

Western



Tanager

PUBLISHED MONTHLY, SEPTEMBER TO MAY
BY THE LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY INC.

THE LOS ANGELES BRANCH OF THE
NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

Volume 20

May 1954

Number 9

THE CANADIAN ROCKIES IN JULY

Ruby Curry

At 3 in the morning on June 27



last, Dorothy Groner and I started for Canada via the Angeles Crest, the Desert Cutoff and Route 395. Our mountains were bathed in moonlight, there were no traffic problems so we could enjoy the beauties of mountains and sky fully. We arrived in Mohave as the full moon was setting in the west, the sun rising in the east and the wind blowing all around. At Little Lake a pied-billed Grebe and a western kingbird were having breakfast, by 7 o'clock a road runner was out for his. Mariposas, antelope brush, deep blue lupines, and, in a damp field, purple iris with red-wings flying over, added to our pleasure. After two more days of birds and flowers at Burns and the John Day country, we crossed into Canada.

Leaving Cranbrook the next morning a deer bounded across the road, a spruce grouse with two chicks was seen. Bank swallows were nesting. A mountain bluebird, ruby-crowned kinglet, chipping sparrows, a Lewis' woodpecker, a raven, cedar wax-wings and an Eastern meadowlark welcomed us to Canada. Later came mammals with their young; first a bear with a cub, a cow moose at an animal lick, then a bear with two blond cubs having a jolly wrestling match on a log beside the road, then a black bear with two black cubs.

After getting settled in Banff we sat by the river to watch the boating and enjoy the flocks of pine siskins, white-crowned sparrows and magpies. Each evening while at Banff we rode out to Beaver Lake. Out in the small lake was a beaver house seemingly occupied by both beaver and muskrat (Hudson seal to my lady). The latter was very busy going back and forth from its home to the opposite side of the pond, scrambling up the bank into the grass and coming back with a load of grasses and equisetum. Next we drove out to see the bison which have a large place to roam and rest with a range of snowy mountains in view. There were several cows with nursing calves and one huge bull. From here we continued on the Calgary road to Lake Minneworks where we found a pair of big-horn sheep strolling around and seeming quite willing to have their pictures taken. The day following on the way to Lake Louise a moose and a wapiti cow were seen.

At Moraine Lake we walked to the end of the trail. We were enchanted not only by the marvelous views but by the lovely Alpine flowers; -avens, yellow Arctic cinquefoil, dainty waxy bells of Cassiope, red heather (Bryanthus), white violets, draba, dotted and tufted saxafrages and beautiful and interesting fungi and lichens. In the black spruce and aspens were robins, Audubon's warblers in summer dress, siskins and a rufous hummingbird darting about. Here too, were red squirrels, golden-mantled ground squirrels and pikas among the boulders.



Walking up the Hamilton Falls trail to Emerald Lake was even more of a botanical spree; ferns, clintonia, vanCouveria, forget-me-nots, fools huckleberry in blossom, mertensia, and many other high mountain flowers under the firs and cedars. A side trip to Peyto Lake was rewarding, - yellow snow lilies and white alpine lilies growing and blooming at

(Continued on Page 45)

THE WESTERN Tanager

Published monthly, Sept.-May by the Los Angeles Audubon Society.
\$1.00 per year, free to all members.
Editor - George T. Hastings, 517 Euclid St., Santa Monica. Phone EXbrook 5-1137.

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, includes subscription to Audubon Magazine. Regular \$5.00, Sustaining \$10.00, Active \$25.00, Supporting \$50.00.

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THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

How many interesting activities we have before us in this month of May, before we "fold up our tents" for the summer!

In addition to the regular three field trips and the two indoor meetings of our own Society, there is the two-day convention in Laguna Beach, which will be most worthwhile; and I know you will want to be there, for at least one day, if not both.

Then, of course, there is "the last roundup", - the annual trip to Charlton Flats, where in addition to the bird walks, we have the Installation of Officers. Instead of the Tanager (the paper), we'll be having lunch with the bird himself. Be sure to bring an extra tidbit in your lunch to share with our own special feathered friend, and perhaps, a bit for the bluebird that has been, for so long a time, a symbol of happiness.

Now, doesn't all that sound like a good send-off for the summer vacation? And, speaking of vacations, are you looking for a place to go? What about the Audubon Camp at Norden in the High Sierras? Or, if you want a closer spot, why not spend a week or two at the Conservation and Nature Camp at Idyllwild? In both places you will have the inspiration of the mountains and inspiring leadership for field work and lectures.

