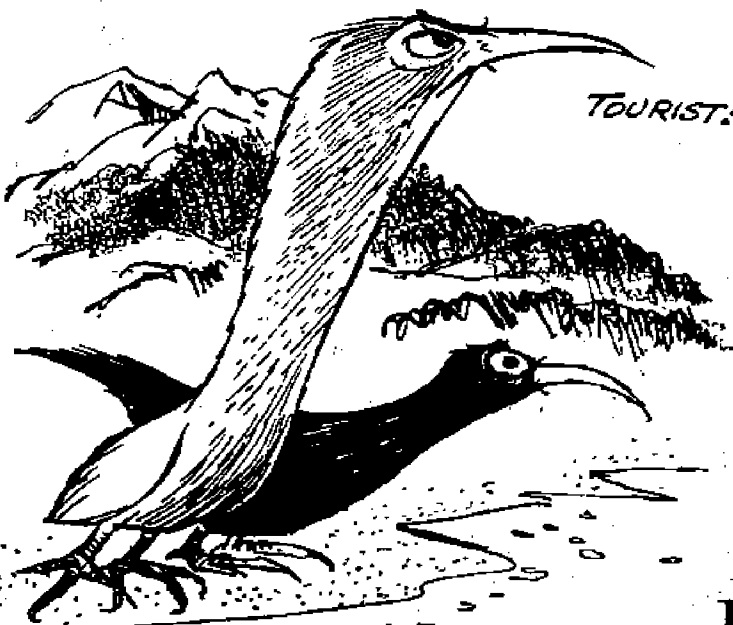
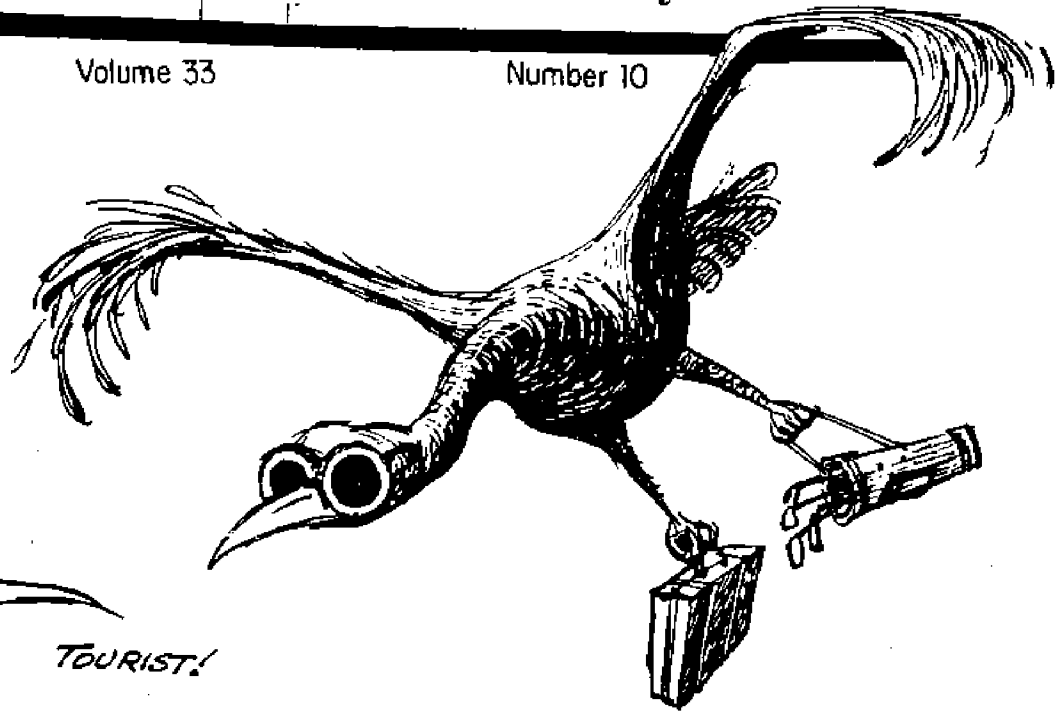


JUNE 1967



# Vigrants and Magrants

By Arnold Small

Our interest in birds is often ascribed to their pleasing habits, bright colors, and cheerful songs. But, down deep, most of us, I feel, are attracted to birds because they exemplify the truly free spirit. They come and go as they please, following the attractive seasons and knowing no geographic or political borders. When the shorebirds depart for their Arctic homes in the spring, we'd like to follow their wings to the tundra and watch them as none of us can ever see them on our shore where they are but passage migrants. We can never really know them "at home" until we visit their nesting grounds. When the tanagers, swallows, swifts, and orioles depart for the balmy tropics in the fall, we know that for us, the vacation season is completed, and we dream of the faraway tropical places to the south, teeming with rare and exotic birds which only recently departed from here.

