsylvania, awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Science to Roger Tory Paterson. Mr. Paterson is now in England working on a Field Guide to the birds of western Europe.

#### CHRISTMAS PARTIES

Our afternoon party will be held in Flummer Park on Thursday, December 11 at 2. There will be a program with Miss Ellen Barnes playing Christmas music and Mrs. George Hanson reading Christmas stories. There will be refreshments served by the committee. From the Sanctuary Bird and other Nature Books and cards will be on sale, an opportunity to secure appropriate Christmas gifts. And, perhaps, best of all, opportunity to visit with friends. So come and enjoy the afternoon with us.

The Evening Party will be on Friday, Dec. 12 at 7:30 at the home of Miss Marjorie Walther, 10361 Lemona Ave., San Fernando. Come and have fun with us, enjoy the program of games and songs and the luscious refreshments. Go out Sepulveda Blvd. to San Fernando, to Devonshire Ave., turn right two blocks to Lemona, turn left 1/2 block to where a large outdoor Christmas tree will be lighted. If planning to go please phone one of the following:-

Mr. Hiram Beebe	GRanite 9372
Mrs. Christine Hayden	PLEasant 3-8359
Miss Walther,	EMpire 1-2910
(in the evening)	

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 WHAT'S GONE ON IN THE SOCIETY

The Study Class on October 23, learned from Mr. W. Scott Lewis how the folding and fracturing of rocks results in earthquakes. His pictures showed many examples of rock folds and faults as well as of the direct results of earthquakes. He explained that these rock movements expose new surfaces to erosion, resulting in formation of new soil to replace that constantly being lost. So really earthquakes are of benefit, tho' hard to take at the time.

Mr. Hastings had specimens of native woodpeckers, and directed questions at the class, then described the birds, bringing out many points of interest.

Mr. C. V. Duff gave out a fine number of one of the Cooper Ornithological Club's publications to each one present.

SUNDAY FIELD TRIP to Irvine Park and Bolsa Chica, Thirty-two persons came, among them several new members and a few visitors. About 50 birds were listed, among them 10 Elegant Terns seen at Bolsa Chica. These are larger than Forester's Tern but smaller than the Ring-billed Gull. A large flock of Cedar Waxwings flew over the little lake at the Park, came down and fed in small groups, reuniting to fly off. The Sky - hazy all day.

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AFTERNOON PROGRAM meeting, Nov. 6. About 70 attended. Mr. Kenneth Stager of the museum staff gave an interesting account of the preparation of animal skins and the modeled forms on which to mount them, giving lifelike pose. Samples of artificial vegetation were shown and he told of the treatment given grasses and trees used in the settings. Then he conducted the party around to view some of the Habitat Groups, making comments and answering questions. The film of the day was "Realm of the Wild", showing some of these animals as they live in Nature.

Mr. Vaughan McCughey, Pacific Coast Representative of the National Audubon Society had come down from San Francisco and visited our Headquarters at Plummer Park and this meeting at the Museum, where he was introduced and made a short talk, complimenting the Los Angeles Branch of the Audubon Society on their large membership and enthusiasm.

## EVENING MEETING, November 13.

A most thought-provoking talk was given by Mr. W. Scott Lewis on the destructive and constructive forces of Nature which make life on the globe possible. The talk was excellently illustrated by Kodachrome slides, About 60 club and workshop members enjoyed an intriguing game set up by Mrs. Mary V. Hood. Among the displays on the tables was one on shells and another on rocks. From the Griffith Park Zoo came an unusual exhibit of antlers and horns.

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 NEW DATE FOR THE 1952 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

This year's Christmas Bird Count is now scheduled for Sunday, December 28, a change from the date announced in our Yearbook. Postcards are being sent to all those who participated last year, but all members of the Society are invited and urged to help. We have 176 square miles to cover and everyone is needed who can join one of the parties for the day. Novices can help as checkers or drivers, but anyone with an interest in birds is urged to join the fun. If you cannot go afield you can help by counting the birds in your own yard and neighborhood that day, provided you live in the area north of Inglewood, west of the Civic Center and south of Magnolia Hill in North Hollywood. Plans are being made to designate a restaurant where those who wish may meet after the count for supper and review the day's work. Last year more species were reported in our Los Angeles count than in any other of the 470 counts taken across the country, and we had more observers participating than ever before. We can do even better this year!

