

Western Tanager



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WHITE PELICANS

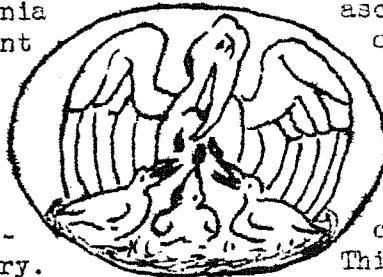
One of the most thrilling sights for some of those on the Field Trip to the Salton Sea in January was the flock of fifty or more White Pelicans, wheeling in formation overhead, their black wing tips in striking contrast to the gleaming white of their bodies, seen against the brilliant blue of the sky. With a wing spread of 8 to 9 feet, the only other North American bird to equal it is the California Condor. But seen in the air the Pelican impresses one with beauty and grace rather than size.

In the Tanager for last May Mrs. Irma Rogers reported seeing over 100 of these birds over Monrovia Canyon and Miss Elsie Kennedy and Miss Nellie Spencer, some 200 above the San Fernando Reservoir circling around as they progressed north. In the December Tanager Mrs. Russell Wilson reported several flocks, totaling between 2,500 and 3,000, migrating south over the 8000 foot ridge north of San Gabriel Canyon.

These Pelicans are rarely seen along the coast where their brown cousins are common, but frequent lakes and rivers from British Columbia south to Utah and Southern California in summer, south to Costa Rica in winter. The largest breeding colonies are in Great Salt Lake, in California they nest, or have in the past, on islands in Tule, Eagle, Tulare and Buena Vista Lakes and at the end of the Salton Sea. During migration they are found along the east coast of the United States. Frank Chapman tells of seeing flocks of thousands passing north along the eastern face of the Sierras near Vera Cruz, progressing in wheeling circles.

In feeding they behave very differently from the Brown Pelicans we see diving into the ocean, but scoop up small fish from near the surface as they swim. At times they work in what seems to be closely coordinated groups, gathering in a line off shore, wing to wing, they swim towards shore with loud splashing as they beat their wings, driving the fish before them to shallow water where they can be easily scooped up. After feeding they may, to quote Dawson, "foregather ashore in snowy windrows to meditate and digest and to gladden withal the retrospective eye of the rare man, who like his Creator, enjoys the simple bliss of the undisturbed wild." Dawson further says this method of securing food "almost shows brain work." We wonder at the almost, it would seem that such cooperation shows a high degree of brain work, as does the holding of formation during their aerial maneuvers. Of course they do not think and reason as men do, but in their own way, as pelicans they think.

Naturally about such unusual birds many stories and legends have grown up. In the Encyclopedia Britannica it is told that the Seri, Indians inhabiting the Island of Tiburon on the Gulf of California and of themselves to the Ancient supernatural wisdom and melody of the land above the primeval deep, where several species of they feed their young on blood pierced by their beaks. The self-sacrifice. And the "Pelican" place in ecclesiastical heraldry. to the coat of arms of the State of Louisiana.



ascribe the creation of the world of Pelicans, a great bird of melodious song that first raised waters. An old legend in Europe, Pelicans are found, is that that drips from their breasts, Pelican has become a symbol of "can in its Piety" took a firm This symbol is strikingly similar

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WE WELCOME THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS

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One of our oldest members, Miss Jennie
Winchester died on the 26th of January.
A member for over 30 years, for a number
of years our librarian. She would have
celebrated her 98th birthday if she had
lived a month longer. To the last her
mind was clear and her interests un-
abated. We sincerely mourn our loss.

Election of Officers for the coming year will be by ballot in May. Unless
there are nominations in addition to those made by the Nominating Committee, the
ballot will be cast by the executive secretary. See the constitution and by-laws
as to the method of making nominations. Have you sent recommendations for our new
officers to the committee? They will be glad to receive them.

