



Crested Guan

PANAMA BIRDING TRIP

By R. Dudley Ross

For years the name "Barro Colorado" fascinated me and everything I read about this island and its birds only added fuel to the fire. Therefore, when my wife and I decided to visit Panama in 1963, we both felt Barro Colorado should be the starting place. Accordingly, we obtained Frank M. Chapman's two well-known books, Life in an Air Castle and My Tropical Air Castle, and avidly read and re-read both of them. Then, our excitement at fever pitch, we set to work in earnest. We were already familiar with Sturgis' Birds of the Panama Canal Zone and to this we added The Species of Middle American Birds by Eugene Eisenmann, his Annotated List of the Birds of Barro Colorado Island and Edwards' booklet on Finding Birds in Panama.

We soon learned that 840 species of birds have been recorded in Panama or about 65 more species than have been known to occur in all of North America, north of Mexico. This is all the more remarkable when one considers that in area, Panama, including the Canal Zone, is approximately the same size as the state of South Carolina. To put it another way, nine Panamas would fit into Texas with several thousand square miles left over; but then, the center of the world's avian population is in the tropics.

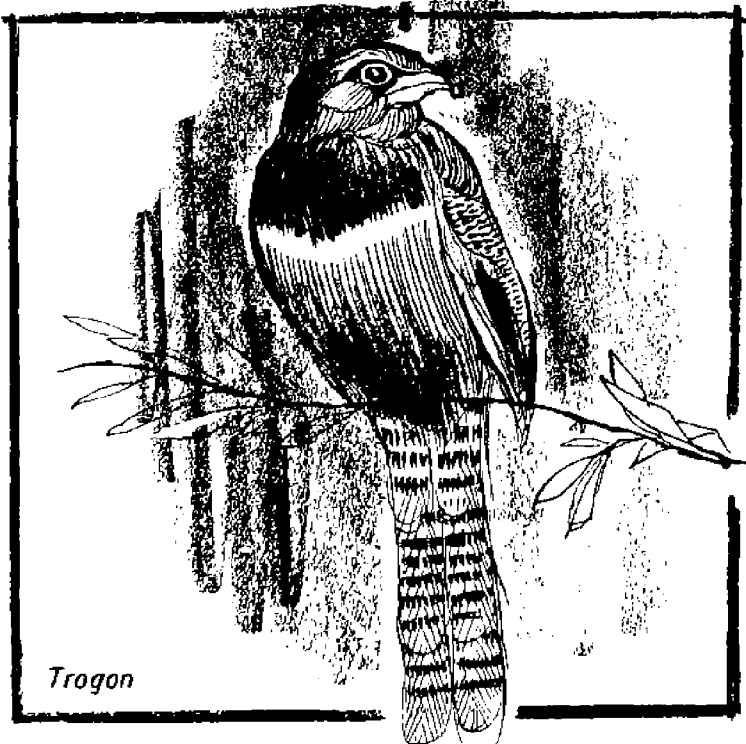
Our next step was to eliminate from consideration all species occurring only in the inaccessible jungles of the province of Darien, plus those peculiar to Bocas del Toro province in extreme northwestern Panama. Then we consulted our friend, Gene Eisenmann, one of the authorities on Panamanian birds. With his help we then eliminated accidentals, extreme rarities and those which, for one reason or another, we were very unlikely to encounter. Thus, we finally brought the list of what I like to call "reasonable possibilities" down to the much more manageable figure of some 450 species.

Continued on page 70

PANAMA BIRDING TRIP CONTINUED

Following this, I made tracings from illustrations in various books, cut the sheets to 4 by 6 inches, punched holes through the tops of the sheets and put them on rings so that, with a paper-board cover, I had really a ring binder. My wife and I then spent many days and half days going over the skins in the American Museum of Natural History in New York City and at the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia, coloring in the tracings with crayon. In this fashion, we wound up with over 400 "illustrations, ranging in quality from poor to fairly good, mostly the former. I have no artistic ability whatever and the colors were, in many cases, not too accurate. Nevertheless, they gave us an idea of pattern and the many hours studying the museum skins proved invaluable.

Finally, after months of preparation, we left Philadelphia on May 18, 1963 by jet for Miami where we connected with a PanAmerican Jet for the 2 1/2 hour non-stop flight to Tocumen Airport in Panama City. We arrived at the Tivoli Guest House in Ancon in time for dinner -- we were in Panama! Awakened at dawn by a chorus of strange and intriguing bird sounds, we could scarcely get outside quickly enough. We birded in the vicinity of our hotel for about 45 minutes before breakfast and saw seventeen species, some of the more interesting birds (to us, at least) being Yellow-bellied Elaenia, Lesser Elaenia, Sapphire-throated Hummingbird, Red-crowned Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Seed-eater, Common Tody-flycatcher, Paltry Tyrannulet, and many Orange-chinned Parakeets.



