

The Western Tanager

VOLUME 39, 1972-73 No. 2 OCTOBER



Song for a Marsh by Laurette Maisel

We were racing back over Malheur Lake in the airboat. Sitting up front with the breeze in my face and the evening light ahead of me, I was overwhelmed by the beauty of the lake and the marsh surrounding it. I felt a thrill of joy as I thought of the many events we had experienced in the past week. This place holds such enchantment, we were already talking about returning. It was the first week in June, but there are other seasons, and so much more to see. I am fascinated by the effect of light on a marsh. One moment all is dark and forbidding, and the next, a pattern of dark and light blades as the sun pours through the passing white and gray clouds, turning the paler grasses to a lovely soft yellow green. Then the mirror pools between reflect these same clouds in infinite blue. The wind plays tricks as I stand in one place and think how warm the day, and in another I wonder from which direction the storm may come.

This is an exciting place for the naturalist, full of mystery. What bird will I hear from out those unreachable pools and grasses? Or, if I peer long enough, what little creature may I see wandering out into the open water, as it passes from one grass clump to another? Somehow the idea is so intriguing that I stand rooted to the spot. Ah! but that's the secret. Time has no part in these affairs. Stand there, absolutely quiet. There is a murmur of a breeze. Listen, though, for before you life is stirring. All at once the tranquility and exhilaration make the senses keener. Look carefully and, as you remain still, as a tree standing in the landscape, creatures will begin to move about you.

The marsh is full of sounds, and if you can identify them you will know some of its life. Particularly in spring, when many birds may be heard but not seen as they go about their business furtively, making nests and brooding. It may be the long-billed marsh wrens, prattling away, answering each other insistently, or the friendly grunts and cackles of the coots. But it is the distant descending bell of the sora and the haunting reed call of the pied-billed grebe which thrill me. More obvious, as they sit atop the reeds, the glorious yellow-headed blackbirds throw back their golden heads and call out their hoarse croak, which has in it still, though briefly, a note or two of that delightful blackbird musical gurgle. The meadowlarks sing from fenceposts, and we are indeed lucky that it is our western variety which pours forth some of the most magical music to be heard anywhere. From down in the grass nearby, or atop some low bush, just over there, comes the wheezy song of the savannah sparrow, almost plaintive. As he sings, the gentle warmth of the midday surrounds me.

I look over the landscape. Cinnamon teal are quietly passing between the reeds, and occasionally a pair of gadwall or mallards flush out and fly off to some other part of the marsh. Then a marsh hawk is flying low over the rushes, zooming this way and that, hovering some and flying again, white rump flashing. Now a most beautiful ballet. The black terns are wheeling everywhere. Glinting in the sun, a dark bird with silver wings flies by, stops short over the marsh, hovers for many seconds on fluttering wings raised high, then dives to the water. The theme is repeated, as the eye catches the lightening flashes of swooping bodies and vibrating wings.



"..a pattern of dark and light blades".
Photograph by Gerald Maisel

Continued overleaf

A few Forster's terns lend counterpoint in white, but the choreography is virtually unchanged. Along the bank beside the dike, the sweet song of the yellow warbler comes again and again, and if you go looking for them they move and hide, they don't want you to see them just now. The male peers from his perch to make sure he really is hidden behind that willow twig. And there's the female skulking away under the bush, with nesting material in her bill. What? A great horned owl calling in the middle of the day, over there from the marsh! The call is soon echoed by another, off to the left. Well of course, for just in front of us on the opposite bank are two young birds looking at us in great surprise and obvious fear. Large, light, buffy, fluffy creatures with two horns. They sit so huddled together, they couldn't press any closer. Again we hear the calls of the two owls, not far away, but insistent while we stand so near their young. We move on, as in the distance a pair of turkey vultures are circling in the sky, and every now and then a raven passes by.



