

Western Tanager



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BY THE LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY INC.

THE LOS ANGELES BRANCH OF THE
NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

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Number 1

THE LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY In 1955-56

At the June meeting of the Society's Executive Board each year officers and committee chairmen make their annual reports. A brief summary of these gives an excellent idea of what the Society has accomplished.

The President, Mrs. Grace H. Phillips, was very active, attending nearly all the afternoon and evening program meetings, morning study classes and the Thursday and Saturday field trips. She planned the programs for the afternoon meetings, helped with the special meetings for Cub Scout mothers, and helped in nearly every phase of the Society's activity.

Mrs. Charlotte McBride, Registrar of Members, reported that our total membership at the end of June was 801, a gain of 34 during the year. We are saddened as we recall that we lost by death during the year the following members:-

Mrs. Tula L. Copenig	Miss May McGregor
Miss Bonnie Green	Miss Edith Newton
Miss Alberta Hodge	Mr. Frank Rhodes
Mr. Isaac Levy	Miss Grace Tower

The Executive Secretary, Miss Elizabeth Patterson, besides the regular work of her position, prepared the Year Book, listing all members and officers of the Society and giving our constitution. Mrs. Bess Hoffman, Recording Secretary, kept records of the Board meetings and helped with many phases of our work.

Mrs. Olive Alvey, Historian, wrote reports of meetings and trips for publication in the Tanager. She reports that at the seven afternoon meetings the average attendance was 35, in the study classes about 25, and the 25 field trips - Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays - were enjoyed by over 30 each time. In addition our annual Christmas Party, planned by our Hospitality Chairman, Mrs. Delight Dodds, was attended by some 80 members and friends.

Mrs. Irma Hecht, Curator, reported a very active time at Audubon House in Plummer Park. She, with the help of some 20 other members, kept the house open every Wednesday and Saturday afternoon, greeting visitors and explaining the exhibits and the work of the Society. 3775 people signed the register during the past two years and many others attended without signing. Visits to the house were made by over 90 troops of Boy and Girl Scouts and talks on birds given them. The house has been redecorated and the exhibits rearranged to make them more attractive.

Miss Bessie Pope reported a very successful year for the Screen Tours. The attendance at the 5 evening and 5 afternoon meetings was very good. The primary purpose of the Tours - to interest people in nature and conservation - was accomplished by the fine pictures and lectures. The profit to the Society of \$300 was an extra dividend from the series.

The Press Chairman, Miss Gudrun Pepke, sent out over 380 press notices to 20 papers, resulting in excellent publicity for the Society, the best we have ever had.

Miss Ida Kizler, in charge of Sales, sold our check lists and leaflets, bird and nature books at our regular meetings, also took materials to the workshops for Cub Scout mothers, the Nature Leaders' workshops and to other places.

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THE WESTERN Tanager

Monthly, September through May, \$1.00 per year. Free to all members: Editor Emeritus -----George T. Hastings Editor-----Mrs. Fern W. Shelford 3315 W. 41st St., L.A. 8 AXminster 4-0410

THE 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; Student \$2.00.

OFFICERS - 1956-1957

President Emeritus...Mrs. Mary B. Salmon Jr. Past Pres.....Mrs. Grace H. Phillips President.....Mrs. J. L. McBride 1st Vice-President....Mr. Herbert Clarke 2nd Vice-President....Mrs. Paul D. Dodds Exec. Sec'y.....Miss Elizabeth Patterson Record, Sec'y.....Miss Dorothy Goddard Treasurer....Miss Esther Johnson Registrar.....Miss Marjorie J. Moody Curator.....Mrs. Russell E. Wilson Historian.....Mrs. Olive Alvey

COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Conservation.....Mr. Robert Blackstone Finance and Laura Greely Education Fund.....Mr. R. W. Julian Headquarters.....Mrs. Russell E. Wilson Hospitality.....Mrs. Paul D. Dodds Publicity.....Mrs. Grace H. Phillips Sales.....Mrs. Ida Kizler Screen Tours.....Miss Bessie M. Pope Study Class.....Mrs. Olive Alvey Evening Programs.....Mr. Arnold Small Youth Training.....Mrs. Irma S. Hecht Saturday Trips.....Miss Ethel B. Craig Sunday Trips.....Mr. Herbert Clarke Thursday Field Trips....Mrs. Nurtha Dunn The Western Tanager....Mrs. Fern Shelford

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Los Angeles Audubon Society is starting on a new adventure this year and it is our hope that all our members and friends will take interest in helping as the plans progress.