The Nominating Committee

Mrs. Mary V. Hood, 138 S. Wilton Dr., L.A. 4; Mr. R. W. Julian, 608 Poinsettia Pl.,
L. A. 36; Mrs. Elizabeth Fulton, 3603 Tacoma Ave., L.A. 65

CONSERVATION WEEK

The California Conservation Council
announces that the 19th California Con-
servation Week will be March 7 to 14.
Saturday, the 7th, is Bird and Arbor
Day in commemoration of the birthday
of Luther Burbank.

During this week it is hoped that
all organizations interested in Con-
servation will stress the subject and
Out-Door Good Manners.

WHAT CAN I DO IN CONSERVATION?

What can I do in Conservation to aid
my Community, State and Nation?
I can use courtesy, thought and care,
in field and forest everywhere.
Take what I need, but never waste:
curb my desire for frantic haste.
In handling forest, range or field,
plan skillfully for future yield.
Observe the laws for fish and game:
and help my neighbors do the same.
So live that in a future year, none
will regret that I passed here.

We can help by sending letters to
Senators and Assemblymen opposing dan-
gerous legislation and favoring bene-
ficial bills. Here are a few of the
dangerous ones:--

Resolution number 19 now in the Sen-
ate Committee on Natural Resources
would permit hunting of wild birds
and animals in parts of the State
Parks.
Senate Bill 69 would permit the Direc-
tor of Natural Resources to grant
easement for state highways over and
across State Park lands free from any
terms or conditions.
Senate Bill 934 takes the right to reg-
ulate outdoor advertising away from
local authorities and centers it in
Sacramento and might permit billboards
along our highways.
Assembly Bills 581, 1245 and 2854
threaten the whole future of our salt-
water fishing.

WHAT'S GONE ON IN THE SOCIETY
Grace H. Phillips

At the STUDY CLASS on January 22, Mr. W. Scott Lewis explained the difference between "weather" and "climate", and with his beautiful kodachrome slides showed the various types of clouds and what they portend as to weather.

For the second hour Mrs. Neil Lewis led the discussion of birds of the Thrush family. Individual members described particular birds, such as the Alaska Hermit Thrush, Varied Thrush, Bluebirds and Robin. Miss Rosalynde Hutchinson whistled imitations of many bird calls and gave two numbers accompanied by Miss Sarah Ellen Barnes on the piano.

The THURSDAY AFTERNOON PROGRAM on Feb. 5 had as the subject Hawaii. Miss Linnean Blind told of her visit to the Islands and the birds she saw there.

The colorful film "ALOHA LAND" was shown by courtesy of the Standard Oil Company. A fishing scene, casting the net, drawing it in and the feast that followed was shown, also beautiful flowers, and volcanoes in action. Miss Blind then interpreted a feast in Hula dance patterns while a recorded Hawaiian song was playing.

The FIELD TRIP of Jan. 24-25 to the lower end of the Salton Sea. Two reports of this trip have been received, so different that we are printing both. Following is the report from Mrs. Russell Wilson. On Saturday, January 24, - a beautiful, clear warm day fifteen cars under the leadership of Robert Pyle left Calipatria and worked their way through the Salton Sea National Wildlife Refuge to the Headquarters six miles west of Westmoreland. (Three other cars entered the refuge at the west end and never did meet the main group).

Many of the more familiar birds were seen. Redtail, Marsh and Sparrow Hawks, Shrikes, Phoebes, Gambel's Quail, Killdeer, Savannah and Lark Sparrows, Roadrunners and Mockingbirds. A Verdin, Sage and Crissal Thrashers were also seen. Many Pheasants, propagated by the State Game Farm, were seen in the fields. Robert Pyle was able to show

the group a partially albino Audubon's Warbler in the same group of trees where it had been noted previously. Some fields were filled with Canada and Snow Geese, one Black Brant and a few White-fronted Geese were also seen. In other fields where irrigation was in progress were Snowy and American Egrets. A Burrowing Owl was flushed from the bank of one of the canals.

