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THE NATIONAL CONVENTION ** NEW YORK CITY

Mary V. Hood

In conversations with members of the Los Angeles Audubon Society I have found some misunderstanding of the purpose of the National Conventions. They are not designed to give a local branch an opportunity to make a progress report of its local program, but rather to inform delegates of the scope and success of the National Society's nation-wide program. It is heartening to be a part of such a program and to see more and more affiliates join the National as branches. A branch society in California has every reason to feel itself particularly fortunate because it enjoys the privilege of being one of the few states that has National staff members carrying on a vital and growing program in its very midst. This year both Mrs. Gertrude Woods and Mr. William Goodall gave splendid descriptions of the successful western program.

Every member of the Los Angeles Branch received a copy of the 50th Convention program. Each session of the convention was packed with worthwhile reports, expertly given.

A few words regarding the status of certain wild birds as given by those working in the field, might be of special interest to our members. The return of the Whooping Cranes was being watched for with the usual interest. The efforts to establish a breeding colony of Flamingos on the mainland was described in detail. We learned how much effort was largely nullified by the fact that the young birds failed to arrive in Florida until after they were too old to be pinioned; so that they escaped from the sanctuary that had been prepared for them. We can

only hope that this venture will meet with better success this year. A new area of swampland in Florida, known as the Corkscrew, has been secured as a sanctuary. Someday it may be opened to the public, but today locomotion is almost impossible, unless to an alligator or a water moccasin, both common in the area.



Perhaps the most delightful and amusing report was given by our friend of the screen tours, Alexander Sprunt. Despite the vigilance of bird watchers of Florida and the southern states an invasion has taken place. In fact a beach-head has been established for some years under the very shadow of their binoculars. The Cattle Egret of Africa and a long time resident of northern South America has appeared and is breeding in the swamplands supervised by Audubon wardens. This is good news and the excellent pictures that accompanied the talk did much to endear this independent bird to the audience in New York.

Between the sessions there were a few precious moments to talk with other delegates and learn of their activities. Perhaps the most spectacular of these came from Michigan. Next summer a new Audubon Camp opens at Hunt Hill. We met the future director and his charming wife. We also met the donor of the grounds and the two energetic ladies who have raised \$72,000 to make its operation a reality.

After the convention, your delegate remained in New York to spend a day at the museum of Natural History and another at the Bronx Zoo. These were both valuable in view of the hopes many entertain of seeing institutions of equal size become a reality in this city.

THE WESTERN TAVAGER

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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 Magazine; Regular \$5.00; Sustaining \$10.00; Active \$25.00; Supporting \$50.00.

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WE WELCOME THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS:

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THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Many years ago I learned a valuable lesson in mountain climbing. It was a very simple rule. When your feet refused to go one step farther, just turn around and face the other way for a few moments. This always worked as it gave the entire body the respite needed. As we looked down, perhaps we could see rocks that had tripped us, but we could also see how far we had climbed. The secret was not to stop too long, for if you would reach the end of the trail and the top of the mountain you must be on the move.

Just so, at the end of the year we stop a moment to catch our breath, and, of course, we see the blunders we have made, but, like the mountaineers we also see how far we have climbed.

We see the splendid new members we have added to our Audubon family and how much time and energy they are giving to the various activities that make our society a real influence in the community.

But we have by no means come to the top of the mountain. - Far from it - this is merely a "breather". So we move on in one direction only, onward and upward.

How long will it take to have a membership of one thousand? How high a peak can we climb?

Have you taken a look at the calendar sheet for January? I hope you are planning to be with us often. For you know there is always enthusiaam in numbers. So, not only come yourself but bring a friend.

Sometimes during January and February Jupiter Pluvius descends upon us with his refreshing showers that we sorely need. So, if by any chance you are rained out of your favorite field trip come to the next indoor meeting or Screen Tour (or both) and take a trip the easy way dry shod.

We have already passed the shortest day of the year and very soon now we will be enjoying more light of day. You know the old saying, "When Christmas comes can Spring be far behind".