We are establishing a Bird Sanctuary in the South East Section of the old Bixby Slough, which the city has named Lake Machado. This will be the name by which it is known henceforth.

This is a habitat for marsh and shore birds that has long been known to most of you. The Society believes that this area is both highly desirable and adaptable as a site for such a development.

While it was impossible to save the whole area as a wild life habitat, at least a very desirable section has been set aside as a bird refuge. This section has already been boomed off from all boating. For this our thanks are entirely due to Mr. John Olguin, Director of the Gabriello Beach Museum.

This is the plan for the Sanctuary as submitted to the Department of Recreation and Parks:

- 1. That this section be boomed off from all boating. 2. That a footpath or walkway be provided around area. 3. That a nature trail be incorporated in the plans for the purpose of guided walks. 4. That an observation station be established. 5. That a tree planting program should be initiated. 6. That there be provided a picnic area, including a certain number of tables. 7. That suitable comfort stations be built. 8. That plans for the complete posting of the area should be devised.

This area holds many possibilities and as time goes by and our plans become realities, there are many things that can be done to add to the outline above.

Charlotte McBride

MR. HASTINGS RETIRES

For the past seven years we have been extremely fortunate in having Mr. George T. Hastings as editor of "The Western Tanager". His work on behalf of the Los Angeles Audubon Society has been outstanding and his loyalty unflinching. It is indeed a difficult task to properly thank one who has given so much of his time, effort, knowledge and ability. I would like to quote a tribute paid Mr. Hastings by Allen Cruickshank, "Mr. Hastings has been an outstanding influence for good, and that influence is seen in the lives of many men who were known as Mr. Hastings' boys." This remark was followed by a list of names and positions these influential men now hold. We feel the Society can not afford to lose his sage advice so to keep him on the Executive Board in an advisory capacity, we have conferred upon him the newly created title of "Editor Emeritus."

The Society - 1955-1956 - continued.

In the line of Public Relations, Mrs. Mary Hood lectured to various groups, being heard by at least 1600 persons. She arranged special exhibits for display at Workshops, Training Classes and a Church Conference Camp. She did much of the work of planning for the meetings at the five May Co. stores for Cub Scout mothers and leaders and in preparing the illustrative materials used at them. These meetings were one of the outstanding activities of the year. Planned by Mrs. Kay Hardt, Youth Leadership Chairman, and Mrs. Hood, they included exhibits of bird houses, feeding stations and other things the boys could make, suggestions for bird study, outline drawings to be colored and other material. At each meeting there was a small group of our members to explain and help the mothers and to give a talk on bird study and conservation. Some 1500 mothers registered for the course.

Our Conservation Chairman, Robert Blackstone was very active in our behalf, the nine articles he wrote for the Tanager, some of which were copied by other Audubon publications, represented but a small part of his work. He wrote numerous letters to state and federal legislators regarding measures relating to conservation. He had interviews, together with Mrs. McBride, Mrs. Hood and others, with the Los Angeles City Recreation and Parks Department regarding a bird sanctuary at Lake Machado (Bixby Slough) and with county officials regarding a bird sanctuary at the Venice marshes in connection with the proposed boat harbor. He also attended meetings of groups interested in protecting the Owens Valley Tule Elk herd and with state officials regarding proposed changes in laws protecting birds and mammals.

The Audubon Christmas Bird Count was in charge of Mr. James Huffman, who enlisted 66 others to help. In 33 parties they covered same area, a circle 15 miles in diameter, as in former years, counting 35,898 birds of 150 species, not the largest count in our history but a very satisfactory one. The full list of birds listed was published in the February Tanager.

The Treasurer, Miss Esther Johnson, reports a balance on hand at the beginning of the year of \$1,119.84. The income from dues was \$1,299.98. From interest and dividends on investments \$510.85. Other income,

including profit from Screen Tours \$947.80. Expenditures, including the cost of the Tanager and Year Book and \$200 for scholarships at the Audubon Camp at Norden, \$2,570.23. Thus the balance at the end of the year was \$1307.25.

These are some of the high lights of another successful year for the Society.

George T. Hastings.