But wherever you choose to go, whether to the mountains or to the sea, there will always be wild life to enjoy and wild life to protect. So may you enjoy these months to the fullest and tell us about it in the fall.

A happy and helpful vacation to you all is the wish of the entire Board.

Bessie M. Pope

A worthwhile means of extending information about birds and the part they play in conservation is through the use of our Society's slides. Other organizations frequently ask for illustrated talks. Won't some of our members volunteer to do some of this speaking or to prepare themselves to do so? Every one who knows the meaning of the word "Conservation" knows his help is needed.

(The Canadian Rockies - continued)

the edge of the snow banks, -heather, white anemones, and rosy catkins of the shrubby willows. A pair of red deer were seen and nearing the Columbia Ice Fields a golden eagle soared close over the ground.

At Athabasca View Point among the rocks half way down the cliffs and again down by the river were three mountain goats and two kids.

On the many lakes near Jasper and on trips around the country we saw numerous Holboell's Grebes with their long red necks swimming with the heads jerked back and forth, Barrow's golden eyes with as many as 12 ducklings, Canada geese with downy goslings, loons with young. One day six baby mergansers were swimming so fast that as they rose out of the water and down again it seemed almost as if they were roller skating in formation.

One morning early as we were passing the Pine Bungalow Headquarters the clean sheets were hanging on a line to dry. A big bull elk was rubbing his sides and wiping his nose on the sheets. Dorothy got out of the car and tried to shoo him away. The proprietor came out and called to her to drive the elk away (instead of doing it himself). The elk looked as if he were going to dive under the sheets and toss her with his antlers which worried me so that I missed an unusual shot. Then a small black dog came to the rescue and chased the big elk away into the woods where later we found him lying down and chewing his cud.

Everywhere along the roads and in the woods were masses of big red mountain lilies with dark spots in the chalice, pint pyrolas, an occasional lady's slipper, tall greenish white zygodenes, brilliant red paint brush, pink hedyсарiums, mimulus and numerous others.

We returned via Edmonton seeing in the fields flocks of Franklin Gulls following the plows. Near Ft. McLeod were six blue-winged teal and an eared grebe in breeding plumage. Further along two grouse with twelve young. Everywhere black terns were seen.

So if you like baby ducks and mammals, if you want to see flowers in abundance, Canada is the place to be in July.

BIRDING ON A CITY STREET

Bess M. Hoffman

City birding can be fun! For more than a year I used the corner of La Brea and Wilshire Blvd. as a transfer point, one of the busiest traffic corners in the city, right in the heart of the Miracle Mile.

There black phoebes used awning posts as take-off points to sally out in the air after flying insects, while linnets and sparrows picked "cooked" insects off the neon signs or from the radiator grills of parked cars. Once I watched an English sparrow trying to capture a moth. For almost five minutes she darted this way and that, following the moth's erratic movements, without result because the moth was on the inside of a florist's window and the sparrow on the outside.

Mockers sang from the tallest TV ariels and occasionally the jays challenged them for the same spot. Brewer's blackbirds were underfoot, Chinese doves were common. Gulls were part of the sky scene every winter. Once a sparrow hawk flew overhead. On the well-kept lawns in front of billboards only a few blocks away, killdeer fed from autumn to spring.

But what gave me the greatest pleasure was watching cliff swallows all summer long. They were almost always present, sometimes hawking high and barely visible, sometimes darting right in front of our faces. They must have had nests nearby, but although I combed the tall buildings I could never discover them, and being chained to a schedule I never got more than a block away. One of the high points of my city birding was the sight of cliff swallows feeding their babies -- babies perched on guy wires that support the overhead signals where the red and green lights controlled some of the most chaotic traffic in the city.

How many other bus riders have shared that experience, I wonder?

Nature, kind mother, my heart is content
 With the beauty and mirth thou hast
 lavishly sent;
 Sweet summer is nigh and my spirit leaps
 high
 As the sun travels further along the blue
 sky.
 Eliza Cook

WHAT'S GONE ON IN THE SOCIETY

Grace H. Phillips

FIELD TRIP, Irvine Park and Tucker Sanctuary, March 18. Fifty people on this outing, and a fine day. Birding was not as good as usual because bus loads of boys were having a rousing time, but the Park is always a delightful place, with its large areas of native shrubs and trees.

