

## Western



## Tanager

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BY THE LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY INC.

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## WE VISIT

Alma Stultz

"The loveliest Fleet of Islands that lie anchored in any Ocean".

So Mark Twain described the Hawaiian Islands. To us it was a glorious adventure and a dream come true. The trip started with the unforgettable voyage on the Lurline with rare entertainment, sheer beauty of tropical ocean and easy carefree days at sea.

The only birds observed until the last day at sea were seven Black-footed Albatross, one Frigate-bird and one Red-tailed Tropic-bird. As we neared Honolulu the Sooty Terns and Wedge-tailed Shearwaters were common.

Our real welcome to the Islands and their charm and friendliness came when Bob Pyle and his wife Billie came out on the official tug to board the Lurline before we landed, bringing us leis of orchids and carnations. We owe Bob and Billie special thanks for our finding so many birds, for a Navy-conducted tour of Pearl Harbor, for a field trip with the Hawaii Audubon Society and entertainment in their lovely home overlooking Honolulu. Their garden has a wealth of lovely flowers and trees, Torch Ginger, Bird of Paradise, Royal Poinciana flowering red among the green trees and many others.

One day of super birding was arranged and conducted by Bob and Billie. They took us over the mountains and close to the rainbows that arch over them each day. We passed beautiful estates brilliant with color, yellow and pink Plumeria and Golden, Rainbow and Pink Shower-trees, Croton hedges, and everywhere Hibiscus, the floral emblem of the Territory of Hawaii. Two white species native to Hawaii are fragrant, although 150 varieties not native are found on the Islands.

We passed through banana and papaya orchards to reach our objective, Ulupau Head, whose high cliffs overlook two small islets about a mile from shore. Thousands of sea birds nest there and great flocks of them are constantly flying over and around the islets. All around us on the main island were nests of Red-footed Boobies, built on top of shrubs and trees, hundreds of Boobies, from downy young to the handsome white and black adults with their startling red legs and feet. They sat in the bushes almost close enough to touch and let us study them to our hearts content. A young one with a fuzz of down across his funny face got almost cross-eyed looking us over too. Even an occasional mongoose appearing nearby did not cause any alarm. Flying back and forth from the cliff below us were a few Brown Boobies, many Hawaiian and Common Noddys and several times the White-tailed and Red-tailed Tropic-birds flew by together. Frigate-birds were flying low over the water catching the red-winged flying-fish and in the sky above us countless Frigate-birds were soaring. This is the Great Frigate-bird with a wing span of 7 feet, a different species from the "Magnificent" (Continued on Page 20)



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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 the National Audubon Society,  
includes subscription to Audubon Maga-  
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Active - \$25.00; Supporting - \$50.00

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**THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Thanksgiving has once again come and  
gone. At least the holiday has passed,  
but the spirit of thanksgiving grows  
ever stronger with the approach of the  
Christmas season. As we prepare to  
celebrate the birthday of the Prince of  
Peace we remember that it was He who  
taught us to love and protect the "beasts  
of the field" and "the fowls of the air".  
Truly it is fitting that we Audubon folk  
celebrate Christmas.

So, for one month, we pause in our  
regular activities and turn out atten-  
tion just to our two special events,  
which by now, have become delightful  
traditions.

The annual party in Fiesta Hall at  
Flummer Park has long been looked for-  
ward to as a time to renew old friend-  
ships and make new friends.

Then, of course, you will want to  
help with the bird count to prove that  
our feathered friends prefer the green  
Christmas of our beloved southland to  
the famed "white Christmas" of the east  
and north.

One more thing I might add. Are you  
wondering what to give to some special  
friend this year? What about giving an  
Audubon membership? Isn't that a bright  
idea? For, you see, that would be a two-  
way present, being a gift to your Society  
as well as to your friend. And the  
arrival of the Audubon Magazine and the  
Tanager would be constant reminders of  
you and your friendship.

So, wherever you are and whatever  
may be your plans for the Yuletide, may  
your hearts be young and gay and may  
the Spirit of Him whose birthday we  
celebrate be with you all.

