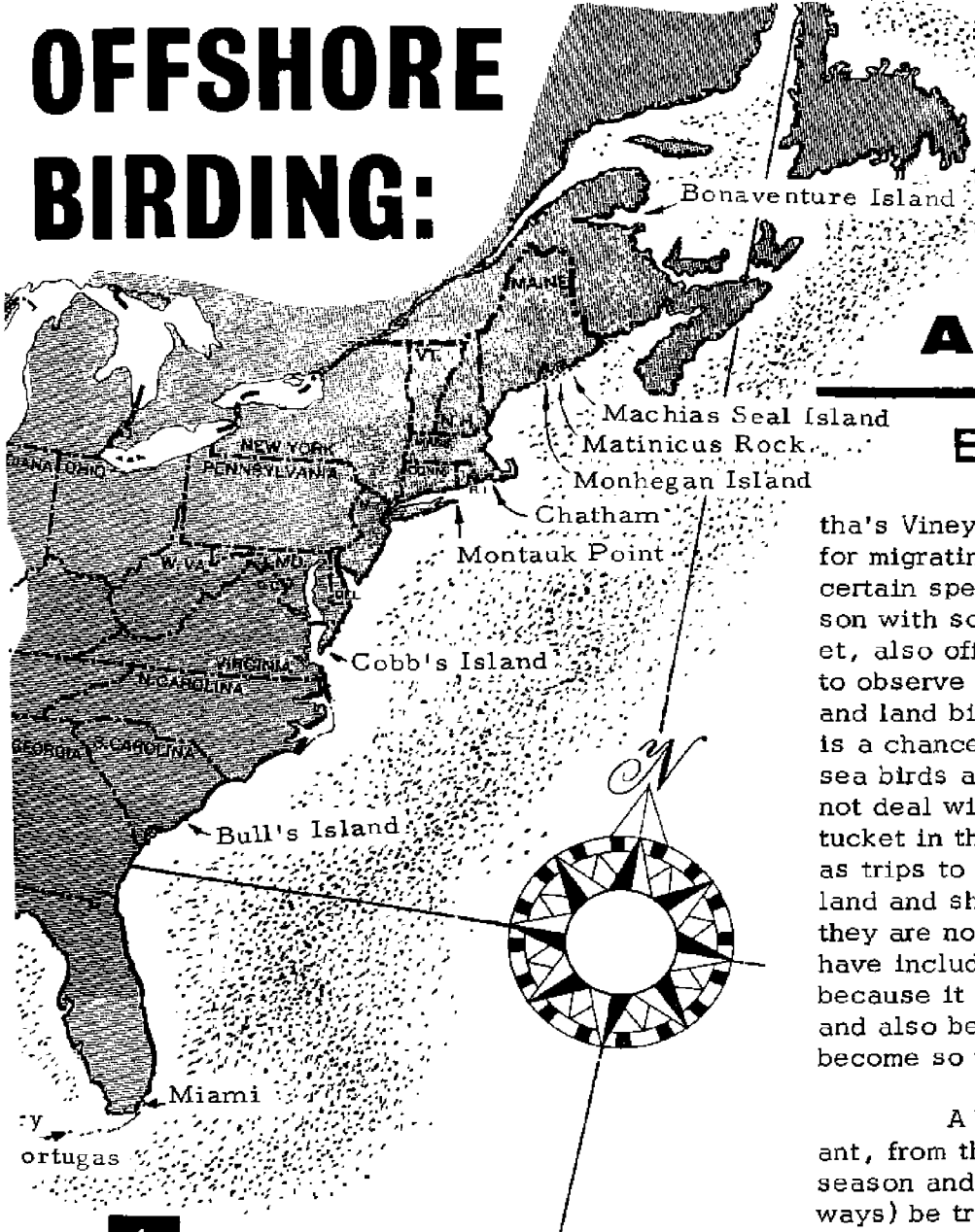


# OFFSHORE BIRDING:

## Atlantic Coast

By R. DUDLEY ROSS



Martha's Vineyard is usually visited in late summer for migrating land birds and also in the winter for certain specialties which occur there at that season with some regularity. The island of Nantucket, also off Massachusetts, is a very good place to observe the fall migration of both shore birds and land birds, and on the trip out and back, there is a chance of shearwaters, jaegers, and other sea birds at the appropriate time of year. I do not deal with either Martha's Vineyard or Nantucket in the descriptive paragraphs which follow as trips to these two islands are principally for land and shore birds, and in that sense at least, they are not really offshore trips. However, I have included some remarks about Bull's Island because it occupies a special niche of its own and also because its ornithological reputation has become so widespread.

A boat trip off California would be pleasant, from the standpoint of temperature, at any season and the same would usually (but not always) be true of Florida. However, such a trip off the northeast coast in winter, can be a rugged test of one's ability to withstand the biting cold and penetrating wind.

