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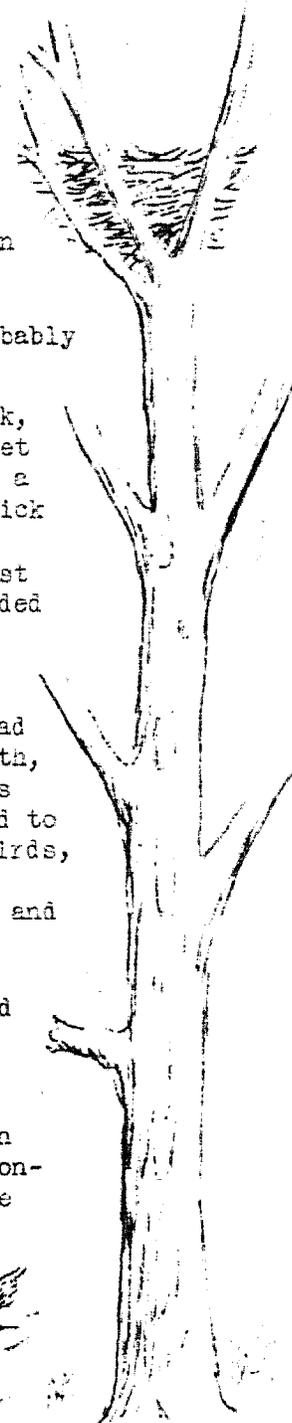
Number 3

NEST BUILDING OF A RED-TAILED HAWK
Charlotte McBride



At Palos Verdes a pair of hawks have had a nest for some ten years. Each year the nest has been repaired and used. This year they began work on February 4 and had the nest well repaired, when in a high wind on the fourteenth the branch bearing the heavy load broke and fell. In the remains of the fallen nest I found pieces of shells of last year's eggs, the rattle of a rattle snake, two skulls (probably of skunks), and parts of the lining of the nest.

The hawks were seen about the tree daily for the following week, and early on the morning of the 21st began a new nest about 25 feet higher in the tree, but in a fork of the main trunk instead of on a limb. Both birds worked at nest building. If one came with a stick when the other was working on the nest he or she flew to another part of the tree or to a neighboring tree and waited till the first bird left. While working the birds kept their wings partly extended and their tails spread. They carried material in both bills and talons, heavier materials in their talons. Sometimes the sticks brought were so heavy as to make flight awkward. At no time did I see either bird gather material from the ground. They broke dead twigs and branches from nearby trees with their bills. By the 24th, five days after starting, the nest was large enough for both birds to work on it at the same time. When working together they seemed to show great affection for one another, acting like a pair of lovebirds, frequently pecking about the bill or preening the feathers of the head and neck of their mate. Each day they began working about 7 and stopped shortly after 9 a.m. I made checks at frequent intervals during the day but never saw material carried to the nest after 9 or 9:30. On the 27th and again on March 4 the birds were observed mating. On the 28th the nest building seemed finished but for several days the birds were seen to carry just one small twig, some with green leaves, to the nest. On March 3 one of the birds carried a small rodent to the nest and ate it there. From then on till the 15th the female was on the nest frequently, though not continuously, all day. On the 15th she remained on the nest and once I saw the male bring her a small rodent.



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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 National Audubon Society, including subscription to Audubon Magazine: Regular \$5.00, Sustaining \$10.00, Active \$25.00, Supporting \$50.00

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The Nominating Committee, according to our By-Laws will report at each meeting in April.

Check this date on your calendar ---

- MAY 15 -

The Spring Conference of the Audubon Societies of Southern California in Laguna Beach.

A splendid program on Conservation. Field trip on the 16th for those willing to stay over.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

At the base of the bird bath in my garden is a stepping stone, given to me by a friend, on which is printed the familiar inscription:

"The kiss of the sun for pardon,
The song of the bird for mirth,
One is nearer God's heart in a garden,
Than anywhere else on earth."

I am sure that the author, Dorothy Frances Gurney, must have penned these lines in April when we celebrate Resurrection Day. For it is at this time that we realize how true they are.

Do you remember those dry bulbs that you planted or the tiny seeds that the wind blew your way? Look at them now! How can such beautiful blossoms come from such small beginnings? Why does one seed produce a mustard, and another smaller yet a poppy? Questions such as these can only be answered by Him who created them all both great and small.

So we stand near to God in a garden and as we watch the buds unfold and listen to the melodious tones of the bird choir, we give thanks that once again it is Easter.

Bessie Pope

"Every civilization has eventually exhausted itself, either by wars between nations or by internal war with nature. No one can win a war against nature."