"..so huddled together they could not press any closer.." Photograph by Gerald Maisel

In a field of short grass, a pair of sandhill cranes move leisurely as they feed. Half hidden in a nearby clump of rushes, a coyote watches them intently, but we are denied the ultimate drama as he slips quietly away. Now and again, the male ring-necked pheasant gives his strange honk, reminding me of those horns on very early cars, not a clear note but rather raucous. A few times we caught sight of this fantastically colored bird, the pure white on the neck contrasting so dramatically with the deep blood red on the face. Further along the dike, there is a twiggy bush, not yet leafed out, and on it, like a design for needlework, sit swallows of several species. Tree swallows, cliff, and violet green. Then a rough-wing. The pattern outlined against the sky changes as they come and go. On another occasion, we came across a pool where we saw six species of swallows, all but the cave, in undulating movements, ceaselessly weaving, dipping and rising over the water.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Born in England and transplanted to California in 1958 when she married her physician husband, the author has been interested in the natural world since childhood. Desire has become reality in the past 14 years, as she and her husband have travelled extensively, visiting much of Western and Southern U.S.A., East Africa, and the Galapagos Islands. They are keen back-packers and consider the High Sierras their second home. They are members of numerous conservation organizations, here and abroad. The author is at present recording secretary of the IAAS.

We come to a shallow pond on the edge of the marsh. Avocets and a pair of black-necked stilts are feeding there. Also, a few female Wilson's phalaropes, our first in breeding plumage. As we approach, kildeer fly up sounding the alarm. They make such an incessant commotion I cannot but feel that I am an intruder, and I am embarrassed, but determined by curiosity to stay. For here the avocets are nesting. One sits right out in the open. She won't stay, though, and now begins quite a display. With her neighbors it becomes a joint venture to get us to leave her nesting area. There are suddenly birds in the middle of the pond with first one broken wing and then both, then a broken leg so they have to limp or almost fall in the water, while others fly around us calling, piteously and furiously, it seems, all at the same time. We don't move, so now one grows daring, and even approaches on the ground with her pathetic broken wing. Since we take no notice, she circles behind us to draw our attention away from the nesting site. We are not had by this ruse, so back she comes to repeat the same process all over again. We move on.

Now, but for willets flying over and calling, it is quieter, and again we hear the sora and the pied-billed grebe, but added is the deep honking of the American bittern. In stark relief from the dark green reeds, three snowy egrets in a small opening move gracefully about feeding, their beauty doubled in mirrored reflection. We sit and watch for some time, with the warm sun high overhead, surrounded by the soporific hum of insects, as a song sparrow melodizes from a tree not far away. Then it is time for lunch, and while we eat our sandwiches, a yellowthroat sings nearby, and California quail call in the sagebrush hills.

To be concluded in the next issue



"..three Snowy Egrets in a small opening.." Photograph by Gerald Maisel

BOOK STORE

After eleven years of detailed study and research by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Ser., "Birds of Idaho" by Thomas D. Burleigh has been published. This volume is the first full treatment of all the diversified birdlife habitats in Idaho. Beautifully illustrated in full color and black and white, we welcome it to our bookstore.

"Darwin's Islands" by Ian Thornton is another recent book which is a most up-to-date source on the bird, animal and plant life. An excellent gift for anyone interested in the natural history of these curious islands in the Pacific.

"A New Dictionary of Birds" by A. Thomson is not a dictionary in the usual sense but a superb one-volume encyclopedia and most useful single reference work for every nature lover.

AUDUBON HOUSE NEEDS HELP

Perhaps you know that Audubon House is the oldest house in Hollywood. This does not mean that it is falling down in disrepair and dreariness. It is, in fact, a charming building, hidden amongst large native trees, with rose bushes flourishing as they did when they were brought from Spain almost a century ago. The birds feed on our balconies and bathe in the large ornamental bath in the garden. The interior of the house is light and airy; bright with the floral decorations of our curator, Olive Alvey. There is a well stocked library and a large number of mounted birds and insects indigenous to California. There is the book store and the office.

If you're wondering why I should wax so enthusiastically, it is because I find the house a delight to work in and I enjoy the people.

There is one small blight however, and perhaps you, who are reading this, can help. We need one or two more people, not necessarily knowledgeable in ornithology, but interested and a lover of nature, to help us one day a week from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., talking to our visitors, answering the phone, and if you can type a bit, assisting with the office work. If you are eager to join us, but uncertain of your ability to assist us, come and see us anyway and let us show you how to develop your natural talents to the benefit of the Society. You can contact me on Thursdays at Audubon House. Phone: 876-0202, or leave your name and phone number and I will call you.

Dorothy Dimsdale
Executive Secretary



BIRD TOURS

Announcing a birding tour to Southeast Asia, including Malaysia and India, sponsored by the Los Angeles Audubon Society.

To leave Los Angeles on June 23, 1973. Leaders will be Jim Huffman & Olga Clarke. Further details will appear in an early issue of the Western Tanager.