The number of truly pelagic species (as distinguished from the loons, grebes, pelicans, cormorants, gulls, terns etc., which are, in reality, birds of the littoral) which one looks for on a sea trip is approximately thirty, of which seven or eight could be considered more or less rare. This applies pretty well to both coasts. About a dozen of these thirty species occur off both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts but there is a considerable difference in the status of some of these species as between one coast and the other. For example, the Fulmar, while not common in the west, does occur in some numbers at

(Continued on page 10)

**A** study of offshore birding on both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts brings to light some interesting differences and some equally intriguing similarities.

Whereas there are few islands off the Pacific coast on which it is possible to effect a landing, there are several off the eastern coast where a landing is not only possible but to which there is regular boat service. While Vancouver Island is the only island off the west coast which offers fairly good land birding, a number of eastern islands do so. Bonaventure Island, in Canadian territory, has some interesting land and sea birds as nesting species. To some extent, the same is true of Monhegan Island, off the Maine coast. Off the Massachusetts coast Mar-

# OFFSHORE BIRDING

## CONTINUED

times, but it is always exceedingly rare in the east. The Long-tailed Jaeger is rather rare in the east but even more so in the Pacific. The beautiful Sabine's Gull is, on the contrary, quite rare in the Atlantic and is never seen there in migrating flocks as happens in the west. The Common Murre lives up to its name in the west, where there are a number of sizeable breeding colonies but in the east it is much scarcer than the Thick-billed Murre, until one gets far enough north to be in the vicinity of breeding places in Canada and neither species is usually seen very far south of its breeding range, except in winter. Even then, neither is common along the east coast. The Sooty Shearwater is the commonest of its kind on both coasts. The Skua, never common on either coast, is much rarer in the east.

I might mention here that I am considering the Common Eider as a pelagic bird in this article, the reason being that, although it is often seen close to shore in the east, during the winter months sea trips are sometimes made with the object of seeing the enormous flock which occurs near the mussel beds some miles off Cape Cod.

Bonaventure Island - this island, off the southeast coast of the popular Gaspé Peninsula in the province of Quebec, is one of the most frequently and easily visited islands of the Atlantic coast. Its scenic beauty and that of the mainland has attracted tourists for many years. There are satisfactory overnight accommodations both on the island itself and on the nearby mainland. The trip takes but fifteen minutes and boats are always available. The modest price of the trip includes the privilege of a complete circuit of the island by boat, thus affording a very close and thrilling view of the famous gannet colony. This is located on the steep cliffs which are on the offshore side of the island and, consequently, not visible from the mainland. While an over-enthusiastic boatman will speak blithely of 200,000 or 300,000 gannets, the truth is that this colony contains approximately 7,000 nests or a total, including young birds, of perhaps 20,000 individuals. This is one of the continent's great ornithological spectacles. Your small boat, as it circles the island, moves in very close to many of the rocks so that it is possible to secure excellent pictures of some of the birds at very close range. The rocky ledges are filled with birds and so is the air, as there is constant movement to and from the ledges. The noise is deafening and the sight

of hundreds of these great white birds, zooming into their characteristic slanting dive, is never to be forgotten. So crowded are the ledges that the colony has overflowed on to the level ground at the top of the cliffs, and it is, therefore, possible to walk among the nests, provided one doesn't get close enough to receive a painful jab from one of the outraged adults. The top of the cliffs is reached by an easy path across the island from one's hotel or motel and, on the way, the Boreal Chickadee should be seen and, if one is lucky as we were once, there will be singing flocks of White-winged Crossbills. Also nesting on the cliffs are some Common Murres and Razorbills, occasionally a few Common Puffins and even one or two pairs of Harlequin Ducks may be found. The Common Eider also nests on the island and, on the opposite side from the gannetry, there are numbers of nesting Black Guillemots.

Machias Seal Island - although but a few miles offshore from the curious little fishing village of Cutler, Maine, the only way to get there is to engage the services and boat of one of the local lobstermen. The trip to this small and uninhabited (except for the lighthouse personnel) island takes about two hours. Here there is a flourishing colony of Common Puffins and on Machias Seal they nest under rocks instead of in burrows, as is the usual case. They stand around on the rocks and permit a very close approach. In murky weather the blast of the fog horn fairly rattles one's teeth, but the birds have become accustomed to it that they pay not the slightest attention. There is also a large colony of nesting Arctic Terns and many hundreds of Leach's Petrels nest in burrows on the grassy parts of the island. Not infrequently, a few Razorbills and Black Guillemots may be seen flying nearby or resting on the water. There are no overnight accommodations on the island.

Matinicus Rock, Maine to get here one takes the regular mail boat from Rockland to Matinicus Island and then on to Matinicus Rock, five miles further off. The birds here are virtually the same as on Machias Seal Island but in lesser numbers. It is, however, easier to reach and overnight accommodations may be had on Matinicus Island.