Migration is not restricted to birds alone, although our interest draws our attention to them. Among the mammals, the great whales annually make long journeys from the Arctic to the Antarctic waters and back while the California Gray Whale, whose migration along the California coast is well known, reaches only to Baja California. In the Arctic, migrations of Alaskan Fur Seals, caribou, reindeer, and lemmings, are also well known. The plains game of central east Africa (especially the White-bearded Gnu and the zebras) make long overland treks in search of fresh grass, while the North American Bison performed the same feat on our prairie. The annual migration of certain species of bats and butterflies, and the movements of salmon, eels, and ants in many ways correspond to the migratory movement of birds.

Continued on page 92

# Vigrants and Magrants

Continued...

The familiar migrational movements are in the north-south direction and the range extends from north of the Arctic Circle to southern South America. Indeed, the bird with the longest migrational route of all may be the Baird's Sandpiper which, as a high Arctic breeder, winters in extreme southern South America. Some birds which breed to the north of us make their winter homes in southern California, while some species which breed in southern California, spend the winter in Central and South America. Some groups which follow this well-known north-south migratory pattern are the waterfowl, shorebirds, Turkey Vultures and Swainson's Hawks, swallows, orioles, tanagers, warblers, grosbeaks, buntings, hummingbirds, and so forth.

A migrational pattern (often combined with the north-south pattern) restricted to mountainous areas, is sometimes called "vertical migration." Here, birds which breed in the mountains, spend the winter in the lowlands adjacent to the mountains. Some may migrate vertically, and once having reached the lowlands, proceed to the south for some distance. Familiar species which follow this pattern in California are Mountain Chickadees, Mountain Quail, Townsend's Solitaires, White-crowned Sparrows, Steller's Jays, Robins, and Oregon Juncos. Of the above species, those which probably do not move very far to the south are the quail, chickadee, and jay. Green-tailed Towhees leave the mountains in the fall, and migrate far south into Central America. This "vertical" pattern is often influenced by local weather conditions, and "upward-bound" spring migrants are often delayed in reaching their mountain homes by unseasonal weather at higher elevations. Although I can recall one visit to Big Bear about May 1, while in the midst of a blizzard, the warblers were literally swarming everywhere - many even in full song!

Even the occasional bird-watcher soon realizes that not all birds migrate, while others are highly migratory. We can organize the migratory habits of most species into several categories. Those birds whose habits induce them to remain in an area more or less permanently, and showing only restricted movements, may be called PERMANENT RESIDENTS. Such species as Wren-tits, Scrub Jays, Nuttall's and Acorn Woodpeckers, Bush-tits, Plain Titmice, and the like would be placed in this group. The WINTER VISITORS are those birds which breed to the north of us or in the local mountains and whose migration brings them to us in the fall, to depart again for their breeding grounds the following spring. Among such species would be the White-crowned and Golden-crowned Sparrows, Cedar Waxwings, most of the Robins, most of the waterfowl, some of the shorebirds, some of the gulls, Audubon's Warblers, and Sandhill Cranes. SUMMER VISITORS are the birds which breed here after spending the winter somewhere to the south. Of course, White-crowned Sparrows are summer visitors to the mountains while they are winter visitors in the lowlands, so our categories must be adjusted to our own localities. But, typical summer visitors in southern California would

be Warbling Vireos, Blue Grosbeaks, Lazuli Buntings, Cliff Swallows, Barn Swallows, Rough-winged Swallows, the three Orioles (Hooded, Scott's, and Bullock's), and some of the flycatchers. The TRANSIENTS are the real passage migrants through our region in spring and fall. They breed to the north of us (or even in the local mountains - such as the Green-tailed Towhees and Western Tanagers) after having come from somewhere to the south of us. They are in evidence primarily during spring and fall. In this group would be such birds as Rufous and Allen's Hummingbirds (although the latter species has recently been found nesting at Palos Verdes), Swainson's Hawks, Black and Vaux's Swifts, Nashville, Hermit, Black-throated Gray, MacGillivray's, and Wilson's Warblers, Hammond's, Olive-sided, and Dusky Flycatchers, and Swainson's Thrushes, for example. These four categories will account for the vast majority of birds we are likely to encounter.