So a Very Happy New Year to you all and make us of the Board happy by your presence. Bessie Pope

A date to remember, a meeting to plan for -- April 2 to 5, the West Coast Audubon Convention at Asilomar.

CONSERVATION NOTES

Robert Blackstone, Chairman Conservation Committee.

Two months ago we noted that the Upper Colorado River Commission had approved the expenditure of \$25,000 for publicity to influence the new congress to authorize the Upper Colorado River Storage Project, which failed to pass the last congress. The Bureau of Reclamation and other proponents have also announced plans to seek authorization in the first session of the new congress. Conservationists, however, have not been idle; the National Wildlife Federation reports a conference called by Sigurd F. Olson, President of the National Parks Association, ... "for the purpose of coordinating efforts to prevent construction of the Echo Park Dam in Dinosaur National Monument". Representatives of 28 interested organizations established a coordinating committee to be headed by Dr. Ira E. Gabrielson, president of the Wildlife Management Institute. I hope all members of the Society are acquainted with the issues involved and are aware of their importance. One of our least known and, as yet, undeveloped National Monuments is being used as a foothold by the power interests; loss of the fight for Dinosaur would, without doubt be followed by further attacks on our National Park system.

Less serious, perhaps, but equally insidious, are perennial demands by the Armed Forces for vast areas of our public lands to be used as gunnery ranges. Recently the Navy acquired 879,560 acres in Inyo County, including Saline Valley, over the protests of Inyo County residents. They already controlled thousands of acres south of there used by the Naval Ordnance Testing Station at China Lake. This is perhaps not a conservation matter, except that the Navy's original plans included a corner of Death Valley National Monument where Ubehebe Crater and the Race Track are located. It is not clear whether the present plans do so, or not. The Navy rejected a proposal to share with the Air Force the gunnery range already in operation near Tonopah, Nevada. Then the Air Force which during World War II, as an emergency measure was permitted to use the Cabeza Prieta Game Refuge and adjoining public lands in southern Arizona as an air-to-air gunnery range, now wants

primary jurisdiction over the refuge. The Sonora pronghorn antelope, smallest of all North American antelopes, and now much reduced in numbers, is given protection on the Cabeza Prieta and in adjoining Organ Pipe National Monument.

A survey of the Arenas National Wildlife Refuge in Texas on November 20 showed 21 Whooping Cranes, with no young-of-the-year. This is three less than the 24 that went north last spring.

Trumpeter Swans, nearly extinct in this country 50 years ago, now show a population of 642 according to the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, a gain of 65 over last year. Most of these birds are found in federal refuges and parks.

A Federal-State program seeks to restock game birds in the dry southwest portions of the United States. Over 3,700 chuckar partridges from Turkey have been brought over in the past three years. Now it is planned to introduce from Pakistan the Black Francolin, a bird half again as large as the quail. Whether the introduction of foreign game birds will give as good results as could be obtained by efforts to increase the numbers of our native game birds seems very doubtful.

The Idyllwild School of Conservation and Natural Science reports that in its first two years over 1250 adults and 1500 children have been in attendance at the best in conservation at Idyllwild. This summer a new course will be added to the summer program, a Wilderness Workshop, to be held in the San Jacinto Wilderness area.

The San Diego Zoo has recently received from New Zealand, coming by Pan American Airways, the gift of the rare Kiwi, or Apteryx, a primitive, wingless bird that has rarely been seen in this country. In fact few persons in New Zealand have ever seen one as it is not only rare there, but is active only at night. It feeds largely on earthworms which it secures by probing in the ground with its long bill.

BIRDING WITH CAROLINE DAUGHERTY

May Wait

Due to the fog along the coast our trip to San Diego was changed to Big Bear by way of the desert.

Out through San Fernando into Soledad Canyon where skys changed from gray to brilliant blue against which the fall colors of cottonwoods and willows stood out.

Across the desert to Victorville, Apple Valley, and on to Big Bear, arriving in late afternoon. We stopped at the end of the lake where the water had receded, leaving shallow pools where thousands and thousands of robins were feeding and bathing.

