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VACATION ON A TROPICAL ISLAND AND IN A CLOUD FOREST

On June 21st at 8:30 p.m., Mr. & Mrs. O. M. Stultz, Mr. and Mrs. James Bartel and I waited impatiently for our Douglas Clipper that would carry us to Panama City.

At 5 a.m., we were over the Isthmus of Tehautepec looking down on the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans at the same time, and 5 hours and 45 minutes afterward landed in Panama City and had already added Roseate Spoonbill and Magnificent Frigate Bird to our list, quickly followed by the Black-breasted Puffbird.

By permission of the Smithsonian Institution we were privileged to spend 9 wonderful days on Barro Colorado Island Biological Area in Gatun Lake about midway across the Isthmus of Panama.

The island measures about 3 miles across and includes a land area of nearly 4,000 acres. The irregular shoreline, accessible by dugout canoe (cayuco) is approximately 25 miles long. Clear well-marked trails extend an equal distance. The highest point on the island is about 430 feet above the lake. Except for 15 acres of man made clearing, the island is forested. The largest trees being 150 feet in height and seven feet in diameter above the buttresses. Approximately half of the island is in primeval state, the remainder being second growth from 30 to 50 years of age.

The biota of Barro Colorado is rich in species, including 307 of birds, 65 mammals, 20 lizards, 37 snakes, 5 turtles, 2 alligators, 15 toads, 16 frogs, 2 salamanders and 22 fish. Butterflies, including the beautiful blue Morpho, are numerous. There are few mosquitos and no houseflies.

In the primeval forest there are as many as 60 to 80 species of trees and shrubs to the acre competing intensely for survival and using many peculiar adaptations to do so.

One night the murmuring conversation of a family of howler monkeys spending the night in a tree beside my cabin lulled me to sleep. A family of 8 or 10 of them spent 2 days and a night in a large tree across a small ravine from the Stultz cabin. In it were 2 females, each with a tiny black furry baby in her arms.

Common birds of the clearing were: Blue, Palm, Plain, Crimson-backed and Golden-masked Tanagers; Bananaquits, Blue, Green and Shining Honeycreepers, Blue Dacnis, Orange-chinned Parakeets, Rice Grosbeaks, Blue-black Grassquits and Hicks Seed eaters.

Capuchin monkeys, coati mundis, a sloth and a lesser anteater were encountered in the forest.

Continued on Page 15

## THE WESTERN TANGER

Free to members....Others \$1.50 annually  
 Editor Emeritus.....George T. Hastings  
 Editor.....Mrs. Fern Shelford  
 3315 W. 41st St., L.A. 8.....AX 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 National Audubon Society in-  
 cludes subscription to Audubon Magazine.  
 Regular \$5; Sustaining \$10; Active \$25;  
 Supporting \$50; student \$2.

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 Thurs. Morn. Program...Mrs. Olive Alvey  
 Sunday Field Trips....Mr. James Huffman  
 Thursday Field Trips....To be Announced  
 Saturday Field Trips...Miss Ethel Craig

## AUDUBON HOUSE

Headquarters of L. A. Audubon Society,  
 7377 Santa Monica Blvd....HO 7-9495  
 Open: Wed., Thurs., Sat...2-4 p.m.  
 3rd Wednesday.....7:30-8 p.m.  
 4th Thursday (members only) 9-10 a.m.,  
 1-4 p.m. Groups by appointment.

## THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In a letter recently, a member apparently thought it necessary to remind me that the *raison d'être* of the Audubon Society is conservation, and implied that our programs and field trips were rather frivolous pursuits.

I think it is well to realize, however, that because we are interested in this type of activity is one of the chief reasons that we are conservationists. And the more people to whom we can communicate this interest in and love of nature, the more conservationists we are going to have. Far more people are won to the cause of conservation by this means than by reason alone.

Although the out-and-out sentimentalist approach to conservation is to be deplored, the opposite extreme of making economic considerations the sole measure is equally undesirable. For most of us the latter, no more than the former, represents our real reason for our stand on any conservation question. We should not be ashamed to advocate conservation for non-materialistic reasons.

I have been told that an issue was recently lost when a hearing was held before a committee of the California Legislature because the Legislators were prepared to be receptive to a plea by the conservationists on idealistic and esthetic grounds, whereas they argued their case on an economic basis, and on ground that was apparently none too secure.

In an editorial recently, in the National Wildlife Federation's CONSERVATION NEWS, Executive Director Ernest F. Swift took exception to the term "wise use" as a definition of conservation. He points out that this is frequently taken as an injunction that everything in the way of resources must be used. He raises the question as to whether the uses to which the final products are put justify depleting the resource; would not a forest be just as valuable left standing as converted into pulp to manufacture comic books?