Flying Carpet Tours of Miami, Florida is conducting a series of 16 birding tours in 1973 to various parts of the world. These trips are recommended by the Florida Audubon Society.

Herb and Olga Clarke will be leading several; Costa Rica after Christmas 1972, Borneo and the Philippines in March, and Alaska in August. For further information please contact Olga Clarke, 2027 El Arbolita Dr., Glendale, Calif. 91208, (213)249-5537.

These tours are in addition to the Los Angeles Audubon Society's tour to Malaysia and India in June 1973, to be led by Jim Huffman and Olga Clarke.

BIRD COURSE

The Bird Identification Courses for Fall will begin on Tuesday, October 17th (advanced) and Thursday, October 19th (beginning). The beginning course will last for eight weeks and the advanced will last ten weeks. Both courses will meet once a week at 7:30 p.m. and last about two hours. The meeting place has not been arranged, but anyone located centrally in the L. A. area who is willing to offer the use of his home for the meetings can take the course free of charge. The price of both courses is \$25.00. To register write to Lee Jones, Department of Biology, UCLA, Los Angeles Ca90024.

At the unanimous request of the Orange County Board of Supervisors, the U. S. Department of the Interior is conducting a study of the feasibility of establishing a wildlife refuge in the Upper Newport Bay. Recently it was reported that the Interior Department was considering the acquisition of the three marsh islands from the Irvine Company to serve as the first part of this preserve. Since this seems to indicate that some progress is being made in our long battle to retain the Upper Bay in the public trust, several people have asked if it is still necessary for us to remain in the lawsuit. *More on page six*

audubon activities

DONALD ADAMS

FIELD TRIP—BUCKHORN FLATS, August 12. We met under dark clouds with some lightning and lots of thunder. The eight of us remained under thick white firs while the brief showers came and went. Brown Creepers, Pygmy and White-breasted Nuthatches were choosing their own particular way to go up or down the firs and pines. Flowers were out: penstemon, golden-rod, cinquefoil, some mimulus. The bracken is especially lush and tall. We counted 23 species including a White-headed Woodpecker and a Chipping Sparrow. —Otto Widman, Leader.

FIELD TRIP - BUENA VISTA LAGOON, August 27. It was a beautiful day for birding on Sunday, August 27, when 22 birders turned out at Buena Vista Lagoon. Near State Street, where we met, we saw the Belted Kingfisher, Little Green Heron, Double-crested Cormorant and Great Blue Heron. Least Terns were very busy feeding. A few early arrivals of ducks were seen, notably Ruddy, some of which were in very good plumage. Inland from the freeway were many Egrets, both Common and Snowy. We also found several Black-crowned Night Herons, more Great Blue and a lone White-faced Ibis. A total of 44 species were seen. Les Wood

PILAGIC TRIP—SAN CLEMENTE ISLAND, September 9. The California Field Ornithology autumn visit to the warm waters of Pyramid Cove this year was unusually productive of numbers of birds, although it was another disappointment for the many who wanted to see the Red-billed Tropicbird. The first excitement was a Magnificent Frigate-bird sitting on the pole at the entrance to the harbor—the first time most of us had ever seen a stationary frigate-bird. Soon after a Parasitic Jaeger chased a Mourning Dove, which took refuge among the passengers. Two Long-tailed Jaegers passed close by the boat. Most of the Pomerine had well-developed tails.

A second-year Laughing Gull flew alongside for 15 minutes, allowing careful study of all its plumage. Several Sabine's Gulls were seen in excellent plumage.

The unusual feature was over a thousand Shearwaters, in mixed flocks throughout the trip. With the expected Sooty and Pink-footed were an unexpected number of Manx, and later two Pale-footed, allowing all the comparisons to be made one wanted.

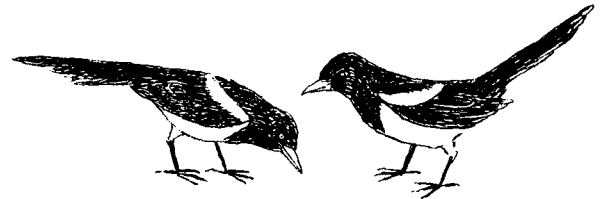
Almost equally numerous were the petrels—Black, a hundred Least, a few Leach, and finally later in the day two Ashy.