In the Incense Cedars were many hundreds of Cedar Waxwings feeding, also a flock of Pinon Jays were enjoying the cedar fruits. Later we found the pigmy, slender-billed and red-breasted nuthatches and the Sierra creeper feeding together in a small grove of trees.

Thirty six species were listed on the trip, including a road runner and a huge osprey.

From the "Avocet" of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society we quote an interesting experience of one of their members, Miss Lillian Gorham of Los Gatos; - "A red-breasted Sapsucker was observed diligently making holes and drinking sap from an elm tree. One day while watching the sapsucker she noticed an Anna's Hummingbird perched on a twig nearby. When the sapsucker left the hummingbird darted from hole to hole, drinking the sap. Another hummingbird arrived and tried to get in on the treat. While they were quarreling an Audubon's Warbler flew in and chased both of them away. The warbler had made frequent stops, clinging to the bark and drinking sap from different holes. In a few moments two Ruby-crowned Kinglets joined the sap party. The Audubon Warbler did his best to discourage the intruders but while he chased one kinglet the other always managed to get a feed".

A WORD OF APPRECIATION

Mrs. Mary B. Salmon writes "I wish to express my sincere appreciation for the beautiful book - "Wings in the Wilderness" - that the Society presented to me on my resignation as librarian after 17 years, and the many expressions of kindness to me. Thank you."

FROM AUDUBON HOUSE

Mrs. Hecht reports that a number of members have been helping at Audubon House. Mrs. Hood and Mrs. McCune have rearranged the mounted birds and nests. Mrs. Alvey has been mounting and labelling the shells. Mrs. Christianson, Mrs. Nell Lewis, Miss Bess Pope, Mrs. Wait and Miss Pepke have all helped on the Wednesday and Saturday afternoon the house is open. Our thanks to them and an invitation to others to help on these days. If you can and are willing to help one of the afternoons notify Mrs. Hecht or Miss Pope.

A new Check List of the Hawaiian Audubon Society.

A copy of the Field Check List for Hawaiian Birds, by Robert L. Fyle has been received. It seems to be an excellent piece of work, just the sort we would expect from Bob.

The key is divided into four sections, Native Land Birds, Fresh Water and Shore Birds, Introduced Land Birds (the number equal to the other two combined) and Sea Birds. The relative abundance of each species on each of the 7 main islands is indicated by the kind of type used.

Our congratulations to the Hawaiian Society.

Interior Decoration

Oliva Alvey

One day after a winter's wind a bird nest was blown out of our pine tree. Imagine my surprise on seeing a scrap of one of my dresses woven into this nest

When sewing, if the weather is nice, I sit outdoors to trim seams and do other hand work. The scraps fall to the ground where birds can find them when hunting for nesting material. It is natural for them to use some bright or different thing for this. So I have hoped they would be pleased to use these scraps; but this was the first time I had seen my idea for interior decoration for birds' cradles carried out.

The Indians of northern Louisiana told a story of an Indian once setting the marshes on fire. A little bird rose up through the smoke and remonstrated. Whereupon the Indian threw a shell, wounding the bird in its wing. So the bird, blackened by smoke and stained red on its wings, became the Red-winged Blackbird.

WHAT'S GONE ON IN THE SOCIETY

Olive Alvey. - - Historian

Saturday Field Trip, Nov. 13. To Mt. Wilson. Weather clear, Attendance 21. Leader Miss Ethel Craig. Many birds at feeding trays, the chickadees especially tame. Also titmice, white-breasted nuthatches, juncos, Audubon warblers, ruby-crowned kinglets, four kinds of woodpeckers, -Lewis, downy, hairy and Nuttall and others, 26 species identified.

