

Western Tanager



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

THE LOS ANGELES BRANCH OF THE
NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

Volume 22

May 1956

Number 9

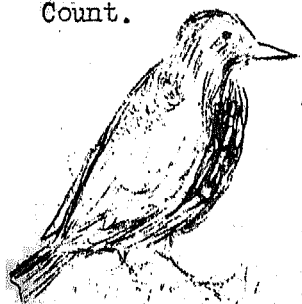
INTRODUCED BIRDS IN THE UNITED STATES Alice Lewis

Upon seeing the Chukar and Hungarian Partridges on the Wildlife Conservation Stamps as "Introduced Birds," I thought it would be interesting to investigate the subject of birds introduced into our country.

Our early settlers missed the song birds they loved so much in their native lands. In the 1870's and 80's Acclimatization Societies sprang up all over the country. The English Sparrow was introduced in 1851 and for the next 20 years was brought to cities from Maine to Carolina. By 1911 it had reached Los Angeles. Interesting accounts are given in the May and October 1948 Tanagers by Dr. Loye Miller and Mr. George Hastings. It became a bothersome bird but a leveling off of the population has now come, and it does not seem such an obnoxious bird.

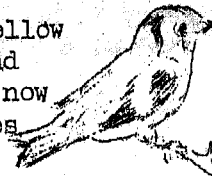


The Starling was introduced by the Acclimatization Society of New York and set free in 1890. They have gradually spread over the whole country, recently reaching some locations on the West Coast. They were reported on our 1954 Christmas Bird Count.



The Cincinnati Acclimatization Society spent \$9,000 between 1872 and 1874 and liberated 20 species Peterson tells us in his "Birds over America;"—such birds as Bull Finches, Linnets, Dippers, Robin Redbreasts, Skylarks and Nightingales, but all in vain. The Skylark lasted for about 25 years on Long Island. It was successful in Portland, Oregon, for a time. The Natural History Society of Victoria, British Columbia was persistent and today thousands of Skylarks may be found near Victoria, but will probably not spread beyond the tip of Vancouver Island.

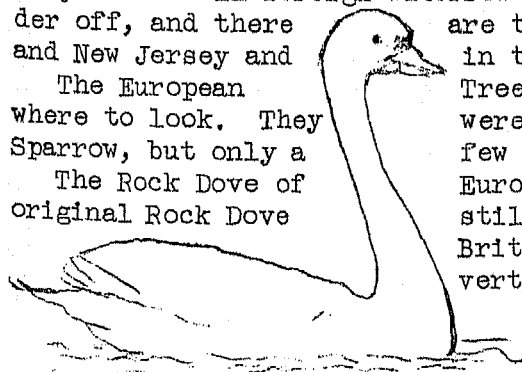
The European Goldfinch, a little tan bird with a red face and yellow wing patches, seen in medieval paintings as a symbol of the soul and resurrection was imported in droves by homesick Europeans. It may now be seen occasionally along the south shore of Long Island, sometimes with flocks of American Goldfinches.



The Mute Swan, seen in park ponds with its black knob on an orange bill is the only one of all foreign waterfowl that has taken hold. Young unpinioned birds wander off, and there are thousands of swans of feral stock on Long Island and New Jersey and in the Hudson River Valley.

The European Tree Sparrow may be found near St. Louis if one knows where to look. They were set free in 1870 at the same time as the English Sparrow, but only a few took hold and they do not seem to spread.

The Rock Dove of Europe became edificarian upon domestication. The still nests in caves and fissures by the sea on the original Rock Dove British Isles. In America the only place where it reverts to its ancestral way of life is on the headlands fronting the sea at Nahant, Massachusetts. There a few may be seen among the rocks.



THE WESTERN Tanager

Monthly, September through May, \$1.00 per year, free to all members.
George T. Hastings, Editor, 517 Euclid St., Santa Monica. Phone EKbrook 5-1137.

THE LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY

Organized 1910 Incorporated 1951
"To promote the study and protection of birds and other wildlife, plants, soil and water."

OFFICERS - 1955-1956

President. Mrs. Grace H. Phillips
1st Vice-Pres. Mrs. Paul Dodds
2nd Vice-Pres. Mr. Herbert Clarke
Exec. Sec'y. Miss Elizabeth Patterson
Rec. Sec'y Mrs. Bess Hoffman
Treasurer. Miss Esther Johnson
Registrar. Mrs. J. L. McBride

MEMBERSHIP

Joint with the National Audubon Society, includes subscription to Audubon Magazine, Regular \$5.00; Sustaining \$10.00; Active \$25.00; Supporting \$50.00; Student \$2.00.