Most birders, however, are extremely interested in finding representatives of the following categories, because they often represent new, rare, and unusual birds. Here we find a group which we might call POST-BREEDING WANDERERS - birds whose appearance is unpredictable from year to year, but some of whom have become quite expected. These are birds whose breeding grounds are essentially to the south and east and are often represented by young birds of the year. Most of the Elegant Terns which appear along our shore in late summer are both adults and young of the year, and their appearances here in the past fifteen years have become quite regular. There is little doubt that this species is spreading slowly north as a breeding species which now has a firm little colony at San Diego. Wood Ibis and Royal Terns put in a regular summer appearance in southern California, while the status of the Manx Shearwaters, Magnificent Frigatebirds, Red-billed Tropicbirds, Louisiana Herons, and Reddish Egrets is more or less unpredictable. The Tropical Kingbird would also be included, although its appearance is most regular in California now. CASUALS are those birds whose appearance is relatively unpredictable, and yet they may arrive in rather good numbers when they do appear. Lewis' Woodpecker, Varied Thrushes, Clarke's

Continued on page 93

## Vagrants and Magrants

*Continued ...*

Nutcrackers (in the lowlands), Harlequin Ducks, Rough-legged Hawks, Barrow's Goldeneyes, and Red Crossbills could be included here, for example. VAGRANTS are those species which occur with some regularity, but would be considered quite rare nonetheless. In this group would be found such birds as New Zealand Shearwaters, Northern Shrikes (in northern California), Bohemian Waxwings, Emperor Geese, White-throated Sparrows, Gray-headed Junco, and White-winged Doves and Vermilion Flycatchers (along the coast). Birds which are completely out of range, season, or habitat would be categorized as ACCIDENTALS whose appearance virtually brings out flocks of birders to greet them. Such choice birds as Buff-breasted, Sharp-tailed, and Rock Sandpipers, Brown and Blue-footed Boobies, Orchard, Baltimore, and Scarlet-headed Orioles, Kiskadee and Scissor-tailed Flycatchers, White-tailed Tropic birds, and the like are the prime rewards for today's hard-driving birders.

We must, however, create a new category solely for the regular eastern species which have been appearing (or found only of late) along the coast of California during the fall. Here, we must consider the status of such birds as Dickcissels, Bobolinks, Eastern Kingbirds, Veeries, Indigo Buntings, Clay-colored Sparrows, and such warblers as Virginia's, Blackburnian, Blackpoll, Bay-breasted, Prairie, Chestnut-sided, Worm-eating, Blue-winged, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, and so forth. Formerly considered accidental at best, many of these species have appeared with such regularity in the past few years that we can no longer consider them to be such. True, they are rare, and their appearance is of short duration here, but they are regularly found. And the list grows each year. Undoubtedly, many are regular fall migrants in very small numbers, and generally restricted to coastal areas. Perhaps we should call them VIGRANTS (vagrant migrants?) or worse yet, MAGRANTS.

The Spring Migration for 1967 is largely completed. The birds, wherever they may be - here or there - are building nests, raising families, and fattening-up for the return journey to their wintering grounds. Some, like the male Calliope Hummingbirds, depart their nesting areas very early and will be found in southbound migration through the lowlands as early as July. The Fall Migration of 1967 lies ahead, and for many birders, the fall is the best season for it offers the hope of some really fancy birds among the post-breeding wanderers, casuals, vagrants, accidentals, and that other group.

## Official California Condor Observation Point

*By Bill Watson*

The time is drawing near to inaugurate our first comprehensive information and education program on the California Condor, aimed at the public. From time to time during this year, I have referred to this program, which is going to be a cooperative effort of the United States Forest Service and the Los Angeles Audubon Society.

It was at our request that a portion of the summit of Mt. Pinos in the Los Padres National Forest is to be established as an official Condor Observation Point. A number of you are already aware of the value of Mt. Pinos as a place from which condors can be easily observed during the summer. This has been well established during our Condor Observation Programs; and Russ and Marion Wilson studied the observation possibilities at great length last summer. They observed condors every day while they were camped on Mt. Pinos. Indeed, it was Marion who suggested that Mt. Pinos should be established as an official condor observation point.

