

A June Day in Yosemite Valley



or, Birds Are Where You Find Them, But It Doesn't Hurt
To Be In The Right Place At The Right Time...

By BETTY JENNER

The first voice of the dawn chorus is the lazy drawl of Wood Pewee. Stars still glitter through the pine branches as he makes a few tentative remarks, then settles into his wheezy up-and-down song in earnest, obviously convinced that he is the world's premier vocalist. Then a Robin joins in, and another, and then all the Black-headed Grosbeaks, until all the forest is filled with warbling --over us, around us, through our half-wakefulness as we burrow deeper into our sleeping bags, this rather chilly June morning on the bank of Yosemite's Tenaya Creek. As we drift back to sleep, we are aware that the Steller's Jays' strident voices are joining the chorus.

Daylight has slipped in over Half Dome when we next awake -- a jay is impatient for a snack, and hops along on my sleeping bag. Let him wait -- we can do some more birding before getting out of our snug cocoons. Brown Creepers are circling the trunks of the great Ponderosa pines of our campground. Attempts to put a bird's song into words are usually unsatisfactory, but for the rhythm of Brown Creepers' song we might say: a high-pitched "tea-tea-teadlee-dee-tea. Western Tanager is warbling languidly in a pine top, and remarking "pur-dink." The nasal tone of Red-breasted Nuthatch can be heard-- and who is singing hesitantly in the higher branches as he searches for food -- who but Solitary Vireo? His cousins, the Warbling Vireos, are scolding and warbling brightly in 6/8 time. That loud tapping on a dead limb is a tiny Downy Woodpecker, leading a young one on an insect-hunting expedition. A few hundred yards away the young White-headed Woodpecker is keeping up a continual nagging for food in the nest-hole about ten feet up in a dead snag; both parents are kept busy from daybreak till dark, trying to satisfy the everlasting hunger.

Speaking of food -- let's get up and have a batch of hotcakes! What a pleasure to do kitchen chores in the out-of-doors. We watch a doe step daintily through the mint in the meadow. We must check every plate and pan for tiny spiderlings who are constantly drifting in on their thread parachutes. So intense is their hunger, that for want of a better meal they will devour the next-weakest sibling. Klunk, pow! No, it's not Batman, it's our resident gray squirrel in the branches high above --she's harvesting ripe pine cones, and when one drops on a parked car, it sounds like bombardment.

Here on a furrowed cottonwood trunk is a large black ant, twisting, nipping at her wings. No nonsense here about prolonging the delights of flight and midair mating; she must start her colony, so, off come her wings as fast as she can manage.

The 8 a.m. "ride" of about sixty horses is coming along the bridle path from the nearby stables. To you and me the horses look like slow, reluctant old nags, but to that small boy in cowboy hat and boots, his mount is a galloping steed, the finest thing in horseflesh.

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The Red-winged Blackbirds fly to our campground from their reed patch -- each male gives a ringing cry, "I'm here!" as he lands. Several male Brown-headed Cowbirds are courting an indifferent female; they drag their wings and puff out their feathers, but she pretends not to notice.

What is that tiny trilling and warbling, like nothing we've ever heard? It's a Black-headed Grosbeak courting his lady with this exquisite whispered song, and he too drags his wing like a little turkey.

Kingfisher rattles along the creek, and Song Sparrow can be heard from the blackbirds' reeds across Tenaya Creek. Red-shafted Flicker's scimitar call cuts the air; and in the air high above us is the incessant scolding of White-throated Swifts. That warbler in the azalea bush is a MacGillivray's, but which one is that, flitting about in high pine branches? When we catch him in the binoculars, we find that he is a Hermit, probably en route to the high country.

We'll take a five-mile walk this morning, following the bridle path to Mirror Lake, around the Lake, and back to camp. At our first stop we put the scope on the Pygmy Owl nest, about thirty feet up in a slender oak. Sure enough, three little owl faces are looking out at us from the nest hole, and we can hear Mother's two clear notes and her warning twittering as she flies in with a blue skink in her big talons.

Our next stop is to check on the Dipper nest by the creek. Father and Mother Water Ouzel take turns bringing food to the mossy nest on the boulder face, stuffing it into one of the four gaping red mouths and then leaving, all in a matter of seconds.

As we start on the woodsy path around the lake, breathing deeply the scent of sun-warmed pine needles and leaf mold, we stop to marvel at the Dome Spider's amazing web. *Allepeira conferta* is a plain-looking little spider, but is a marvellous architect, building a perfect dome; underneath the dome is a maze of threads to trap the prey. The dome catches prismatic colors from the sun and is as impressive in its fragile way as are the great granite domes of the Park.