Robert E. Blackstone.

## VACATION - (continued)

The noisy yips of toucans accompanied by much ceremonious waving of enormous bills skyward marked the close of day.

Five days were spent 250 miles northeast of Panama City in Chiriqui Province at the edge of the cloud forest at Boquete on the side of the volcano, El Baru. In this lush verdant country we realized one of our fondest wishes, to see the most glittering and dazzling of birds, the Quetzal; two males and two females, one of the latter feeding wild avocados to young in the nest.

This was a land of coffee fincas, dashing streams, pale gray Water Ouzels, tiny Torrent Tyrannulets and brilliantly colored Tanagers. Where the beautiful black and white Swallow-tailed Kite cruised the emerald slopes, luxuriant maidenhair ferns burst from cut banks and orange-fringed terrestrial orchids grew wild along the roadside.

New birds seen on the trip included: 5 species of toucans, 8 of flycatchers, 3 ictेरids, 10 hummers and 3 trogons. Mrs. Stultz added 68 new species to her life list, and we barely scratched the surface of opportunity to observe behavior patterns of the birds new to us.

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WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

Miss Priscilla Alden Beach,  
1725 Ocean Front, Santa Monica  
Miss Julia N. Collins,  
1866 El Cerrito Pl., Hollywood 28  
Mr. Loring Dales,  
1555 Club View Drive, L.A. 24  
Mr. Chas. G. Davenport,  
Star Route, Agoura, Calif.  
Mrs. Chas. G. Davenport,  
Star Route, Agoura, Calif.  
Miss Marjorie Nelson,  
618 So. New Hampshire Ave., L.A. 5  
Trail-R-News Magazine,  
Box 1571, Glendale, Calif.

This year a feature of the Thursday Morning Meetings will be a "Bird of the Month" discussion. Mr. Kenneth Stager is seeing to it that we have some new mounted specimens, especially of the better known birds that live here among us.

Last month Mrs. Jos. Dunn used the kingfisher, the first of the new set, telling us interesting facts about this accomplished fisherman. There will be other such discussions so we may have a better acquaintance with the birds we see most. The kingfisher was donated by Mr. W. J. Schaffer, mounted by Mr. Herman Beck, and the expense of the mounting was furnished by the Girl Scout Troop #1773 of North Hollywood.

---Olive Alvey

## GAME BIRDS PLANTED BY AIR

Because the Chukar Partridge and the Wild Turkey have "built-in parachutes," California and Florida have solved some of the problems of planting birds in the so-called inaccessible regions, according to Federal Aid reports by the Fish and Wildlife Service.

During the past fiscal year, the service states, California reports that it has released a great number of Chukar Partridges from planes going about a hundred miles an hour and two hundred or three hundred feet above the ground. The birds tumbled through space for a few feet only, then righted themselves and glided to the ground well within a quarter of a mile of a spring which had been selected as the "target." There were no casualties. The birds collected into groups within a few minutes and began exploring their new home.

Florida reports the successful release of several dozen Wild Turkeys from planes two hundred feet above the ground and travelling at about fifty miles an hour. Like the Chukars, the turkeys righted themselves and volplaned to earth.

## BIRDING IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

October birding in Southern California was characterized by the influx of fair numbers of migratory water fowl (in choice areas such as the Salton Sea, Lake Norcorian, Lake Mathews, and the Ventura County Gun Clubs), the gradual build-up of wintering shore-birds and the through-traffic of the migrants, the appearance of the vanguards of the Glaucous-winged Gulls, the steady but slow decline in the numbers of Elegant Terns. Small numbers of Jaegers (mostly Parasitics) foraged and pirated along the coast, but they were not as prevalent as last year, at which time their prime targets were the Elegant Terns.

One hundred and twenty Elegant Terns were at Malibu Lagoon September 7 (R. Dudley Ross) and this many were still there on September 29 (Ben F. King, Jr. Ed.), but elsewhere their numbers declined, but very slowly.

Six California Condors were seen near Mt. Pinos September 7 (R.D.R.). Most interesting was the report received from Mrs. Will Williams of Granite Station (near Bakersfield) of a group of 28 Condors feeding on the carcass of a steer alongside the road from Woody to Granite Station.

A single Osprey was near Lake Cachuma, Santa Barbara County, September 23 (R.D.R.) and another was at Malibu Lagoon September 29 (B.K., Ed.). Migrant Rufous and Allen Hummingbirds had departed by the middle of September but as many as 75 Anna Hummingbirds could be seen at the feeders at the Tucker Bird Sanctuary near Orange in October.

Say Phoebes began to arrive in the Southland during the first week in October. Small flocks of Cedar Waxwings were noted towards the end of September. A Red-breasted Nuthatch appeared in the Ross's garden in Pacific Palisades September 21 and another was recorded at the same time in Will Rogers State Park (Eugene Anderson).

