

Western Tanager



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THE LESSER SNOW GOOSE IN ITS SUMMER HOME



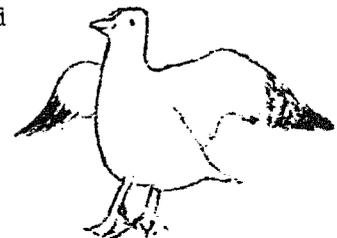
The WOOD DUCK, published by the Nature Club of Hamilton, Ontario, reprinted in December an article from the Edmonton Journal by Dr. E. O. Hohn of the University of Alberta. We use a portion of this as of interest to those who have seen the great concentrations of these geese (waveys to the hunters) at the Federal Refuge at the end of the Salton Sea in fall and winter.

Five tents and a small wooden house in the snow beside the frozen sea make the settlement of Sach's Harbor on Bank's Island, about 200 miles north of the Canadian coast in the Arctic Ocean, where I awaited the arrival of the waveys last May. It was a wintry scene, though on the slope between the coastal range of hills and the shore a few patches of marshy ground were clear; yet on the 18th of May, the Eskimo children ran into the house calling "kangoot" - the geese - and there sure enough, heading in from the west over the white expanse of the sea ice was the first flock, calling as they came. They were heading for Egg River their traditional breeding place, 20 miles from the coast and 40 from Sach's Harbor north-eastward.

On the last of May the snow-free patches were well covered with waveys and we found many clutches of eggs in mere scrapes in the mud. Later the birds would add the characteristic grey nest down. There were more geese than could find room in the clear patches, and thousands were just standing around on the snow in dense masses down the valley as far as I could see with binoculars. I judged there were about 30,000 birds here and they were still arriving. When they occupy the whole of the nesting area there must be about 100,000 geese there. They lose some of their eggs to Arctic foxes and perhaps more to Jaegers. The natives, of course, also take some eggs. We had them daily for breakfast for the next six weeks.

In mid June I one day disturbed a pair with five downy young on the shore. They took to the water of the bay and sailed out between the ice floes toward the opposite shore. One youngster was about 20 yards behind and though he peeped the parents kept right on. This separation was the little one's doom, for soon a big glaucous gull spotted him, wheeled over and dropped down, but the young one dived and escaped. However the gull came at him again and again and the gosling's dives got weaker for at the fourth try he was snatched up and devoured.

In July these geese moult all their wing feathers and are flightless for about two weeks. At this time three of the natives and I rounded up a flock of nearly a thousand and they marched ahead of us for miles to the settlement just like a bunch of sheep. Every now and then one would get exhausted and begin to stagger and shiver all over. These I picked up and banded and set them down. After a rest they would walk back again toward the river where we found them. I banded over 70 and in this way we may hope to find the wintering grounds of these geese. One clue we have already - one of the Eskimos shot a banded wavey in late May. I found it had been banded in Southern California, about 2,000 miles away the preceding November.



THE WESTERN Tanager

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THE LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY
Organized 1910 - Incorporated 1951
"To promote the study and protection of birds and other wildlife, plants, soil, and water".

MEMBERSHIP

Joint with the National Audubon Society, including subscription to Audubon Magazine, Regular \$5.00, Sustaining \$10.00, Active \$25.00, Supporting \$50.00.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Did you know that you have an interest in a piece of property for which you receive no tax bill? Well, you have. In Plummer Park you'll find just such a spot. For, on the side of a wee house there, you'll find a sign that says "Audubon House". That means us.

Would you like to see our house all dressed up for a party? Then come out after a Saturday Screen Tour lecture and have a cup of tea and meet the speaker as well as fellow Audubon friends.

The boys and girls of many Scout Troops are well acquainted with our house, for during 1953 nearly three hundred came there and received instruction in plant and bird lore from Dr. Lloyd or Mrs. Salmon and their helpers.

Of course, you enjoy reading books on nature. Well, here is your opportunity. Our library consists of books by top authors on all types of nature subjects and they are there for you to read, you know.

Many of us like to eat lunch in the Park after study class and then browse around in the house getting a book to read during the coming month and learning a new bird from our mounted specimens.

Oh, yes, there are peanut hearts for sale there too, if you wish to feed your feathered friends in your own yard.

Now, I ask you, in what better way could you start the New Year than in coming out and giving your own possessions the once over? The first Screen Tour tea is Saturday afternoon, January 9, a good time to begin.