WE ARE HAPPY TO WELCOME

THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS:-

Miss Patsy Baker
123 So. Bonnie Brae, Los Angeles 57
Mr. Warren L. Flock,
1256-B 25th Street, Santa Monica
Mr. Ray E. Gardner,
5218 Monte Bonito Dr., Los Angeles 41
Mr. Leroy J. Gloria,
804-3/4 Lucile Ave., Los Angeles 26
Mr. D. S. Melstrom,
5413 Calle de Arboles, Torrance
Mr. Henry T. Mudd,
523 W. 6th Street, Los Angeles 14
Dr. E. R. Phillips,
2401 Cascadia Dr., Glendale 6
Mr. and Mrs. Jack Rogo,
7312 Beck Ave., North Hollywood

NOMINATIONS FOR OFFICERS

FOR 1956-1957

President. Mrs. Charlotte McBride
1st Vice-Pres. Mr. Herbert Clarke
2nd Vice-Pres. Mrs. Paul D. Dodds
Exec. Sec'y. Miss Elizabeth Patterson
Rec. Sec'y Miss Dorothy Goddard
Treasurer. Miss Esther Johnson
Registrar. Miss Marjorie Jane Moody
Curator. Mrs. Russell E. Wilson
Historian. Mrs. Olive Alvey
ELECTION AT THE EVENING MEETING, May 1st.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"Warble me now for joy of lilac-time,
Sort me, O tongue and lips, souvenirs
of earliest summer;
Gather the welcome signs . . . put in Apr
and May the elastic air,
The sparrow with its simple notes,
Bluebird and darting swallow . . .
For springtime is here, the summer is
here,"

and the year's work of the Society draws to a close. Now a period of reorganization with some new officers follows, before a new season begins. The past year has shown no startling changes of scenery or fields of work. We have kept mostly the main roads, with field trips and meetings as before, to give information and pleasure to that portion of our membership who could attend them.

One new function and a need filled; an Evening Meeting for those busy through the day. These have been enjoyable and popular, and have enabled us to get acquainted with new friends, some of whom have taken on duties and offices for the coming year, and we are grateful for these new recruits.

This is the last issue of "THE WESTERN Tanager" of 1955-1956, and my final message as President. I take affectionate leave of you all; officers, chairmen of committees and members, for splendid help in administering the work. Continuing the metaphor of my first message in September, I give over the reins into the hands of our incoming Chief, Mrs. John L. McBride, who will lead you on familiar and new paths - and who knows on what great experiences?

Best wishes to you all.

Grace Harvard Phillip

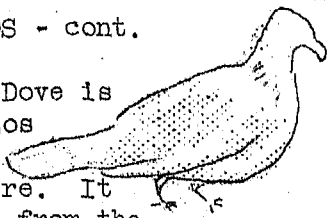
A FAREWELL WORD FROM THE EDITOR

For seven years I've enjoyed working on the Tanager and appreciate the help received from so many of our members. I am glad to announce that Mr. James Clements is to become Editor, and ask for him your cooperation. Specifically, if you move notify him; if you see unusual birds or bird behavior, send your Observations; write an article if you can. Get material to him, 7915 Dalen St., Downey, by the 15th of the month.

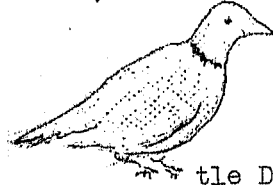
Good Luck, Jim! George T. Hastings

INTRODUCED BIRDS - cont.

The Chinese Spotted Dove is found commonly around Los Angeles; it is not known how it arrived here. It is easily distinguished from the native Mourning Dove by its blunt-ended tail, lacy neck pattern and gutteral notes.



It is now seen as far away as Santa Barbara, San Diego and Palm Springs.



The little Ringed Turtle Dove is also found in our area and is on our check list.

There have been many efforts to transplant birds of our country from one location to another. An example that gives delight to many a southern Californian is the sight and song of the Cardinal at the San Gabriel River Wildlife Sanctuary. The story of how they were introduced was told in the April 1954 Tanager. The Bob-White of the east seems to be taking hold in Oregon where the habitat is similar to its niche in the east. House Finches have been liberated in Long Island and have been found nesting there. Turkeys have been introduced to many localities but seem to do well only in places where they had been before being "shot-out," as in the mountains of western Pennsylvania and the Huachuca Mountains of Arizona. The California Quail has been transported the length and breadth of the land, but seems to find no other place to their liking.