Last fall the oaks produced a bumper crop of acorns; little inch-high oak trees are as thick as moss. The acorns that haven't sprouted are great treat for those two young bucks ahead of us near the path. See that one nuzzle the ground for an acorn, then daintily munch it, rolling it over and over in his mouth as he calmly looks around.

Occasionally we cross dry watercourses. These can become raging streams when a cloudburst occurs over the hard surfaces of Half Dome which now looms above us to our right. Most of the warblers we hear now are Nashvilles, and constantly we are hearing the songs of Robin, Black-headed Grosbeak, and Warbling Vireo. The "wheet, wheet" of Spotted Sandpiper comes from the lake's edge. A dramatic change of vegetation occurs when we are well into the shadow of Half Dome; instead of the Sierra, we might well be in the Olympics, for we are in the twilight of a rain forest community -- large leaf maple, dogwood, cedar, Douglas fir; indirect sunlight filters through to the green carpet of little shade-loving plants. Here we see Oregon Junco; here is a family of Winter Wrens and we are lucky enough to hear the male's interminable high warbling. We have a quick glimpse of a Chestnut-backed Chickadee, and faintly hear the upward-welling flute tones of Swainson's Thrush. Western Flycatcher, Wood Pewee, Tanager -- all join the chorus.

Past a silent battleground where great numbers of spindly young Douglas firs are competing for the available space and sunlight, we cross the creek and start the return trip. Marshy habitat gives us Song Sparrow, Yellow Warbler, Bullock's Oriole, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker -- and what is that infernal racket? It's a young Pileated Woodpecker, sitting at the edge of his oval nest hole, calling for his parents to bring him more food.

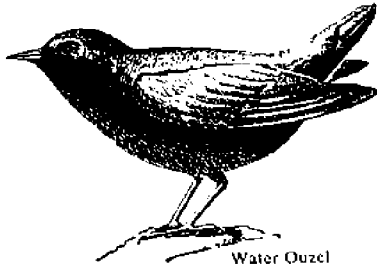
A long sinuous shape slides across the path; it's a western diamondback rattler, relaxed, at peace with the world. It drapes its length over a rotted log by the side of the path, and we watch as the black ants, their path along the log blocked, go up and over the snake's body. We study its geometric skin design, and it studies us by flicking its tongue to learn our odor. "Hurry," we urge it. "Get off that log -- the next people to come along may not be friendly. How do you hurry a rattler?"

As we are returning to camp we hear Canyon Wren's descending laughter against the rock cliff. We watch Bandtail Pigeons flying two by two. We're hungry, and move a little faster now. Shall we be lazy and just watch the birds around camp this afternoon; or shall we go to Big Meadow for Western Bluebirds and Purple Finches; or to Gin Flat for Townsend's Solitaires, Cassin's Finches, and the matchless song of Hermit Thrush; to May Lake for Goshawk and Mountain Bluebird; or to Tuolumne Meadows for Evening Grosbeaks and Pine Siskins; or Saddlebag Lake for Gray-crowned Rosy Finches? First we'll have a gourmet lunch. Who cares what it is -- it will taste delicious -- we're starving.

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Water Ouzel

The metallic note of Dipper can be heard over the creek's rippling. Mother Dipper is showing a young one how to walk under water to find larvae. The youngster has lost interest, for on a tree trunk overhanging the water is a young White-headed Woodpecker, whose mother is trying to show him how to get insects that are hidden under bark. For a long moment the two immatures look at each other, sensing some common interest, as you have seen two children stare at each other from supermarket carts. The mothers call, and the vitally serious lessons resume.

Shall we drive to Badger Pass to add to our "Park List" for the year? Lazuli Bunting, Calliope Hummer, Mountain Quail, Lincoln's Sparrow may be seen here; and farther on, at Camas Meadow, we'll see Pine Grosbeak. Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker may be found near Bridalveil Campground, and the diurnal Great Gray Owl at Peregoy Meadow. Still farther, at Glacier Point, we may see Blue Grouse or at least hear the booming. We might stay all evening at this spectacular point, watching the Alpenglow fade on the peaks of the High Country, toasting ourselves at the red-fir-bark bonfire which will become "Firefall," watching the lights appear as darkness fills the Valley. When at 9:30 the bonfire is slowly pushed over the cliff, we won't see much of the firefall, but we enjoy the musical tinkling of the red-hot coals as they bounce down the rocky cliff....



R.S.