Bessie Pope

**CHRISTMAS PARTY! MUSIC, LITTLE SPEECHES, WASSAIL BOWL and GOODIES!**

Thursday afternoon, December 9 at Fiesta Hall, Flummer Park, 1:30 to 4.

This party takes the place of the usual indoor programs for the month. Mrs. Paul  
Lodds and her committee will have the Hall decked with holly, and will greet all who  
come.

Bring small packets of food - seeds, raisins, broken nuts, doughnuts, - for the birds  
that eat at the Audubon House Table.

At 2 o'clock the Program of Music and Etceteras. Followed by a Social Hour. Tables  
displaying Bird and Nature books and games, stationery and articles suitable for  
gifts will be arranged by Mrs. Stultz of the Audubon Center and Mrs. Christianson.

West Hollywood bus runs on Santa Monica Blvd. Get off at Fuller Ave. and walk one  
short block west to Park entrance. Join in a sociable time with us.

WE VISIT (continued from first page)

Frigate-bird" that occasionally visits Southern California. In some of the Pacific Islands Frigate-birds are domesticated and used like pigeons for sending messages from one island to another.

All these marvelous birds with their graceful movements and beautiful color against a background of deep blue sky and bluer water, brilliant sunshine to enhance the details and gentle tradewinds to keep us cool and comfortable.

In ponds nearby were Hawaiian Black-necked Stilts, Wandering Tattlers, Ruby Turnstones and Alaw Keckeos (Coots).

We spent two days on Kauai, Hawaii's Garden Island, where we saw and heard the Chinese Thrush and found large flocks of Rice Birds. The Banyan tree by our inn sheltered many Myna Birds and measured over 100 feet around. We visited enthralling Waimea Canyon, "the Little Grand Canyon of the Pacific." It was here we saw and heard the Elepaio, a very gay little bird.

We passed exquisite mountain formations, grottos and waterfalls. In the pineapple fields, Lincoln Young, our native guide, would suddenly stop and "borrow" a ripe pineapple and serve it dripping with goodness to his delighted passengers. He also "borrowed" mountain apples, mangos and flowers. He was a modern Scheherazade who entertained us with legends and true stories of Kauai which made us believe it was the one place in the whole world where you could live and be completely happy.

We went swimming in the warm blue waters of Kalihwai Bay and walked across the gleaming white sands to find a banquet spread under the Coconut Palms by our guide who played and sang as we feasted. We were sorry indeed to say "Aloha" to so perfect a guide.

The Island of Maui has the largest dormant volcano in the world, the summit 10,000 feet above sea level. At the Haleakea Mountain Lodge half way to the top of the volcano we stopped for lunch and there we saw dozens of Skylarks in company with our House Finches. The Finches oddly enough, have bright yellow rumps and heads. Can this be the result of diet?

It is here that we saw the Silver-sword in bloom, a rare sight as it grows no other place in the world. It is something like our Yucca in shape with narrow swordlike leaves that gleam like frosted silver. Each plant produces one flower stalk, as much as six feet high, bearing hundreds of small purple-petaled flowers.

As our plane left Maui it circled inside the nine mile long by three or four mile wide crater. Here we could view at close range the many cinder cones and the very colorful reds, yellows and grays of the crater itself.

The big Island of Hawaii is perhaps the grandest of all, with its varied scenery, miles of tree ferns, waterfalls, Black Sand Beach (said to be one of the strangest and most beautiful in the world), coffee plantations, volcanos, orchids, wild and cultivated, coral beaches, and, as Bob said, "best of all for the birds."

It was here in the Fern Forest that I heard and saw many Apapane, gorgeous crimson bodies with black wings and tail, that belong to the family of Hawaiian honey-eaters. We also saw the Hawaiian Amakini and Red-billed Leiostrix.

At Kona we saw the shiny-leaved coffee plant, some times ten feet tall. It was covered with bright red berries and some of its very fragrant flowers. From our room at Kona Inn we looked into a tide pool alive with black and white striped angel-fish and tiny jeweled fish of many colors. On all the Islands we were received with warm friendly greetings and leis. Hawaiian music and Hulu dancing was part of every evening's entertainment. The very air seemed perfumed.