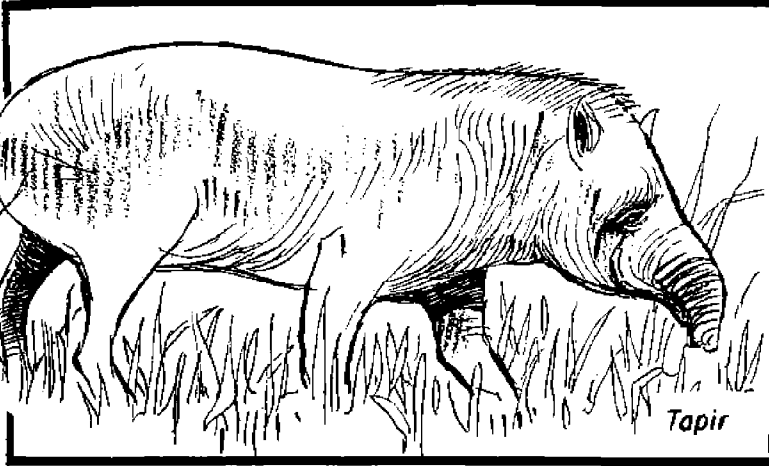
Then, after breakfast, to the Balboa railroad station, to get the early morning train for the fifty-minute ride along the eastern side of the canal to the village of Frijoles where the "launchman" from Barro Colorado met us, as arranged. A twenty-minute trip across Gatun Lake brought us to the island dock. What a thrill to see the famous 201 steps up to the headquarters building! Gatun Lake, by the way, was formed by the flooding of the valley of the Chagres River upon completion of the Panama Canal. The canal's channel runs through the lake so that our little boat actually crossed the canal in order to reach the island. Incidentally, the island is in truth nothing more than the top of a mountain, protruding from the waters which flood the valley.

On the short trip over we saw, among other things, a number of Brown-chested Martins and a Wattled Jacana. Quickly getting into birding clothes we birded around the clearing until lunch and again until mid-afternoon when the drizzle became a fairly heavy rain. As our cottage was raised some distance from the ground on cement pillars, we sat beneath it and watched the birds from there. Our first day's birding produced many exciting species including Crested Guan, Black-cheeked Woodpecker, Violaceous Trogon, Keel-billed and Chestnut-mandibled Toucans, Cinnamon Becard, Streaked and Ochre-bellied Flycatchers, Blue Dacnis, Blue Honeycreeper, Green Honeycreeper, Chestnut-headed Oropendola, Plain-colored, Blue-gray, Palm and Crimson-backed Tanagers. Also the following hummingbirds -- White-necked Jacobin, Violet-bellied, Blue-chested, Rufous-tailed and Green Hermit. Quite a day!

We were well content to start for bed at 9:15 after making up our notes for the day, as we wanted to be out by daybreak next morning. We spent nine fascinating days on Barro Colorado. We saw all three species of toucan (the two mentioned above plus the Collared Aracari) every day, sometimes as we sat at breakfast or lunch. We found birding along the trails in the dense forest rather frustrating. The lush tropical foliage made observation difficult and the light was poor as, except for occasional openings, the sunlight could not penetrate to the forest floor. We worked hard for our birds but, by dint of considerable effort, managed to see during our stay seven species of antbirds, those elusive denizens of the deep woodland shade, four species of trogon, nine kinds of hummingbirds, seven tanagers, five honeycreepers, Broad-billed and Rufous Motmots, Buff-throated and Streaked Saltators, Striated Heron, King Vulture, Greater

Ani, Lesser Kiskadee, Purple-throated Fruit-crow and many others.

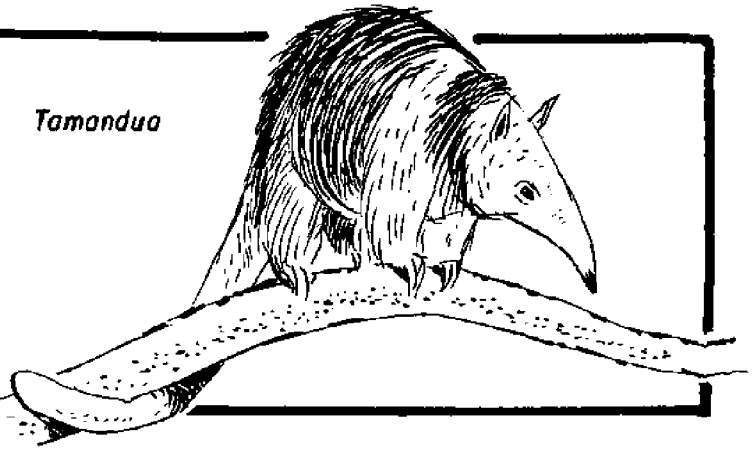
We also frequently saw the Spider Monkeys and often heard the impressive roaring of the Howler Monkeys, but seldom saw the latter. Other mammals seen were Collared Peccary, Coati-mundi, Agouti, Nutria, Baird's Tapir and the Tamandua or Silky Anteater.