It was this suggestion that inspired the whole concept of manning Mt. Pinos with qualified condor observers, and others who wish to become qualified; of helping the general public to see condors, and give out information about them; of doing this each weekend during the months of July, August, and September this year.

I urge everyone who is able and interested in this necessary venture to come forward and make yourself known. The more who will help, the fewer your personal assignments will be.

We have the complete approval of the Forest Service and the National Audubon Society. Everyone is eager to see us put over this program. The Los Angeles Audubon Society is known as a leader in the California Condor preservation effort. It is our hope that we can at last educate the public to the value of having wild, free California Condors flying in southern California skies forever.

If you wish to know more about this exciting and important program, and if you wish to participate in any way, but especially as a condor observer this summer, - be sure to attend our organization meeting which will be held at Long Hall, Plummer Park, Thursday evening, June 15th, at 8:00 p.m.

This is your chance to see California Condors, and help in their preservation, by showing them to others!

## One More Lesson to Learn

By Paul Burgoyne

A group was talking the other day about reptiles and how some snakes in this part of the world seem to congregate in dens for their winter period of inactivity. One member of the group told how his grandfather and others had come upon such a den and had pulled out hundreds of snakes, most of which were rattlers. All were killed and thrown into the back of a truck, filling up the bed to a depth of nearly a foot. The townspeople marvelled at the sight, and hailed the men as some sort of heroes. I asked the story teller if he realized that those hundreds of snakes had been eating thousands of rodents (Rodentia) and rabbits (Lagomorpha). "Come to think of it," he said, "several years later some government people were called in to help us with pest control. Foxes were introduced, but they now have to be hunted as they, too, are becoming pests." Is it fair to wonder if that ranching community's problems might not have stemmed from that fateful winter day when the snakes were pulled out from their den and exterminated? Some of the state's herpetologists have discovered hundreds of snake dens which they observe frequently. They mark, identify, check growth rates, migrations, etc., of the snakes found in each. For obvious reasons, they must keep the locations of the dens confidential to prevent such occurrences as the above-mentioned incident.

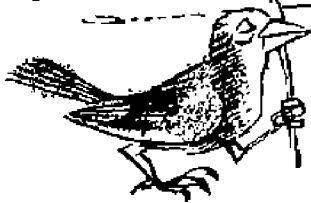
Several summers ago while working for the National Park Service at an archeological site on the Navajo Reservation, I had to kill a rattlesnake that was staying around a campground restroom. We were afraid that some unwary person might step on it, or some children tease it and excite it to bite. Our Indian crew watched me emerge from the restroom with the still-squirming, nearly decapitated snake. After returning from the superintendent's office, the Indian spokesman told me that as a result of having witnessed the killing of this snake, each of them, or one of their loved ones, would suffer some misfortune. It was but a half hour later that one of the crew had his finger badly mangled in the gears of the cement mixer. The remaining Indians exchanged knowing glances with me. I felt we should have dismissed them then before anything else happened, but the day passed without further incident. During the remainder of the week, however, each crew member informed me of some misfortune. . . . . We would have to doubt that the snake's death was the direct cause of the Navajos' problems, yet very likely the destruction of the snakes in the den was the direct cause of the later problems in the first story.

Snakes have been with us a long time, and have worked out a very successful and important niche in the total community of living things. The Navajos, like most other Indian groups, have learned to LIVE WITH living things instead of to FIGHT them. Our great culture has yet to learn the lesson.

NATURE NEWS NOTES

Utah Nature Study Society, March, 1967

## Birding for Beginners



LOOK ON  
PAGE  
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Although beginning birders are always warmly encouraged to attend regular field trips, some people are reluctant to "bird" in the company of those with a bit more experience. (We all had to learn those first birds, remember!)

In order that beginners may learn to recognize our commoner birds, there will be a field trip for new birders in Griffith Park on the morning of June 17. Bill Watson and Otto Widmann will help you identify all those plain little brown birds! We suggest that if you don't own binoculars, -- borrow some. Get a copy of Roger Tory Peterson's "Field Guide to the Western Birds" or the Golden Field Guide by Robbins, Zim et al. Now, -- turn to the introduction, and the explanation of how best to use the book. Thus you will be prepared to make the most of your new hobby. Soon, you'll be telling other beginners what that little brown bird is!

## Be a Golden Eagle Family

\$7 is all you pay for your Annual "Golden Passport" and every penny of it is channeled into the Land and Water Conservation Fund to help assure more recreation lands and waters.