The Lacey Act, passed in 1900 put an end to free-for-all efforts of the Acclimatization Societies. Now, no bird may be brought in from abroad without a permit from the Fish and Wildlife Service. However hundreds of thousands of birds from all parts of the world have been brought here; many are cage birds. Probably a thousand species are on display in zoological parks. For the past 30 or 40 years most of the birds set free have been game birds brought for the sake of sportsmen. The most outstanding success in introduced game birds is the Ring-necked Pheasant,

first introduced in 1881. Centuries of hide and seek in the scant cover along the edges of Chinese paddy fields con-



ditioned the "ring-neck" for survival here.

16,000,000 were shot in one hunting season in 24 states from New England to Oregon, exceeding the bag of all wild ducks of more than 30 species. In some states game farms turn out enough pheasants to replace the deficit caused by hunting. The "ring-neck" does best in the grain belt just south of the great snows, but does not like the red earth of the south. There is reason to believe they have passed their peak for in some places there has been a population crash.

The Chukar Partridge is a native of India and western China. In our country it likes the bleak mountains of Nevada,



but is very adaptable and is also at home in low hot valleys or green wooded hillsides. It has survived mainly in the wheat belt. It is not recorded by either Peterson nor

Hoffmann among western birds, but is number 75 on our check list and is listed by Robert Pyle in Annotated Field List of the Birds of Southern California. They come to the "guzzlers" along the edge of the desert. It is strong, swift and tenacious and one of the most sporting game birds. Its brightly hued plumage, black crescent on the breast and chestnut bars on the wings, affords little of Nature's protective camouflage.

The Hungarian Partridge, the common partridge of agricultural Europe, has been introduced to the New World with splendid success. The Indiana Game Commission alone spent \$62,000 on the project of introducing this bird from 1899 to 1912. In our country it likes the upper Mississippi River Valley. This dark gray partridge flashes a rufous red tail as it bursts from the weed patches along the roads of the Dakotas and Minnesota. It is an excellent game bird. The "Huns" seem here to stay.

Conservationists differ as to the wisdom of introducing game birds.

Some say it eases pressure on our native birds. Others insist that it creates pressure.

It takes many years to truly evaluate the ultimate worth of any introduced species.



WHAT'S GONE ON IN THE SOCIETY
Olive Alvey, Historian

Field Trip of March 10 to the Audubon Center at El Monte. Thirty members of the Society had an interesting trip, being shown through the new museum and office building as well as going through the Sanctuary and observing birds. Mrs. Gertrude Woods, Assistant Director of the Center, was guide. She explained that the Richfield Oil Company had given the sanctuary wild flower seed which had been planted and is making an attractive ground cover. Much of the devastation caused by the fire is hidden by the new growth, and the dead trees remaining are appreciated by the woodpeckers.

Field Trip of March 15 to the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum in Arcadia. This was a joint meeting with the Pasadena Audubon Society. Mr. Dan Quattlebaum, "Bird Man" of the Arboretum, took us on a tour around the lake, up Tallac Hill and down to the "Elephant Train," sturdy trucks which drew flat cars with the seats facing outward through sections of the 127 acres planted with trees, shrubs and flowers from foreign countries - South America, Australia, Africa, etc. We saw the hot houses and nurseries. A staff of 70 gardeners is employed. Among other projects various grasses are being tested to find ones that will keep greenest through the dry season.

The Indian name for their old village site here meant "place of waters." Many Waterfowl were on the spring fed lake and an Anthony Green Heron was seen. Peacocks along the roads had their beauty a bit lessened by their harsh, ugly cries.

We saw the old stables and the adobe house where Mr. Baldwin died in 1909. These buildings will be restored as funds are available. The guest house, more Victorian than Queen-Anne, has already been restored with furniture, draperies and pictures of the period and mood, the then current song-hit open on the piano.

The two societies lunched at the county park near by. Mr. Quattlebaum presided

and Mrs. Enid Michael Benson read the list of 44 species of birds identified. At Mr. Quattlebaum's request, Mrs. Grace Phillips gave an account of her recent broadcast interview on "Birds" with Edgar Bergen on his radio show.