For further information contact Robert Pyle, 1143 21st Street, Santa Monica, EXbrook 5-0319.

## AT THE SANCTUARY

Hazel Lewis

The wild grapes now attract many birds, flocks of Cedarwaxwings are enjoying them at present. An American Egret visits the river. Cardinals come daily to the feeding shelves with the other usual species:--Song Sparrows, English Sparrows, Brown and Spotted Towhees, House Finches, Chinese and Mourning Doves, Thrashers, Mockingbirds and Jays, with an occasional Flicker.

Gambel's Sparrows are numerous and Audubon Warblers can be seen in the trees and bushes. The White Finch reported several times previously was seen daily from October 17 to November 13.

## OBSERVATIONS

Western Grebes, 300 or more off shore at Playa del Rey, Nov. 11 (Gould and Hawkins).

Common Loon, off Ballona Creek Jetty, Nov. 8 (Hastings), several undetermined Loons, Playa del Rey, Nov. 11 (Gould and Hawkins)

White Pelicans, Mrs. Russell Wilson writes that on Sunday, October 26, "We were thrilled by the migration flight of large flocks of White Pelicans. We estimated 800 in the first flock, the second about the same. More and more began to go over looking like giant strings of beads. After the last had disappeared we estimated there must have been between 2,500 and 3,000 birds in all."

Baird Cormorant, off Ballona Creek Jetty, Oct. 2 (Gould and Hawkins), Seal Beach, Nov. 11 (Pyle).

Sooty and Pink-footed Shearwaters one of each feeding over kelp beds just beyond the surf, Malibu, Oct. 25 (Pyle)

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Several Gadwalls, Playa del Rey, Nov. 11, (Gould and Hawkins). Surf Scoters, many off shore near Ballona Creek, Nov. 8, (Hastings). About 1000 ducks, mostly Pintails with many Coots and among them 3 Canvasbacks, Hansen Dam, Nov. 9 (Pyle) Phalaropes, one Red off Santa Monica Pier and several Northern at Newport Beach, Nov. 16 (Pyle).

Jaeger, one over the Ballona Creek jetty, Nov. 1. It flew over and circled several times, now and then chasing a gull for a few seconds. Either an immature or in a changing phase, the chin, throat, and part of upper breast solid black, rest of under parts white, tail pointed but quite short. (Dorothy and Harold Baxter) 2 Jaegers off Newport Beach, Nov. 16 (Pyle).

Franklin's Gulls, 3 on the mud flats in the Venice marshes, Oct. 17. Seen clearly and observed for some time (Nurtha Dunn). Elegant Terns, 18 at Malibu and 14 at Bol-sa Chica, Oct. 26 (Pyle)

Horned Owl, Mr. Edward Terry writes, "My home is adjacent to Griffith Park. For three weeks a cottontail rabbit had been nibbling some of my plants. One evening at dusk I heard the deep resonant hooting of five notes characteristic of the horned owl. I hastened out of the house, looked up to my neighbor's high aerial, and there he was silhouetted against the sky. Suddenly a second owl, presumably its mate, flew into view with my enemy the rabbit dangling from her claws. When she flew over the flat part of the roof she dropped the animal from a distance of several feet. Immediately her mate descended to share the evening meal. How do I know it was my rabbit? Because no more plants have been eaten."

Hooded Oriole, Monrovia, Oct. 20 (Irma Rogers) Robin in a city yard, Nov. 18 (Mary Hood). Cedar Waxwings, Santa Monica, Nov. 17, small flock (Hastings) Lark Sparrows, five near Playa del Rey, Oct. 2 (Gould and Hawkins)

## THE SAN GABRIEL RIVER WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

664 N. Durfee Ave., El Monte --- Telephone Forrest 0-1972

Mrs. O. M. Stultz, Director ..... Mrs. E. Gertrude Woods, Assistant Director

Maintained by the National Audubon Society, with the cooperation of the Southern California Branches and affiliated societies.