Bessie Pope

Recent Additions to our Library:
Mrs. Willis has given two books on Flight of Birds.
Mrs. Wentz has given the copy of Audubon's Birds that had been her husbands.
Also many nature magazines and pamphlets from Mrs. Wentz and Dr. Lloyd.

Dr. Lloyd has given the museum a collection of birds' eggs mounted in cellophane covered boxes and a series of shells, 30 univalves and 40 bivalves, mounted and named.

Peanut hearts for the birds, 10¢ a pound at Audubon House.

WHAT'S GONE ON IN THE SOCIETY

Grace H. Phillips

On Thursday, November 19, the Field Trip led by Mrs. Mary Hood was through the Griffith Park Zoo area. Some 27 species of wild birds were seen, Audubon's Warblers being most abundant. In addition, many native birds were seen in the large cages. Mr. Michael Wendt, chief animal keeper of the zoo, walked with us past the cages explaining the birds and their habitats and telling how they were acquired. Three beautiful Golden Eagles, now in full plumage, were brought in as young birds after an accident to their nest. Mr. E. R. Bullard, superintendent of maintenance, spoke to us after lunch, telling of some of the great changes since he came to the park a quarter century ago, and of changes planned, including a refuge for migratory birds. He said smog is now affecting vegetation in the hills, particularly the live oaks.

At the Study Class, November 24, our new slide projector was used for the first time. Dr. William Lloyd showed color slides of moths and butterflies. He also had many gorgeous and interesting specimens mounted in glass cases. In the second hour Miss Clara Pflager showed slides belonging to our society of common birds of the city and foothills. Mr. David Gray, in charge of the Nature Museum in Fern Dell, spoke of the Workshop meetings that will commence in February to give instruction and help in Nature subjects to teachers and youth leaders.

On the Field Trip of Sunday, November 22 to Upper Balboa Bay some 50 species were identified, including the White-tailed Kite and many water and shore birds. The thrilling event was the sight of 10 American Golden Eyes.

The CHRISTMAS PARTY on December 5, had the true holiday spirit. Our Hospitality Chairman, Mrs. Neil Lewis, and her committee decorated Fiesta Hall with the traditional red and green. The Birds' tree on the stage was decked with popcorn and cranberry strands, with tempting doughnuts suspended on ribbons. Gift packages of bird food were piled at the

base to give good cheer to Plummer Park birds.

Mrs. Celia Christensen and Mrs. Alma Stultz had attractive displays of books, stationery and gifts for sale. Mrs. Stultz placed a replica of the little house and grounds at Audubon Center, El Monte, made of candies and sweetmeats, on the edge of the stage.

Our President, Miss Pope, welcomed the audience. She introduced our Senior Member, Miss Miriam Faddis. Miss Faddis told us that when unable to sleep at night she enjoyed memorizing poems and recited the last she had learned, - Henry Van Dyke's, The Foot Path to Peace.

"To be glad of life because it gives you the chance to love and to work and to play and to look up at the stars; to be satisfied with your possessions but not content with yourself until you have made the best of them;.....to spend as much time as you can, with body and spirit, in God's out-of-doors; these are little guide-posts on the foot-path to peace".

A program of music and readings began with Miss Sarah Ellen Barnes and Mrs. Henry Lyman playing two numbers for four hands, and each a short piece whose inspiration was "Birds".

Sunflower told us some Amerindian stories and legends of birds and of the creation. Miss Sydney Hembling sang a group of three songs. Miss Florence Palmstrom told a few stories such as she tells the youngsters at the Children's Hospital; and about the birds sculptured in stone at St. Sophia's Greek Church. The program closed with whistling of bird calls by Mrs. Rosalynde Hutchinson while Miss Barnes played "In my Garden".

Refreshments and the social hour were much enjoyed by all.

Just what are we? Some time ago I said that we were Auspices (each one an Auspex) a term from the Greek meaning an Observer of Birds. Now from the Whittier Observer I learned that we are really Avidors, or bird watchers. Well--no matter what they call us, - it's really lots of fun.

A WARNING

Our Conservation Chairman, Mrs. McCune, says our President, Mr. John Baker, reminds us that eternal vigilance is the price of conservation as well as liberty.

House Bill 4646, would have allowed the exchange of federal land for condemned private land, even if the federal land was within national parks or monuments. This bill was favorably reported by the House Committee and cleared for immediate consideration by the Rules Committee. Fortunately strong opposition by some Congressmen and national conservation organizations caused the author of the bill to withdraw his request for action at this time. There is always the hope that the people will be caught napping.