Study Class of March 22. We had two topics presented: "THE MOCKINGBIRD, MUSICAL AND MIMIC" by Mr. Dan Quattlebaum, and "INTRODUCED BIRDS OF THE UNITED STATES" by Mrs. Neil Lewis.

It was the naturalist Mark Catesby who in 1730 named the "mock-bird."

Thomas Jefferson suggested to his daughter Patsy at school in Europe, that she listen to nightingales for critical comparison of their songs with that of the American singer, the mockingbird.

Mr. Quattlebaum gave some of the information gathered in many years of observation, commenting on the use of mimicry, among the birds own tuneful - or raucous - phrases. He is choosy, scorns to imitate sparrows, finches or doves; but weaves call-notes of jay, killdeer, red-bellied hawk, barnyard fowl and so on into its concerts. Also songs of Bullock oriole, grosbeak and even that of a chat that stayed to sing only one day. He has mimicked the olive-sided flycatcher's song, belonging to the foothills a mile away - hard to account for unless the song was relayed by intervening mockingbirds till it reached the one he heard.

He quoted Dr. Lloye Miller as saying that some songs not recognizable now as mimicries may follow those of birds now extinct.

Mrs. Neil Lewis told of birds introduced into this country. Her talk forms the first article in this issue of The Tanager.

Field Trip of March 24-25 to Cottonwood Springs. Very few members attended, but excellent birding was had. The peak of the spring migration was on and a tremendous number of birds were concentrated in the Cottonwood Springs area. Thirty-two species were counted in the campground area alone.

On the return trip, several members of the party returned by way of the Palms to Pines Highway.

Evening Meeting of April 3. Mr. Arnold Small spoke of Migration, giving very briefly the theories to account for it then listing some of our winter visitors, migrants, summer visitors and residents, and telling of opportunities for observing migrants. Mr. James Clements showed maps of areas within 100 miles of the city where careful observations on migration will be made this spring.

Thursday Afternoon Meeting of April 5. The first talk was by Miss Lucy Starling on the birds of Thailand. Miss Starling was a missionary in Thailand for many years and had opportunity of watching the birds closely.

First, she described some of the "Social Birds" that live near the homes of the people. Among these were the Robin Magpie, three species of Bulbul and the Tailor Bird that makes a nest by sewing leaves together. The Common Minah or Grackle has been introduced and is very abundant, while another, the Hill Mynah, is found in the hill country.

In the country along the canals that serve for much of the transportation in the country are other birds. Weaver Birds make long hanging nests in the bamboos overhanging the water. The roller Jay, handsome in several shades of blue can be heard for long distances. In the colder season the Blue Rock Thrush is seen on the housetops or ruined temples and the Hoopoe in the fields near the city.

At higher elevations, about the cottage in the pines, where the missionaries often went to escape the summer heat, were still other birds. The Copper Smith, named for its call, was a clown among birds. The large Hornbill was seen at times. The male seals the female in the hollow where she has her nest, feeding her through a small hole he leaves. If anything should happen to him while the female is shut in, she and the young would starve.

The second part of the program was an illustrated talk by Dr. Tema Shultz Clare, Professor of Botany at the University of Southern California on TREES. After telling how a tree is distinguished from a shrub, she spoke of the types of leaves

in different groups of trees. Then described the primitive Cycads showing pictures of the whole plants and of the staminate and pistillate "flowers." She showed the scale and fasciated leaves of Pines and the staminate cones and the ripened pistillate ones.

Field Trip of April 14.

After a week of intermittent rain, Saturday was clear. Only 23 society members came for a most rewarding trip to the Tucker Hummingbird Sanctuary. The feeding tables had been flooded but fresh food was attracting many birds. Among those seen were Bullock and Hooded Orioles, Black-headed Grosbeaks, House and Bewick Wrens, Brown and Spotted Towhees, while at the sugar-water feeders were Anna, Allen and Costa Hummingbirds. A total of 53 species was seen. Ethel Craig, leader.

A NEW BOOK ON MINERALS

Rocks and Minerals of California and their Stories by Vinson Brown and David Allen with 48 color plates by W. Scott Lewis. This book of 120 pages contains descriptions of rocks and minerals, maps showing locations, keys to aid in determination, etc. We know that color pictures by Mr. Lewis are as fine as pictures can be. In paper covers, \$2.75 from Mr. Lewis, Palm Springs Desert Museum, Palm Springs, California.