Upon leaving the island, we returned to the Tivoli for the night and had Hertz deliver to us the Volkswagen we had arranged for before leaving home. Next morning we set out for Summit Gardens, a short drive north of Ancon, and which we found to be a very "birdy" place. Three hours in this beautifully maintained park yielded thirty species including Boat-billed, Streaked and Piratic Flycatchers, Yellow-backed Oriole, Yellow-rumped Cacique, Variable and Yellow-bellied Seedeaters, Yellow-crowned Euphonia and Green-backed Sparrow. Then on to Madden Dam, which produced Brownish Flycatcher, Blue-black Grassquit, Black-and-white Becard, Tropical Gnatcatcher, Long-billed Starthroat and our first Bay-headed Tanager.

On Barro Colorado we had met Tom Crebbs from Rutgers University in New Jersey, who had been in Panama for several months making a special study of certain finches. Having made arrangements to meet him at 4:30 next morning, we drove with him in his jeep to Cerro Azul about 2,500 feet up in the mountains, some 25 miles east of Panama City along the Panamerican Highway. The country was beautiful and the air was cool, a welcome relief from the heat and humidity of the lowlands. Tom felt the birding was below par but you couldn't prove it by us! A morning's birding yielded a fine list of birds, some outstanding species being Swallow-tailed Kite, Short-tailed Hawk, Plain-breasted Ground-dove, White-collared Swift, Violet-capped and Snowy-breasted Hummingbirds, Yellow-eared Toucanet, Lance-tailed and Golden-collared Manakins, White-eyed Toucanet, Lance-

Tamandua



tailed and Golden-collared Manakins, White-eyed Pygmy-tyrant, Yellow Tyrannulet, Blue-and-white Swallow, Rufous-and-white Wren, Thick-billed Euphonia, Speckled, Silver-throated, Golden-masked, Plain-colored, Bay-headed, Palm, Blue-gray, Crimson-backed, Hepatic and White-shouldered Tanagers; Slate-colored, Variable, Yellow-bellied and Ruddy-breasted Seedeaters.

After lunch Tom took us a few miles further east, along the Panamerican Highway, to the ornithologically famous La Jagua marshes which, without a guide and a four-wheel-drive vehicle we could not have reached. The Panamerican Highway extends only about 38 miles east of Panama City and then ends abruptly at the edge of a dense tropical jungle. Ahead is nothing but nearly 200 miles of impenetrable forest stretching to the border of Colombia and sparsely inhabited by several tribes of Indians who, while not unfriendly, live very primitive lives. Shortly before reaching the end of the highway we turned off into an extensive area of open grassland, following wagon tracks through the grass past shrubby growth and patches of woods. The spectacular Red-breasted Blackbird was everywhere - down in the grass, on wires and fence posts. Every few moments two or three Yellowish Pipits would flush just in front of us. Suddenly, we came upon 18 or 20 Fork-tailed Flycatchers sitting in low shrubs. As we approached, several of them launched into the air, their long scissor like tails streaming behind.

Upon arriving at the edge of the marsh we found several Pied Water-tyrants, their black-and-white pattern making a pretty picture. Soon thereafter we spotted two Banded Tiger-herons, then in the distance a Roseate Spoonbill, while overhead several Yellow-headed Vultures soared lazily. Then a Savannah Hawk flew slowly by and a little later another perched in the open for us, his rufous plumage showing off to good advantage in the bright sun. We had several views, at a distance, of some Scaled Pigeons; a Striped Cuckoo perched quietly while we admired him. Leaving the car and penetrating into a small patch of weeds with considerable undergrowth, we found a pair of Lance-tailed Mana-

Continued on page 78

AUDUBON

Activities

BY OTTO WIDMAN

February 18

At the Conservation Meeting slides on "Wild-life on Our Public Lands" were shown. They were taken by Jim Yoakum for the Bureau of Land Management and the Department of the Interior. Those animals and birds still on our public domain were featured. Notices of our Conservation Meetings have been sent to other organizations in Southern California interested in conservation. Mrs. Betty Jenner has kindly offered free parking to all those attending the Conservation Meeting at the Shrine Auditorium's "California Sportsman's Rally"

February 28

The day at Chatsworth Lake began windy and cold but by noon it was ideal picnic weather. It was also ideal for birds, because the 59 of us counted 70 species as we motorcaded about the lake with many stops. Of particular interest were the Common Mergansers, the Wilson's Snipe, and Dunlin. The swallows have appeared in number--we saw the Tree, Violet-green, and the White-throated Swift. In spite of the lack of food there were 13 different ducks, scaups, teals, plus two different geese--the number alone being limited. Among the sparrows were the Savannah, Lark, Fox and Song. Both American and Lesser Goldfinch were around. We ran the gamut from kinglets to Pheasants, quail to Road-runner. Some were fortunate enough to see the Red-breasted Sapsucker.