WELCOME TO THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS:

- Mr. R. N. Christian,
409 So. Harvard Blvd., L.A. 5
- Miss Anna Maria Deering,
628 Del Mar, Pasadena, Calif.
- Mr. & Mrs. Dudley E. Foster,
1656 Royal Blvd., Glendale 7
- Miss Irene A. Hanson,
382 Obispo Ave., Long Beach 14
- Mr. Allen M. Hardt,
207 E. Ave. 41, Los Angeles 31
- Mr. Henry W. Isham,
460 Bellefontaine St., Pasadena 2
- Mrs. George James,
4119 W. 177 St., Torrance
- Mr. J. F. A. "Cy" La Tour
1031 So. 8th Ave., Arcadia, Calif.
- Miss Helen Macey,
737 No. Berendo St., L.A. 29
- Miss Florence E. Martin,
922 So. Windsor Blvd., L.A. 19
- Mr. R. Sanford Martin,
1161 Spazier Ave., Glendale 1
- Mr. Herbert J. Michals,
1720 Brooklyn Ave., L.A. 38
- Miss Marjorie L. Pressey,
8421 Rincon Ave., Sun Valley, Calif.
- Miss Grace L. Riner,
4764 Mendota Ave., L.A. 42
- Mrs. B. J. Rosenthal,
Carbon Mesa Road, Malibu, Rt. 3, Calif.
- Miss Lillian Stogsdill,
352 No. Van Ness Ave., L.A. 4

AUDUBON HOUSE

Audubon House will be open to the public again this year from 2-to-4 on Wednesdays and Fridays. We hope to have it open also on Thursdays from 1-to-4 for members only. We can use more hostesses and speakers to lighten the load now carried by those who have been so faithful the past year.

Please come out and visit us and let us know what you would like to do to help. Hostesses are on duty from 2-to-4 P.M. Wednesdays and Saturdays. Speakers from 3-4 on days when youth groups come to Audubon House for talks on Nature subjects.

---Mrs. R. Wilson

CONSERVATION NOTES

Robert Blackstone

I thought it might be well at this time to review briefly some of the most significant conservation developments of national importance since the last of these columns was written.

Fred A. Seaton was appointed by the President to the post of Secretary of the Interior, to succeed Douglas McKay, who resigned to run for the Senate. The appointment was approved unanimously by the Senate. Mr. Seaton is a newspaper publisher of Hastings, Nebraska, and is regarded as a "liberal Republican." In his favor so far are his reaffirmation of his Department's opposition to the Smoky Range dam in Montana, which would have flooded a part of Glacier National Park, and his alignment with conservationists against the move by commercial fishing interests to split the Fish and Wildlife Service and set up a Bureau of Fisheries. Let us hope that he proves to be a good conservationist.

Legislative hearings were held on some important conservation bills, among them the Engle Bill, designed to curb Defense Department land grabs and to require observance of fish and game laws on military reservations, and the Metcalf Bill to provide funds for recreational and wildlife improvements in the National Forests. No word has been heard of any further legislative action on these bills, however.

Legislative delay worked in favor of conservationists, however, in the case of the Wickersham bill to transfer 10,700 acres of the Wichita Mountains N.W.R. to the Army. After being resumed briefly on June 26, the hearings were discontinued until some indefinite date.

The Blatnik Water Pollution Control Bill was passed by Congress and signed by the President. This bill strengthened and extended the Taft-Barkley Law of 1948 which expired June 30.

An agreement was worked out between the House Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries and the Secretary of the Interior that "any proposals for oil development, or for other disposals of wildlife lands or interests, would be submitted first to the Committee for approval or disapproval." This has served to ease somewhat the situation created when Secretary McKay announced the opening of the refuges to oil and gas development last December.

The National Park Service on July 8 released the results of a recreational area survey of the Atlantic and Gulf coasts. This survey showed that of this 3700 miles of coastline only 240 miles are in public ownership for recreation purposes. There remain some 54 areas totalling 640 miles of coastline, which can still be saved for this purpose. The report recommends that "prompt action" be taken by Federal, State and local agencies to acquire "at least half of the remaining 640 miles of seashore suitable for recreation..." Areas along our Pacific coastline suitable for recreation or wildlife habitat are likewise fast disappearing. We wonder if the Park Service is conducting or intends to conduct a similar survey of the Pacific Coast.