"In Mesopotamia we find one-sixth of the population that was there 4000 years ago. Their irrigation canals became filled with silt. In the headwaters of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers in Assyria, overgrazing and forest cutting has exposed the soil to erosion. Later the mountains of Phoenicia and Syria were completely cleared to supply the Cedars of Lebanon that built Solomon's temple and palace. Subsequent pasturing of goats prevented revegetation and erosion had its way."

"In North China, an increasing population forced the people more and more into the hills. Forests were cut down, erosion began, and silt choked the great Yellow River. Now the Chinese accept floods, death and famine as the natural thing. Just as we accept many abnormal things in our own country.

"Land mismanagement hastened the fall of the Roman Empire. In 1000 years, Italy has not recovered; today there is not a forest along the Mediterranean coast."

"In the parts of Europe that have gentle rains and moderate slopes, land destruction was not serious." --From "Man on the Landscape" by Vernon Carter.

HOW THE CARDINALS CAME TO CALIFORNIA

Irma Rogers

Many times I have heard it asked, how did the Cardinals arrive in Southern California? Numerous and varied were the answers, all seemingly without foundation. I hoped someday for the authentic answer, and early last summer this came.

On a typical June day I had just ended a walk through the Audubon Center when Mrs. Alma Stultz, the director, called to me to come meet a distinguished gentleman. Needless to say I was embarrassed when I, in peddlepushers and showing plainly the effects of a half day's hike, was presented to the Rev. Bob Shuler, Pastor of the largest Methodist Church in Los Angeles, and known in the era of the 20's as the fightingest Crusading Evangelist of the time.

We sat in Mrs. Stultz' kitchen. Dr. Shuler had come down from his El Monte home to see "his" redbirds. Hooded Orioles came, followed by Black-headed Grosbeaks and numerous House Finches, Anna's and Black-chinned Hummers flitted in to partake of the nectar in the colored glass feeders. At last arrived the male Cardinal in all his spring radiance, followed shortly by the female in her somber array.

This seemed the opportune time to inquire of Dr. Shuler the facts about the birds arrival in Los Angeles County, as I vaguely remembered he was in some way connected with it. The following is the history he gave me.

Bob Shuler was born in the primitive area of the Blue Ridge Mountains, and learned early to love the Red Bird, as it is commonly called in the southland. Moving to Texas and then to California where no red birds were found he became conscious of the fact and wished he could do something about it.

Nothing came of his desires until 1923 when he was holding Evangelistic Meetings in the Mississippi River Delta region. Thousands of Red Birds were wintering in the area. At that time there were no laws as to trapping the birds or their interstate transfer. Driving from one meeting to another he mentioned his

hopes to his colored driver and together they discussed the possibility of transplanting the birds to his California home.

Before leaving Dr. Shuler constructed a wire cage to be filled with the birds trapped by the driver. Doubtful if the plan could be carried out and becoming in his busy life almost forgetful of the plan, Dr. Shuler arrived home to find that the birds were already en route. Twenty-five were sent that year, and the same number for the succeeding two years. Owing a 40-acre orange grove, Dr. Shuler erected a huge wire enclosure covering several trees and plantings of dense shrubbery, all desirable for Red Bird habitat.

The birds arrived in good condition, soon became acclimated and nested. Few however hatched their eggs, due to the destruction of each others nests. This occurred for three years, and finally concluding that few would reach maturity in captivity, the birds were released. They remained for several years in the vicinity; now they are found adjacent to the river beds a few miles distant. A few have strayed over Los Angeles County; one pair nesting last year in the yard of Dr. Shuler's daughter at almost the site of the original release of the birds. Many are the good deeds of Dr. Shuler, and the bringing of the Red Birds to California to add joy to the peoples of the bird world ranks high among them.

Two years ago the staff of the Audubon Nature Center at El Monte made a careful count of Cardinals in the area and reported 200.

Mr. W. Scott Lewis has made an interesting observation on his pet Parakeet. When exposed to the invisible rays of an ultra-violet lamp of the "black light" type which has a wave length somewhat greater than a quartz lamp the yellow feathers fluoresce brilliantly in a dark room. The fluorescence is brilliant yellow, but paler on body feathers that are merely tipped with yellow.

WHAT'S GONE ON IN THE SOCIETY

Grace H. Phillips

FIELD TRIP to Cabrillo Beach, Feb. 18. It was a clear windy day. The mountains showed plainly and Catalina Island seemed very close. En route we saw Red-winged Blackbirds on reeds along the Sloughs and Curlews feeding on the banks above.