Your Annual "Golden Passport" opens 7,000 glorious recreation opportunities to you AND your family! Our population is outgrowing our outdoor recreation areas. Unless we all cooperate in planning, buying, and developing more land and water recreation areas, future generations will be denied full enjoyment of our outdoor heritage.

On sale at all entrance gates and other Federal areas where valid for admission; at most offices of Corps of Engineers, Forest Service, various agencies of Department of the Interior, certain national conservation organizations, AAA local offices, and by mail. Make check payable to Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, and send to Operation Golden Eagle, Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, Box 7763, Washington, D.C. 20044.



# Los Angeles Audubon Society

# calendar

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## JUNE

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

## JUNE 1967

June 1 THURSDAY - EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING - 7:30 p.m., Audubon House

June 10 SATURDAY - FIELD TRIP - Buckhorn Flats - Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the parking area near Buckhorn Ranger Station on the Angeles Crest Highway (about 35 miles from La Canada turnoff on State Highway 2). Group will walk down into the campground, about 1/4 mile. Cassin's Finch and Hermit Warblers have nested here. Some of the Group may wish to camp over night.

Leader: Otto Widmann 221-8973

June 13 TUESDAY - EVENING MEETING - 8:00 p.m., Great Hall, Plummer Park. This will be our last program until September. Our speaker will be a representative from the Angeles National Forest staff.

Program Chairman: Laura Lou Jenner 748-7510

June 15 THURSDAY - CONDOR OBSERVER ORIENTATION MEETING - 8:00 p.m., Long Hall, Plummer Park. If you wish to know more about this exciting and important program, and if you wish to participate in any way, but especially as a condor observer this summer, be sure to attend this meeting. This program will give you a chance to see California Condors and help in their preservation by showing them to others!

June 17 SATURDAY - FIELD TRIP - FOR BEGINNERS - Meet at 8:30 a.m. in Griffith Park, Fern Dell Museum. Enter park from Western Avenue - Los Feliz entrance. This field trip is designed to help beginners in identifying birds. Bring binoculars, and lunch for those who wish to stay longer.

Leader: Bill Watson 661-8570

June 24 SATURDAY & SUNDAY - FIELD TRIP - Greenhorn Mtn. This is an overnight camping trip and will involve about 350 miles of driving. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Rancho Bakersfield. Follow U.S. 99 to Bakersfield, take 24th Street (there is an off-ramp) and go east about 15 blocks to H Street. Turn left (north) to the Rancho Bakersfield. Some of the group may plan on eating breakfast here, but be prepared to leave at 8:00 a.m. We will caravan to Greenhorn Mountain Park, birding along the way, via Oildale & south branch to Glennville, and camp Saturday night at Tiger Flats Campground. Bring warm clothing and warm gear as nights are cold. Motels available at Kernville, about 15 miles east.

Leader: Frances Kohn 665-0171

ALWAYS BRING lunch and binoculars on field trips.

Please - no pets and no collecting!

EVERYONE WELCOME AT ALL ACTIVITIES



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# World Wildlife Fund

Suite 728

910 Seventeenth Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. 20006

Telephone 296-0422

Dear Friend:

The disaster that has overtaken the West Coast of England is tragic in more than one sense--it has destroyed (for how many years is yet unknown), entire bird populations and greatly effects the survival of many other bird and fish species.

It was an American owned oil tanker that crashed onto the rocks--releasing into the sea more than 100,000 tons of crude oil (a type acknowledged to be the greatest source of oil pollution). Therefore, it is not only as a conservationist or an ornithologist, but as an American, that I feel a great measure of responsibility for this tragedy--as must we all.

Here is an eyewitness report from a prominent member of the British Appeal of WWF, "Thousands of oil soaked birds--pitifully unable to lift their wings and fly--are being gathered and carried to shelters that are poorly equipped to handle the enormity of the crisis. Thousands more are dead on the beaches and many thousands await rescue or are stranded in the thick, tar-like oil covered sea, unable to reach shore. As the oil spreads, even more birds are effected."

Rescued birds must be hand washed, and after many attempts with soap and other unsuccessful solutions, the Dutch Appeal of WWF sent a specialist who developed a detergent that cleans the birds with the least amount of damage. This is not the end of their problem--or of our responsibility. Washing the birds removes their natural oils making them temporarily unable to swim or fly. They must then be maintained in captivity for up to six months, when and where shelters can be financed.