In a small pond Avocets, Green-winged Teal, Shovellers, Coots and Least Sandpipers were found.

The duck area was reached in the late afternoon. It was a real experience to see and hear the thousands of ducks on the water and in the air. Against the sunset sky were silhouetted flights of White Pelicans with many other birds. Three White-faced Glossy Ibis finished our lists for the day.

At the THURSDAY EVENING MEETING, Feb. 13, Mr. Edward P. Baker told how to make a camp museum. He brought a compact case of his own design which when opened had a shelf for nature books, another fitted for a display of fresh flowers, and a glass fronted enclosure for live snakes or small mammals. The cover of the case made a large bulletin board. He also showed mounts of cones and other plant parts for display in the museum. Mr. Hastings spoke of how to make and attach descriptive labels and of the organizing of museum committees and curators from among the campers. But the show was stolen by a visitor from the zoo - a baby Collared Pheasant, that wandered about the room and seemed to enjoy being handled.

AUDUBON CONVENTION

The convention will be held again at Asilomar, Pacific Grove, from March 28-31. The theme of the convention will be Conservation in your own backyard and Conservation Education as related to California's needs. Our society has always been well represented at the conventions and those attending have had a thoroughly good time, gained knowledge and received inspiration for our work. Plan to attend this year and share in the good time.

WEEK END TRIP--SALTON SEA AREA

Nellie Spencer

The trip brought 59 "Auspices" led by Bob Plye to the little town of Calipatria on Saturday afternoon. From there we drove to the Federal Wildlife Refuge - which became a place of enchantment! for there were countless Canada and Snow Geese, many Ducks and other Water Birds - and everywhere in the green fields were Egrets standing guard over some small pool watching the chance for a meal. The Snow Geese were most impressive as they kept coming in long wavy lines - pure white with black wing tips - against the brilliant blue sky - coming to feed and rest undisturbed and unharmed in the meadow-like Refuge.

With reluctance we moved to the next section of the Refuge - a marshy pond - here were great numbers of ducks feeding, swimming about, getting settled for the night. One could easily pick out the Ruddy Duck with its fan-like tail held erect, the conspicuous Pin-Tail, beautiful Teal of all kinds, Bald Pates, Shovelers milling about, suddenly going down head first, feet up, after their supper. Close by the pond were some leafless old willows filled with dozens of great nests, an old rookery of the Great Blue Heron - this silhouetted against the pink and gold sunset sky, was reflected in the marshy channels where the ducks seemed to float between earth and sky. It was getting too dark to see birds, so each went his way to rest to be ready for the next morning in the Imperial State Refuge. For this there were 72 people registered. The terrain was entirely different from that of the day before - here thickets of undergrowth, small trees, little ravines, a pond, running water and marshy spots, with some open spots made suitable habitat for other birds. One saw Godwits, Avocets and Least Sandpipers wading about in mud and water, and one longs to tell of Tree and Rough-winged Swallows swooping through the air. A Burrowing Owl's hole was investigated, many of these little fellows were seen on the canal banks along the road. Lutescent Warblers were searching for larvae among the leaves, Black-tailed Gnatcatchers flitted through the bushes, and magnificent Ring-necked Pheasants, both male and female.

Altogether it was a most satisfactory Field Trip - to many the sight of a "Life Bird" like the Road Runner was a thrill - the color of the Vermillion Fly-catcher was alone worth the trip - the sheer beauty of the Snow Geese ready for their journey to the North was a symbol of something important -

"He who from zone to zone

Guides through the boundless sky
thy certain flight-----

Will lead my steps aright."

Those who stopped at the cow pens outside the Refuge were rewarded with the show of hundreds of blackbirds, - Redwings, Yellow headed and Cowbirds, males and females of all species.

Life in this region is so rich one wishes to go again and again to watch for Gambel's Quail running across the road and to see the Phainopepla dashing about the tree tops in its grand style.