The southbound warbler flight was as expected, quite dull. Needed observations at desert oasis in spring and

fall should yield valuable information of the trans-desert migration of small Passerines. Bob Blackstone made the following observations at Cottonwood Spring in Joshua Tree National Monument September 23: Cassin Finch - 1 (most unusual for such a locality), Lincoln Sparrow, Western Tanager, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Myrtle Warbler, Black-throated Gray Warbler, Empidonax Flycatcher (sp.), Fox Sparrow, MacGillivray Warbler, and Green-tailed Towhee (no numbers given any of these species). Fern Shelford reported a pair of Cactus Wrens constructing a nest in the southern Mojave Desert during the last week in September.

(Note: please send observations of interest to Arnold Small, 3028 Cavendish Drive, L.A. 64. If the bird is unusual, please phone Vermont 7-2272. Participants in the Evening Program of the Society have organized a Rare Bird Alert. This is a communication system whereby interested members are notified of the appearance of rare or unusual birds in the shortest possible time. If you are interested in joining this Alert, merely write to the above address or to R. Dudley Ross, 16510 Las Casas Place, Pacific Palisades, stating your name, address, phone and hours during which you may be reached.)

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#### ANCIENT SQUIRRELS' STORE

The ability of trees to "swallow" foreign objects as they grow is well known. A recent example of it was a cache of acorns found in a redwood tree processed by a California lumber mill. The acorns were found in a cavity deep in the heart of the tree, covered by layer after layer of wood growth. It is thought they were stored by a squirrel sometime before Columbus discovered America.

-- Boston Globe.

No Screen Tour in November, but remember the December date - Tuesday, December 3 and Saturday, December 7.

## ALOHA TO YOU

After spending the greater part of the summer in my own garden admiring the ease with which the birds flew down to the feeding trays and then flew back again to the great blue yonder, I found myself repeating the line of an old hymn, "Oh, for the Wings of a Dove," but being an earthbound human the nearest thing to imitating the creatures with wings was to be a passenger on a plane with man-made wings.

On October 5, with Beth Patterson, who also longed for wings, I took to the air en route to Hawaii. We had both been there many years ago when it took a week to make the trip. This time, what a difference - breakfast in Los Angeles and dinner in Hawaii the same day.

Though so much has happened between the then and the now, the natives still keep their delightful custom of greeting their guests with music and flowers and always a smile.

The people were not the only ones who made us feel at home. After having been presented with leis made from the fragrant plumeria flowers and been settled in the hotel, we heard birds in the trees and being true audubonites we, of course, went out to see which ones of our feathered friends were giving us a welcome. Now what do you suppose they were? None other than English Sparrows, the same brand of little beggars that eat all my grain at home.

It wasn't long before we heard the call, "fly over the hump, hump, hump," and found it to be the "voice of the turtle." These little turtle doves, not much more than half the size of our Mourning Doves were everywhere and absolutely fearless. They wandered in and out of open dining rooms at will, picking up what crumbs they found handy.

It was never necessary to have an alarm clock, for at the first signs of dawn we heard the familiar cry of "fly over the hump," followed by the

rasping call of the Mynah bird so common all over the islands. With his yellow beak and dark body he walks about much like the Brewer Blackbird, till he takes to the air and shows the white underwing feathers, giving him quite a striking appearance.

The bird that gave us both the greatest thrill was the Brazillian Cardinal. They were introduced there some years ago and, we were told, come quite readily to the feeders. Differing from our eastern Cardinal they are red only on head and bib.

The birds, of course, are only part of the picture. The colorful plants and fragrant flowers, together with the hospitality of the native Hawaiians make the islands what they are so often called, Land of Paradise.

We took many drives through pineapple and sugar plantations, through sections old and new, but the one spot that we shall always remember was the crater of an extinct volcano, once known as the Punch Bowl, now covered with grass and flowers. For it is now the Arlington Cemetery of Hawaii. As we stood there in that beautiful spot and looked seaward toward Pearl Harbor and back again to the headstones, such forceful reminders of those dark days, we breathed a prayer of thanksgiving that all was peaceful now and, please God, may it ever remain so.

---Bessie M. Pope.

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 Out recently is the new "Check List of North American Birds" published by the American Ornithological Union - Price - \$8.00. This covers all the species and sub-species of the United States, Canada, Alaska, Baja California and Western Greenland.

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 The fifty-third annual convention of the National Audubon Society will be held in New York on November 9-12, with headquarters at Audubon House.

CHRISTMAS PARTY - PLUMMER PARK - DEC. 5

## WHOOPIING CRANES FLY AGAIN

The last wild flock of Whooping Cranes has made its migration from Canada to Texas and was eagerly watched along the migration flyway.