Perhaps the most memorable feature of this trip was the fact that 24 Craveri's Murrelets, and no Xantus' were seen. The field marks of the Craveri, the black of the head reaching well below the eye, and the white at the base of the primaries, with black under-wing coverts, were visible on all the sightings.

MALIBU LAGOON, SYCAMORE CANYON - Sept. 9. Although the day was overcast with no sun, thirty-six birders turned out early Saturday morning. Birds sighted at Malibu Lagoon included Kingfisher, Great Blue Heron, White-tailed Kite, Black-bellied and Semipalmated Plover, Royal and Common Terns, Western, Spotted and Baird's Sandpipers.

While the group was lunching at Sycamore Canyon, Harold Baxter spotted a Canada Warbler, considered a vagrant for this area. Two American Redstarts in beautiful plumage were also seen. In all, sixty-four species were identified. Les Wood

EVENING MEETING - September 12. The 1972-73 Audubon year got off to a fine start at the September 12th meeting. A good sized turnout of members and friends greeted Les Wood, our new president. Eric and Kathy Brooks gave a very interesting report on their session at the Audubon Camp of the West, illustrated with beautiful color slides of the scenery, flora and fauna of the area. They were fortunate in not only seeing but photographing some hard-to-find species such as Black-billed Cuckoo, Goshawk and Harlequin Duck.



TANAGER MAILING

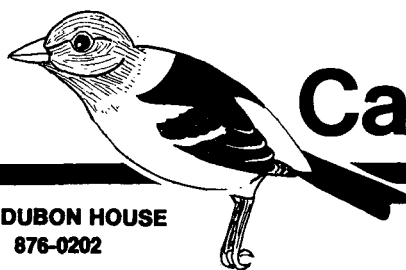
We are getting many reports that people are not receiving their Tanagers at all, or only after a week or ten days. We understand that the Post Office, at least in some areas, is cutting down on personnel, thus delaying even further the delivery of bulk mail. We wish that we could afford to send the Tanager out to all our members first class, however, that is obviously not possible. However, we should like to remind the membership that anyone may receive the Tanager first class by sending in \$1.00 a year.

CONCERNING STUDENT MEMBERSHIPS

The whole of Student Membership dues are retained by the National office, so that the Los Angeles Audubon Society has to support students entirely. This includes subscription to "The Western Tanager."

We hope that parents and others considering Audubon gift memberships and wishing to support both the Chapter as well as encourage the students' interest, will provide a regular membership.

We also hope that students will transfer to regular membership when they graduate.



HEADQUARTERS, LIBRARY AND NATURE MUSEUM LOCATED AT AUDUBON HOUSE
PLUMMER PARK, 7377 SANTA MONICA BLVD., LOS ANGELES 90046 876-0202

DOROTHY DIMSDALE
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Audubon
Bird Reports
874-1318

CAROLINE ADAMS
CALENDAR

BIRD REPORT



The Society is extremely fortunate in having as their "Bird Reporter" someone who is remarkably good at turning up birds for the tape: possible Rock Sandpipers, American Redstarts, Lewis' Woodpecker for this week (Sept. 10), but she says she does need help as there is quite a lot of space on the tape. Please, if you want good birding

information whenever you listen to 874-1318, let us know what you are seeing. Also, please, please, won't you let us know if you found the birds listed on the tape at the designated places. Call Audubon House 876-0202, Jean Brandt at 788-5188 or send a postcard. The tape is changed on Wednesday.