Monhegan Island - this fairly large island is located in Muscongus Bay off Pemaquid Point, Maine. There is a quaint and charming village on the island where overnight accommodations may be found. In late summer there are sometimes impressive concentrations of Northern and Red Phalaropes to be seen just offshore. There is also a rather good land bird migration.

(Continued on page 11)

# OFFSHORE BIRDING

Continued...

Chatham, Mass. this interesting town is strategically located at the "elbow" of Cape Cod and has been, for many years, the starting point for numerous sea trips, usually undertaken toward the end of May or in late August and early September, but occasionally in winter. These are really trips to nowhere, with no specific destination. The object is to cruise around, looking for unusual sea birds. Several of my most memorable trips were made out of Chatham, with the late Ludlow Griscom, and I can truthfully say that, over a period of a number of years, we never had a poor trip. On more than one occasion we found all three species of jaegers and all three shearwaters -Sooty, Cory's and Greater. Sometimes one is fortunate to run into the migration of Wilson's Petrel; on one trip Griscom estimated we saw 2,000 of these diminutive birds. Red and Northern Phalaropes are good possibilities on these trips and in late May the beautiful Sabine's Gull is sometimes encountered, in full breeding plumage. The Manx Shearwater has also been recorded a number of times. On winter trips out of Chatham one is sure to see great numbers of all three species of scoters and often the Oldsquaw is present in force. At this season, alcids are always possible, with the Dovekie, Razorbill and Black Guillemot seen most often. Nevertheless, it is the large wintering flock of Common Eiders which everyone looks and hopes for. Once found, the sight beggars description. The birds sit quietly on the water and, when they consider the boat has approached too close for comfort, they rise into the air like a vast cloud, circle around and move off. Always impressive, the flock on one trip was estimated at some 300,000 individuals! This flock was one quarter mile thick and about four miles in length. This is equivalent to one bird for every ninety square feet.

Montauk Point, New York Montauk Point is the extreme eastern tip of Long Island, about 125 miles by automobile from the center of New York City. An offshore trip between October 15th and November 15th has been known to produce hundreds of Cory's Shearwaters and, less frequently, one may see the Razorbill, Thick-billed Murre, Dovekie and Black Guillemot. This is the best place in the region to see the Black-legged Kittiwake. In fact, all of these species can at times be seen from the high cliffs right at the point. Other species to be looked for here are the Common and King Eiders and Harlequin Duck. The

point is open moorland and the cliffs offer a good vantage point for observation. Land birding is also good here during the winter, with Snowy and Short-eared Owls, Northern Shrikes and Snow Buntings among the possibilities. Food and overnight accommodations are available throughout the year in the town of Montauk, but a few miles from the point.

Cobb's Island, Virginia - this small island, reached by fishing boat from the village of Oyster, is but a short distance off the coast of the well-known Delmarva Peninsula. It has nesting colonies of Piping and Wilson's Plover, Royal and Gull-billed Terns, American Oystercatcher, Black Skimmers and Boat-tailed Grackles. Laughing Gulls nest on the marshes and Clapper Rails and Seaside Sparrows in the grassy areas. This trip can be made, if desired, in half a day; the Delmarva Peninsula is itself worthy of investigation, having many birds of southern affinities.



Bull's Island, South Carolina - a trip to Bull's Island is a unique experience. Famous ornithologically for many years, comfortable lodgings and good food are available on the island at Dominick House. It is heavily wooded and is part of the Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge whose headquarters are located at McClellanville, South Carolina. Write here for information, reservations, and also to arrange for the boat from the island to meet you at Moore's Landing, the point of departure. There is no public transportation to Bull's Island. While the tours, formerly conducted by the National Audubon Society, have been discontinued, it is a simple matter to explore this island entirely on your own. Maps may be obtained showing a network of trails so arranged that it is possible to go one way and return by a different route. As the island is but six miles long and less than one mile across, distances are not great and lunches can be provided for those who wish to make a full day of it. November through January is the best time for a trip here. There is a large wintering population of ducks and shore birds. Pileated Woodpeckers are very common and Wild Turkeys can usually be seen here more easily than almost anywhere else, at times right around Dominick House itself. Along Seewee Road which leads from highway US 17 to the boat dock at Moore's Landing, one should look for

(Continued on page 17)

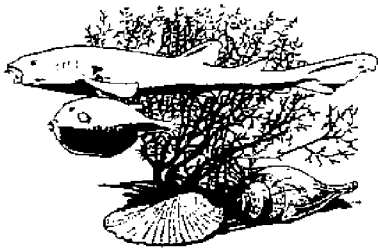
# AUDUBON ACTIVITIES

FROM ELIZABETH ROSE

\*\*\*\*\*

Cool punch on a very warm evening was one of the rewards for attending the first fall meeting Tuesday, September 10. Seeing friends who had been off here and there birding all summer was another. And, the talk was "meaty" and spiced with humor.