Field Trip of Nov. 18 to Cabrillo Beach. Weather warm with no wind. Attendance 21. Birds identified 42. At the sloughs visibility was poor because of smog, but many meadow larks, red wings and tricolored blackbirds were seen. At the beach visibility was fine but few birds were seen. Three Caspian terns with their bright red bills, Bonaparte's, western, California, ring-billed and Heermann's gulls, sanderlings, willets, cormorants were there, also a seal. This last tried in vain to hoist himself up on a float, finally leaving in disgust. Lunch was eaten in Averill Park in San Pedro. In the park is a running stream and rolling slopes covered with fine lawns. It is the most beautiful small park in our park system. Mr. Anacker, Director of Nature Activities has compiled a booklet with a map of the nature trail and a list of 30 rare trees and shrubs in the park.

Study Class, Plummer Park, Nov. 22. Attendance 25. Mr. C. V. Duff, business manager and past president of the Cooper Club told of "Birding in the Blue Mountains of Washington". Mr. Duff said he would have liked to have taken us all on this wonderful trip; and we would have loved it - except for the hairpin turn on the mountain side! His route was through little-travelled country, from 5,200 foot high table-lands where spring was so far advanced that young birds were seen to deep stream-filled canyons where birds were beginning to look for nesting sites. His list of birds seen reads like a birder's dream; the quantities can be imagined if each kind is multiplied by 1,000. The list is: Brewer's blackbird, sage thrasher, western tanager, Bullock's oriole, blue grouse, evening grosbeak, pigmy nuthatch, vesper sparrow, junco, magpie, Mountain

bluebird, mountain plover, lazuli bunting, eastern goldfinch, mountain quail, ruffed grouse, Townsend's solitaire, great horned owl, goshawk, prairie falcon, golden eagle and three woodpeckers, -Lewis, Nuttall, and pileated. There were delightful sidelights told by our speaker, such as seeing snow-shoe rabbits on patches of snow; blue grouse feeding in low plants with blue foliage and yellow flowers, showing perfect protective coloration; of the large colony of Inyo screech owls breeding in an isolated section; of dozens of porcupines in a barn near the camp on Mallory Ridge; of gray jays, very quiet and secretive; and of finding seven baby magpies in one nest, all of different ages and that the banding of these brought Mr. Duff's count of species banded to 118.

Mr. Hastings set up an interesting Tree of Life he has made and given to Audubon House. The two main branches - plant and animal, had smaller branches also branched representing the main divisions of living things.

Mr. Hastings spoke to us about the Thrush Family illustrating his talk with life-size paper cut-outs of some of the birds. The thrush family contains the sweetest singers of all the birds. Some like the hermit thrush are shy and retiring, blue birds are gentle and friendly, while some like the robin prefer living close to people, so they are one of the best known and liked of all birds. As usual, we liked hearing Mr. Hastings read poetry; he chose John Burrough's "Bird and Bough" from which he read "the Hermit Thrush", "The Blue Bird" and the "Oregon Robin".

Field Trip, Sunday, Nov. 20, to Newport Bay. On account of the dense fog the leader had decided no one would venture out but four hardy souls braved the elements and found the beach almost clear. They sent in their list of 53 birds identified, including the long-billed curlew and Cassin's kingbird.

Christmas Party, Plummer Park, Fiesta Hall, Thursday, December 9.

The party was a big success! The weather outside was raw and dreary, inside the Hall all was bright and cheerful. The holiday decorations arranged by Mrs. Dodds and her committee, were in red and silver with branches of berried shrubs. There was a Christmas tree where members placed gifts of food for the wild birds

"What's gone on in the Society", continued.
of Audubon House.

Our President, Miss Bessie Pope made the opening speech, saying the party was the highlight of the year for the Society.

Our oldest member, Miss Miriam Faddis gave a fine reading of John Burrough's "Waiting". Original poems were read by Miss Anne Zukor. Our Don Tomas gave an amusing poem of his own. The musical part of the program was beautiful and appropriate. Miss Wendy Brennan played several numbers on her cello, appreciated because of the fine rendition and also because Wendy represents the third generation of Audubon contributors, her mother, Mrs. Raymond Brennan originated and was the first editor of the Tanager, her grandfather was at one time our poet laureate, and her grandmother was our president twenty years ago. Mrs. Henry Lyman and Miss Sarah Ellen Barnes each played Christmas carols on the piano.