After lunch we drove through the green hills to the Sanctuary in Modjeska Canyon. It was a grand chance to watch from the observation porch, the feeding birds. The only hummingbird seen was the Anna's, taking syrup from bottles hung along the porch edge. The curator told of their color preferences: Red, next yellow, then green and last blue. A hummer seldom visits a blue flower.

STUDY CLASS, Plummer Park, March 25.

Mr. Scott Lewis spoke as one inspired, continuing the subject of Flowerless Plants; mushrooms, molds, rusts and lichens; liverworts, mosses and ferns. A probable source of the Biblical manna is an edible lichen, which, loosely attached, blows along the ground to collect in quantities in sheltered places. Mrs. Ruth McCune reported success in the passing of state and federal bills of aid to conservation; and of the Baker Bill, still pending, which would provide 10% of National Park receipts for Park maintenance.

Mr. Dan Quattlebaum, of the County Arboretum, gave an animated talk on OWLS. He spoke especially of the Screech Owl he and his wife have observed in their yard for over twenty years. He also distributed his interesting pamphlet "Adventures with Pasadena Screech Owls".

FIELD TRIP, Sunday, March 26, to Audubon Center, El Monte. Thirty interested members made up the party. Rufous hummingbirds are coming back, a barn owl was seen, and 24 cinnamon teal and some greater yellowlegs were on the water in the adjoining Whittier Woodlands. Yellow-throats, ruby-crowned kinglets and Bewick's wren sang; also many cardinals, descendants of the birds brought from the south by Dr. "Bob" Shuler as des-

cribed in the April Tanager. A thrilling sight was a white-tailed kite chasing a red-bellied hawk, that turned on its back to receive the kite with clenched talons.

AFTERNOON MEETING, at the Museum, April 1. Mrs. Mary Hood took Mr. Stager's place in describing the White-tailed Kite and the Kestrel, commonly and wrongly called Sparrow Hawk, as birds of the month. Mrs. McCune gave a stirring Conservation talk, stressing the difficulty in restoring an area mistreated for years, citing the copper-mining district where Tennessee, North Carolina and Georgia meet. Here timber was cut and burned for smelting, fumes killed vegetation for miles around and so poisoned the ground that efforts to re-forest and stop erosion have largely failed.

Mr. Arthur Koehler, for years connected with the Forest Products Laboratory at Madison, Wisc., gave a lecture on TREE RINGS AND WHAT THEY TELL. He showed by slides how the rings tell of rainfall, drought, cold, fire, overcrowding and the release of this condition. How analysis of tree sections are used in determining points in law regarding property boundaries, and even in murder cases, as in the ladder used in the Lindberg Kidnapping case where Mr. Koehler proved absolutely that a board in the ladder came from the attic of the murderer's home.

SATURDAY FIELD TRIP, to Audubon Center, April 3. Mrs. Alma Stultz led one group birding, Mr. Arthur Berry, another. Red-bellied hawks carrying nesting material and a beautiful pair of white-tailed kites were seen. On the strip of water some mallards and an American egret were feeding. Cardinals sang lustily, but were elusive as this was their nesting season.

FIELD TRIP, Thursday, April 15 to Ojai. The day was sunny and warm, our bus was filled and others came by private cars, over 60 in all. Under the leadership of Mrs. Caroline Daugherty and Mrs. J. L. McBride the birding was fine. Among the 50 species seen were Bullock's Orioles, Long-tailed Chat, Phainopepla, and our own bird, the Western Tanager.

CHEEPS AND CHIRPS

Our president, Bessie Pope used to do much hiking in the High Sierras and the Rockies, near Boulder, Colorado. Locally her favorite hiking spot was Santa Anita Canyon. When travelling was restricted at the outbreak of the war she expanded her bird feeding in her own yard so as to enjoy the out-of-doors at home. She recalls that one young bird seen in the yard she could not identify, so she went with Bess Patterson (our secretary) to the museum and found that it was a baby cowbird. Next spring there were three of these in her yard, one being fed by a jay, one by a song sparrow and the third chose Miss Pope as its foster mother, following her about the yard like a little chicken, begging for food which it took from her hand. Her yard is a haven for birds of many kinds that find food and water there. If she is late in putting out food in the morning the porch rail outside her kitchen has a row of linnets waiting.