Regular field trips the second Sunday of each month, start from the entrance at 9 A.M. led by Bill Hawkins and Pat Gould.

Come and bring your friends.

For information call CRestview 6-1990

## FAREWELL TO MISS ELLA JOHNS

Miss Ella Johns, a member of our society for 28 years is leaving our area to make her home in Carmel. Miss Johns has been press chairman of the society and was for some years treasurer. She will make her home with her brother and sister, both ardent birders. Our best wishes go with Miss Johns, - we shall miss her

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## FROM OUR EXCHANGES

FLICKER FLASHES, of the Birmingham, Ala. Audubon Society quotes the following from the Saturday Review of Literature: If the Korean armistice talks at Panmunjon have accomplished nothing else they have at least provided a home for two swallows. The birds, apparently optimistic that negotiations would continue for some time, have completed the building of a nest in one of the U.N. staff tents. Why they selected a U.N. rather than a Chinese tent is anybody's guess.

Floodlighting of a lighthouse has been tried in Sweden as a means of saving thousands of birds, which attracted by the light, have crashed against its walls at night. While formerly the staff of Long Jan on the Island of Oland in the Baltic Sea used to find daily numerous dead or dying birds, the migratory birds now use the rock of the floodlit tower as a resting place on their way to and from Scandinavia.

From the SANDERLING, Bulletin of the Monterey Peninsula Audubon Society for November" -- It's bowties and yellow tails for California's Band-tailed Pigeons this year. In an effort to determine the migration and daily movements of these pigeons and to learn the percentage of the population harvested by hunters each year, the Department of Fish and Game is dyeing some of the birds' tails yellow and equipping them with colored neck tabs for field identification. In addition the birds are being banded. If you see one of these birds notify the California Department of Fish and Game, San Francisco.

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The WESTERN MEADOWLARK, published by the San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society reports a Cooper Summer Tanager seen above the Warm Creek Wildlife Refuge in late August. Another, an immature male or a female was seen in the area and was around for about a month. Bob Pyle wrote "There are perhaps a dozen records in coastal So. Calif. in the last 100 years, so it certainly may be regarded as a straggler from the Colorado River area. Your bird happens to be the fourth recorded for this region since last November. Bill Lasky caught a female or immature male in his banding trap in Santa Monica. In January I saw another near Calipatria. Early this spring Mrs. W. Scott Lewis reported one at her feeding tray in Los Angeles -- and now yours. A truly remarkable year for the Summer or Cooper Tanager.

From the TOPEKA AUDUBON NEWS, Topeka, Kans., of October: A Quetzal in breeding plumage is thought by some to be the world's most beautiful bird. If you like green you might agree, but other Trogons have their good points, and you can not pass up some of the Tanagers, and there are Buntings and Warblers, not to mention the Mountain Bluebird. (Who started this beauty contest anyway?)

THE WHITTIER OBSERVER reports two new sanctuaries. In the October number there is a brief account of the dedication of a sanctuary in Whittier on the 50 acre property of Mr. "Hap" Caneer. This has been posted by the Associated Audubon Societies of Southern California.

In the November number is an account of the dedication of the Friendly Hills Wildlife Refuge on the Dr. Everts Loomis Ranch at Hemet. Mrs. J. H. Comby made the dedicatory address. Dr. Ebon McGregor, President of the Whittier Society was in charge of the ceremony. A large redwood sign with deeply carved letters was erected.

The Whittier Society had an overnight camping trip at the Loomis Ranch the day before the dedication of the sanctuary. As night approached beves of Quail came walking from every direction. Flock after flock flew into a large live oak, till about 300 were settled for the night in the one tree. Next morning an unforgettable sight was the assembly of hawks, more than 200 Swainson Hawks flying over.