At the Bay large gatherings of shore birds, Godwits, Willets, Sanderlings and Gulls were sunning themselves, not caring for the wind.

After lunch on the greensward next to the ocean, Mr. John W. Olguin of the Cabrillo Marine Museum took us around the two floors of exhibits, commenting on many interesting forms of marine life from tiny shellfish to huge whale skeletons. This has been the season for whale migration to Baja California to the warm and shallow waters required to receive their young. Mr. Olguin pointed out that at Point Firmin we were really nine miles out to sea and right in the path of migration. In six weeks or so the whale mothers and calves would return north.

STUDY CLASS at Plummer Park, Feb. 25. Four of Miss Ruby Curry's fine color films were reeled off for us, mainly birds of marsh and shore. There were many striking shots of feeding and flying birds, and the underwater scenes of anemones and other sea creatures were marvelously beautiful.

Mrs. Mary Hood, scheduled for bird study the second hour, was unable to appear. Consistently the naturalist, she reported "a frog in her throat". But she sent her slides which Miss Patterson showed with interesting comments.

Bird skins from Audubon House were on display and studied after the meeting.

FIELD TRIP to Playa del Rey, Sunday, Feb. 26. Party turned out chirping like a flock of friendly English sparrows. For the leader the day started out well with a Short-eared Owl hunting over a brown field sprouting with new green grass. At the shore - a different story. Low, thick fog hugged the ground, and a couple of Avocets performing a nuptial dance at the muddy edge of the lagoon were hardly visible. Dim forms of ducks scarcely pierced the gloom. So, away to Malibu Creek and warm sunshine. Western and Eared Grebes, a bathing Black Turn-

stone, the ubiquitous gulls, a Surf Scoter, numerous Black-bellied Plovers, Willets and Godwits, 3 Cinnamon Teal and 2 Black Brant were of interest. When the fog closed in again a determined handful drove off to Tapia Park and Bluebirds. A White-tailed Kite hovering over a sloping pasture on Ventura Boulevard closed the chapter. Dorothy Gruner, leader.

AFTERNOON MEETING at the Museum, March 4. Mr. Kenneth Stager described the Bird of the Month as he showed the skin of the nearly extinct Mexican Imperial Woodpecker, the largest of the family - larger than the 20-inch Ivory-billed Woodpecker which it resembles. Destruction of the pine forest habitats of the birds is causing them both to die out. The deep holes of the Imperial are used by the Thick-billed Parrots after the woodpeckers' nesting season is over.

Mrs. Hood's talk on the California Indians and their natural history gave us a good idea of the food preparation, and the arts and crafts of the Wichobe Indians of the Yosemite Valley. Mr. and Mrs. Hood had themselves gathered, shelled and ground acorns, made cakes from the meal and cooked them on open fires as the Indians used to do. She said Indian food is rather tame to our palates, though the Indians used many things as seasonings and flavorings. The Wichobe basket work was especially fine. They traded with other tribes for foodstuffs and articles not available in their valley.

Her views of household utensils and showing stages in food preparation were photographed against authentic backgrounds, which added to their effectiveness. The informative talk was enthusiastically received by the audience.

SATURDAY FIELD TRIP to Playa del Rey, March 6. This, the first of our Saturday trips, was attended by 21 persons. On the beach was a group of Willets estimated at over 300. Other shore birds were seen, the most beautiful sight was of 25 Avocets, many in summer plumage.

Miss Ethel Craig was the leader.

OBSERVATIONS

Ruby Curry

The South West Bird Study Club on a visit to Chatsworth Reservoir on Feb. 22 saw Parallon Cormorants, California Heron, American and Snowy Egrets, 100 Canada Geese, Mallards, Pintails, Green-winged Teal, Baldpates, Shovelers, Canvas-Backs, Lesser Scaup, and Ruddy Ducks; Turkey Vultures, White-tailed Kites, Sharp-shinned Red-tailed and Sparrow Hawks; Red-shafted Flickers, California Woodpeckers, a Lewis Woodpecker and Red-breasted Sapsucker.

Bess Hoffman saw an Old Squaw Duck in the ocean near Malibu on the 8th of March, and on the same day, from Del Rey to Malibu Nurtha Dunn saw Horned, Eared, Western and Pied-billed Grebes.

Margueritte Parker out with the Southern California Ornithological Club on Mar. 14 on a trip to Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties saw 2 Golden Eagles, 2 Red-tailed Hawks, one carrying a small snake in its talons, 2 Sharp-shinned Hawks and 1 White-tailed Kite.

Charlotte McBride reports that beside the Red-tailed Hawks of which she writes this month and the Vultures that are about Palos Verdes every summer, 2 pairs of Marsh Hawks and a pair of White-tailed Kites live in the hills near her home.