The Redwoods in the Humboldt State Park are still in danger, depending on what action is taken jointly by the State Highway Commission and the State Park Comm.

It behooves us to watch and support the program of the Ocean Fish Protective Association. In the last legislature they were able to defeat a number of bad bills and secure the passage of some good ones. Our "bait fish", mackerel and sardines are gone because of unlimited catches by commercial fishermen in the past. The fishing industry has literally put itself out of business thru its own greed. The anchovies are the sole remaining fish, in any quantity, to draw the larger fish here. A bill protecting them within the three mile limit was passed. But the commercial fishermen are able to come within this limit and leave before the patrol boats can reach them.

NOTES FROM THE NEWSPAPERS

The Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks will buy about 130 acres around Bixby Slough at a cost of \$100,000 to add to property already set aside by the city as a recreation area and aquatic park. The lake will be developed as a wildlife refuge. The proposed park lies between Pacific Coast Highway and Anaheim Street, Vermont Avenue to Figueroa and will comprise 420 acres.

Bird lovers of Southern California will benefit from a \$75,000 fund to be established at U.C.L.A. in memory of Mrs. Lida Scott Brown. The fund will be administered by the Zoology Department. Plans call for

annual lectures by prominent ornithologists and the dissemination of literature about birds.

The Los Angeles County Supervisors recently appropriated \$15,000 to complete a study at Cal Tech of native and foreign plants that can be used in mountain and foothill areas to cut down soil erosion. The work is being carried on in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service. It is believed the benefits through increased watershed retention capacity through improved vegetative cover will be very great.

ITEMS OF INTEREST FROM OUTDOOR CALIFORNIA

This monthly publication of the Dept. of Fish and Game has much of interest to us.

The Department is testing a capped well as a water supply for the Buena Vista Waterfowl Refuge in San Diego County.

Last year a total of 588,150 people bought hunting licenses. Deer hunters killed over 57,000 bucks. This year much forest land in Southern California was closed to hunting during part of the season due to the high fire hazard, therefore a special season for deer hunting is made for parts of Los Angeles, San Bernardino and San Diego counties from January 2 to 18.

A wild duck banded in December, 1932 was shot on Dec. 27, 1952, making it at least 20 1/2 years old, as it was at least six months old when banded.

A pelican found dead at Buena Vista Lake in Kern County last February had been banded in 1935, so was at least 18 years old.

Proposals for the creation of a state park along the California side of the Colorado River between Parker Dam and Yuma were considered by the State Park Commission and the Fish and Game Comm. in October. Spokesmen for some sportsmen's groups expressed the opinion that too much land of game value is being taken into the park system.

Mrs. Grace Sharritt Nelson, a member of our Society, whose husband is in charge of the National Elk Refuge at Jackson, Wyo., writes, "We have 24 Trumpeter Swans wintering with us, the most we have ever had before was 14. The elk are coming in by the thousand now".

OBSERVATIONS

Ruby Curry

- LOONS, GREBES:** Pacific Loon, Bolsa Chica, Nov. 22 (Dorothy Groner); Western, Eared and Pied-billed Grebes, Cabrillo Beach, Nov. 30 (R. Curry).
- DUCKS, GEESE:** Black Brant, Cabrillo Beach, Nov. 30, (S.W.B.S. Club); Cackling Goose, Echo Park, Dec. 7 (S.W.B.S. Club); Baldpates and Ruddies, Lincoln Park, Dec. 7; female Bufflehead, Balboa Back Bay; Redhead and Canvas-back Ducks, Bolsa Chica, Nov. 22 (D.G.).
- PELICANS:** 3 White Pelicans, Back Bay, Nov. 22 (D.G.).
- HAWKS:** White-tailed Kite, Bolsa Chica, and another at Back Bay, Nov. 30, (Kent); Mrs. Salmon reports a Swainson's Hawk feeding on a good-sized rodent in Griffith Park, Nov. 4.
- QUAIL:** Mrs. Getz reports 19 at Niodrara Drive after an absence of several years; 16 in covey daily at Eagle Rock (R.C.).
- PIGEONS:** Mary Lambert writes that a flock of 25 Band-tailed Pigeons is with her daily at East Glenoaks, Glendale.
- THRUSHES:** Alaska Hermit Thrush seen and heard daily north of Colorado Blvd. in Eagle Rock (R.C.).
- KINGLET:** Dec. 9, Ruby-crowned, E. Glenoaks, (M.L.).
- WARBLERS:** Mrs. R. McCune reports that an Audubon is a regular visitor at the syrup cups of her hummingbirds. Miss Ellen Wakeman reports an Orange-crowned in her bird bath at San Gabriel, Nov. 12.
- BLACKBIRDS:** On Nov. 30 at the dairy on South Main St., San Diego, and Tricolored Redwings, and Dwarf Cowbirds, (S.W.B.S. Club); Hooded Oriole, female, at bird bath, Santa Monica, frequently up to Dec. 11, (Hastings).
- FINCHES, SPARROWS:** California Purple Finches in bird bath, Nov. 12, San Gabriel (E.W.); Mrs. Getz near Verdugo Woodlands had a Green-tailed Towhee feeding with the Gambel's Sparrows, but fewer Golden-crowned than usual.