A NEW BIRD SANCTUARY (From The Gull, April 1956)

For several years the Golden Gate Audubon Society has been greatly concerned at the gradual encroachment of housing and industrial developments on the great salt marshes along part of the shores of San Francisco Bay where thousands of shore birds and ducks feed. Recently the Society, with the cooperation of the Sequoia and Santa Clara Societies and the National Society and the Sierra Club, have secured a 25 year lease on a thousand acres of marsh land to make the Bay Shore Sanctuary. The leases were generously given by the Leslie Salt Co. and the Ideal Cement Co. for one dollar a year each. The shore line involved has extensive mud flats, exposed at low tide as feeding ground for waders. It has broad fringes of natural salt marsh plants suitable for loafing for waders at high tide and as cover and nesting grounds for others, while the canals and pools provide favorable environment for ducks and other species.

The Golden Gate Society had a field expedition to the area in May for the purpose of posting signs.

Warden services and the use of the Audubon boat will be provided during the hunting season. Now it is hoped funds can be secured to buy the land and make the sanctuary secure for all time.

The Golden Gate and cooperating organizations are to be congratulated on a fine accomplishment.

WHAT'S GONE ON IN THE SOCIETY

The May issue of the Tanager went to press before the last Field Trips and Meetings took place. Here is a rapid review of some of the Society's activities, not before reported:

April 19, FIELD TRIP TO SOLEDAD CANYON AND LILAC FARMS. It was the highlight of the year's Thursday trips, to my notion, a fine sunny day after clouds and some rain. Beside the lilacs, many wild flowers were blooming; and lunch beside the stream in the canyon was very enjoyable.

The greatest show was at Colombo's: 125 acres of lilac bushes in full fragrant bloom.

The April 26 STUDY CLASS honored Audubon, whose birthday it was. A short talk on some aspects of his life as a traveler and reporter was given by Mrs. Phillips, quoting from his Journal while on the trip to Labrador in 1833.

Mrs. Charlotte McBride told us of the hawks and vultures she has studied for years from her home in Palos Verdes Estates, watching the same pairs of hawks at their nesting, season after season.

At the May 1st EVENING MEETING, Herbert Clarke showed what birds we might see on a trip in Southern California: water and shore birds; those of the city, foot-hills, mountains and desert. The color slides of wild birds were superb. He and Robert Taylor had made a fine sound track for the occasion: bird calls and songs, with Herb's comments and explanations. It was a splendid program, splendidly done.

May 3 AFTERNOON MEETING. We were fortunate in getting to see Mrs. Dorothy Schowalter's beautiful kodachrome slides of some of the National Parks, and the Canadian Rockies. These pictures were out of the ordinary in composition, and in selection of subjects. Her running comments had an attractive and individual flavor.

May 17 FIELD TRIP TO O'NEILL PARK AND TUCKER BIRD SANCTUARY, repeated one of the Society's favorite trips. The foot-hills were abloom with wild flowers; and birds were plentiful in the Park. While

at the Sanctuary, we saw the usual striking and colorful birds of the season: hummers, western tanagers, black-headed grosbeaks, orioles, and many other birds.

May 24 STUDY CLASS. Dr. Howard Hill, Curator of Marine Biology at the Los Angeles County Museum, gave an interesting talk on SHELLS AND BIRDS, showing their place in nature and inter-relations. He had shell samples for inspection, and a shell for each one in the audience for a souvenir.

The ANNUAL PICNIC at Charlton Flats on June 7 brought out some members and friends we had not seen often through the year: our President Emeritus, Mrs. Mary B. Salmon and her sister; and the W. Scott Lewises, who were camping at Chillao. We divided into three groups for the bird walks, and after lunch, pooled the count of birds seen.

Officers and Chairmen of Committees were introduced and installed, beginning with the new President, Mrs. Charlotte McBride, and the day came to a close with a Social Hour.

It is truly gratifying to know we have so much real talent in Audubon. If you look back over the programs of the past year, you will see how many of them were a real success, through the participation of our members. Because of their great love of Nature, they have discovered much of interest and have been willing to share their discoveries with us all. Many in Audubon have learned these things on the side, as it were, as they are living their usual busy and useful lives. We are also indebted to other speakers, not members. We hope they liked us enough to join the society sometime. The tours were well attended, especially the overnight ones. Our people like to go places and see things, particularly when there are birds to be studied with the help of our competent guides. The tours covered all types of bird habitats, from the mountain to the sea, islands off our coast, as well as deserts and parks. A truly fine opportunity to learn the birds that live among us.

Olive Alvey,
Historian.

OBSERVATIONS
Caroline Daugherty

SHOREBIRDS: Flock Long-billed Curlew, Los Alamitos Bay Area, early August. (J. T. Tramontano).