TREES OF SANTA MONICA

A completely rewritten and enlarged edition of a small book published ten years ago by George T. Hastings. Planned for the city of Santa Monica, it has some interest for tree lovers of other communities. 158 pages bound in plastic "cloth," \$2.50 from our Sales Chairman, Mrs. Ida Kizler.

BIRD ALERT NUMBERS

to call for investigation of rare or strange birds so information can be disseminated to those most likely to follow up for identification or photography or news interest:-

- Arnold Small Orchard 4-0950
- R. Dudley Ross Gladstone 4-2332
- James Huffman Frontier 2-7124
- Mary V. Hood Hollywood 3-0974
- Mrs. R. E. Wilson Ploplar 1-7635

CONSERVATION NOTES

Robert Blackstone

The Army took it for granted that the 10,700 acres of the Wichita Mountains National Wildlife Refuge, which it wants for expansion of its Fort Sill artillery ranges, could be had for the asking from the Department of Interior. Secretary McKay, however, maintains that the Army's claim is unjustified, and has steadfastly refused to relinquish the land to them. The Army has by no means given up, and is now seeking to force transfer of the land by act of Congress. Oklahoma Congressmen have introduced bills which would accomplish this "without reimbursement or transfer of funds to the Department of the Interior." H.R. 9665 was referred to the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries, Rep. Herbert C. Bonner of North Carolina, Chairman. S. 3360 is before the Senate Committee on Armed Services, Sen. Richard B. Russell of Georgia, Chairman. YOU can help by writing to the above Chairmen of Committees and to your own Representatives in Congress and voicing your opposition to these bills.

The April ALERT reports on the 21st North American Wildlife Conference held in New Orleans the first part of March. I quote the following list of gains and losses of the past year summarized by Ira N. Gabrielson in a talk before the conference. The gains include:

1. Revision of the 1872 mining laws.
2. Protection of the National Parks and certain other federal lands from prospecting under the Atomic Energy Act.
3. Resistance by the Department of Interior to efforts of the Dept. of Defense to take over, for its exclusive use, portions of the National Parks and National Wildlife Refuges.
4. Proposal of the National Park Service to improve and expand national park facilities over the next 10 years, a project known as Mission 66.
5. Authorization to distribute to the states the \$13,500,000 surplus Pittman-Robertson funds for use in Wildlife research and management.

Losses listed by Gabrielson include:

1. Action by the administration to change the Fish and Wildlife Service from a scientific career service to a political agency.
2. Opening of most of National Wildlife refuges to oil and gas leasing.

OBSERVATIONS

SNOW GEESE, flock of over 200 flying north over Palm Springs, March 30. Sometimes they formed a great V with a lot of smaller Vs within, then broke up into a long white rope that twisted and turned.

W. Scott Lewis

PIGEONS, Band-tailed, over 300, San Francisco Canyon, Mar. 21, R. Blackstone; 150 Little Tujunga, Apr. 8, K. Hardt.

HUMMINGBIRDS, Allens, Santa Monica, April 13, G. T. Hastings.

FLYCATCHERS, Ash-throated, Little Tujunga, April 8, (K. H.); Cassin Kingbird, 2 in field near Beaumont, Apr. 8, H. and V. Chaney.

TITMOUSE, Plain, a pair building in a hollow limb of a walnut tree, Mar. 31, Elsa Schwartz

NUTHATCH, Redbreasted, U.C.L.A. Botanic Garden, Apr. 1, (Chaney's)

WAXWING, Cedar, a flock, 8 drinking at one time at bird bath, Baldwin Park, Apr. 10, Leoti Fisher, flock of 75, Westchester, Apr. 14, R. Blackstone.

PHAINOPEPLA, male, Little Tujunga, Apr. 8, (K.H.)

VIREO, Solitary, U.C.L.A. Botanic Garden, Mar. 24 (Chaney's)

WARBLERS, Yellow, Apr. 6 (K.H.), Calaveras, U.C.L.A. Bot. Gardens, April 5, (Chaney's), Sand Canyon, Apr. 8 (K.H.); Black-throated Gray, Sand Canyon, Apr. 8 (K.H.); Black and White at bird bath with Audubon, Mar. 31 (E.S.), Audubon last seen Apr. 1, (L.F.).