Myfanwy Lewis says a Band-tailed Pigeon came to the feeding tray on Mar. 10 in Hollywood.

Reg Julian saw at the Warm Springs Sanctuary on Feb. 23, a very hot day, Hermit Thrush, Hutton Vireo, Bewick Wren, Western Bluebird, San Diego Towhee, many Chinese Doves and 12 Valley Quail.

Ruth Eckler writes from Mecca of seeing an Orchard Oriole in full plumage, a long way from his regular home. She has also seen several Sage Thrashers, a Bendire's Thrasher and an unusual number of Robins, but fewer Vermillion Flycatchers than usual.

On an overnight trip to the Indio-Palm Springs, Mecca region with Mrs. Stoner and Mrs. Dauprey we saw on Feb. 16-17 flocks of Gambel's Quail, 15 Phainopeplas, 3 Roadrunners, Vermillion Flycatcher, flocks of Verdins, many Sonora Shrikes, 3 Cactus Wrens, and others. R.C.

Mrs. Irma Rogers says that due to the fire in the hills in the fall more birds come into her yard in Monrovia than ever

before. At one time in the morning of Mar. 9 there were 13 species of birds, among them Band-tailed Pigeons, Mourning and Chinese Doves, Bewick Wren, Lawrence's Goldfinch, Juncos, Robins and Golden-crowned Sparrows.

The S.W.B.S. Club on Feb. 15 at Hansen Dam saw Mountain and Western Bluebirds and Rock Wren. On the 15th of March in Big Tujunga Canyon, a Canyon Wren.

CONGRATULATIONS ON THEIR GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY TO THE PASADENA AUDUBON SOC. They have arranged for an exhibit in the Pasadena Library Lecture Room during the month of April of one of the Photography Tours of the National Audubon Society. This is an opportunity to see some of the best work of some of our Screen Tours lecturers.

OUR APRIL LECTURER -
MR. ARTHUR KOEHLER,

was for years in charge of the U. S. Forest Products Laboratory at Madison, Wisconsin and after retiring from there was for a few years a professor of Forestry at Yale University. He is an authority on wood structure and the author of government publications on the identification of woods.

Mrs. Bess Hoffman, our Recording Secretary, who has written an account of a week-end's birding for this number of the Tanager, served the Society from 1947 to June 1951 as Executive Secretary. A few years ago she wrote an account of her birding experiences on an auto trip with her husband across the country. She is an active member of the South West Bird Study Club as well as of our Society. She not only watches birds on field trips but even on busy city streets.

The Portland Audubon Society takes some late afternoon trips to an old holly tree farm in the city where there is the largest wintering robin roost of the area. Counts ranging to 20,000 Robins have been made.

THRILLS APLENTY

Bess M. Hoffman

Some bird trips stand out as memorable, trips when everything goes right and the day is full of surprises? Such was the trip on February 1 and 2, shared by Nathan Dunn, Eunice Trainor, Delight Dadds and me. We were invited to show Delight the birds in her own back yard, so to speak, at Balboa Back Bay, spend the night at her Emerald Bay home and bird again. When we arrived the coast was blanketed in solid white fog, so we switched plans, drove inland via Laguna Canyon and were soon in bright sunshine.

One of the first birds on our list was a Say's Phoebe, a life bird for one of the group. A little later, in a broad green rolling field, there were Bluebirds, MOUNTAIN Bluebirds, hundreds of them, worth crawling under barbed wire for a closer look. What a sight to see 5 or 6 glowing blue "jewels" against a gray shrub. What a sight to see them hover in mid air like sparrow hawks. Their rich cerulean blue is almost unbelievable. No picture can give the intensity of this color when seen in bright sunlight.

Meadowlarks, thrashers and mockingbirds sang, flickers, dusky warblers, Audubons. Warblers and jays were everywhere. A road runner posed in mid field, then walked (not ran) deliberately out of sight.

A large hawk was seen perched on a limb. We were not too well informed in this field, so out came the bird books, and there in Peterson's Eastern Guide was the exact counterpart of our bird. An American rough-legged hawk in the dark phase, all blackish brown except for the yellow feet and an area around the bill. With the binoculars we could almost read the number on the metal band around his leg. When he rose in the air the light areas in wings and tail matched the book's description and clinched the identification. A rare find! There were other hawks, too; Coopers, sharp-shinned, marsh, sparrow, and the turkey vulture.

Four western kingbirds were seen, early in the season as Bob Pyle's field list shows them as arriving late in March.