Our guests were Everitt Frieman, John Casano from Bellevue, Washington, Miss Malkah Yaari, Stu Shaffer, Stephen Vradenburg, also from Washington, and Walter Johnson. We were glad to have Reg Julian as our leader for the day. As a highlight to the outing 6 deer trotted across the meadow during the afternoon.

March 6

It was a real nice day at El Monte Audubon Center. Paul Howard split up the many people who showed up into three groups of their own choosing, so the thirty members from the Los Angeles Audubon Society did not move about as a group. It was just as well, because when it came to listing the 50 birds, each group added some that the others had not seen. In a barrel on a post near Headquarters a Screech Owl blinked at the many binoculars focused on him. A California Thrasher sang quite a while for us. Sparrows seemed plentiful, including the White- and Golden-crowned, Fox and Lincoln. Swallows were again on our list: Violet-green and Tree. Most exciting for a westerner was the song of the cardinal; and just as we began our walk, the

song came to us quite clear. Because of the lack of water one would not expect shore birds, but Least Sandpipers, Greater Yellow-legs, Pintail and Mallard ducks, Ring-billed Gulls, and Killdeer were seen. The warblers were Orange-crowned, Audubon and Wilson's. We welcome Dorothy Holland to our trips. The Sandmeyers brought Pam Harwood as a guest. We were most happy to see Lee Eppler who has just recovered from his recent illness. Welcome back. March 9

Bill Watson conducted the affairs of the Tuesday Evening Meeting in the absence of President Arnold Small. He called our attention to the situation at Malibu Lagoon. Should it be a marina or a nature center? Two petitions were circulated: one to keep the sale of alcohol out of state parks, the other to save Elysian Park as a recreation area--signing was optional. The reports on bird sightings and trips were of interest. Bob Blackstone gave us a run down on the more interesting birds of the Morro Bay trip. Russ Wilson brought us up to date on the Chatsworth Lake Trip. Irving Woldman pointed out Rock Sandpiper at Marina del Rey. Blue-winged Teal and thousands of Widgeons were at Upper Newport Bay. At the Gun Club inland from the Bay were White-faced Ibis and Rough-legged Hawks. Our guests were Julia H. Dembrowsky, Alta E. Travis, Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Lavergne from Lake Charles, Louisiana, Ed Schell, Dayton, Ohio, and Mr. James Seaman, La Crescenta.

The "Call of the High Country" was exactly that with Mr. and Mrs. James Clements and their sons clinging to sheer surfaces like flies on the wall. In excellent clarity we were able to see our mountain peaks of North America, plus some in Europe. Special attention was given to the Grand Tetons and through his camera we were able to see the country from all angles. All too quickly the beautiful frames of Wood Duck and Golden Eagle were before our eyes and then gone. We could have lingered longer on this excellent work.

March 10

A saga is a story in prose but the "New England Saga" was a story in sheer poetry. At first we saw the many wonders of nature in a vast kaleidoscope of color and movement--all phases parading in the richest of patterns and variations. But nature is not all wonder, for man has brought pollution and death to it. Instead of wringing his hands Dr. Bulger has shown in his second half of the program what can be done about the destruction. Ponds were filled, Wood Duck houses were built, feed planted, brush shelters provided, and soon not only the wildlife returns but the Bloodroot springs up, Jack-in-the-pulpits return and Marsh Marigold cover the banks. Wild game can be restored, fish multiplied far beyond what nature can do, and the soil made prolific to support all life, including man. Dr. Bulger has given hope where others have spread only dismay.



HEADQUARTERS, LIBRARY AND NATURE MUSEUM LOCATED AT AUDUBON HOUSE
 PLUMMER PARK, 7377 SANTA MONICA BLVD., LOS ANGELES 46. 876-0202
 HEADQUARTERS CHAIRMAN: MRS LAPRELLE EDENS
 REGISTRAR OF MEMBERS: MRS RUSSELL WILSON

ARNOLD SMALL, *President*
 MRS. DONALD L ADAMS, *Executive Secretary*

APRIL 1965

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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APRIL