President Arnold Small conducted a brief, neat meeting. Russ Wilson reported in his new capacity as Field Trip Chairman. The Bazaar Bird with a Christmas tree in its beak (Bob Sandmeyer's artistic inspiration) made its appearance to announce the approaching Annual Christmas Bazaar. Don Adams began his stint as Program Chairman with the introduction of Dr. Richard Boolootian of the Department of Zoology, UCLA.



Dr. Boolootian's lecture, accompanied by slides, quickly whisked his audience to faraway coral atolls, crystal clear seas, and white sands. The lecturer, however, aided in more than escape to sunlit waters. He scientifically outlined the hypothesis, originally stated by Darwin, as to how atolls such as Eniwetok evolved. The fact that many of these islands of calcium carbonate are shaped like birds stuck in everyone's mind. While many listeners in the audience probably grasped the problems of three kinds of sharks more vividly than they understood subsidence and euphotic zones, the background of serious study was important. Dr. Boolootian's seven years of work on sea urchins and the fact that they are cordates, a near relative of man, deserved attention. The lecturer made one feel a part of living, exciting research. How did the hermit crabs survive a hydrogen bomb explosion? Do primitive sea forms with scarcely any nervous system exhibit homing behavior? Do the growth rings of corals prove that the day was once only 18 hours but has now lengthened into one of 24? Are coconut crabs for real? And, how does a living fish find a home inside a starfish? He made good points with more than the new electric pointer.

But what of the "hazy, lazy, crazy days of summer" just past? We can only mention a few highlights of the July and August calendar. Laura Jenner's trip, July 13, recorded the longest bird list of the summer as bird activity was quiet later.

# ¡MÁS MÉXICO!



Due to the closing of Great Hall at Plummer Park for maintenance, the Evening Meeting will be held in the auditorium of West Hollywood Park 647 N. San Vicente Blvd., on Monday, October 7. Herb Clarke will show color slides of a recent trip to southern Mexico. See calendar page.

The combination of Tucker Bird Sanctuary and the shorebirds of Upper Newport Bay, no doubt, accounted for the variety.

The Annual Picnic, July 27, had no birding with it and it even got cold when the sun went down, but the company, sixty-three people, and the food were the best yet!

The Idyllwild Camping Field Trip will be remembered chiefly for its excellent leadership, that of Don and Caroline Adams, who did a great deal of scouting and planning the week previous. But, it was HOT, and the Pygmy Nuthatch, the hummingbirds, and the lovely campsites could not persuade one to visit that area again in August.

They say that the August 24th trip was a "leaderless trip" and that only three carloads came. Christine Hayden didn't report anything special but one of these days when one misses a trip they're going to miss an Hepatic Tanager in with the cowbirds!

As Herb Clarke has reported "the birds were conspicuous by their absence" on the pelagic trip from San Pedro. But, an albatross or a Sabine's Gull is still a "good" bird, and the "Corsair" is a good boat, and San Clemente Island is still there, and many birder caught up on his sleep! Ho-hum!

**DECEMBER**

**SAT**

**BAZAAR**

**7**



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PLUMMER PARK, 7377 SANTA MONICA BLVD., LOS ANGELES 46, 876-0202

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Open Mon., Wed., Thurs., Sat. 2-4 P.M.  
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OCTOBER 1963						
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

# October

- Oct. 3 THURSDAY EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING 7:30 P.M. Audubon House.
- Oct. 5 SATURDAY SPECIAL PELAGIC TRIP from Monterey aboard the "Grey Ghost" in cooperation with the Golden Gate Audubon Society. The fare will be \$4.50 per person. Make checks payable to the Golden Gate Audubon Society and mail reservations to: Mr. Harold G. Peterson  
3548 65th Avenue  
Oakland 5, California
- Oct. 5 SATURDAY JUNIOR NATURALISTS 9:45-11:15 A.M. Hancock Park to visit the La Brea Tar Pits.  
  
For information call: Ed Anacker HO 7-1661.
- Oct. 7 MONDAY EVENING MEETING 8:00 P.M. Auditorium at West Hollywood Park, 647 N. San Vicente Blvd., between Santa Monica Blvd. and Melrose Ave. Parking lot is on San Vicente Blvd. NOTE CHANGE OF DATE AND PLACE. Mr. Herb Clarke will give a program of his splendid color slides taken on a recent trip to southern Mexico.  
  
Program Chairman: Don Adams FR 2-5536.
- Oct. 12 SATURDAY FIELD TRIP 8:30 A.M. Condor trip to Sespe Canyon. Meet at the second Tip's Restaurant at the junction of U.S. Highway 99 and State Highway 126. Bring lunch and drinking water.  
  
Leader: Herb Clarke CH 9-5537.
- Oct. 27 SUNDAY FIELD TRIP to Bolsa Chica and Upper Newport Bay. Meet at 8:00 AM on U.S. Highway 101 just south of the traffic circle in Long Beach. This trip will feature wintering ducks and shorebirds. Bring lunch, binoculars and spotting scope.  
  