The British Appeal of WWF has launched a special "Sea Bird Appeal," in conjunction with the Royal Society for Protection of Birds and Royal SPCA. Costs run nearly \$1,500 a week and will triple within a few weeks.

"Americans living and visiting in Britain," according to Peter Scott, Chairman of WWF International, speaking from England, "have been telephoning the Embassy to express their concern and to ask how they may help. The only way, aside from actually going to the stricken areas as a volunteer, is to send money."

We of the United States Appeal of World Wildlife Fund, have also received unsolicited contributions for this tragedy, and know that many more of our friends will want to help. Your urgently needed gift will be put to immediate use. Please do not delay sending your special gift today.

Gratefully,

Roger Tory Peterson

April 12, 1967

HELP SAVE THE WORLD'S WILDLIFE AND WILD PLACES

# A Letter from the Wilsons

May 1, 1967

Dear friends,

We were about to sell Rockport short! For three and a half weeks we birded daily a ten-mile loop, with stops at the most likely places, and listed three warblers; I mean three species and also three individuals! For days, the weather report sounded like a broken record. It ran: "Wind steady from the southeast ten to twenty miles per hour, gusting to twenty-five, etc., etc. With favorable tail winds, the birds were being carried far inland and the coast was barren except for the resident species.

And then the weather changed. Wednesday, April 26, a weak storm front passed through. And Friday, April 28, was the day we had come to Rockport for. At our first stop, a grove with some very old oaks quite widely spaced adjoining a more dense stand of small oaks, through which a narrow dirt road passed that gave access and provided an edge effect, the trees were full of birds. For two hours, without walking more than a hundred yards, scarcely ever lowering our binoculars from our eyes, we checked out species after species. We saw not just one of a species but dozens, many at such close range that binoculars were not needed to distinguish their markings. It was the most exciting birding of our lives, -- we seemed pressed to feverish haste by the thought: "What other species am I missing while I focus on this one?" and the birds continued without interruption to flit through our grove, feeding, preening, and some of them displaying. Perhaps you would be interested in our list:

We saw 16 warblers; Black-and-white, Prothonotary, Golden-winged, Blue-winged, Orange-crowned, Nashville, Yellow, Magnolia, Black-throated Green, Cerulean, Blackburnian, Chestnut-sided, Bay-breasted, Blackpoll, Northern Waterthrush, American Redstart; 3 vireos, Red-eyed, Philadelphia, & Warbling; 2 orioles, Orchard & Baltimore; 2 grosbeaks, Rose-breasted & Blue; 2 buntings, Indigo & Painted; Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Wood Peewees, Eastern Kingbirds, Swainson's Thrushes, and Veeries. Some of these are among the showiest of our American birds.

Monday and Tuesday of this week we took a run up to the Edwards Plateau west of San Antonio to try for the Golden-cheeked Warbler, Black-capped Vireo, and Cave Swallow. We followed essentially the trip plan from Pettingill's Bird-finding column in Audubon Magazine of January, 1964. Starting at Garner State Park we drove up Sabinal Canyon, stopping at all likely spots and walking up and down the road while searching intently for any flit of wings or warbler-like song -- but all in vain. As we came up out of the canyon onto the plateau we had a fine flight of Cave Swallows, which alone made the trip worth while.

In the late afternoon as we drove along the Guadalupe River west of Hunt, and had about resigned ourselves to failure, we came to a

SACRAMENTO AUDUBON SOCIETY

## Report on Annual Grasslands Field Trip

We were pleased to note some 80-90 White Pelicans, 400-500 White-fronted Geese, 25 Wh.-faced Glossy Ibis, and what appeared to be more than the customary number of Avocets, Bl.-necked Stilts, Dunlin, Dowitchers, Western, and Least Sandpipers. Cinnamon Teal were everywhere. Although Snowy Egrets were observed, noticeably in short supply were Common Egrets and Great Blue Herons. The thinking was that these birds were in the process of nesting somewhere in the area and were not to be seen feeding. Normally, the Great Blues commence nesting in February; the egrets a month or so later.