With so many stops along the way, progress was slow and we did not reach O'Neill Park till after 2 o'clock for lunch. In the park were robins, thrushes, San Diego wrens, slender-billed nuthatches, bush-tits, titmice, willow, Nuttall's and California woodpeckers, western bluebirds, juncos, lark sparrows and purple finches in abundance. So ended the first day of birds.

Next morning, although there was fog again on the coast, it had dispersed by the time we reached Balboa Back Bay and visibility was perfect. Our first discovery was a group of 50 long-billed curlews feeding in the tall grass. Forrester's terns dived again and again for little silver fish. California herons dotted, or should I say, made blue-gray exclamation marks all over the marshland. 54 egrets of both kinds were doubled by reflection in the still water and made an unforgettably beautiful picture. White-tailed kites perched on a tree or hawked overhead. Indeed they seemed to follow us wherever we went, so active and ever present we never knew whether there was only one pair or three. In a stretch of open water a pair of ducks swam. Wonder of wonders! American golden eyes! Another road-runner was seen. Avocets, yellow-legs, many common shore birds fed in the shallow water and gulls flew overhead. In the big lagoon were ducks, 350 pintails, baldpates, shovelers, scaup, ruddys. A red-throated loon fed well on fish while we watched. And finally, to top our list, we discovered, resting on the far shore, a group of 15 white pelicans.

72 birds were counted by four well-satisfied birders - or did we miss something?

Our library has received from Mrs. Thomas Shearer a copy of the latest book by Sally Carriger - ICE BOUND SUMMER. We now have all three of Miss Carriger's books, delightful reading for all nature lovers.

How much use are you making of the opportunities offered by the library?

LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY
OFFICERS, 1953-1954

President Miss Bessie Pope, 912 Victoria Avenue, Los Angeles 19
1st Vice-Pres. . .Mrs. J.E.P.Dunn Secretary . . . Miss Elizabeth Patterson
2nd Vice-Pres. . .Mrs. Hiram Beebe Treasurer . . . Miss Treva Russell
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CALENDAR FOR APRIL

Thursday, April 1. AFTERNOON PROGRAM MEETING, Los Angeles County Museum, Exposition Park at 1:30. Mr. Kenneth Stager will present the Bird of the Month. Mrs. Ruth McCune will report of matters of interest in conservation. An illustrated lecture - ANNUAL RINGS IN TREES AND WHAT THEY TELL by Arthur Koshler, a national authority on wood structure and identification. Meet with us for lunch in the museum cafeteria at 12 and then spend the time till the meeting in informal study of museum exhibits.

Saturday, April 3. FIELD TRIP to the Audubon Center of California, 664 N. Durfee Ave., El Monte, From Beverly Blvd. turn left (north) on Rosemead, then right (east) at first signal. From Garvey Blvd., turn right (south) on Rosemead, then left (east) at second red signal. Meet at 9 a. m. at gate. Bring lunch, binoculars, and out-door friends. Leader - Ethel B. Craig.

Thursday, April 15. FIELD TRIP to Camp Comfort, Ojai. This is the trip that was so outstanding last year that every one wanted it repeated. Our Tanner bus will leave 6th and Olive at 8 a. m. (Note the time - somewhat earlier than usual). A stop will be made at Cahuenga and Hollywood Boulevard about 8:15. Fare \$3.00. For reservations call Miss Florence Wilcox, Dunkirk 8-7981.

Thursday, April 22. STUDY CLASS at Plummer Park at 10 a. m. SOME UNEXPLAINED MYSTERIES OF NATURE, beautiful kodachrome slides with explanation by Mr. W. Scott Lewis. All of Mr. Lewis' talks are both very interesting and thought provoking, and his pictures among the best to be seen. For the second hour there will be a discussion led by Mrs. Nurtan Dunn on some group of birds, illustrated by pictures and prepared bird skins.

Sunday, April 25. FIELD TRIP to Oak Grove, San Diego County. This will be an overnight camping trip in conjunction with the Sierra Club. Oak Grove is on State Highway 79, 25 miles southeast of Temecula and 15 miles northwest of Warner's Hot Springs; 20 stoves, 24 tables and 4 toilets. Water supply is piped. Suitable for camp trailers. Reached over a hard surfaced road; shade. Supplies available at Oak Grove, Aguanga or Temecula. Ranger Station adjacent. Elevation 2,750 feet. Bird walk Sunday at 9 a. m. Leaders - Maybelle DeMay and Catherine Shaw.

AUDUBON CENTER OF CALIFORNIA

664 N. Durfee Avenue, 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 the entrance at 9 a. m.

- Led by Pat Gould and Bill Hawkins.