- Oct. 5 THURSDAY - EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING - 8:00 p.m., Audubon House.
 - Oct. 7 SATURDAY - PELAGIC TRIP, MONTEREY, sponsored by the California Field Ornithologists. Leave Sam's Fishing Fleet, Fisherman's Wharf, at 9:00 a.m. and return at 3:00 p.m. Fare = \$10 to members, \$11 to non-members. Send check to California Field Ornithologists, P.O. Box 369, Del Mar, CA 92014. Enclose stamped self-addressed envelope and list all names of party.
 - Oct. 8 SUNDAY - PELAGIC TRIP, ANACAPA ISLAND, sponsored by Sea and Sage Audubon Society. Meet at Quarterdeck Restaurant, Channel Island Harbor, near Oxnard. The Paisano will depart at 7:00 a.m. and return at 4:00 p.m. Fare = \$10. Reservations must be made by October 1. Send check to Miss Margary Ernst, 14781 Hillsboro, Tustin, CA 92680. Telephone - 717 838-9082.
 - Oct. 10 TUESDAY - EVENING MEETING - 8:00 p.m., Plummer Park. Miriam and Ben Romero will present a slide program on "Land of the Amargosa."
 - Oct. 14 SATURDAY - TIJUANA RIVER BOTTOM. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at Oscar's Restaurant on Palm Ave. in Imperial Beach. Go south on Route 5 to Imperial Beach turnoff, Palm Ave., and proceed 3/4 mile to Oscar's on right hand side of Palm. We hope to see rare migrants. Because of the large number of birders in recent years, some private lands and ranches are now closed to birders. Please observe posted areas. Otto Widmann, leader, 221-8973.
 - Oct. 14 SATURDAY - CAMPING TRIP - HORSE CANYON, MOJAVE DESERT. Limited to 10 vehicles; 35 miles north of Mojave off Highway 14. Joshua tree-pinyon pine covered secluded valley. Good chance to see LeConte's Thrasher and Pinon Jays as well as other interesting desert birds. Travel will be on dirt roads passable with caution. ABSOLUTELY NO FACILITIES (this includes NO water, NO picnic tables, NO toilets, and other such luxuries). Reservations will be accepted by mail only. All information will be sent along with confirmation of reservation. Send self-addressed stamped envelope to Pamela Greene, 729-A 10th St., Santa Monica, CA 90402. Keith Axelson and Pamela Greene, leaders. Phone 394-2255.
 - Oct. 16 MONDAY - NEWPORT BACK BAY. Meet at 8:30 at west end of Back Bay Dr. behind Newporter Inn. Late comers may join the group along Back Bay Dr. Leader, Jean Brandt, 788-5188.
 - Oct. 22 SUNDAY - NEWPORT BACK BAY - Meet at 8:00 a.m. at Golden West ponds near Huntington Beach on Golden West St. at Talbert Ave., 3 miles south of the San Diego Freeway or 3 miles north of Pacific Coast Highway. Excellent for migrating and early wintering water birds.
 - Nov. 20 MONDAY - NEWPORT BACK BAY - same directions as October 16 except starting time will be 7:30 a.m. to take advantage of unusually high tide. Leader, Ellen Stephenson, 794-1764.
 - Dec. 7 MONDAY - CAMP PENDLETON for monthly bird census. For directions call Jean Brandt, 788-5188.
- NOTE: Because of lack of interest the pelagic trip scheduled for September 23 had to be cancelled



Los Angeles Audubon Society

The Western Tanager

Official Publication of the
LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY

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CONSERVATION

FRIENDS OF THE SANTA MONICA
MOUNTAINS' PARKS

Spokesman for the Federal Bureau of Outdoor recreation, Ray Murray, presented results of the Santa Monica Mountains Study at a meeting of the Friends of the Santa Monica Mountains Parks. He pointed to the Santa Monica Mountains and Seashore as a unique natural area which should be preserved for quality recreation. He said that the study is the last phase of a commitment made in 1970 by the then Secretary of the Interior Walter Hickel to study 14 areas to determine feasibility for a National Recreation Area.

Murray pointed to the Santa Monica Mountains relation to an expanding urban area and the prime watershed and airshed encompassed by it. He said that the area should be protected as a prototype model for land planning and pointed to the Santa Monica Mountains and Seashore National Urban Park as concepts which would give the area maximum protection yet open it for recreation area for Los Angeles residents. He pointed out that large scale development is imminent-37,000 acres are already committed to residential and industrial development largely because of the lack of coordination by the many separate local over-all planning, intergovernmental fighting, all leading to fragmented development. Murray's study indicated that a stage agency, should handle the park program, referring to the State Department of Parks and Recreation. He further called for related land planning restrictions, preferably by a state sponsored regional commission. Murray said that the area has not been designated as a high priority national recreation area. The implication was that the Santa Monica Mountains and Seashore must serve large populations to qualify. It appears that the Federal Government must be politically encouraged to establish the National Recreation Area program.

Write the President and ask for support for an URBAN NATIONAL PARK in the Santa Monica Mountains. Also your Congressman and Senators

Write the Governor today and ask support for the VENTURA/LOS ANGELES MOUNTAINS AND COASTAL COMMISSION. Also your Assemblyman and State Senator.