Everywhere we saw hundreds of Mynah Birds and enjoyed their funny cocky ways. The little Barred Doves, English Sparrows, and our North American Cardinals are common. On Oahu we found the Brazilian Cardinals. The White-eye flits around in almost every tree.

Rich indeed is anyone who visits Hawaii with memories to last a lifetime. The last of our memories are the smiling faces of Bob and Billie as the Lurline sailed away. We cast our leis into the ocean as we sailed past Waikiki Beach and Diamond Head.

## WHAT'S GONE ON IN THE SOCIETY

Grace H. Phillips

Field Trip of October 21. San Dimas  
Experimental Forest.

It was warm and tinder dry in the mountains but the group of 22 was rewarded by seeing this large project in operation; Our host, Mr. P. J. Rowe, the Hydrologist of the station, explained the instruments at various points; these record rainfall and runoff, evaporation and absorption in different types of ground cover. This area of 17,500 acres is being studied intensively as it contains different chaparral associations, different ages of cover, and areas that show no effects of fire, others burned over long ago, and some recently burned. The staff hopes to develop methods of watershed management that will give maximum yield of clean usable water, so necessary in this thirsty land, and minimum loss by flood and erosion.

Field Trip, Sunday, October 24. Playa del Rey and Malibu Creek. The weather was perfect and the group of 18 led by Dorothy Groner were rewarded with a list of 44 species seen. Among them horned grebes, snowy plover, royal and Forester's terns, surf birds, godwits and willets; beyond the breakers were many pintails and shovellers driven from the marshes by the shooting at the gun club.

Study Class, October 28 at Plummer Park. The first hour was a lecture by Mr. Scott Lewis, This Restless Earth, with Mrs. Lewis showing their beautiful slides. Mr. Lewis said the earth is a going concern, the surface being worn off in some places, built up in others. These changes affect our lives through changing plant and animal life and climate. The changes in the past are studied in order to understand the formations of the present and to learn what to expect in the future. Whatever the changes they were and will be according to the laws of nature. The second hour Olive Alvey talked on Flickers and other woodpeckers, showing prepared skins. There was considerable discussion by members.

Mrs. Stultz, Director of the Audubon Center of California, and a former president of our Society, told of the early days of the Society and of the part Mrs. Salmon had played in making the Society

what it is today. In the name of the Society she presented Mrs. Salmon, our retiring librarian and President Emeritus, with a copy of "Wings in the Wilderness" by Cruickshank, as a slight token of our appreciation of her years of service.

Meeting of November 4 at the Museum in Exposition Park.

Instead of the announced study in Bird Hall, Mr. Kenneth Stager showed us the birds he collected in Australia last summer. These are temporarily in cases in the main lobby and are exotic and colorful. There, also, is a large collection of African birds, mostly from around Kenia. These are of especial interest because of their brilliant colors.

In the lecture hall Mr. and Mrs. Harlan Eckler showed us the very fine pictures of flowers and birds they took in Yosemite last spring and summer. These were particularly good, especially the closeups made with the strobe light. The many pictures of birds at close range as they fed young or visited nest sites were most intriguing.

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With great sorrow we record the passing of two of our long-time members.

Mrs. Frances Edith Ridgley, a life member of our Society and of the National Audubon, died in her 83rd year after a long illness. In former years she was very active in the Society. She was especially helpful to the South Bay Bird Study Group and often entertained them at her attractive home in Redondo Beach.

Mr. Wyatt Kent died on October 21 after an illness of several months in his 74th year. In the past he had led our study classes and written for the Tanager. As a young man he organized and was field leader of the Proctor Bird Club in Vermont. Soon after he came to California in 1925 he joined the Los Angeles Audubon Society. He was especially active in the Southwest Bird Study Club and was president from 1949 till 1954. He prepared the very complete check list used by the Club. He was also a member of the Cooper Ornithological Society and the American Ornithologists' Union. We extend our sincere sympathy to his wife, Ranona.