Certainly no Bible text was practiced with greater diligence this particular Sunday morning, than "Behold the fowls of the air."

PINKY AND THE HUMMINGBIRD

Pinky is a cat belonging to Mr. Sherman McFederic of Pasadena. A few weeks ago Pinky gave the peculiar cry she makes when she has something in her mouth outside the front door. When the door was opened Pinky walked up to her master and opened her mouth. Instead of the expected mouse or gopher dropping out, a humming bird flew out. How the cat managed to catch the bird without injuring it only she knows. Mr. McFederic says he had a good deal of trouble getting the humming bird out.

Ten years ago, Mrs. Doris Hudson of Culver City picked up a newly hatched English Sparrow, carried it home, and cared for it. Now it has the "run" of the house, or we might say, runs the house. Its cage which it shares with a canary is always open. It loves to ride about on the head or shoulders of members of the family. If the sugar bowl is left uncovered the bird may be found in it. It sleeps in a closet with the canary, entering by an opening cut in the top of the closet door.

OBSERVATIONS

- GREBES: Pied-billed, Hansen Dam, Feb. 1; Western and Holboell's, Huntington Beach, Feb. 12 (Mrs. Russell Wilson).
- IBIS: White-faced Glossy, 25 in a field with several Long-billed Curlews Imperial State Refuge, Feb. 5, (Ruby Curry)
- GEESE, DUCKS: Black Brant in the lagoon at Point Mugu, apparently a favorite place for them to feed, Jan. 26, (Curry); at Hansen Dam on Feb. 1. Mrs. Wilson saw the following ducks, -Ruddy, Pintail, Shoveller, Baldpate, Bufflehead, Green-winged Teal and Lesser Scaup; In Newport Back Bay on Jan. 31, the Baxters saw 8 Cinnamon and 3 Green-winged Teal.
- HAWKS: 3 Red-bellied on the road to Modjeska Canyon, Feb. 14 (Baxters)
- SHORE BIRDS: about 10 Knots on Jan. 31, 20 a few weeks earlier, near Alamitos Bay (Dorothy and Harold Baxter)
- HUMMINGBIRD: Rufous, near Whittier, Feb. 1 (Baxters).
- KINGFISHER: on Feb. 10 William Lasky saw one in Beverly Hills, far from a lake or stream.
- KINGBIRD: Cassin's, 3, on Feb. 14 in Modjeska Canyon (Baxters)
- TITMOUSE: on Feb. 14 at Irvine Park the Baxters saw a Plain Titmouse with bright red eyes. It sat motionless on a dead limb for some time and was observed closely for several minutes.
- WRENS: Cactus, near Whittier, Feb. 1, (Baxters), near Salton Sea, Feb. 5, (Curry); Bewick, Hansen Dam, Feb. 1 (Mrs. Wilson)
- ROBINS: large flocks with Cedar Waxwings Eaton Canyon, Jan. 19 (Curry)
- KINGLET: Golden-crowned, Big Bear, Feb. 3, (Ruth McCune)
- EVENING GROSSBEAK: small flocks feeding in tops of pine trees at Big Bear daily, Feb. 1 to 3 (McCune)
- Pyrrhuloxia: Leoti Fisher saw a male of this bird which is at home in southern Arizona and New Mexico near Mecca on Feb. 10. The soft gray of the sides and back, the rosy red head and the crest made identification certain.

FROM OUR EXCHANGES

The Gull, of the Golden Gate Audubon Society reports a goose, apparently a Canada Goose, with a white head and neck apparently a hybrid. Mr. and Mrs. Eckler saw and photographed two geese at the Federal Refuge at the Salton Sea, one with a gray body and white head and neck, the other with a white body and the neck and head of a Canada Goose. These may have been hybrids, but more likely were partial albinos.