Leaders: Don and Caroline Adams FR 2-5536.
- Nov. 2 SATURDAY FIELD TRIP to Audubon Center of southern California. Meet at Headquarters Building 8:30 A.M., conclude about noon. The Center will provide tomato soup. Each person bring own lunch. Other branch societies are being invited to share the same day. Take San Bernardino Freeway to Rosemead to San Gabriel Blvd., left on San Gabriel Blvd. to Durfee--1000 N. Durfee Avenue.

## MONTEREY PELAGIC TRIP

Depart 9:00 A.M. from Sam's Wharf, Monterey. Park at Municipal Pier out of metered zone. Allow 30 min. to park and board. Return about 3:00 P.M.

Take plenty of: warm windproof and waterproof clothes, gloves, caps, etc.

Is there an Audubon member who has an artificial Christmas tree and would be willing to loan it to be used as decoration at the Audubon Christmas Bazaar, December 7? If so, call one of the numbers below and we will arrange to pick up and return the tree.

Call: Helen Sandmeyer - 842-9328  
Olive Alvey 661-8036  
Audubon House 876-0202



# Welcome! NEW MEMBERS

Miss Ione D. Ball  
555 Dayman St., Long Beach 6  
Miss Luella Blount  
3915 Valle Court, L A 65  
Miss Dorothy DeKoven  
16540 Sunset Blvd., Pacific Palisades  
Mr. & Mrs. Victor E. Gleason  
433 Keltan Ave., L A 24  
Miss Shirley Jean Halloom  
8222 Bleeker St., S. San Gabriel

Mrs. D. B. Hummel  
2614 Nipomo Ave., Long Beach 15  
Mrs. Maurice Kamins  
851 N. Kings Rd., L A 69  
Mr. Raymond Lopez  
1749 N. Sycamore Ave., Hollywood 28  
Mrs. C. M. Mathieson  
2511 Brigden Rd., Pasadena  
Dr. Elizabeth B. Parker  
6753 Hollywood Blvd., Suite 515, Holly. 28  
Miss Gladys J. Sanders  
5243 N. Hammill Rd., El Monte  
Mr. Lonnie Shoemake  
832 W. Adams, L A  
Mr. & Mrs. Francis J. Simmons  
2017 N. Gramercy Pl., L A 28  
Mr. Shirley R. Weinberg  
P O. Box 793, Beverly Hills

## AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILMS



### THE RIGHT TO LIVE

Man, as the prime adjuster and destroyer of the earth's mantle of soil and life-giving plants, holds dominion over his own future and the lives of Nature's creatures. It is his responsibility to see that the "right to live" is carried out in its fullest and wisest sense.

In this age of steel, concrete, and supermarkets, many people overlook the basic importance of soil and water, and plant and animal life to man's welfare; and they seldom appreciate man's ever growing role as an agent of change.

Canada's Pacific Coast province of British Columbia is ideal for the study and demonstration of conservation practices. Its magnificent scenic beauty, its wide diversity of climate and topography, and its abundant wildlife, provide the material in this film for a fascinating and informative Audubon program.

In *The Right to Live*, "Chess" Lyons examines the five most important Life Zones which express British Columbia's diversity and resources, and in so doing gives a remarkable cross section of its people, their basic industries, and the plant and animal life of the province.

You will explore the Coastal Zone with its unsurpassed softwood forests —parts of it now bleak desolation because of the "cut out and get out"

forest policies of the past—and travel through the adjacent picturesque Gulf Island Zone. In this color film of rare beauty, you will roam the "fruit bowl" of the Dry Interior Zone; then move into the Central Forest Zone—a conservation battle ground; and finally see the Alpine Zone, the province's beautiful mountain backbone, important in maintaining streamflow as well as providing year 'round recreational facilities.

The "stars" of this film are of course the province's many forms of wildlife. This makes it a "spectacular" presentation with a cast of hundreds. These are the jewels of the long course of evolution. Some are lowly — shrimp and lampreys; some are lordly — moose, cougar, and eagles. All are important to man.

In *The Right to Live*, Chester Lyons has produced an epic that will appeal to the conservationist, the naturalist, and the armchair traveller.



### Chester P. Lyons

C. P. "Chess" Lyons was born near Regina, Saskatchewan, in Canada, but his family moved to British Columbia a few years later. As a young boy, so much did he love to range the beautiful Okanagan Valley of British Columbia that, " . . . it became a matter of fine judgment to balance the time spent playing hookey against the grade-passing requirements of school." However,

"Chess" managed to make all the right moves in the best possible combination. He graduated from the University of British Columbia in Forest Engineering.

In later years, his work with the Parks Division of the British Columbia Forest Service took him to many of the most scenic areas of the province. He was so impressed with what he saw that he began writing about it. His published works include books on the historic Fraser Canyon, the Okanagan Valley and Vancouver Island, as well as "Trees, Shrubs, and Flowers to Know in B.C.", now in its third printing. He also compiled a similar work on the State of Washington and has been frequent contributor to newspapers and magazines.