Pat Gould and Bill Hawkins, -we always associate them, - are two of our younger and most enthusiastic members. Sunday field trips at the Sanctuary are led by them jointly and they are usually together on birding trips. Both are sophomores at Mt. San Antonio College, where they have organized a fine nature museum in a room assigned them by the college. Pat says his interest in bird study began when he went to the Sanctuary to obtain a boy scout merit badge in bird study and met Mrs. Stultz. From her he developed such an interest in nature that it is his ambition to devote his life to nature work. He worked one summer at the Audubon Camp of California and last summer was at the Maine Camp. His article on the trip to Matinicus Rock in the April Tanager describes one day of the camp life.

Bill says his interest in nature began when his grammar school teacher approved a drawing of an ant he had made and asked him to draw more insects. His study of insects, begun then, continues. Later visiting the Sanctuary and meeting Mrs. Stultz and Mrs. Woods his enthusiasm for bird study developed. Classes

in the L. A. County Museum, where he came under the influence of Kenneth Stager gave him a more scientific viewpoint, further fostered by his college work. Work in a boys' camp last summer made him feel deeply the need for instruction in nature and conservation for young people. His ambition now is to become either a field naturalist or a teacher of nature subjects. Both Pat and Bill joined the Los Angeles Audubon Society five years ago and expect to continue their membership always - we hope they do.

Mrs. Caroline Daugherty, who led our field trip to Ojai last month, was Field Chairman of our Society from 1937 till 1951. During this time she developed and wrote the Observations which have been a feature of The Tanager since 1945, and took charge of the Christmas Bird Count. Between times she found opportunity to lead Boy Scouts and Scoutmasters on field trips and prepare the boys for merit badge tests. Mrs. Daugherty says her father and mother were interested in birds and all wild life, and that her father was fine in imitating bird songs and wild animal calls. So her interest in the out-of-doors began naturally when she was a small child.

WRITE LETTERS

We have not lost the fight against the proposed dam in Dinosaur National Monument. The Bill is now before the House and since they refused to cut the Soil Conservation Service, we may hope. If you are uncertain why all conservation groups are fighting the proposed bill so bitterly, call the Sierra Club, VA 1885 or Mrs. McCune, CA 8782. The bill number is necessary.

Telephone the Chamber of Commerce for the "Roster of Public Officials" to be mailed to you, though the coming election may alter much of it. Letters to your Congressmen should also mention your opposition to any change in the grazing laws in our national forests. Don't delay. Never have there been such subtle measures to do away with our public lands as now.

OBSERVATIONS, Mid-March to Mid-April

Ruby Curry

Ducks: In a pond near Fairmont, Rt. 138, 2 Buffleheads, 8 Lesser Scaup, 4 Ruddy's, 1 Mallard, 3 Baldpates and 3 Shovellers, with 6 American Egrets at the edge. April 10, R.C.

Hawks: Mrs. J. L. McBride found a Marsh Hawk nesting in an oat field, near Palos Verdes, March 30.

Ferruginous Rough-leg over little Tejunga Canyon, Apr. 12, S. W. Club.

Quail: Gambel's, Antelope Valley, Apr. 10, R. C.

Pigeons: Mrs. E. Little has 20 to 25 Band-tailed at her feeding station at her home on La Canada Blvd. mornings and afternoons.

Humming Birds: 7 Black-chinned, Eagle Rock, Apr. 7, R.C.; Black-chinned on her nest in an oak tree, Little Tejunga Ranger Station, Apr. 12, S.W. Club. Mrs. McBride has seen a male Rufous in the same shrub at Palos Verdes daily from Mar. 20 to 30.

Flycatchers, Horned Larks: Mar. 31, 3 Western Kingbirds, 30 Horned Larks, Palos Verdes, Mrs. McBride. Apr. 5, Western Flycatchers calling incessantly in San Dimas Canyon, S.W. Club.

Swallows: Apr. 4, Violet Green in Griffith Park, Mrs. W. S. Lewis. Apr. 5 scores of Cliff finishing nests under bridge at San Dimas Dam, S. W. Club.

Chickadee, Verdin: Apr. 5, Mrs. Lewis still heard Chickadees near her home in Hollywood. Mrs. Eckler writes of seeing Verdins building nests in March at Mecca.

Thrushes: Many reports of Alaska Hermit remaining to date.

Wrens: Cactus calling from top of Joshua Tree in Antelope Valley at the same time as the song of a Scott's Oriole came from a more distant one, Apr. 10, S.W. Club.

Waxwings: A flock of 30 to 50 resting in a cork oak at Eagle Rock, then flying over, Apr. 2, R. C.