SEAL BEACH WILDLIFE REFUGE

The President has recently signed legislation establishing a National Wildlife Refuge within the confines of the Naval Weapons Station at Seal Beach. An Interior Department appropriation of \$522,000 will be used over the next five years to develop the area. What is meant by development we do not know.

The area is the last remaining pristine salt water marsh south of Point Mugu. It is the spawning ground for several species of fish which have access to the ocean via Anaheim Bay. Also it is the nesting area for numerous water birds as well as a feeding ground for migratory birds. The marsh and connecting waterways have been greatly benefited by policy established at the station by the officer in command who has not allowed emptying or flushing of bilge tanks in these waters. We hope he will continue in command.

*The Friends of Newport Bay
cordially invite you to attend
our benefit cocktail party*

*Saturday, October 7, at 7:00 p.m.
at the home of Dr. and Mrs. Richard B. Simpson
2006 Galaxy Drive, Newport Beach*

*Cocktails, Hors d'oeuvres, Dancing
with music by Alan Remington's Orchestra*

Tax deductible Donation, \$5.00 per person

Mail your check payable to
Orange County Foundation for Preservation
of Public Property to:

Frances Robinson
1007 Nottingham Drive
Newport Beach, Ca. 92660

Please enclose a self-addressed stamped
envelope for the return of your tickets.

If you should want more information
about our lawsuit or Back Bay Bash #3,

please call
(714) 646-8009 or 543-6019.

The New York Times

SEPTEMBER 17, 1972

Extinction of the Monk Parakeet Is Sought by Audubon Society

HARTFORD, Sept. 16 (AP) — The monk parakeet, now multiplying in the New York metropolitan area, ought to be wiped out before it becomes a threat to agriculture, Stanley Quickmire, executive director of the Connecticut Audubon Society, said this week.

Mr. Quickmire compared the monk or quaker parakeet, so-called because of its bluish gray plumage, to the English sparrow and the starling, two other imported species, which proliferated to the point of nuisance in the United States.

The monk parakeet's homeland, Argentina, has been trying unsuccessfully to control it for 25 years. So numerous are the swift-flying gray birds that in the Argentine Province of Cordoba they have destroyed up to 45 per cent of the crops in a single season.

Early settlers in this country had a similar problem with the Carolina parakeet, which ravaged orchards along the Eastern seaboard before it was exterminated.

Mr. Quickmire said it is "unfortunate" that the Carolina parakeet is now extinct, but the

monk parakeet is in a different category, since it is an intruder from another continent.

The problem is that the parakeet is highly adaptable. After a flock apparently escaped from cages at Kennedy International Airport in 1969, they settled on Long Island, Staten Island and in Manhattan.

The parakeets have been shipped to this country for years for sale as pets and some apparently have escaped from their owners or were deliberately set free.

As many as 12,000 were imported in 1968, according to a report by the United States Department of the Interior, and flocks now are living in Michigan, North Dakota, Virginia, New Jersey and Massachusetts.

If the species becomes established in the Northeast, "there is every reason to expect that it will gradually extend its range southwards to Florida and westwards to include the southwest and the west coast," says a Federal Government report.

"If this species should become abundant, serious damage to agricultural and orchards crops can be expected."

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA BIRDS

Continued from back page

Ventura was badly "oiled" below the waterline when examined on Aug. 25 and it is probable that most strictly pelagic birds seen ashore are "oiled" or sick. Two ROCK SANDPIPERS were reported by Jean Brandt and Ruth Lohr on the Marina del Rey breakwater early on the drizzly morning of Sept. 8. When the first fishermen arrived, the birds flew to the isolated breakwater across the harbor mouth. This report is doubly interesting because ROCK SANDPIPERS have not been seen at Marina del Rey (the southerly extension of their winter range) since March 1957, and because this date is more than two months before their normal arrival time in California.