As officer in charge of special projects in British Columbia's Department of Recreation and Conservation, Mr. Lyons has experienced several fields of interest. He supervised the clearing made necessary by the giant hydroelectric project of the Aluminum Company of Canada. He designed and supervises the "Stops of Interest" program along the highways of British Columbia. He is currently involved in the restoration of the pioneer gold-mining town of Barkerville in the Cariboo. His memberships include the Association of British Columbia Foresters, the American Institute of Park Executives and the American Association of Historic Site Public Officials.

A wealth of experience, a fund of knowledge, and keen appreciation of the broad and vital subject of conservation is reflected in every detail of Mr. Lyons' authoritative presentations.



Chester P. Lyons of Victoria, British Columbia, takes you on a tour of the west coast of Canada. As the film depicts the colorful plants and animals in each of the five altitudinal "life zones" there is woven the story of how man should manage his domain for the benefit of all. Mountain lions, moose, caribou, and mountain goats vie with unusual close-ups of flowers, insects and small mammals in this kaleidoscope of Nature's wonders in British Columbia.

This film features spectacular close-up photography of wildlife. We see a striking array of the creatures that roam the vast wilderness areas of western United States, through the lens of Walter Berlet of Casper, Wyoming. Here are moose, elk, bighorn and bison; black bear and grizzly, marmot and mountain lion, as well as a wide variety of bird life. A vivid story of the wilderness, narrated by a keen conservationist.

A pioneer scout entering upon a virgin land finds buffalo and antelope roaming in endless bands. The healthy land supports a complex community including prairie dogs, badger, coyote, owls, moose, and the beautiful trumpeter swan. The pioneer settler follows with herd and plow, and creates problems never known here before. John Taft of Camarillo, California, narrates this powerful film-story which he and Eben McMillan have co-produced to stimulate interest in conservation

Emerson Scott of Caro, Michigan, takes us on a tour of our magnificent west as we follow a herd of domestic sheep through their various grazing grounds during the four seasons. What vital changes are being wrought by man? How much and what part of our land should we leave untouched? This film deals with the compelling question of preserving our wilderness areas.

Life works out its designs in a country creek, in the north woods, and in the suburbs. Turtles munch blackberries while herons stalk frogs. Crossbills lick salt and moose parade in the mist of Isle Royale. Horned larks nest by the sidewalk, but robins no longer sing. How much change can man force on nature? This impressively documented film, based on Dr. Alfred Etter's own experiences in Missouri and Michigan, will help you decide.

**Thursday**  
**October 24, 1963**  
Chester P. Lyons  
"The Right to Live"

**Monday**  
**November 25, 1963**  
Walter Berlet  
"The Living Wilderness"

**Thursday**  
**January 23, 1964**  
John Taft  
"Land That I Love"

**Wednesday**  
**March 11, 1964**  
Emerson-Scott  
"Our Changing Heritage"

**Thursday**  
**April 9, 1964**  
Alfred G. Etter  
"Awake to Nature"

## AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILMS

**SEASON TICKET** **\$4.00**  
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Single Admission .....\$1.00

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Single Admission ..... .50

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Miss Laura Lou Jenner  
639 W. 32nd Street  
Los Angeles 7, California  
RI 8-7510

*Eighteenth Season*

**John Burroughs Junior High School**

**600 S. McCadden Place**

**7:45 P.M.**

# ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

By BILL WATSON

When Arnold Small, our President, asked me to be the Christmas Bird Count Compiler for the Los Angeles Audubon Society in 1963, I decided to learn all I could about this nation-wide activity. Using the wonderful material in our Library, I found out many things in the history of Christmas Bird Counting.

A scarcely missed "sport" at the end of the last century was to go out on Christmas Day and shoot every wild animal or bird that a man (?) could find. Among those who found this practice abominable was that great pioneer in the Audubon movement, Frank M. Chapman.

Frank Chapman founded "Bird-Lore", the forerunner of our present "Audubon Magazine". The Christmas Bird Census was initiated when he invited birdwatchers reading "Bird-Lore" to spend "a portion of Christmas day with the birds", hoping to offset the disgraceful "side hunts" that were still going on. Christmas day 1900 was set as the date for the first Christmas Bird Census.

Twenty-seven observers sent in 25 counts. In New York City, in Central Park, a twelve year old boy, alone, was one of the first 27 observers. Today, he is still unfailingly devoting himself to Christmas Bird Counting without ever missing a year. His name is Charles H. Rogers, and he is making his counts in Princeton, New Jersey these days.

Another gentleman, in Cadiz, Ohio, for many years, was one count behind Charles Rogers. His name was Harry B. McConnell. Harry McConnell tried to get ahead of Rogers until the 56th Christmas Bird Count. Then even he fell behind. He died in September, 1956 at the age of 89. Today Charles H. Rogers is still unchallenged and still Christmas Bird Counting.