Shrike; Warblers: Mrs. Eckler found a Shrike's nest with 4 eggs at Mecca, Apr. 1; Tule Yellow-throat standing in a pool under a large oak, drink-

ing. Near Little Tejunga, Apr. 12, S.W. Club saw a Myrtle Warbler, also seen recently at the ranger station by Mrs. Little.

Blackbirds, Orioles: Apr. 1 Black-headed Grosbeak, Hollywood, Mrs. W. S. Lewis; Apr. 6, Hooded Oriole drinking from same syrup cups where it fed last summer, Santa Monica; Hastings.

Apr. 10 a Bullock's Oriole at Palos Verdes, next day more than 50 in one block, Mrs. McBride.

Finches, Sparrows: On Apr. 8 Dan Quattlebaum reports a male White-throated Sparrow singing in his yard, where it has been seen and heard since the first of last October. A Cassin's Purple Finch is also in his yard in Pasadena, singing. Apr. 2, two White-crowned Sparrows on feeding tray with Gambel's, R. C. Apr. 5, Vesper Sparrow at Palos Verdes, Mrs. McBride. By the 12th two thirds of the Gambel's have left, Mrs. McBride. On Apr. 10 near Fairmont along route 138, 50 Willow Goldfinches perched on a fence, then flying over fields with a background of steep hills covered with blue lupines and deep orange California poppies, -something never to be forgotten. R.C.

FOR A WONDERFUL VACATION!

The AUDUBON CAMP OF CALIFORNIA will have the first of the six sessions, from June 27 to July 10. Attendance at one of these sessions will be a richly rewarding and very enjoyable experience. For details of the camp write to the National Audubon Society, 693 Sutter St., Room 201, San Francisco.

The IDYLLWILD SCHOOL OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL SCIENCE in the San Jacinto Mountains will have three courses, each giving upper division credit through the Long Beach State College. The Conservation Workshop, 2 units, Section 1, June 21 to July 2; Section 2, July 19 - 30. Leadership Techniques, 1 unit, Section 1 July 5-10; Section 2 August 2-7.

Field Nature Study, 2 units, June 21 to July 2. For full information write to Dr. Robert P. Durbin, Long Beach State College, Long Beach, Calif.



AUDUBON SPRING CONFERENCE

SATURDAY, MAY 15
10: A.M. - 5 P.M.

AUDUBON FIELD TRIP

SUNDAY, MAY 16
9 A.M. - 4 P.M.

FOR ALL INTERESTED IN AND CONCERNED WITH CONSERVATION AND WISE USE OF OUR NATURAL RESOURCES.

THIS IS YOUR RESERVATION FORM - MAIL TODAY - DO NOT DELAY!

Note: Luncheon, May 15th is the only meal requiring reservations - All other meals and overnight accomodations to be arranged individually.

FIELD TRIP (NOTED LEADERS) STARTS - 9:00 A.M.

AT

TUCKER BIRD SANCTUARY
MODJESKA CANYON
Orange, California

SUNDAY

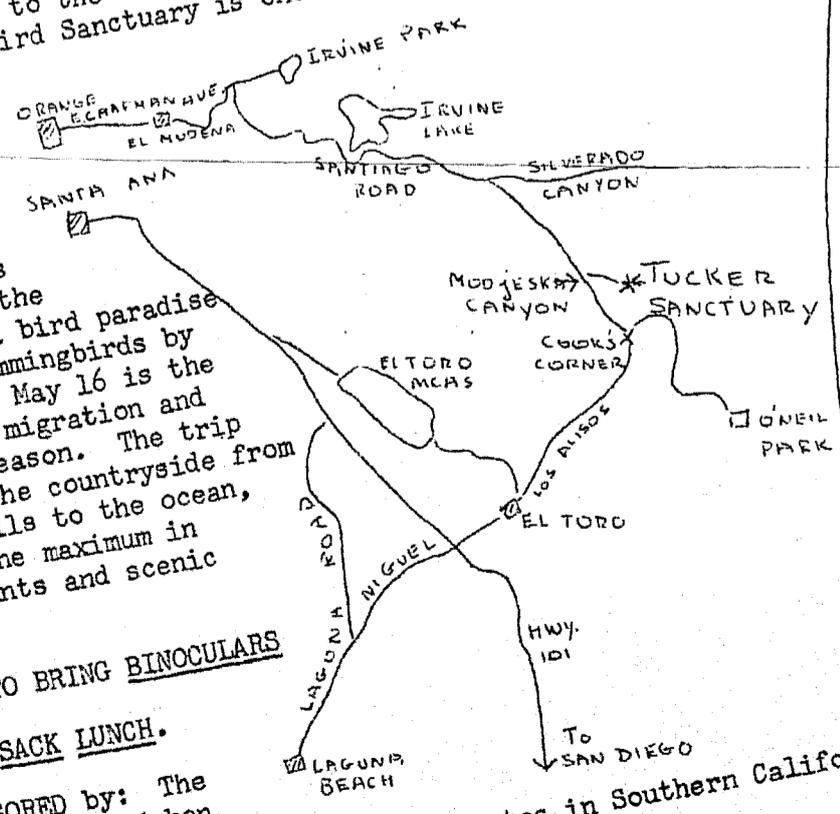
The Tucker Bird Sanctuary is 16 miles east of Orange in Modjeska Canyon. From Orange drive east on Chapman Avenue to Santiago Road. Turn right and go eight miles to the Silverado Canyon fork. Turn right and go five miles to the Modjeska Canyon fork. There turn left. The Bird Sanctuary is one mile up the Canyon.