Mrs. Mary Hood, just returned from the Audubon National Convention in New York told of the lighter side of a delegate's visit to the big city. She told of the fine new headquarters of Audubon and of her pleasure in meeting the important personages who work there. Of her early morning bus ride to the park and her unsuccessful quest for a blue jay; also her exciting glimpse into the private life of an insect - where no insect should be - in the bird-of-paradise room in the bird house of the zoo. Mrs. Hood decided that if she had to choose a place to live she would prefer to be among the tall trees of California, rather than among the tall buildings of New York.

Mrs. Stultz told an interesting Christmas story she heard when she visited a town in the Arctic having the unbelievable name of Shismarib.

After the program there was delicious hot spiced cider prepared by Miss Bess Patterson and cakes and candy. This time of sociability was very pleasant as new members became acquainted and those who cannot attend often renewed friendships. It was an especial pleasure to have Mrs. Brennan, Miss Miriam Faddis, Mrs. Willis, and Miss Dorothy Croft with us.

Mrs. Stultz, like Santa Claus, brought a load of Audubon products, books, fine note paper and cards so members could do some Christmas shopping.

So, as we said, the party was a big success.

OBSERVATIONS

Ruby Curry

- GREBES: Nov. 26, Salton Sea Refuge, Eared and Western Grebes, White Pelicans (Mrs. R. Wilson) (R.W.)
- HERONS, BITTERN: Dec. 5 at Hansen Dam, Mrs. Wilson saw California Heron, Snowy and American Egrets and Bittern.
- DUCKS, GEESE: Nov. 26, Salton Sea, thousands of White fronted Geese, Redhead, Pintails, Shovellers, Baldpates (R.W.); Dec. 5, Hansen Dam, Ruddy, Canvasback, Mallard, Redhead, Bufflehead, Green-winged Teal, Lesser Scaup (R.W.); Dec. 6 at Lincoln and McArthur Parks, Snow Goose, feeding on grass with Baldpates, 2 Wood Ducks (S.W.B.S. Club)
- HAWKS: Nov. 27 Mrs. R.W. had a fine view of a Ferruginous Rough-leg as he ate a rodent at edge of an alfalfa field.
- SHORE BIRDS: 6 Longbilled Dowitchers, Dec. 5, (R.W.), Salton Sea Nov. 26, Northern Phalarope, Least Sandpiper, Avocet (R.W.) Spotted Sandpiper, Hudsonian Curlew, Santa Monica Beach, Dec. 11 (Hastings).
- OWLS: Burrowing Owl living at the Sanctuary, (Alma Stultz).
- PIGEONS: 80 Bandtail, San Gabriel Canyon, Nov. 21 (R.W.); 5 at Eagle Rock, Dec. 7, (Curry).
- FLYCATCHERS: Nov. 21, Salton Sea, 2 Vermillion (R.W.); Olive-sided at Sanctuary (A.S.)
- HORNED LARK: a flock at Hansen Dam, Dec. 5
- CHICKADEES, TITS: Dec. 3, Titmouse calling for peanuts; Wren-Tit within 2 feet of my hand in shrub near back door, just looked at me (R.C.).
- ROBINS, THRUSH: Robins in yard, Santa Monica, Nov. 26 (H.); Hermit Thrush at bath and jumping up for Toyon berries, Dec. 2 (R.C.)
- GNATCATCHER, KINGLET: About 20 Ruby-crowned Kinglets, as many Western Gnatcatchers, flocks of 125 and more Cedar Waxwings at Sanctuary, early December (A.S.) A group of at least 10 Golden-crowned Kinglets, Mt. Pinos, Dec. 1 (R. Blackstone)
- WARBLERS: Nov. 21, San Gabriel Canyon, 3 Townsend's (R.W.); many Audubon's reported from various sections.
- GROSBEAK, CARDINAL: Nov. 28 at Buckhorn Flat, Evening Grosbeaks feeding on the ground (D. Groner); Cardinals daily in the Sanctuary woodland (A.S.) 10 or 12 evening Grosbeaks, Mt. Pinos, Dec. 1, R.B.
- FINCHES, SPARROWS: More Gambel's coming daily; recently more San Diego Towhees than California. (R.C.) Abert Towhee, Salton Sea area, Nov. 26 (R.W.)