THE SANCTUARY OF AUDUBON CENTER

On October 28, Mrs. Woods noticed 2 Red-breasted Sapsuckers and several flocks of Cedar Waxwings. Since then the Waxwings have been numerous, as many as 500 have been seen in one day. When they roost they make the bare tree limbs look like oversized pussywillows. A Phainopepla has made his appearance again. Judging from the tracks the thickets must be alive with coons and 'possums sharing the feast of grapes with the birds. And Pheasants bursting from the trailsides are frequent enough to be a hope on any field trip.

In November we welcomed to membership the B.B.W. Club. The club is a small group who work together and are interested in birds and the out-of-doors. They have frequent field trips, usually starting on Friday afternoon and returning late on Saturday. In September they made a trip to the Los Padres region to look for Condors. An enjoyable time included observations on many birds - but no condors. The last week in November a trip was made to the region above Ojai and the club members were thrilled with the sight of three Condors. The group are working on a telescope to use in studying such birds as the condor. They ask advice on where to obtain a long focal length objective lens. Floyd Eyer, 8036 Canteloupe Ave., Van Nuys, is president of the club.

In the Bulletin of the Massachusetts Audubon Society a writer comments on the fact that one of the state sanctuaries is also managed as a waterfowl refuge and open to hunting in season and closed to the general public at that time. The comment is one we can all agree with. "Let us hope the Secretary of the Interior and the state officials concerned realize they are dealing with a migratory wildlife resource which belongs as much to the people who get a recreational value from this wildlife resource, without in any way diminishing it, as it does to the minority who pay a small fee to obtain the right to harvest a portion of it.

With deep regret we have to announce the recent death of two of our active members.

Mr. John H. Wentz was a regular attendant at meetings and study classes and helped in planning our work. Mrs. Wentz has placed in our library one of his bird books and a large number of nature magazine.

Mr. Raymond W. Smart of Redondo Beach died on October 29 after months of illness. He had for years studied the shore birds especially and contributed to our Observations and wrote short articles for us. Since he retired in 1946 he has been making archeological studies in his area under the direction of the Southwest Museum of Los Angeles.

CHEEPS AND CHIRPS

Some time ago we received a clever card, "We used to live where we ain't no more, We've moved where we never was before." This telling us that Mrs. May Wait had moved from West Hollywood where she had lived for so long, to Van Nuys, largely to be near her son and granddaughter. Mrs. Wait served the Society as Treasurer for five years, then as Membership Chairman for several years, and later as Chairman of the House Committee. While too far away to come to meetings regularly, she does come occasionally if there is a chance for her to be of help. We were glad to see her at our Christmas Party.

Much of the interest and value of our Study Classes in recent years has been due to the stimulating talks and the beautiful slides shown by Mr. W. Scott Lewis. He has contributed at least one article to the Tanager each year. When the San Gabriel River Wildlife Sanctuary was begun it was Mr. and Mrs. Lewis who moved into the little house on the grounds at a time when there was no running water near it or any other conveniences and did the development work. At present Mr. and Mrs. Lewis are working with their slides dealing with all phases of nature. Their catalogue lists more than 4000 members.

"Adventures with Pasadena Screech Owls" is the title of a pamphlet published by W. Dan and Edith B. Quattlebaum, telling of their experience with owls that have nested in a box in their yard for 34 years. There is a letter from Mr. Quattlebaum in the last Audubon Magazine - Pasadena's Youngest Bird Watcher. Long a member of our Society,

Mr. Quattlebaum is "Bird Man" at the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum and will be the leader of our next field trip. He had an article on Bird Song in the first volume of The Tanager, twenty years ago. Both he and Mrs. Quattlebaum collect early American glass. Some of the finest of their specimens are on display in the County Museum.