We're procrastinating--it's just too pleasant here in camp to leave. Put the scope on the nest of Gray Squirrel, thirty feet up in a bole of a tall cottonwood; the Mother is trying to coax her three rather ratty-looking young ones to leave the cozy nest hole and climb to the "summer home," a platform-nest of twigs in another tree. She demonstrates how to jump from the home tree to a branch of the next one. Awkwardly, the first baby squirrel manages the jump, but the second youngster misses the branch and falls thirty feet to the ground. Like a puff of gray smoke, the mother reaches the ground in an instant; the baby isn't hurt, and she leads him up the tree-trunk to the new home. What is that flash of yellow in the high branches - a warbler? No, it's the big yellow tiger swallowtail butterfly. He's as big as a warbler.

Let's walk over towards Ahwanee Fall for firewood. On the way we can stop a moment by the patriarch of all Ponderosa pines of the Valley -- a great tree of nearly six feet in diameter at eye level. The trunk tapers very little; we look up the warm brown column and consider what tremendous changes have taken place since this tree was a tiny seedling. Farther on, another sight makes us think of days long gone: "potholes" made by Indian women on a flat granite boulder for the purpose of grinding acorns; the meal when properly leached was the basis of their daily bread. See the one pothole that is much smaller than the others; do you suppose it was for some little girl, so that she might "help Mother"?

Still farther, we can reach out and literally touch a mountain; the granite cliff rises from the ground by the trail, and we can see the innumerable forms of vegetation on the seemingly bare stone. Lichens, mosses, Indian Paintbrush, little pines and oaks --wherever there is a crevice to hold soil, it supports life.

Back at our camp, as twilight approaches, the robins sound their alarm notes: "It's getting dark! The owls are coming!" Little bats twitter over the meadow. Half Dome is bathed in a pink glow.

This evening we'll have a campfire and invite over the young couple who sing and play the guitar so well; we'll have popcorn and cocoa, and watch "Firefall."

In the city, we have a friend who says, "Oh, I never go to Yosemite; there's nothing to do there."

Maybe he's right. There's nothing to do there. Nothing but living.

The White Mountains

by DAVID A. GAINES

On the northeast side of the Owens Valley, and directly across from the Sierra Nevada, loom the White Mountains. The Whites do not command the awe of the Sierra. They are gentler mountains, less steep, not scarred by glaciers. Except for several deep canyons cut by streams, the White Mountains could pass as a series of tall hills, very tall hills in fact, for White Mountain Park is but two hundred feet lower than Whitney. The Whites are a combination of arctic, desert and forest. A gently rolling plateau forms their crest, upon which grow scattered groups of Bristlecone Pine. Some of these stunted and gnarled trees are over five thousand years old, the oldest living things on earth. Upon the windswept gravel of the upper slopes grow tiny alpine plants, flowers, fungi, and lichens. Only twenty miles to the west of this strange, highland desert, the precipitous east side of the Sierra rises to over fourteen thousand feet. A spectacular panorama is afforded of mountain, ice, and snow.

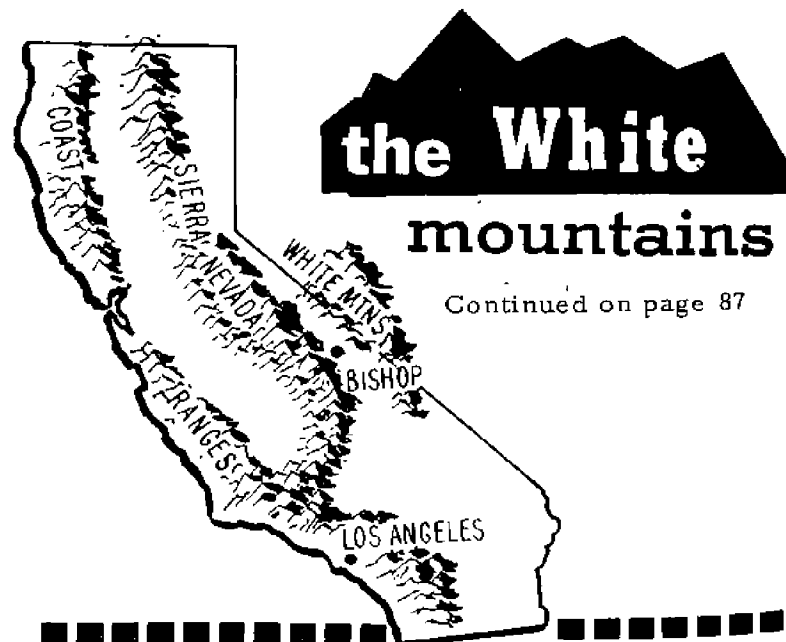
The White Mountains excel in both birds and scenery. Best time to plan a trip is from late May through September as the weather is usually pleasant and summering birds inhabit the canyons. For some of the best land-birding anywhere in the state, however, plan your trip in June or September and spend time at the Deep Springs College (more about Deep Springs below). There are no camping facilities or stores anywhere in the White Mountains so plan to come prepared.