Aerial surveys conducted by the Canadian Wildlife Service in the vicinity of Wood Buffalo Park, Northwest Territories, indicated that the birds concentrated in the Sass River area in preparation for their 1800-mile journey southward. For years these carefully guarded birds have commanded the attention of the entire continent during their dangerous fall migration. Each year the heartening sight of a few newly hatched cranes accompanying their parents on the migration have stirred renewed hopes that the birds can be preserved from extinction.

This year the Canadian authorities have observed three young cranes which were successfully hatched last summer. These young birds raise the known total of wild Whooping Cranes to 26. Once again the cranes seem to justify the faith of authorities that they can maintain a good population level as long as losses during their migration can be kept at a minimum.

The greatest dangers to these birds are from the many hunters who crowd the flyway during the duck hunting season which corresponds to the Whooping Crane migration period. During the past few years the cooperation of sportsmen's groups, state and national conservation officers, and private citizens has helped to keep the loss to a minimum. Their slogan is: "Do Not Shoot at Any Large White Bird."

The National Audubon Society, in conjunction with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has conducted a research project on these rare birds. The birds do not migrate in one large flock, but as small groups and individuals. Those birds which did not nest, or are too young to have mated, usually migrate

ahead of the family groups. These first migrants usually appear in the Dakotas after the first of September. Parents with young travel much more slowly, stopping to feed and rest along the way. The last of these family groups may still be along the flyway during early December.

No one could possibly mistake a Whooping Crane for a duck or a goose, and yet in the past many of them have been shot by hunters along the flyway. The adult Whooping Crane is a large, white bird, with a red crown on his head and jet black wing tips. It stands about three and a half feet tall. The young cranes are usually a brownish color, splotted with a few white markings. Their call is similar to the sound of a bugle or a whoop. They feed along river edges, marshes and ponds during migration.

The migratory route extends across the states of North and South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas. People within these areas are asked once more to watch for these birds, and to give them safe passage through their states. These cranes are the last remnants of a fine and noble species, part of America's great natural heritage. They are rigidly protected at their summer nesting site in Canada, and at their wintering grounds at the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge in Texas. The safety of the birds during their migration is a major factor in their preservation. You can help! If you see a Whooping Crane, notify your game warden or state conservation department. Let's keep them flying!

Many people believe that virtually no life exists in Death Valley, California, because it is one of the hottest and most arid areas on earth. However, this desert is the permanent habitat of at least 15 species of birds, 40 species of mammals, 44 kinds of reptiles, 12 kinds of amphibians, 13 species of fish and 545 varieties of plants.

SUPPORT THE SCREEN TOURS

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CALENDAR FOR NOVEMBER 1957

November 9, SATURDAY FIELD TRIP to Joshua Tree National Monument. Meet at the Monument Headquarters in Twenty-nine Palms for study of Desert Birds and Plants at 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. We will follow the marked trail at Headquarters. Pictures and talks by the Ranger will be announced there. Those wishing to stay over night will find motels near the Monument Headquarters in Twenty-nine Palms.

Leader, Ethel Craig.

November 14, EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING, Thursday, 7:30 p.m. at 912 Victoria Ave.

November 20, WEDNESDAY EVENING MEETING, at 8:00 p.m. sharp, in Great Hall, Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd. "A Symposium of Problems of Ecology and Identification of Hawks and Owls." This discussion will be led by R. Dudley Ross and will include such tough field problems as identification of hawks at a distance, melanistic phases of some hawks, hawk migration in California and Owl calls. The program will be augmented by a display of study skins to aid identification.

Chairman, Arnold Small.

November 21, THURSDAY MORNING PROGRAM - 10:00 a.m. in Long Hall, Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd. Mr. George T. Hastings, Editor Emeritus and long-time friend of Audubon Society, will speak on "Blossoms, Bees and Birds." A well known teacher of nature subjects, he and Mrs. Hastings have conducted classes on these subjects wherever they have lived, in the east and in Santa Monica, their present home. To illustrate his fine talks on botany, Mr. Hastings uses beautifully made detailed paper models of the intricate structure of flowers.

Mrs. Isabella Bright, a member, will also be a speaker on this program. A recently retired teacher of natural sciences and agriculture in the city schools, Mrs. Bright is an authority on bird study, so her subject, "Adaptation of Birds to their Environment," should be most interesting.

Chairman, Olive Alvey

November 24, SUNDAY FIELD TRIP will be to Lake Norcorian to see the wintering ducks. Group will meet at 9:00 a.m. in Norco, Calif., (about 2 miles north of Corona) at the corner of Hamner and 4th Streets. Park on 4th Street west of Hamner, not on Hamner.

Leader, Jim Huffman,  
FRontier 2-7124