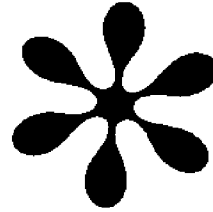
- April 1 THURSDAY EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING 7:30 P.M., Audubon House.
- April 10 SATURDAY FIELD TRIP Arroyo Seco. From the Foothill Freeway take the Oak Grove and Berkshire off ramp. Go north to Oak Grove Park. Bring lunch and meet at 8:00 A.M.
 Leaders: Don and Caroline Adams 372-5536
- April 13 TUESDAY EVENING MEETING 8:00 P.M., Great Hall, Plummer Park. "Tips on Field Identification of Birds", a talk by Eleanor Pugh, Regional Editor of Audubon Field Notes.
 Program Chairman: Don Adams 372-5536
- April 21 WEDNESDAY CONSERVATION MEETING 8:00 P.M., Great Hall, Plummer Park. This meeting will be the first organizational meeting for the Condor Patrol. Here is your chance for YOU to do something about conservation. This project will need many kinds of talents; come and find out how you can help.
 Conservation Chairman: Bill Watson 661-8570
- April 24 SATURDAY, SUNDAY - FIELD TRIP - Morongo Valley and Salton Sea. Meet at 7:00 A.M. Saturday at Covington Park, Morongo Valley, about ten miles north of U.S. 60-70-99 on the Twentynine Palms Highway. Group will camp Saturday night at Finney Lake (about three miles south of Calipatria on California 111, turn left into Imperial State Waterfowl Management Area and follow local signs to Finney Lake). Bring water and a few sticks of wood for a group camp fire. There are motel accommodations in Brawley for those who don't camp.
 Leader: Jim Huffman 372-7124
- May 1 SATURDAY, SUNDAY - FIELD TRIP Morongo Valley and Salton Sea. This will be a repetition of the field trip of April 24-25, with the same instructions as above.
 Leaders: Gene Rose and George Venatta 454-0191
- May 6 THURSDAY EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING 7:30 P.M., Audubon House.
- May 8 SATURDAY - PELAGIC TRIP Leave Oxnard at 7:00 A.M. on the "Old Timer" for offshore birding around the Channel Islands. We should be in the midst of the shear-water migration. Bring lunch and hot drink and don't forget the motion sickness pills. Fare: \$8.00. Make check payable to the Los Angeles Audubon Society and mail to Mr. Dave Robison, 4370 Colfax Ave., Studio City, California. To reach the landing, if traveling the Ventura Freeway, take Vineyard off-ramp, go south on Vineyard to 101A to Gonzales Road. Turn right (west) on Gonzales Road and go to Ventura Road. Turn left (south) on Ventura Road and go to Channel Island Blvd. Turn right (west) and go to West Road, where you turn left (south) and continue to Channel Islands Sportfishing Center. If coming up the coast on 101A, turn left on Dempsey Road, follow this to Oxnard Road and Channel Island Blvd. Follow Channel Island Blvd. to West Road as above.
 Leader: Dave Robison 761-0217

CALENDAR CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

May 8 SATURDAY - FIELD TRIP Santa Clara River bottom and Elizabeth Lake Canyon, Meet at 8:00 A.M. at the first Tip's restaurant on U.S. 99. Bring lunch.

Leader: Russ Wilson 761-7634

THE AUDUBON SCENE
NEWS FROM OTHER SOCIETIES



CONTRIBUTE NOW!

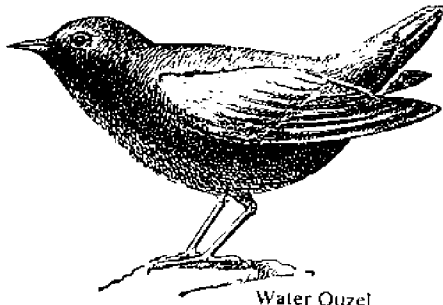
KEEP THE CONDORS FLYING

Michigan Audubon Society will ask the State Legislature to give complete statutory protection to the Upper Peninsula's few remaining timber wolves, making it unlawful to shoot or attempt to kill a wolf by any method at any time. The lone exception would be to protect livestock, and then only with approval of the State Conservation Department.

... an MAS resolution, adopted at the society's 61st annual meeting... noted that Michigan "would thus become the first in the Union with the foresight to grant such protection," Michigan's ancient wolf bounty was removed in 1959, but the survivors may still be slain indiscriminately.

From MICHIGAN AUDUBON NEWSLETTER February-March 1965

Your contributions will be forwarded to the National Audubon Society--earmarked for the Condor Sanctuary. They will help to pay the expense of maintaining wardens there. It is hoped that the contributions will be as generous as they have in past years.



Water Ouzel

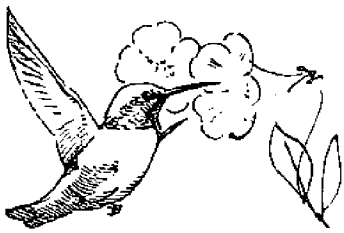
The Maricopa Audubon Society (Phoenix, Arizona) calls attention to threats to the survival of the Saguaro. It seems that over-grazing has caused erosion, which in turn robs the giant cactus of the protection afforded by smaller desert plants. Also predator control programs have caused a decrease in the population of coyotes and other predators, which in turn has led to an increase in the rodents which attack the root systems of the Saguaro.