To reach the White Mountains, drive north through the Owens Valley to Big Pine. From Big Pine the Westgard Pass road winds east over the Whites and into Nevada. While ascending the steep and narrow road to Westgard Pass, do not neglect to look across the valley at the jagged, glacier-clad Sierra. At Cedar Flat near Westgard Pass a large sign marks the turnoff to the Bristlecone. The pinyon-juniper habitat in this area provides a home for the Gray Flycatcher and the Pinon Jay. If you take the turnoff to the Bristlecone you will continue up into the White Mountains, attaining an elevation of over twelve thousand feet (at the locked gate). If you go straight, you will descent into Deep Springs Valley. Both of these areas are of interest, the former for its scenery, the latter more for its birds.

From Cedar Flat, a graded dirt road ascends the crest of the White Mountains. Probably the finest example of a Bristlecone Pine forest is that at the Schulman Grove. Here, trails take the visitor to the oddest and oldest of these ancient trees. Dusky Flycatchers, Red Crossbills, Williamson's Sapsuckers, Nuthatches, Creepers, Nutcrackers, and other montane species abound in the forest. More surprising are both Oregon and Gray-

headed Juncos. The two species seem to interbreed quite freely. Mountain Bluebirds are abundant throughout the Whites. For those more intrepid explorers with vehicles that will stand the strain, the trip down Wyman Canyon is recommended. The Wyman Canyon Road (if you can call it a road) descends sharply to the east. It intersects the Bristlecone Pine road several miles above Schulman Grove. Take it at your own risk! A permanent stream flows down the lower part of the willow-lined canyon. Here is one of the few California localities where one may see Virginia's Warblers in breeding plumage and hear the loud buzzing of Broad-tailed Hummingbirds. Both of these species nest. Numerous other birds have been seen in the canyon including a sight record of a singing Veery (no state specimen) and the first state record of the Black-throated Green Warbler. When the road forks near the bottom of the canyon, be sure to take the right fork away from the stream--the other road becomes impassible. The Wyman Canyon road joins the Westgard Pass road at Deep Springs, our next topic of discussion.

Deep Springs and the Oasis Ranch (ten miles farther east) could be called the finest areas for land birds in the state of California. Located in arid desert on the west side of the Great Basin, these two oases often have astounding numbers of western migrants, as well as eastern "strays" Of the two areas, Deep Springs seems to be the better, possibly because it is more concentrated. A two-year college with an enrollment of thirty to fifty students, Deep Springs is located in one of the driest, most isolated places in the United States. It includes a ranch, irrigation ditches, fields and trees, and as such, attracts every bird within miles. Concentrations of Orioles, Tanagers, Buntings, Flycatchers, Warblers and Vireos can be truly fantastic. Even more fantastic in the list of the "less usual" birds to have been seen here. These include Dickcissel, Summer Tanager, Eastern Kingbird,



Continued on page 87

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MAY 1966						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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- April 30 SATURDAY-SUNDAY EXTRA FIELD TRIP -- Morongo Valley and the high desert. 7:00 a.m. - meet in Covington Park, Morongo Valley (about 10 miles north of Interstate #10, on 29 Palms Hiway). The trip is designed for those wishing to remain in the Morongo area. We plan on spending Saturday night somewhere in the high desert. Motels are available in Desert Hot Springs, Yucca Valley, 29 Palms, etc. Those camping may wish to stay at Indian Cove, Joshua Tree Nat'l Monument, about 5 miles west of 29 Palms. Bring own water and firewood. Sunday's plans may include a return to Morongo Valley and perhaps Whitewater Canyon.

Leader: Shirley Wells 757-5049
- May 1
- May 5 THURSDAY-EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING-7:30 p.m. Audubon House
- May 10 TUESDAY - EVENING MEETING - 8:00 p.m. Great Hall, Plummer Park. Election of next year's officers. Color slides of Yosemite scenes, with appropriate bird photos from Audubon House files. No "message" in this program, just an appetizer for approaching vacation time.
 Program Chairman: Don Adams 372-5536
- May 14 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 (9 miles north of junction with U.S. 6).

Leader: Bill Watson 661-8570
- May 22 SUNDAY - FIELD TRIP - Devil's Punch Bowl. Meet in the parking lot at the Punch Bowl at 8:00 a.m. To find the area, take U.S. 6 to the Littlerock and Pearblossom cutoff. In Pearblossom, turn right and follow the signs to the Devil's Punch Bowl. This is a new birding area for us which we hope to find interesting. We plan to take the walk down into the Punch Bowl to the cottonwood-lined stream. It might be wise to wear a hat for the sun might be hot.