HOW TO WRECK YOUR ASSOCIATION

That is the title of an article in the November number of the Audubon Newsletter published by our California office in San Francisco. Here are a few of the 14 rules: Don't attend meetings, if you do go late.

Talk to anyone sitting near you, the louder the better.

Never approve anything your officers do. Don't bother recruiting new members. When you don't like what is going on - say so but under no circumstances offer any constructive suggestions. Remember you know more than anyone about everything. If they don't agree with you, they're wrong.

But psychologists tell us always to use a positive approach, - so - make a NEW YEAR'S resolution to strengthen your society by turning each of these suggestions around, then acting on them.

In the November number of THE ELAPAIO of the Hawaiian Audubon Society is a description of the dancing of the Laysan Albatross, a pair of which are on the folder for our Screen Tours. "The white gooney's bowing and other movements were comical to watch. They goose-stepped and pranced, bowing and nodding their heads at each step and danced around in a circle. Standing erect the birds pointed their bills towards the sky, then lowered them and clattered them with astonishing rapidity."

A BOOK TO OWN AND USE

Introduction to Ornithological Nomenclature, by Mary F. Coble. This is a new, revised and enlarged edition of a book giving the scientific names of all our birds, their pronunciation and meanings. It is of pocket size, paper bound and can be secured for \$1.50 from the American Book Institute, 427 West 5th Street, Los Angeles 13.

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1st Vice-Pres. Mrs. J. E. P. Dunn - - - - - Secretary...Miss Elizabeth Patterson
2nd Vice-Pres. Mr. Hiram Beebe - - - - - Treasurer...Miss Treva Russell
Registrar of Members..Mrs. Tracy H. Fulton, 3603 Tacoma Ave., Los Angeles 65

CALENDAR FOR JANUARY, 1954

Thursday, January 7. AFTERNOON PROGRAM MEETING. At the Los Angeles County Museum, Exposition Park, at 1:30. Mr. Kenneth Stager will present the Bird of the Month. Dr. Theodore Downs of the Museum staff will conduct the group on a tour of the exhibits of fossil animals in Hancock Hall, followed by a film, "ANIMALS UNLIMITED" in the lecture hall upstairs. Members and friends are invited to meet for lunch in the museum cafeteria at 12, and then spend the time till the meeting in informal study of museum exhibits.

Thursday, January 14. MEETING ON THE EXECUTIVE BOARD. 7:30 at the home of Miss Bessie Pope, 912 Victoria Avenue.

Thursday, January 21. FIELD TRIP. To the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum, Arcadia. Mr. Dan Quattlebaum will meet the group at the gate at 9 A.M. Take Monrovia bus on Colorado Street, Pasadena, and get off at North Ranch Road. If driving go out Colorado Street to the same place. Lunch will be eaten in Arcadia Park, nearby.

Sunday, January 21. FIELD TRIP. To Chatsworth Reservoir. Drive north on Ventura Boulevard, turn right on Topanga Canyon Boulevard, turn left on Roscoe Boulevard, then right on Fallbrook Avenue. Meet at the reservoir gate at 9 A.M. Leader Dorothy Groner.

Thursday, January 28. Study Class. At Plummer Park at 10:00 A.M. First hour - another of Mr. W. Scott Lewis's splendid talks illustrated with colored slides - FLOWERLESS PLANTS. Second hour, "INFORMATION PLEASE". Bring in your questions on birds, marine life, insects, plants, etc., for our Board of Experts to answer: Mr. Lewis, Mr. Hastings, Dr. Lloyd and Mrs. Mary Hood.

AUDUBON SCREEN TOURS

Cleveland P. Grant - - - Wildlife of Marsh and Mountain
Tuesday, January 5 - 7:45 P.M. Virgil Junior High School, 152 N. Vermont Avenue.
Saturday, January 9 - 2 P.M. John Burroughs Junior High School, 600 South McCadden Place.

Every one interested in nature and the out-of-doors is welcome to these meetings and trips. Admission is free except for the Screen Tours lectures.

AUDUBON CENTER OF CALIFORNIA

664 N. Durfee Ave., El Monte Phone: Forrest 0-1872
Mrs. O. M. Stultz Director Mrs. M. Gertrude Woods, Assistant
Nature Museum open daily, 2-5, except Sundays and Mondays
Guided Field Trips second Sunday of each month, starting at 9 A.M. at the entrance gate. Led by Pat Gould and Bill Hawkins.