The Wood Duck of the Hamilton Nature Club in an article by Eunice Smillie, "A North Atlantic Crossing" - "I had not known previously that gulls and terns are an important article of food in Newfoundland in the outposts. The Great Black Backed Gull in particular (much like our Western Gull) is sometimes taken when a nestling and allowed to run with the chickens and fed on table scraps. On this diet it has almost no fishy taste and is a welcome addition to a diet that is lacking in fresh meat".

The Elapaio of the Hawaiian Audubon Society, "during the typhoon which recently struck Wake Island and left 10 million dollars worth of damage in its wake, buildings were torn from their foundations, One quonset hut was blown about two miles and disappeared into the sea, Yet when the fury of the storm had abated, fledgling terns unable to fly were found in almost undiminished numbers. The baby birds somehow held fast and weathered winds of velocities around 140 miles per hour, and seemed none the worse. Aircraft caught on the ground were turned into the wind and were saved by taking advantage of the aerodynamic characteristics built into them. Perhaps the terns did the same thing. If so, Mother Nature is quite an aerodynamic engineer."

The Audubon Warbler of Portland Oregon reports that on the Christmas Count of Portland a roosting place was found where 20,000 robins were counted coming in for the night. Among the noteworthy birds reported in the five different counts from Oregon were over 500 Varied Thrushes, 350 Golden-crowned Kinglets, 57 Starlings, 120 Bohemian Waxwings, 8 Golden Eagles and 67 Bald Eagles (64 of them on the Klamath count), and 2740 Whistling Swans from the Klamath Basin.

LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY INC.

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CALENDAR FOR MARCH, 1953

Thursday, March 5. AFTERNOON PROGRAM MEETING. Los Angeles County Museum, Exposition Park, 1:30. Wildflowers of California. Mrs. Mary V. Hood will show some of her splendid kodachrome pictures and tell stories connected with the flowers. Information will be given as to the best places to see this spring's display of wild flowers.

Members are invited to have lunch in the museum cafeteria at 12, then spend the time before the meeting in informal study of museum exhibits.

Thursday, March 12. EVENING PROGRAM MEETING. Los Angeles Museum, 7 p.m., enter by door at southeast corner.

A joint meeting with the Leadership Training Workshop. Mrs. Dorothy Bush will tell how to make Nature Trails and relate her own experiences in laying out trails in city parks.

Thursday, March 19. FIELD TRIP to Irvine Park and vicinity. Red-bellied Hawks, White-tailed Kites, returning summer residents such as Groosbeaks, should be seen. Our Tanner Bus will leave 603 S. Olive Street, Los Angeles at 8:30. Fare \$1.60. Please have exact change. Bring lunch. Make reservations early with Miss Edith Crane, 4925-1/2 Cimarron St., Los Angeles 62. Phone AXminster 2-8458. Leader, Mrs. Enid Michael.

Sunday, March 22. FIELD TRIP to Chantry Flats and Santa Anita Canyon. For chaparral birds, early spring migrants and possibly the Water Ousel. From Foothill Blvd. in Arcadia, take Santa Anita Blvd., north to mountains. Meet leader - Dorothy Groner - at end of road at the parking area. Bring lunch.

Thursday, March 26. STUDY CLASS. The first hour more of Mr. Scott Lewis's pictures and a continuation of his nature talks.

The second hour Mrs. Florence Hamer will lead a discussion of our local swallows and swifts, with specimens to illustrate the various species. There will be a report on the Swallows of San Juan Capistrano. Miss Patterson will give a brief account of the life of Saint Francis of Assisi.

Visitors will be welcome at all these meetings and trips.

SAN GABRIEL RIVER WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

664 N. Durfee Ave. El Monte Phone - Forrest 0-1872

Mrs. O. M. Stultz Mrs. E. Gertrude Woods, Assistant Director
Maintained by the National Audubon Society with the cooperation
of the Southern California branches and affiliated societies.
Nature Museum open to the public daily from 2-5, except Sunday and Monday.

Regular guided field trips the second Sunday of each month, starting at the entrance at 9 a.m. led by Bill Hawkins and Pat Gould.