From THE ROADRUNNER March 1965

- Do you know someone who would be interested in belonging to the Audubon Society?

Full information will be sent to them if you'll give us names and addresses we'll do the rest ...

- Send them to
LOS ANGELES
AUDUBON SOCIETY
7377 Santa Monica Blvd.
Los Angeles 46, Calif.
Attn: Marion Wilson



A Visit to TUCKER BIRD SANCTUARY

by Hiram Beebe

Mrs. Beebe and I were lucky last week, as our two relatives from Minneapolis wished to see the Tucker Bird Sanctuary, and on March 12th we were surprised and so pleased to enjoy the many improvements made by Paul and Helen Colburn.

First noticed was the labelling of the many native shrubs along the path from the parking lot to the viewing porch. These are on stiff cards mounted at an angle on sticks--much easier to read than the labels which George Hastings and I put on some years ago.

Also Paul has transplanted natives from other areas of Modjeska Canyon along the path with the sages, lemonade bush, wild tobacco and the red-barked manzanita, etc., which have always been there. These are all easily observed from the path, can be studied, and it is a real adventure in recognizing them. All these natives would have greatly pleased Theodore Payne.

The turn-around plot in the parking lot has been landscaped and named "Theodore Payne Garden". Would it not be wonderful to have a statue of him examining a California plant in this garden? At least thirty natives are growing thriftily in this plot, including the beautiful blue ceanothus. Adding to the general look of stability and dignity is the landscaping along the north side of the parking lot--again with native shrubs, and labelled.

Yes, we saw birds--about 20 California Quail climbing all over and feeding in feeder B, and on the ground. Californians named them "Valley Quail" but nationally they are "California", and also the national name for our Spotted or San Diego Diego Towhee is "Rufous-sided Towhee" which were also present.

A few scrub jays added their brilliant blue to the 30 or more birds feeding plus Mourning Doves Doves, which by the way, here have a slight reddish tinge as compared with the pronounced gray

of those in the midwest.

The placing of 1 1/2 inch mesh wire around Feeder C has made it selective--no jays, doves or quail can feed there, nor can the raccoons, who at night used to riddle the food supply. Many of the birds evidently are residents as they flash through the mesh without stopping--House Finches, White Crowns, Golden Crowns, and our old friends (?), English Sparrows. Don Follett, who has been helping some days free, showed me a Fox Sparrow and also a Lincoln's.

Georgia Ware's old walnuts in center of Feeder C seemed especially to attract the Fox Sparrows. Perhaps the darker reddish color helped, compared with the gray and lemon of most grains. Mr. Colburn is still seeking relief from the cost of chicken and hen scratch. Gifts of old fruits and nuts are most welcome.

Titmice were scurrying about and we were privileged to see an Audubon Warbler, and a rare sight--three Rufous Hummingbirds at or near the feeders--flashes of near red through the tree branches. The resident Anna Hummingbirds are always a reliable delight.

Hours for viewing the birds are 10:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. More careful observations and more pleasure can be secured on other days than Saturdays and Sundays when the larger crowds obscure the views. However, the mission of Audubon members is to interest others in nature and its preservation. How easier can young people become interested and thrilled than with actual close observance of birds at Tucker.



THE WESTERN Tanager

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY

7377 SANTA MONICA BLVD., LOS ANGELES 46, CALIFORNIA
FREE TO MEMBERS OTHERS \$1.50 ANNUALLY

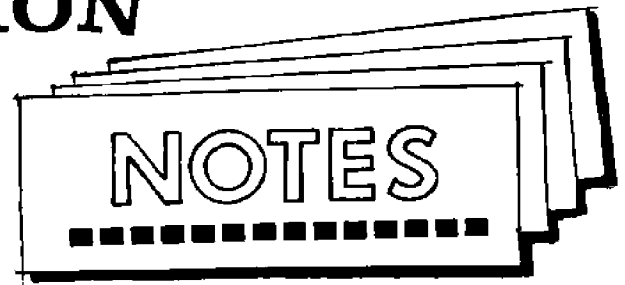
Observation Blind Dedicated at Audubon Center

New at Audubon Center of Southern California is their observation blind, which was dedicated during Conservation Week. Though not yet fully completed, this is now in use. It consists of a room, one side of which is screened and faces a patio with bird feeders and a little pool. One sits in the dimly lighted room to observe the birds unobserved, as at Tucker Sanctuary. Funds for this project were donated by the El Monte Junior Women's Club.

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CONSERVATION

By
**BILL
WATSON**



Since I became the Conservation Chairman of the Los Angeles Audubon Society I have learned many things. Probably the most important lesson I learned was that a lone conservation chairman, a lone executive board, a lone national organization, or a lone President of the United States can do nothing to accomplish the aims of conservation.