Originally called the Christmas Bird Census, this activity was renamed the Christmas Bird Count in 1940, since it is obviously impossible to take a true census of all the birds in one 24 hour period. I hope this will end the confusion still current in this matter.

Dues have been collected from participants ever since 1939. At first it was only a voluntary ten cents. Last year it was a voluntary fifty cents. This year it will be a mandatory fifty cents. This is to help make up for the financial loss incurred each year in publishing the results of the Christmas Bird Count.

Next month, I will have a long article about the Christmas Bird Count in this publication. In it I will try to bring to life some more of the interesting history of the activity by telling about some of the people who have participated in the Christmas Bird Counts in the past. Some are famous, some less so. In particular, I want to tell about some of the very interesting people, birdwatchers all, who have worked in the past to make the Los Angeles area Counts success.

# !NOTICE!



## MEN!

Don't dismiss this plea for help as being only in the realm of the Ladies. We need your assistance too. Do you have a hobby of leathercraft, wood-working, baking or any other accomplishment, the efforts of which you may wish to contribute to the Audubon Christmas Bazaar?



## LADIES!

Do you sew gift items for Christmas, do ceramics, make candles, crochet, embroider, bake, prepare jams or jellies, create Christmas decorations, make jewelry? If you do, lend us a hand to help make this year's Audubon Christmas Bazaar an exciting, worthwhile and profitable endeavor! Proceeds are used to improve and develop Audubon House and the museum.



Call: Helen Sandmeyer 842-9328  
Olive Alvey 661-8036  
Audubon House - 876-0202

WHEN: Saturday, December 7, 1-4 P.M.

WHERE: West Hollywood Park  
647 N San Vicente Blvd.  
(between Santa Monica  
Blvd. and Melrose Ave.)

AUDUBON SOCIETY ANNUAL CHRISTMAS

# BAZAAR



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# OFFSHORE BIRDING

Continued . . .

the Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Brown-headed Nuthatch, and Bachman's Sparrow. On the island itself the winter list of birds is in the neighborhood of 100 species. The unspoiled woods and dense tangles, the ponds, the long stretches of sandy beach, and above all, the absence of crowds, make this a most delightful way to spend a few days or even longer.

Miami, Florida - here it is possible to engage a small fishing boat (cheaper naturally if a group is involved) for a meandering trip a few miles offshore. Such trips often produce Sooty Terns and Bridled Terns are run across at fairly frequent intervals. Less common but always to be hoped for, are Audubon's Shearwater and White-tailed Tropic-bird. One way to take such a trip, at low expense, but one which does not allow a choice of course, is to take the boat which regularly plies between Miami and the island of Bimini 65 miles offshore and the nearest of the Bahama Islands to the United States. For further details about such a trip, see the Audubon Magazine for July-August 1963, page 206. On such a trip in 1962 a number of Sooty Terns were seen, plus a few Bridled and two Audubon's Shearwaters.

Dry Tortugas, Florida - these islands are situated some 70 miles west of Key West, in the Gulf of Mexico. The pleasantest, most comfortable (and most expensive) way to go is to charter one of the many fine sportsfishing boats in Key West. Although these boats are clean, fast, and comfortable, two days is required for the trip. When my wife and I went in this fashion, our meals were prepared on the boat and it also served as our hotel when we tied up at the dock in the Tortugas. Another, and cheaper, way is to make arrangements to join the Tropical Audubon Society on their annual trip to the Tortugas, usually during early May. The practice is to charter a fair-sized shrimp boat and the group may be as large as 40 or so. Thus, the cost per person is very reasonable. On these trips one takes all necessary food for the two days; water and soft drinks are available on the boat. Permission is given the group to sleep in old Fort Jefferson, which means sleeping on the stone floor, preferably in sleeping bags. While the old ruined fort's embrasures are open at both ends, there is a roof over one's head in case of inclement weather. Some prefer to hang a hammock under the trees in the fort's parade ground.

Land birding can be surprisingly good during the spring migration but the major objec-

tive of the trip is to see the enormous and exciting tern colonies. Many thousands of Sooty Terns nest on the beach of Bush Key and a few hundred Noddies nest there in the low bushes. The din is terrific and never ceases, even during the night.

Fort Jefferson is a national monument and personnel will take groups across the narrow channel to Bush Key in a small boat for a close-up look at the terns. Here one can stand and literally reach out and touch terns on their nests. Photographic opportunities are unlimited, but no one is permitted to walk among the nests during the breeding season. Here is another of the great ornithological spectacles of the continent. This is the only place in the United States where these two species nest. A few Roseate Terns also nest nearby. Many Brown Pelicans and Man-o-War Birds are always in attendance, the latter either soaring gracefully overhead or loafing, with evil intent, atop the low bushes near the nesting terns. A careful search of the area, with special attention to the channel markers between Garden and Loggerhead Keys, often produces one or two Brown Boobies and, on lucky days, perhaps a couple of Blue-faced Boobies. Neither species nests here but are apparently wanderers from breeding colonies in the West Indies.