Our San Luis Island rookery -- which we found to contain some 1200 nesting egrets, blues, and Bl.-crowned Night Herons in 1963 -- was completely abandoned this year. The big question is, whether the birds have set up housekeeping somewhere else, or whether there has been a drastic decline in their numbers. No one knows because no one is doing any study of these birds. It may be that our efforts over the past years to show this colony off to birders has discouraged them from continuing to nest at this site; or it may be that the heavy mortality observed in the nestlings has had its impact. There are those acquainted with these birds, and what is occurring in the agricultural practices in the area, who believe pesticide contamination of the aquatic biota is leading to the extirpation of the waders. Tragically, no one can be found who will seek out the answers. The Dep't of Fish & Game have no funds for study of birds other than game birds and our efforts to interest the biology departments of several State Colleges into instigating research into the life history on these birds have met with no success. Each year the opportunity of learning what is happening slips by the way. Perhaps, after we no longer record egrets and herons on our trips to the grasslands, some agency will initiate studies to find out what happened, and, like other vanished species, will note their passing without ever finding the reason why.

THE OBSERVER, May, 1967  
Sacramento Audubon Society

particularly fine stand of juniper and oak. Almost immediately we heard an unfamiliar warbler song and within ten minutes we had our bird. He came to an exposed perch and preened and sang for several minutes. And so our month while based in Rockport provided us some of the most exciting birding ever, and added 22 birds to our life list, which now stands at 549!

With best wishes,

Russ & Marion





# The Ideal Birding Companion

By Trudy Siptroth

Please, no pets on field trips! . . . and I agree most wholeheartedly. However, after six years of birding in the company of our bird-watching poodle "Beau Geste," I must qualify my affirmation with a few pertinent remarks in the canine's defense. Birdwatching is not for all dogs. . . and by the same token, bird trips are not for all people.

Admittedly, learning the ground rules for field trip etiquette was simple for my wise canine friend. He understood them from the start and has never been guilty of bad conduct, under penalty of being permanently banished from bird-watching with me.

For instance:

1. He has never been late by even one minute for our birding expeditions.
2. He has never run ahead of the leader (namely, me) . . . having been exposed to obedience training at a tender age.
3. He has never inadvertently flushed a bird by unnecessary noise, loud talking, or sudden movement.
4. He has never lagged behind in the company of other dogs to visit and exchange the latest gossip.

5. He has never made a great to-do about the trip's check list and what species may or may not be lacking on his own records for the day.

6. He has never lost his copy of Peterson and held up the party while the search for it progressed frantically.

7. He has never dropped or lost his binoculars and then fretted about their condition for the rest of the trip.

8. He has never fussed about focussing my spotting scope; blocked my field of vision through it; or stumbled over the tripod just as I had a rare find in view.

9. He has never participated in an overnight campout without proper equipment, food, and water supply.

10. He has never complained about poor field trip directions or become lost after and complete directions have been furnished.

You see, I think he is a pretty desirable birding companion, particularly since in all these years he has never disputed my identification of a single species. . . even the rare finds. Maybe that's why I enjoy his company so much!

Continued...

Covington Park, as usual, gave wonderful birding. Vermilion Flycatcher was nesting overhead. We had Gray, Warbling, and Solitary Vireos; 14 different warblers. Mr. Levin allowed us on his ranch property on April 29; Long-eared Owl, and an immature Great Horned Owl were observed. About 20 Lazuli Buntings were out in the fields. Indigo Bunting was a life bird for many, at Covington Park. Liz Rose reported a Painted Redstart at Whitewater Canyon. White-winged Dove was in Morongo Valley again; and Golden Eagle, Brewer's, Lincoln, Sage, and Chipping Sparrows. Mr. & Mrs. Elwyn Pollock invited us to their home, where we saw approximately 30 orioles, - Scott's, Hooded, and Bullock's, - males females, and immatures for close study. Gambel's Quail, Cowbirds, Black-throated Sparrows, Mockingbirds, Costa's Hummers, darted in and out of the feeding area. The valley abounded with wildflowers; Mrs. Pollock pointed out the suncups for me, which in places made a solid yellow ground cover. Orange mallow were in large clumps almost everywhere. We welcomed Miss Minnie Bransford, Edith Gunn, Florence Hartwig, and Lee Pancourt as our guests for this field trip.

May 9 - TUESDAY EVENING MEETING - Mr. Hans Hjorth passed around a picture he had taken of the Brazilian Cardinal. A Louisiana (Tri-colored) Heron was reported at Newport Bay by Marge Wilson. The panel of nominees for office for the coming year was elected un-animously.