Take the Elysian Park problem as an example. At our last board meeting, everyone's sympathy was in favor of keeping the convention center out of the park. So we all passed resolution to go on record with the Los Angeles City Council stating our opposition to using the "free land" in Elysian Park as a site for a convention center.

The very next weekend, as I was instructed by the Board, I sat down and wrote a letter transmitting our resolution to the City Council. I even sent copies to Mayor Yorty, to Stanley Fox, who is the President of the Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners, and various councilmen.

In reply, the Council voted 10 to 4 to condemn the park land for a quasi-commercial use that would benefit only a few. The only reply that I have received yet was a letter written to me as Conservation Chairman by the Secretary of the Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners. In the letter are such defeatist and irrational statements as this:

"If the Convention Center is built within Elysian Park, the amount of usable land for public recreation will greatly exceed the amount of space that presently exists. This will be mainly due to the fact that areas not previously opened to the public will be developed as the result of private funds that will be given to the City for better relocation of facilities. Also, new water pumping equipment will bring water to many areas of the Park where it was not previously available, thus creating more usable land."

Frankly, rationalization such as this frightens me. But my main point is to show you that the combined weight of a resolution by your Executive Board and a letter written by your Conservation Chairman had absolutely no effect upon anyone. I could correspond ad infinitum with our city officials and still make no impression whatever. Do you know why?

The reason is that everyone knows that a resolution from any organization is speaking for only six or a dozen board members, and not necessarily for every individual member of the organization. If a labor union officially

takes a stand on some issue, we all know that many individual members may absolutely disagree with their leadership's stand. Why should it be different for a conservation organization?

For your Los Angeles Audubon Society to be really effective, the voices of each individual member who feels as your Board feels should be heard. There are two ways in which you can make your voices heard. You can write letters and appear at hearings. Now some of you say that you don't have time to write letters or that it is too hard. Some of you do make the effort and write. I know because you show me copies of your letters or the replies you received. But this is only a few. And, if it is hard to write a letter for conservation, believe me, it is infinitely more difficult to find the time to attend a hearing. Furthermore, it is easier to attend a hearing than it is to get up and testify at a hearing. These are fundamental truths.

But, if we really intend to do our part as a conservation organization to save those features of America that we love so much, we must become dedicated letter writers. We must realize that no one will pay any attention to us if we are not represented in numbers at hearings.

Until we have this kind of organization, we are going to be ignored and ineffective.



"But what'll we do when we run out of parks?"



NEW MEMBERS

New Habitat Displays At Audubon House

Mrs. Mary V. Hood, who has recently completed the beautiful habitat groups in the entrance hall at Audubon House, for which Vernon Mangold painted the backgrounds, is now at work planning new exhibits as well as refurbishing the old. She has four birds to be mounted (these are birds which were found dead of accidental causes). Mr. Otis Wade generously donated \$15 for the mounting of one, a Sharp-shinned Hawk. Further donations toward this work would be very much appreciated by Mrs. Hood and by the Society.

Morongo Valley Flower Guide Now Available

Members thinking about the upcoming Morongo Valley field trips might well be reminded that there's a book--"Guide to Morongo Valley Wildflowers", by Kobaly and Elliott, for sale at Audubon House. The book sells for \$2.00 plus tax. It has a good deal of useful information, not only about flora but also about the area as a whole.

- Mrs. Lucy Dalmas
1975 N. Alexandria, Los Angeles
- Mr. Christopher Feeney
627 D. East Palmer, Glendale
- Mr. Richard Hawthorne
2731 Waverly Drive, Los Angeles
- Mr. & Mrs. Holbert Hendrix & Susan
1721 Ryan Avenue, Las Vegas
- Mr. & Mrs. Donald J. MacDonald
26 Rugby Road, Manhasset, New York
- Mrs. Philip A. Reynolds
561 S. Orange Grove Ave., Los Angeles

- **Deceased****
- Mr. Leon S. Griswold Local Life since 1931
 - Mr. H. E. White National and Local " 1945



Audubon House Has New Chairs

Six chairs, for which members and friends donated Blue Chip Stamps, have been acquired and may now be seen and used at Audubon House. Many thanks again to those who donated stamps for this purpose.

Alma Stultz Memorial

The recent death of Alma Stultz, the first Director and developer of the Audubon Center of Southern California, has brought letters from many of her friends expressing a desire to contribute to an "Alma Stultz Memorial Fund".

This is to advise, that plans have been made to erect a commemorative plaque at the Center in recognition of her lasting contributions to nature education.

Those wishing to participate in the plan may do so by sending contributions to the Audubon Center of Southern California 1000 North Durfee Avenue El Monte - California 91733. Checks should be made payable to the National Audubon Society and designated for this Fund.

William N. Goodall
Western Representative

Theodore Payne Foundation Annual Luncheon May 8th.