The Tortugas trip is one of the most rewarding and unusual trips I know of, in addition to which it has an advantage possessed by few others - the Noddies and Sooties, which are the principal reasons for the trip, never disappoint you; they are always there provided, of course, the trip is made during the nesting season.

One more word about sea trips off the eastern coast and this is directed especially to those of you who live in other parts of the country - even in the deep south a winter trip can be quite chilly, especially in the early morning. At places from, let us say, New York City north, early mornings can be quite cool as early as September and, needless to say, trips in the winter months in this area call for heavy clothing. If you are unfamiliar with local conditions, contact someone who can advise you as to the type of clothing to wear.

Offshore trips are fun, they are different, and they are frequently highly rewarding. You usually see species of birds not normally seen from land

(Continued on page 18)

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## THE WESTERN Tanager

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY

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## conservation

# NEWS

By NORMAN McGARY

The Department of the Interior, disregarding the recommendation of the Audubon Society and other conservationists, has again decreed an open season this fall on sandhill cranes in west Texas, eastern New Mexico, and on whistling swans in Utah. Both of these magnificent birds are not only rarities themselves, but closely resemble two birds that are close to extinction, the whooping crane and the trumpeter swan.

Last year there were 38 whooping cranes wintering in the Texas refuge. But this spring, according to the Department of Interior, only 28 whooping cranes remain alive. It is hard not to believe that some of these birds did not fall dead in front of some licenced sandhill crane hunter's blind.

One of the reasons the Department of Interior offered justifying the open season on sandhill cranes, ridiculous as it sounds, is to alleviate depredations on agricultural crops. It seems to us that instead of allowing the cranes to be hunted they should use the Reuss Act which permits the feeding of surplus grain to waterfowl in order to forestall crop depredations. This would be much more sensible than protecting the crops by shooting the birds.

Through the efforts of Senator Karl E. Mundt (S. D.) funds for continued research on methods of propagating cranes in captivity were restored for the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife after the House had deleted this item. Research, now being done with sandhill cranes, may be applied later to captive whooping cranes.

The Hawaiian Islands National Wildlife Refuge should remain under the supervision of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. There is a plan to transfer certain federal islands, now encompassed in the Hawaiian Islands National Wildlife Refuge, to the State of Hawaii.

The bird life and some of the other animals of this mid-Pacific area are of world wide scientific interest. One noteworthy example is the Laysan Duck, whose entire wild population of 500 to 600 is restricted to the Island of Laysan. The Miller bird is now found only in the dense vegetation of Nihoa. The Laysan Finch occurs only on the islands of Laysan and Nihoa. The Hawaiian Monk Seal is a mammal peculiar to these islands and its total population is believed to be only about 1,000. Our Society feels strongly that this area must remain protected.

Governor Pat Brown signed the legislative act which suspends California's bounty on mountain lions for four years. We are happy to hear this and feel that perhaps our Society sending an Official Letter of Resolution helped in passing this bill.

Rep. Everett G. Burkhalter has introduced H. R. 6407, a bill to create a National Park unit to be called a "National Wildflower Sanctuary" on 20,000 acres near Lancaster, California. It would protect great fields of the California poppy and other flowers.

## AUDUBON SUMMER CAMP

Perhaps of immediate interest would be an announcement that "THE AUDUBON CAMP OF THE WEST" is returning to Wyoming (Wind River Range) in 1964. There will be three (3) sessions: June 21 to July 3 July 5 to July 17 - July 19 to July 31. The Session fee is \$125 with a deductible Registration fee of \$25. EARLY requests for reservations are recommended. Address: P. O. Box 3666, El Monte, California.

## OFFSHORE BIRDING

Continued . . .

and there is the ever-present chance of seeing something really rare, such as the Yellow-nosed Albatross, seen off Long Island a couple of years ago.

This and the preceding article are not meant to be a complete guide to all the worthwhile offshore trips possible from both east and west coasts, nor has any attempt been made to go into great detail about all the places mentioned; space would not permit. For more complete data concerning many of these localities, I can do no better than refer you to the two bird-finding books which are indispensable to the birding traveler, Dr. O.S. Pettingill's A Guide to Bird Finding East of the Mississippi and A Guide to Bird Finding West of the Mississippi.

GOOD BIRDING!

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

In this department last month we referred our readers to Olin Sewall Pettingill's column in AUDUBON MAGAZINE, July-August, 1963. It has been brought to our attention that the statement in the very first paragraph, that Dudley and Vivian Ross's total of 632 species of birds includes birds seen in Canada and Mexico, is incorrect. We wish to emphasize that this total is for the continental United States only, a truly remarkable achievement. Mr. Ross estimates that of the 755 species of birds included in the latest A.O.U. Check List, one may reasonably expect to see 648 within this area!