## CONSERVATION NOTES

Robert Blackstone

The San Jacinto Tramway has for some time been considered a dead issue. However the Citizens' Group of Idyllwild has been formed for the purpose of the protection of the San Jacinto Primitive Area and repeal of the Act creating the Mount San Jacinto Winter Park Authority. The Sierra Club is also actively campaigning for the repeal of this legislation. This area set aside many years ago as a Primitive Area, has some unique features. Within a very short distance, as shown on the map, the precipitous slopes of the mountain encompass nearly all the life zones of North America.

The Citizens' Group sums up its goal thus: "... to establish official and permanent recognition of this mountain wilderness area as a unique Primitive Area, a special treasure of the people of California, and forever to be free from non-primitive use and/or access". It is still not too late if enough of us get busy with our pens and typewriters and deluge the State Legislature. Letters should be sent to your local legislators, to Governor Knight, and to the Committee on Conservation Planning and Public Works of the State Assembly.

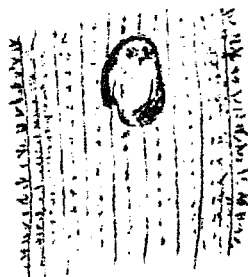
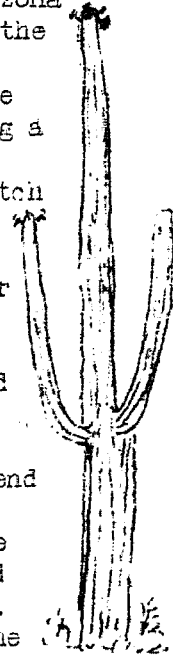
As expected, proponents of the Upper Colorado Storage Project are again preparing to fight for passage of the bill in the next Congress. Conservation groups are unanimously and unalterably opposed to it as long as Echo Park Dam is included in the plan. In an editorial in a recent issue of COLORADO CONSERVATION magazine, reprinted and endorsed by the editor of the National Wildlife Federation's CONSERVATION NEWS, it is suggested that we should be prepared to support a "plan for intelligent development of the Upper Colorado River." Perhaps, if we should signify our willingness to back a plan which would be fair to all concerned, and which would leave our National Park system intact by specifically forbidding a dam at the Echo Park site, it might win us more supporters, and further prove the sincerity of our motives. I believe the idea is worth considering.

## PEDRITO

Don Bleitz

On June 6 near Tucson, Arizona I squeaked out an Elf Owl in the stub of a dying sanuaro. I plugged a spot in front of the next cavity, as one would plug a watermelon and found a female Elf Owl with an incubation patch inside. She made no attempt to fly so I took her out and closed the cavity. I took her to show my father before releasing her. She flew to a group of mesquites and perched for the day. Later she laid two eggs only one of which hatched. In early July a friend in Tucson wrote me that the sanuaro and other trees of the area were soon to be bulldozed down in a development project. I at once asked him to save the little owl. On July 10 he sent me the baby owl with its mother and an addled egg. The young one had its eyes closed and was covered with white down. I judged it to be about four days old. By the 16th he was covered with dark grey pin feathers under the down and his eyes were open.

The first couple of nights I fed him every few hours all night, on meal worms, chopped liver and other meat, but soon he was trained to day feeding. He eats about 10 meal worms at a time and it is no problem to get him to eat, but the mother had to be force fed at first. I gave her meal worms and bits of lean meat. I kept the light low in the room and they were very active. As the light became brighter they became less active and in bright light the adult would not fly at all and could be picked up and handled at will. They are used to hiding in crevices and holes and when she wanted to get away she would go into any corner, or if I hold my hand to form a small, dark hole she will crawl into it. By the 26th the little owl was 4 inches long and its wingspread was 10 inches. It was just starting to get tail feathers. By August 10 he was fully feathered and his tail feathers fully out. I have named



nim Pedrito. He is very tame and loves to ride around on my shoulder. Once I gave him a hawk-moth which he swallowed after taking it in his claw and trying it for size in all positions, finally swallowing it head first with its wings still fluttering as they disappeared into his mouth.