The Theodore Payne Foundation Annual Luncheon will be at the Pepper Mill, 795 E. Walnut, Pasadena, at noon on Saturday May 8. The lecturer will be Mrs. Mildred Finch Brown, of Laguna, who will show slides from her collection of 650 natives. Cost of the luncheon will be \$2.50. For more information contact The Theodore Payne Foundation, 2311 Dorothy Street, La Crescenta, California. Telephone: 248-3273.

BIRDS

By Arnold Small

As this is written, winter birds still inhabit our area, but spring migrants are on the move. Small flocks of Turkey Vultures were netted moving along the Santa Monica Mountains during the first week of March. Both Allen's and Rufous Hummingbirds began appearing in lowland areas by the end of February and many of the wintering waterfowl had already departed for the north by the first week in March.

An extremely early Barn Swallow was seen at Upper Newport Bay on February 28. Although scarce elsewhere, Western Grebes gathered in two large flocks near Venice Pier during the winter according to C. V. Maynard. A female Hooded Merganser was at the quarry in Tujunga Wash, March 13 and added to the growing list of sightings of this species for this winter. A few Rough-legged Hawks were still to be found near the El Tore Marine Base in Orange County during March.

While birding in the immediate vicinity of Los Angeles was rather on the dull side, Guy McCaskie found a number of things of more than casual interest near the south end of the Salton Sea and in the San Diego area. On January 23, near the south end of the Salton Sea he and Duane Carmony located at least 10 Lapland Longspurs and a single Chestnut-collared Longspur among a large flock of Horned Larks. Following this up the next weekend, he and Alan Craig found at least 20 Lapland Longspurs, 1 Chestnut-collared Longspur, and 2 McCown's Longspurs in the same field! By February 13, only a few Lapland Longspurs remained in the field. He also reported that the Curve-billed Thrasher was still at the Salton Sea National Wildlife Refuge Headquarters on Feb. 3. Other birds of note found by McCaskie in the Salton Sea area included a female Old-squaw near Red Hill January 23 and 30, an adult Western Gull (very rare away from the coast), a female Black and White Warbler near Ramer Lake, and three different American Redstarts.

He also reported that birding in the San Diego area was fairly good, producing such birds as 2 Palm Warblers, 5 American Golden Plovers, and 4 Louisiana Herons. A few Western Tanagers are wintering in the San Diego area, as well as a lone Summer Tanager. A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (immature) was found in the Tijuana River valley on February 22 by Alan Craig and remained for some time. Elsewhere, almost three hundred Surf-birds were at the Playa del Rey breakwaters, but the Rock Sandpiper reported there by David Gaines was found by only a very few people. The American Oyster-catcher at Avila was still there during March, and is a very fine bird for this area.

By April 1st the migrants should be moving through in good numbers and look for the departure of wintering ducks, and the arrival of Violet-

green and Cliff Swallows as well as some early orioles. Wintering shorebirds and sparrows will be departing and migrant loons should be seen along the coast.

PANAMA BIRDING TRIP

Continued ...

kins engaged in their animated courtship performance and making some very unbirdlike sounds. In this same spot we saw our first Buff-rumped Warbler and then had the great good fortune to flush a Rufous Nightjar. This last-named bird we followed, flushing it several times, and thus had excellent views of it.

At the marsh we kept hearing a strange call which Tom said was made by the Pale-breasted Spinetail, a member of the Ovenbird family (Furnariidae), not even remotely related to our ovenbird of the warbler group. Although we heard the call all around us, we could not get even a glimpse of one of the birds until some time later, when we ran across one perched out in the open. In this same area we also got our first look at still one more tanager, the Fulvous-vented Euphonia, one of the many small tropical members of this family. Our list for the day came to 102 species and 32 of these were new for us!

The following morning we were up at 4 a.m. to meet Tom again. As he was going to leave us soon after lunch, we drove our little hired car to the town of Gamboa about fifteen miles north of Panama City on the bank of the Chagres River. We met him there and, because of his ornithological activities, he had a key to the U. S. Naval Pipeline Reserve outside Gamboa. Here we spent the entire morning with the gate locked behind us and free from all traffic. The road is merely a dirt track running through beautiful woodlands and across several small streams. Here we added to our growing list the Black Hawk-eagle, Chestnut-winged Chachalaca, Blue-headed Parrot, Pied Puff bird, Buff-throated Foliage gleaner, Rufous Mourner Black-crowned Tityra, Long-tailed Tyrant, Yellow-billed Cacique and Yellow-rumped Tanager.

After lunch at the Gamboa Golf Club Tom left us and we headed north to Colon on Panama's Atlantic coast, at the north end of the canal. Here we stayed at the Hotel Washington, supposedly the best place in Colon and that wasn't saying much. (This narrative will be resumed in the second, and final, article which is scheduled to appear in the next issue of the Western Tanager.)