Leaders: Russ and Marion Wilson 761-7635
- June 2 THURSDAY - EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING-7:30 p.m., Audubon House
- June 11 SATURDAY-FIELD TRIP - Buckhorn Flats

Leader: Russ Wilson - 761-7635
- June 14 TUESDAY - EVENING MEETING-8:00 p.m., Plummer Park

Always bring binoculars and lunch to field trips. Please, no pets and no collecting.

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

1416 NINTH STREET
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814



March 7, 1966

To All Participants in the Condor Census:

In appreciation for your participation in the condor survey conducted on October 16 and 17, 1965, I would like to present you with this certificate of appreciation on behalf of the Department of Fish and Game. Without the efforts of people like yourself the survey could not have been the success that it was.

The Condor Survey Committee has submitted a report on this survey for publication in the "California Fish and Game" quarterly. A brief summary of the survey results as submitted is as follows:

Sixty-nine stations were manned by 98 observers on October 16, 1965. Observers from 16 stations reported 48 condor sightings. Eliminating duplicate sightings, this total was reduced to 33 individual birds: 1 juvenile, 2 juveniles or immatures, 2 immatures, 3 sub-adults, 22 adults, and 3 of unknown age.

On October 17, 1965, the second day of the survey, 63 stations were manned by 91 observers. Sixteen observers reported 58 condor sightings. Eliminating duplicate sightings, this total was reduced to 38 individual birds: 2 juveniles, 1 immature, 6 sub-adults, 17 adults, and 12 of unknown age.

The larger of the two counts, October 17, 1965, was the more reliable population index. Due to prevailing weather conditions, condor activity was thought to be more nearly normal on that date.

This count is not represented as an estimation of the total condor population. The two-day survey was in effect two surveys, designed to arrive at a population index. Such a survey, when conducted annually, will give reliable indication of trends. This information is needed in the conservation and management of this rare and endangered species.

Thank you again for your participation in the condor survey. I am sure the condor will be enjoyed by future generations when so many people are doing so much for such a worth-while cause.

Sincerely,

W. J. Shannon

Director

Enclosure

YOUR HELP WANTED

With the possibility of my illustrating a book of bird photographs, I would like to ask help in locating active birds' nests to enable me to round out my collection of pictures. Rest assured that I take great care to not overly disturb the birds or endanger them needlessly. Feel free to write or call me collect, preferably in the evenings, if you know the whereabouts of any bird, anywhere in Southern California, building a nest, incubating eggs or feeding young at the nest. I will travel fair distances, usually on weekends, to get what I need.

The information needed is: the exact location of the nest, name of the species, what is the bird nesting in (tree, on the ground, house, etc.) and how high from the ground is the nest. Please do not be disappointed if I do not respond to some of the calls, as I have photographed already a good number of the common birds such as House Finch, Mockingbird, Scrub Jay, Flicker, Mourning Dove, Brewers Blackbird, etc. However, there are some common birds such as Meadowlark, Song Sparrow, Screech Owl and others that I still need. If in doubt, check with me.

Should you discover a nest while out birding, I would appreciate your keeping me in mind and notifying me as soon as possible.

Herb Clarke
2027 El Arbolita Drive
Glendale, Calif. 91208

PHONE: Area Code 213 - CH. 9-5537

Please find your March issue of "Tanager", turn to Russ Wilson's article on the second page, and in the fourth paragraph make correction of a typographical error. It should read, "There were 111 verified sightings." Thank you.

The White Mountains

CONTINUED

Eastern Phoebe, American Redstart, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Black-and-White Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, Catbird, Chestnut-collared Longspur, McCown's Longspur, Tree Sparrow, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Indigo Bunting! Seen on relatively few visits by relatively few people, this list just hints at what still remains to be found. Most of these birds were in easy-to-recognize spring plumage. Some species, such as Redstart, tend to be fairly common! Certainly Deep Springs is well worth a visit by the travelling birdwatcher.

It is to be hoped that more birders will take advantage of the unique qualities of the White Mountains of eastern California. For those with a taste for exploring, for visiting areas of rare, isolated beauty, for seeing ancient trees and alpine deserts, for spotting birds found nowhere else in California, the White Mountains are obviously the place to go.

Again, It's Later Than You Think

Reporting on the Christmas count, the Massachusetts Audubon Society said, "There were no Black-crowned Night Herons on Cape Cod, an area which in the past was an important wintering ground. Many naturalists believe that pesticides have almost wiped out the species in New England."