By September 15 Pedrito was calling like an adult male. He flies all over the house and calls from different places, the call is almost like a bark in quality. He also whistles his soft little cooo.

Pedrito is still with me, but his mother was sent back to Arizona and released not far from where I found her.

We were very pleased to see Mrs. Elizabeth Burnell Smith at our Study Class in November. Mrs. Smith was supervisor of Nature Study for the Los Angeles school for many years. When she retired she sold us at a nominal price a collection of bird skins and charts, and gave us a fine mineral collection and many books and pamphlets. More recently she added more bird skins to our collection. She now lives in Victorville and is active in the Apple Valley Audubon Society.

Miss Bonnie Green sends us a message from her new home in La Crescenta - "We love our new home here in the hills above Foothill Boulevard. Western Bluebirds and Pileolated Warblers come to our bird bath, besides many other species.

#### PRIZE WINNING NATURE PICTURES

We are invited to see the complete set of Nature Slides - Birds, Flowers, Scenic that won this year's competition. At the meeting of the Los Angeles Aquarium Society meeting, Friday, December 10, at 8 P.M. in the Education Room, Los Angeles County Museum.

#### OBSERVATIONS

Ruby Curry

- GREBES: Oct. 17 at Hansen Dam, Horned, Western and 3 Pied-billed, Mrs. R. W.  
 HERONS: Oct. 31, Hansen Dam, Anthony Green, California Heron, Mrs. R. Wilson  
 DUCKS: Oct. 17, Hansen Dam, between 7:30 and 9:30, 250 Pintails took off headed for coast, 60 left and more coming in; 74 Ruddies, 13 Baldpates, 18 Lesser Scaup; Oct. 31, 11 Canvasbacks; Nov. 10, 92 Mallards (34 males) largest flock ever seen at Hansen Dam, Mrs. R. W.  
 HAWKS: Nov. 4, Coopers on bird bath, next day seen to swoop down and carry off a sparrow, Mrs. G. Hastings; Marsa, hunting low over dairy property, S. Main St., Nov. 15, S.W. Club; Red-tail 4 in one day, Audubon Center, A. Stultz  
 QUAIL: Nov. 15, flock of 32 Valley Quail pushing one another off the 18 by 18 feeding platform, Eagle Rock, R.C.  
 SHOREBIRDS: Nov. 15, Cabrillo Beach, large flocks of Snowy, many Black-bellied Plovers, S.W. Club; 4 Wilson Snipe, Hansen Dam, Oct. 17, Mrs. R. W.  
 PIGEONS: Oct. 31, 30 Bandtailed in North Hollywood, largest number in area for several years, Mrs. R. W.  
 KINGFISHER: 4 at Audubon Center in October, A. Stultz.  
 WOODPECKERS: Oct. 23, San Gabriel Canyon, 4 White-headed, 2 Hairy, Mrs. R. W.  
 NUTCRACKERS: Oct. 23, San Gabriel Canyon, 5 Clark Nutcrackers, Mrs. R. W.  
 CHICKADEES, ETC. Nov. 6, Chilao, many Chickadees, Slender-billed, Red-breasted and Black-eared Nuthatches, D. Groner  
 HORNED LARK: 12 near Lincoln Blvd. at Airport, Nov. 15, Mrs. C. McBride  
 KINGLETS: Nov. 6, small flock of Golden-crowned in pines at Buckhorn, D. Groner  
 WARBLERS: Nov. 7, North Hollywood, Townsend's, M. Jahp.  
 BLACKBIRDS: Nov. 15 at Dairy, Tri-colored Redwings and flocks of Cowbirds, S.W.C.

#### DECEMBER 26 IS THE DATE

For the Los Angeles Christmas Bird Count - part of the National Audubon Count. We need the help of everyone, including friends and guests, to make this count the best in the nation. If you have not already done so, write to James F. Clements, 7915 Dalen St., Downey, Calif. and tell him you are (1) available for all day in an assigned neighborhood, (2) available for part of the day, (3) can cover your own yard or neighborhood.