The results of one of the most delightful of hobbies were presented to us by Mr. & Mrs. Paul B. Douglas - moving pictures of the wild visitors to their Monrovia home, from the hills above it. At feeding trays, bird baths, and hummingbird feeders, fascinating studies of our everyday birds and other wildlife came to us in exquisite closeups. Imagine fox, raccoon, and opossum, as well as squirrel and rabbit, sitting on a patio table, eating such goodies as cabbage, bread, and grapes. House Finch was a study in pinks with peach blossoms and red sugar water. Quail seemed propelled through the shrubbery at the feeding call. Of particular note was a charming sequence of a young doe playing with a tether ball, kicking, butting, car-ressing it, all photographed in pre-dawn light. The prolonged applause showed our appreciation of the excellence of the work of Mr. & Mrs. Douglas at Hummingbird Hill.

### By David Gaines

Storms continued to move through the Southland in April, bringing high rain totals, unusual snow depths, and green hillsides. The effect of the weather on migrants was not entirely clear. Large concentrations of migrants were found fairly consistently on the desert throughout April. The high occurred about April 24, when observers at Whitewater Canyon found many migrants apparently grounded by adverse weather. Among these were hundreds of Hermit Thrushes, Chipping Sparrows, Wilson's Warblers, Orange-crowned Warblers, Vireos, Orioles, Flycatchers, and Grosbeaks. Five days later, numbers of migrants were considerably less. Lazuli Buntings and Blue Grosbeaks, however, were present in some quantity. Vermilion Flycatchers and Summer Tanagers were at Morongo Valley. With the transients were a smattering of Vaux's Swifts, Bank Swallows, Purple Martins, and Swainson's Hawks. Pine Siskins and Cassin's Finches were widespread in the desert.

Most wintering birds had departed by the end of April. Cedar Waxwings, however, remained in substantial flocks. Shirley Wells discovered Red Crossbills nesting in Palos Verdes, and suspected the nesting of Red-breasted Nuthatches. Three pairs of nesting Long-eared Owls were located in Morongo Valley. Grasshopper Sparrows were found at several localities along the coast.

A Tennessee Warbler was observed over a period of two weeks in early March on Pt. Loma, probably a wintering bird. Also on Pt. Loma was a male Baltimore Oriole. Golden Plovers assumed spring plumage at Playa del Rey. A male Indigo Bunting was at Morongo Valley on April 29. At Whitewater Canyon, a stunning Painted Redstart remained for over a week, joined on April 24 by a Winter Wren, an American Redstart, and a Cardinal (heard only). A Black-and-white Warbler was at 29 Palms Oasis on April 23.

During June, best local birding will be in the mountains and the desert. In the latter, the patient birder may see Bendire's Thrasher or Gray Vireo. Morongo Valley has been known to be a breeding locality for Wied's Crested Flycatcher. Further afield, the rare-bird hunter will find challenges in such areas as Furnace Creek Ranch and Saratoga Springs, Death Valley, or Deep Springs in Inyo County. Finally, the Colorado River can provide such specialties as Inca Dove, (Parker Dam), Least Bittern or Yellow-billed Cuckoo (Imperial Dam).

#### Corrigenda:

1. Report of a Tennessee Warbler in Death Valley, Thanksgiving, 1966, was incorrect.

# Pelagic Trips

Pelagic birds are those which spend the greater part of their lives on the open sea. Each year our Society joins the Golden Gate Audubon Society in the rewarding experience of pelagic trips out of Monterey; these trips have produced some of the best birding of the entire coast. Val Da Costa, who makes the arrangements each year, writes:

"Our offshore pelagic trips out of Monterey will take place on Sunday, August 27th, and Saturday, Oct. 7th. As usual, all Audubonites and friends are invited to join us.

"Unfortunately -- we must increase the fare from \$5 to \$6 due to a 17% increase from the boat owners. If your members plan to join us please let me know as soon as possible!"

Please make checks payable to: Golden Gate Audubon Society, and mail to

Val da Costa  
2090 Pacific Ave., San Francisco  
Calif. 94109

More details in a later issue.

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## The WESTERN Tanager

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Please submit material by 10th of month,  
typed & double-spaced

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2. Number of Longspurs at the Salton Sea this winter was about 20 McCown's & 5 Lapland.

Please send observations of noteworthy birds to: 3045 McConnell Drive, L.A. Calif. 90064.

Ed. note: Be sure to check all warblers! On Saturday, May 6, Caroline Adams observed a Tennessee Warbler in her yard at Manhattan Beach.