In Los Angeles on March 21, Dr. M. M. Hargraves, a Mayo Clinic physician, in speaking at a special conference on environmental health by the California Medical Assn., revealed that he has seen hundreds of cases of leukemia, aplastic anemia, Hodgkin's disease and a variety of blood destruction diseases which appear to be related to pesticides exposure.

Dr. Hargraves said that individuals who react to pesticides in this way probably have individual idiosyncrasies in their chemical makeup which make them susceptible. He adds that the public should be advised of the suspicion that repeated exposure to pesticides in the home and on the farm could lead to possible chronic or fatal illness.

May we dare to hope that if compassion for wildlife carries no weight in the fight against careless use of pesticides, concern for human life may accomplish the desired result.

Surely our vaunted civilization can find a solution. At a recent pest control conference in Washington, D. C., LaMont C. Cole of Cornell University said: The common practice of growing vast acreages of a single crop makes pest problems almost unavoidable.... In Germany hedgerows between fields increase grain yields and reduce moisture evaporation. These hedges provide homes for the birds, mammals and insects that can control the natural pest populations.... The added costs of such diversified farming might be offset by the savings farmers would realize on unneeded pesticides.



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AUDUBON ACTIVITIES

By Otto Widman

March 8 TUESDAY EVENING MEETING

I have the difficult task of converting a picture media into a word media and I don't have thousands. One, to describe what I have seen, is fantastic fantastically beautiful. A trip into a "Japanese garden" where the camera crept between the branches and past the statuary and along pebbled water ways, or a trip to "Simon Rodia's precious towers" a beauty that he alone could conceive which others only could photograph but in such a way to show the loving care that created every nook and aperture. "Don't Walk" is a trip down an asphalt lane - Anylane U.S.A. - just to see what has been done to it. Don't Walk, ride! From vintage car to modern, all aspects, all colors, all roads & conditions, to the speedway and zooming cars to the graveyards of demolished cars - to night scenes, exposure shots the streaming colors of two-way traffic, blurred, composite, beautiful the way life is, the way it is seen, registered by some, caught by the camera by very few, caught magnificently by Jerry Campbell. In "Free Enterprise U.S.A." he leaves the road and follows progress as it takes the landscape and bends it to its will, and what a bending! - the road, the housing developments, the eventual slum where the hillside or meadow once was; the word is "free" Jerry Campbell has a nice way of shoving the slide off slowly and slowly entering the next theme all done to music taken from stereotapes, every note in perfect unison with hundreds of frames, timed in their showing to perfection. The trip through the Japanese thunder shower and into the moonlight cricket serenade was breath-taking. The wild music that accompanied the Watt's Towers seemed to express the wildness in Rodia's mind that made him build ever higher. The mad clatter of the highway registered a beat of jazz that soared and wailed its notes through the night. I tell you those who stayed away cut a big slice of color and mood - an experience that only Jerry Campbell could create you cut it right out of your life.

March 12 TUJUNGA WASH

There is something about Tujunga Wash that is intriguing. A step from the highway and you are in desert, where moments before you were in lush suburbia. A glance into the gravel pit and you are in another element, water, where Wood Duck and swallow dissolve the desert. A walk up the canyon throws strange companions together: Killdeer and Cactus Wren, Quail and House Finch, Western Bluebird and California Thrasher. True, the place is

shambles now but across the junk flit Costa's Hummers, Bewick's and Rock Wren and Say's Phoebe. The Mockingbird sings openly and makes one feel the city is not far behind. At the pit, Mallards fly beneath the Rough-winged Swallows and White-throated Swifts, while Violet-green Swallows perch on the fence near by. Eva Millsap points out the Sage Sparrow. The others yell when a Snipe appears. Kingfishers, Canvasbacks and Cinnamon Teal fly for cover as we approach the lake. Here were Gadwalls, Ring-necked Ducks. At Hansen Dam we saw Horned Larks, Horned Grebes and American Goldfinch. Do these birds sound like desert inhabitants? Does a warbling Yellowthroat belong next to a Shrike? Laura Lou Jenner led us about this strange land, this juxtaposition of improbables. Some new members went with us: Mina Dell, Maurice and Marion Kamins. Larry Sansone dropped in, looking for one more bird for his list before he enlisted in the Air Corps. We had 57 on our list but none was the one.