"The field trip under the guidance of capable, informed leaders commences at the Sanctuary -- a bird paradise featuring hummingbirds by the dozens. May 16 is the peak of the migration and flowering season. The trip traverses the countryside from the foothills to the ocean, offering the maximum in birds, plants and scenic beauty."

BE SURE TO BRING BINOCULARS
and a SACK LUNCH.

SPONSORED by: The National Audubon Society in Cooperation with Audubon Branches and Affiliates in Southern California

MAY 17



LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY

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CALENDAR FOR MAY

SATURDAY, May 1, FIELD TRIP to Tapia Park, for Birds and Friendship.

Go out Ventura Boulevard to Brent's Junction (about 34 miles from Los Angeles), turn left to Tapia Park picnic area, (about 5 miles), meet at 9 A.M. Bring lunch. Leader Miss Ethel Craig.

THURSDAY, May 6, AFTERNOON PROGRAM MEETING. Los Angeles County Museum, Exposition Park, 1:30. Mr. Kenneth Stager will present some Hawaiian Birds as Birds of the Month.

Talk, VACATION IN HAWAII, with colored film, by Mr. Burton Oliver, who is Thrift and Conservation Superintendent for the City Schools and the Auditorium Manager for our Screen Tours.

Meet with us for lunch in the museum cafeteria and then spend the time till the meeting in the museum.

THURSDAY, May 13, BOARD MEETING. At the home of Miss Pope at 7:30 P.M.

SATURDAY and SUNDAY, May 15 and 16. AUDUBON SPRING CONFERENCE, Laguna Beach, Elks Club Auditorium, beginning at 10:00 A.M. Talks and discussion on Conservation Policies and Trends, To-day and To-morrow.

THURSDAY, May 20. FIELD TRIP. Fern Dell, meet at 9 A.M. in the picnic area. Lunch will be eaten in the area, then at 1 there will be a meeting in the Nature Museum. Take Western Avenue bus to end of the line where cars will meet the buses at 8:30 and 9. Leader Mrs. Ruth McCune.

SUNDAY, May 23. FIELD TRIP. To study pelagic birds, - oyster catchers, nesting gulls and cormorants. The "Hawk" will leave Port Huoneme at 8 A.M., promptly. Fare \$5.50, to be mailed to Mr. James F. Clements, 7915 Dalen, Downey, Calif. Reservations must be in by May 10. For further information call NO 3-1012.

THURSDAY, May 27. STUDY CLASS. Plummer Park, 10 A.M.
First hour: Films, Midway and Wake Islands, and Duckhunters' Dilemma.
Second hour: Study of the Sparrow Family, presented by Mrs. Clara E. Weedmark, a long-time member of the Southwest Bird Study Club and of our Society.

THURSDAY, June 3. ANNUAL CHARLTON FLATS FIELD TRIP. Our bus will leave at 8:30 at 6th and Olive; round trip \$2.00 (the increased fare due to the increased cost of the bus). Nature walks in the morning. After lunch the Installation of Officers for next year.
Make reservations with Miss Florence Wilcox, DUNKIRK 8-7981 or Mrs. Eunice Trainor, DUNKIRK 8-7935.

SUNDAY, August 22. MARINE TRIP. Should be the peak of fall migration for ocean birds. Final arrangements for this trip remain to be made. Remember the date as there will be no further announcement.
For information call Dorothy Groner, NO 3-1012.
Last day for reservations - August 10.