ORIOLE, Hooded, U.C.L.A. Bot. Gardens Mar. 29 (Chaney's), Santa Monica, Mar. 29 (G.T.H.); Bullock, U.C.L.A. Bot. Gar. Mar. 27 (Chaney's), Mar 29 (K.H.)

GROSBEAK, Black-headed, Baldwin Park, Apr. 10 (L.F.)

REDWING, Tricolored, flock of 200 by San Fernando Reservoir, Mar. 21, (R.B.)

SPARROW, Fox last date for one that come daily since mid-November, Mar. 4 (K.H. White-crowned (Gambel), and Golden-crowned still feeding in Santa Monica, Apr. 18 (G.T.H.)

* * * * *
* * * * *
* * * * *
* * * * *
* * * * *

LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY

President..... Mrs. Grace H. Phillips, 1237-1/2 So. Bronson Ave., Los Angeles 19

Registrar of Members.....Mrs. J. L. McBride, 2224 Via Guadaluana, Palos Verdes Estates

CALENDAR FOR MAY, 1956

- May 1, Tuesday. EVENING MEETING, at 7:45 in Long Hall, Plummer Park.
Herb Clarke will take us on a hypothetical Southern California bird trip by way of color slides of wild birds, accompanied by Bob Taylor's sound recording.
- May 3, Thursday. AFTERNOON PROGRAM MEETING, at 1:30 in Exposition Community House, 3990 Menlo, corner of Santa Barbara, Exposition Park.
"VACATION WANDERINGS" by Mrs. Dorothy Showalter of the Southwest Bird Study Club. She will show her beautiful kodachrome slides of some of the National Parks and the Canadian Rockies, - her vacation last year, and will tell of birds and flowers seen.
- May 12, Saturday. FIELD TRIP TO TAPIA PARK. Meet at the picnic area at 9:00 A.M. Go out the Coast Highway to just past Malibu Lagoon, turn right and follow Malibu Canyon Road to the Park. Bring lunch and binoculars. Later we may bird along the shore at Malibu Lagoon. Leader Ethel Craig.
- May 17, Thursday. FIELD TRIP TO O'NEILL PARK AND THE TUCKER HUMMINGBIRD SANCTUARY. Our Tanner Motor Bus will leave Los Angeles from the Grand Ave. entrance to the Biltmore Hotel, between 5th and 6th Streets at 8:30 sharp. Round trip fare \$3.00. Please have exact amount. Bring lunch and binoculars. If driving: Take Santa Ana Freeway to Orange, east on Chapman Ave., to Santiago Rd. Right 8 miles to Silverado Canyon Fork, right 5 miles to Modjeska Canyon Fork but keep on right over hills to O'Neill Park. For reservations call Miss Edna Burt, 705 $\frac{1}{2}$ W. 113th St., L.A. 44, Plymouth 5-1044
- May 20, Sunday. PELAGIC TRIP. Boat will leave Norma Landing in Santa Barbara at 8 A.M. Fare will be \$6.00 and reservations accompanied by checks must be in by May 11. Address James F. Clements, 7915 Dalen Street, Downey. Call TOPAZ 2-3374 for further information.
- May 24, Thursday. STUDY CLASS at 10:00 A.M. in Long Hall, Plummer Park.
Dr. Howard Hill, Curator of Marine Biology at the Los Angeles County Museum will talk on "SHELLS AND BIRDS".
During the second hour Mrs. William Towne will tell of "EARLY PEOPLES' INTEREST IN BIRDS".
- June 5, Tuesday. EVENING PROGRAM. "A TRIP TO THE ARCHAEOZOIC". Bill and Mary Hood. This Easter vacation the Hoods turned geologists, hiked into the Grand Canyon to the famed Phantom Ranch. Down the Kaibab and up the Bright Angel trails. The many gorgeous slides obtained will be shown for the first time. Mrs. Hood has promised to include other nature observations in her talk as well as the geologic ones.
- June 7, Thursday. ANNUAL CHARLTON FLATS BUS TRIP. Bus leaves Biltmore Hotel at 8:30 (See notice of May 17 trip). Fare \$2.25. Installation of officers for next year. Make reservations with Miss Edna Burt, Plymouth 5-1044.
Leader Mrs. Caroline Daugherty, FL 5-1286
- June 24 Sunday. FIELD TRIP TO SANTA CLARA RIVER BOTTOMS. Call Jim Clements for information. TO 2-3374.