March 16 CONSERVATION MEETING

The problem of pests and their eradication is not new. Many chemicals have been found that will do the job - and more, as "Silent Spring" has pointed out. The death of a Robin on a University Campus revealed a life-cycle that shattered many fixed ideas. The poison on last year's leaf killed the Robin indirectly through leaf-eating worms who apparently were immune to the poison. The goal, therefore, has been to find insecticides that will perform adequately yet will not eventually affect the streams, the beneficial insects and birds and, which must not be overlooked, man himself. The film for the evening presented this thesis conclusively in "Poisons, Pests and People". Some experiments that have been performed in attempts to save crops and insect life as well were clearly explained and the end results have been satisfactory. But some insects have an amazing ability to develop immunization to some insecticides, so the problem continues. The film left this viewer with the idea that there is some hope in newer methods. The battle to save the crop and the wildlife further down the stream at last is a recognizable one that is conscientiously and assiduously being studied. I think Bill Watson did very well in choosing this film for viewing.

March 23 WILDLIFE FILM

Mrs. Patricia Witherspoon travelled 20,000 miles with her camera to show us some of the rarities of the South Seas Islands: Plumeria or Gold Tree in bloom, Shell Ginger, and Ornamental Banana, and some of the 5000 Hibiscus, the 22,000 orchids. At Rabbit Island were the Noddy Tern. There were some excellent views of the Nene, the Hawaiian Goose,

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Save Buena Vista Lagoon

which was nearing extinction. On Carlton Island the Monarch Butterfly showed up in its migration across the Pacific. Here were the Sooty Terns and Shearwaters which tunneled into the sand to lay their eggs. The Wedge-tailed Petrel and the three species of Boobies were nesting. The amazing conduct of a Fairy Tern: it tried to hatch a rock, simply because it was where the egg had been left. There were many scenes showing the natives usually in celebration, although occasionally at work weaving or fishing.

March 27 IRVINE PARK

It was good birding weather - cool, fogged over, remaining so all day. The group counted 60 birds. Shirley Wells observing here a few days earlier could have added a dozen more. But in the Park we saw Bullock's Oriole and White-breasted Nuthatch, about ten Black-crowned Night Heron and a Hermit Thrush. Richard Bradley and his mother, Mrs. Marjorie Bradley, began their field birding with this trip, adding such birds as the Phainopepla and Western Kingbird to their life list. We did not bird extensively at Irvine, saving our time for Peter's Canyon, both reservoir and pond. Here we added Green Heron, Phoebe, both Mallard and Shoveller Ducks, some Rough-winged Swallows, and several Ravens circling about. A number of Tri-colored Blackbirds were in the reeds and marsh grasses. We seemed to be running into the Song Sparrow everywhere. At Tucker Sanctuary the firsts of the year were being recorded: The Rufous, Costa's, and Black-chinned Hummingbirds had just arrived that week. Orange-crowned and Audubon Warblers with Warbling Vireos and Ruby-crowned Kinglets added color to the canyon. On the slopes above Laura Lou Jenner, our leader for the day, led us to Chipping Sparrows, Yellow Warblers and Robins. Juncos and Western Bluebirds are still around. O'Neill Park failed to produce the Purple Martins. On the Mesa, dozens of Robins robbed the Olive Orchard. The Band-tailed Pigeons seemed to have their fill: I counted 17 roosting nearby.

April 9 CHANTRY FLATS - SANTA ANITA CANYON

Often promised, seldom seen! This year the Water Ouzel appeared above the waterfall; the entire group of 30 of us saw the dipper several times as it went up the stream bed and down with nesting material. Pauline Cole saw where the nest was being built. Dennis Coskren serenaded the Canyon Wren; for five minutes he (the wren) sang on top of a rock. House Wren was singing by Paul and Violet Orr's cabin. Flycatchers are back: Western, Ash-throated, and Black Phoebe. Kimball Garrett, a new member, and on his first field

The 200 acres of water in Buena Vista Lagoon near Oceanside offer refuge to thousands of migratory fowl each year as well as 200 species of wildlife throughout the year. It is a scenic spot visited by many groups of people every month of the year.

Now is the time that we NEED YOUR HELP in order to present to the Division of Beaches and Parks convincing evidence the conservation-minded people of California and other states know this lagoon to be an indispensable part of the Pacific Flyway. Under the leadership of Dr. Roy Palmateer, the people of the cities of Carlsbad and Oceanside are trying to obtain 5000 postcards from all interested people, urging the state to acquire the lagoon and the adjacent park areas. Postcards are more effective than petitions. Where there are two or more people in one family, we urge that each person send a card. We know that you will help us go over the top with these 5000 cards! Cards should be addressed to:

Dr. Roy Palmateer
516 Fourth St., Oceanside, Calif. 92054

For further information write: Mrs. A. W. Shaw, 2034 Lincoln, Oceanside 92054



Mr. Leslie E. Abbott
8201 Osage Ave., Los Angeles 90045

Kimball Garrett and Family
3045 Hollyridge Dr., Los Angeles 90028

Mr. Theodore L. Jahn
10241 Chrysanthemum Lane, Los Angeles 90024

Miss Daisy Marie Lawless
5533 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood 90028

Mr. Alfred L. Tank and Family
2615 Griffith Park Blvd., Los Angeles 90039

Miss Kathryn Thomas
1833 N. Edgemont, Apt. 6, Los Angeles 90027

Family of Mr. Thomas L. Taylor
11725 Palms Blvd., Apt. 3, Los Angeles 90066

trip with us, pointed out Black-chinned Hummer, Cedar Waxwing, Hermit Thrush, and others. We saw Pine Siskins, and two woodpeckers: Acorn and Nuttall's. Our leaders for the day were Harold and Dorothy Baxter. Around the picnic area and down into the canyon, birds were in song all the way. We saw 37 species.

By DAVID A. GAINES

Wilson's Warblers, Warbling Vireos, Allen's Hummingbirds, swallows and orioles were abundant evidence that Spring arrived on schedule in the Southland. By the end of March, many migrants had made themselves known. Flocks of orioles, in elegant breeding plumage, were encountered near the coast. Cliff Swallows

Cliff Swallows were nesting in San Diego County. From secluded thickets, the distinctive song of the Wilson's Warbler could be heard. Overhead, northward-bound Turkey Vultures were not an uncommon sight, even over downtown Los Angeles. Indeed, the abundance of early migrants gave promise of an excellent spring season for birdwatchers.

By late March, many wintering species had departed for more northerly habitats. Ducks and other waterfowl were definitely on the move. A migrant male Blue-winged Teal appeared at Imperial Beach on March 19. A White-fronted Goose was located in late March at Playa del Rey where several Greater Scaup were observed among the other ducks. At the Los Angeles Arboretum Ring-necked Ducks and White-throated Sparrow were present.

The Harris' Sparrow found in San Diego during December was relocated during March. During its stay, it was seen by several patient, dedicated, persevering birders, but only after several hours' search. No more easily observed was the Gray-headed Junco which played hide-and-peek at a Pasadena feeder. Slate-colored Juncos were found in San Diego, Irvine Park and Inglewood Cemetery. Rather out of the ordinary was a Pigeon Hawk in Rancho Park, West Los Angeles on March 20. Shirley Wells, who always manages to find birds where they don't belong, surprised a Varied Thrush at Rimpau and Wilshire Blvds. in Los Angeles! One wonders who was more surprised, Shirley or the thrush.

May is one of the best months in the year for Southern California birders. The migration is at its peak, nesting is in full swing, birds are in breeding plumage, and the weather is generally perfect. Almost any place with trees and waters is excellent. Morongo Valley, of course, is great, but also try Whitewater Canyon, the Salton Sea, Parker Dam (on the Colorado), or Frenchman's Flat (on the Ridge Route). Check all migrants closely, and do not forget to bring your Eastern guide with you.

DR. OLIN PETTINGILL WANTS YOUR ASSISTANCE

There is an opportunity for those of us without specialized scientific training to make a real contribution to ornithology. The Los Angeles Audubon Society will serve as headquarters for the 1966 North American Nest Record Card Program, from Santa Barbara to the Mexican border. This is the first continent-wide one, operated by Cornell's Lab of Ornithology, under the direction of Dr. Olin Sewall Pettingill, Jr. Anyone who finds any active nest and can discover something about the contents at least once has information valuable to this worthwhile program.

One of the long-range purposes is to provide information which reflects effects of man on his environment; pesticides use, habitat changes, etc. Cards are provided, free of charge, with instructions -- from Los Angeles Audubon Society. They are easy to fill out, will take very little time or effort. Each nest, whether successful or not, should be recorded on a single card. **But -- BE SURE NOT TO DISCOURAGE NESTING SUCCESS!** Back records that are accurately recorded with dates and contents are also desired. Nests from threatened areas or species are particularly desired.

Data on every nest of any species (every last common species - House Finch, House Sparrow, etc.) is desired for it helps throw light on bird reproduction.

Persons wishing to participate may obtain further information from:

Audubon House
7377 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles
Tel. 876-0202; or

Alice E. Fries
24071 Calle Marie, Capistrano Beach
Tel. GY 6-5616; or

Shirley Wells
10712 Fifth Ave., Inglewood
Tel. PL. 7-5049

Miss Virginia Osborn, 1811 Riverside Drive, Burbank, California 91506 would like to receive pictures of birds, animals, and scenery for scrapbooks for Crippled Children's Hospital.