THE LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY

Officers - 1954-1955

President Miss Bessie Pope, 912 Victoria Ave., Los Angeles 19, Whitney 5946
 1st Vice-Pres. . Mrs. J.E.P. Dunn Secretary . . Miss Elizabeth Patterson
 2nd Vice-Pres. . Mr. Herbert Clarke Treasurer . . Miss Leoti Fisher
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CALENDAR FOR JANUARY: 1955

Thursday, January 6. AFTERNOON PROGRAM MEETING, Los Angeles County Museum, Exposition Park at 1:30. Mr. Kenneth Stager, Curator of Birds at the museum, will present "The Bird of The Month".

Mr. John M. Olguin of the Cabrillo Museum will talk on "TIDE-POOL LIFE ON SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA BEACHES", illustrating his talk with objects collected by the museum and with a short film.

Meet for lunch at the Museum Cafeteria at noon to visit with friends before the meeting.

Saturday, January 8. FIELD TRIP to the Griffith Park Zoo and other parts of the park for wild bird study. Take Vermont bus to Monroe Street and transfer to the bus marked Field House or Picnic Grounds. This bus leaves at 8:20, 9:20 and every hour thereafter. Meet at the Zoo entrance at 9:30. Bring lunch.

Leader Miss Ethel Craig.

Tuesday, January 18. AUDUBON SCREEN TOUR, 7:45 P.M. at Virgil Junior High School, 152 North Vermont Avenue. Mr. Charles Mohr will present "OUTDOOR ALMANAC".

Thursday, January 20. FIELD TRIP to the Huntington Gardens. Take Monrovia-Glendora bus at station, 6th and Main Street. Buses leave at 8:00 and 8:21 going out Huntington Drive. Get off at San Marino Avenue, in front of San Marino City Hall, Walk up Oxford Street to the Library grounds. All members driving will please watch for Audubon members walking up Oxford St. to give them a lift. Lunch will be eaten outside the grounds of Lacey Park on Euston Road at Virginia Avenue. Leader George T. Hastings.

Saturday, January 22. AUDUBON SCREEN TOUR, at 2 P.M. in the John Burroughs Junior High School, 601 McCadden Place.

Saturday and Sunday, January 22 and 23. FIELD TRIP. To Mecca and the Salton Sea area to study desert birds, ducks and geese.

Meet Saturday at 11 A.M. at Mecca, 2 blocks to right from Junction 195 off #111 (Miss Foulk's). Please do Not ask to use bathroom facilities. Eat lunch beside pond. 1:30 P.M. leave Mecca, drive through Niland, turn right at water tower and meet at Mr. O'Neill's white bungalow on right. (Mr. O'Neill is manager of the Fish and Wildlife Refuge.

Sunday 8 A.M., lobby of Planter's Hotel, Brawley, or 8:30 A.M. at Vendel's gas station on #99 north of Westmoreland. 9 A.M., Mr. O'Neil will address the group before proceeding through the Refuge.

NOTE: - Make reservations Now for Planter's Hotel. Please drive carefully and STAY on dikes if permitted to drive out on them.

Thursday, January 27. STUDY CLASS. At Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd. at 10 A.M. First hour "BROADLEAF TREES OF THE PACIFIC COAST" by Mr. W. Scott Lewis, with his beautiful kodachrome slides and mounted specimens and some fruits of various trees described.

Second hour: "CONSERVATION MISCELLANY", Mrs. Ruth McCune, our former Conservation Chairman will have many interesting things to tell.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 9, FIELD TRIP THROUGH THE AUDUBON CENTER OF CALIFORNIA, El Monte. 9 A.M. Those planning to go are asked to notify the Sanctuary beforehand.