BIKBY SLOUGH AREA: 27 plus-Black-necked Stilts, adults and immature (nested here); 6 Avocet, still wearing breeding plumage; Sandpipers, Willets, Greater Yellowleg and 24 Sanderlings; 8 Wilson's Phalarope, whirling in shallow water and feeding on ground several feet from water's edge; many Least Tern (nested here). (Mrs. J. L. McBride).

GOLDEN EAGLE: 1, Little Tujunga Canyon near entrance, August 11. (Daugherty).

BAND-TAILED PIGEON: 34, Little Tujunga Canyon, Aug. 11, (D); Few in Eagle Rock yard Aug. (Ruby Curry); Sunland yard. (Miss Ida Champney).

SWALLOWS: Barn Swallows nesting under Playa del Rey canal bridge; Cliff Swallows under other bridges, same area. (G. T. Hastings).

MAGPIE: 1, Yellow-billed, Aug. 7, near San Fernando (Mrs. Edna Fichtel).

AUDUBON CENTER OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA: Green Heron (Anthony's) back again.

White-tailed Kites nested here. (Crippled Swainson's Hawk, recovering in cage, now released and on its own. Can fly from tree to tree. They hope it will be strong enough to join its hawk migration). Great number of Mourning Doves. Many Black-chinned Hummingbirds - drive Anna's away during summer months - take over feeding containers, as do Ariz. Hooded and Bullock's Orioles and House Finch. Male Orioles have now migrated - only females and young still around. Both Western and Cassin's Kingbirds nested here as well as many Black-headed Grosbeak and 1 pair Blue Grosbeak. (Mrs. Alma Stultz).

CHICKADEES-NUTHATCHES: Charlton Flat Area: Many Chickadees, 3 White-breasted Nuthatch, flocks Pygmy Nuthatches. (D). Miss Champney reports feeding White-breasted Nuthatch in her Sunland yard all summer.

UNUSUAL: Miss Champney also reports a Yellow Parakeet coming to her feeding tray several days. Later a second Yellow Parakeet appeared. Both stayed around a couple of days, flying as strongly as the other birds. Finally both disappeared, never returning.

ALBINO: Scrub Jay (California) at home of Mrs. Carol Gotshall, Pasadena, seen by G. T. Hastings, Aug. 10. Comes to be fed at back door when Mrs. G. whistles. It is pure white with pinkish legs and bill - beautiful - and first appeared with 2 adults of normal color in early July.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8 - Field Trip to Mount Wilson.

Meet at 9 A.M. in front of the Mt. Wilson Hotel. Bring some bird food, binoculars and your lunch. There is a small fee for entering the grounds. Study up on your woodpeckers. Catherine Shaw will guide us on our bird walk. Friends welcome.

Miss Ethel Craig, Chairman

THE MEETING for the 1st Thursday of each month has been dropped for the coming year.

There will be no Screen Tour Teas this year.

AUDUBON SCREEN TOURS

Tuesday Evening Meetings - 7:45 p.m. at Virgil Jr. High School, 152 No. Vermont Avenue.

Saturday Afternoon Meetings - 2:00 p.m. at John Burroughs Jr. High School, 600 So. McCadden Place, L.A.

1956-1957 Season

"Land of The Scarlet Macaw" - Ernest P. Edwards -

Tues., Oct. 16 - Sat., Oct. 20

"Cypress Kingdom" - Alexander Sprunt, Jr.

Tues., Nov. 27 - Sat., Dec. 1

"Animals at Night in Color" - Howard Cleaves -

Tues., Jan. 8 - Sat., Jan. 12

"Between The Tides" - Robert Hermes

Tues., Feb. 19 - Sat., Feb. 16

"Hawaii, U.S.A." - Fran Wm. Hall

Tues., March 5 - Sat., March 9

All calls and messages for the President may be left with Bessie Pope, WE 4-5946.

SPECIAL NOTICE

PELAGIC BOAT TRIP - September 9 from Oxnard (Port Hueneme). Cost \$5.50. Money must accompany reservation. Hurry. Reservations and check must be mailed before September 1. Contact John Tramontano, 6831 Thornlake Ave., Whittier, Calif. Phone OXford 5-2023. Call after 6 p.m.

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SUNDAY FIELD TRIP - MAXTON BROWN SANCTUARY, Oceanside, Calif. Group will meet at 8 a.m. at traffic circle on Highway 101 east of Long Beach and caravan to Oceanside. Birding at points en route. Leader, Jim Huffman. For further information call Jim Huffman, FR 2-7124.