On Sept. 10, a cold drizzly morning, below San Diego there was the greatest concentration of warblers I have ever seen in the fall. These were mostly "western" warblers - Yellow, Wilson's, Townsend's, Nashvilles and Orange-crowns, with a few Black-throated Grays, Hermits and MacGillivrays - but with them were two REDSTARTS, three VIRGINIA'S, two TENNESSEES and a very early BLACKPOLL. Elsewhere, although quantities were fewer, there were many noteworthy observations. BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLERS were seen in Tuna Canyon, Malibu on Sept. 4 (Chuck Bernstein and Ernie Abeles), and at Scotty's Castle, Death Valley, on Sept. 2 (Guy McCaskie). There were more than the usual number of sightings of TENNESSEE WARBLERS with one at Malibu Creek on Aug. 19 (Lee Jones), two below San Diego as previously reported, and one at Don and Frances Martenes' oriole feeder in Palos Verdes after Sept. 10. VIRGINIA'S WARBLERS (formerly almost unknown along the coast) now seem to be regular and early in small numbers - two at Hansen Dam on Aug. 25 and 26 (Ron Beck and Jon Dunn), two at Malibu on Sept. 11 (Ed Nav.), two or more at Palos Verdes (Shirley Wells) and three below San Diego in early Sept. A MAGNOLIA WARBLER was found at Deep Springs Ranch, Inyo County on Aug. 20 (G. McC. et al) and what appeared to be a different individual was there on Aug. 27 and 29 (the Heindels). A very early male BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER appeared briefly in Shirley Wells' San Pedro garden on Sept. 7. After finding the Harlequin Duck at Marina del Rey on Sept. 6, Larry Sansone identified a rare PRAIRIE WARBLER in a nearby willow clump. It was later seen by many other L. A. A. S. members. NORTHERN WATERTHRUSHES were widely seen, particularly inland, with three at Oasis Ranch, Mono County on Aug. 29 and others at Furnace Creek, Death Valley. The only coastal record to Sept. 10 was one at Malibu on Aug. 20. There were more than twenty reports of AMERICAN REDSTARTS, mostly from Inyo County where five were seen together at Deep Springs Ranch on Aug. 29 (the Heindels). Locally one was at Hollywood Reservoir on Aug. 24 (Ed Navajosky), another was at Pt. Fermin Park on the 27th (Jon Dunn and Lee Jones), a third was near Palos Verdes on Sept. 6 (Shirley Wells), two or more were in Tuna Can-

yon, Malibu on the same day (J. Brandt, A. King and R. Lohr), and several were below San Diego in early Sept. Joan Mills brings word that Pat Doheny reported a PAINTED REDSTART, (very rare in California) which came aboard his boat about 25 miles SSW of Oceanside on Sept. 9.

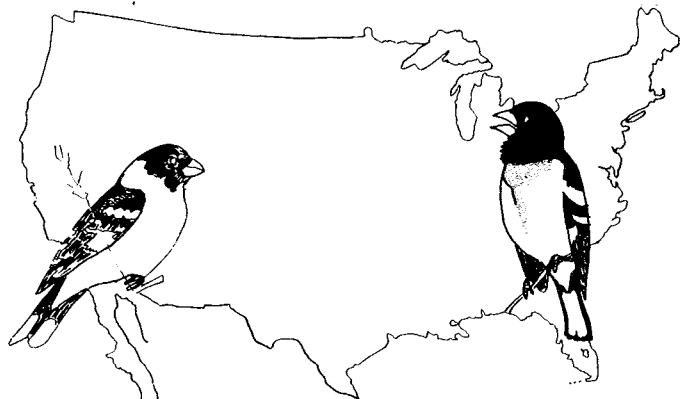
Aside from warblers, SUMMER TANAGERS stole the show (they are rare in coastal California) and most were seen in Franklin Canyon, W.L.A. The latest report there was of an adult male. Earlier reports had been of a female and an immature male. Hal Baxter also had a parti-colored young male in his Arcadia garden in early Sept. Our final report of ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAKS this summer came from Leo Best, who found a male at Finney Lake, Imperial County on Aug. 12. Mike San Miguel saw a male LARK BUNTING still in black and white summer plumage at Furnace Creek on Sept. 9 and Jon Dunn studied a hard-to-identify GRASSHOPPER SPARROW near Encino on Aug. 11.

With so many rare birds so early in the fall, we can look forward to continued excitement through October. However, we should also be on the lookout for the arrival of our most familiar and predictable winter residents - AUDUBON'S WARBLERS about Sept. 15 and everybody's favorite yardbirds, WHITE-CROWNED SPARROWS about Oct. 1. With cool weather in early September, even snow in the Sierras, we may have an early fall, a supposition which is born out by the appearance of RED-BREASTED NUTHATCHES and MOUNTAIN CHICKADEES in the lowlands. These may be only the forerunners of several northern species. What will they be - possibly Crossbills, Varied Thrushes, Northern Shrikes and Evening Grosbeaks.

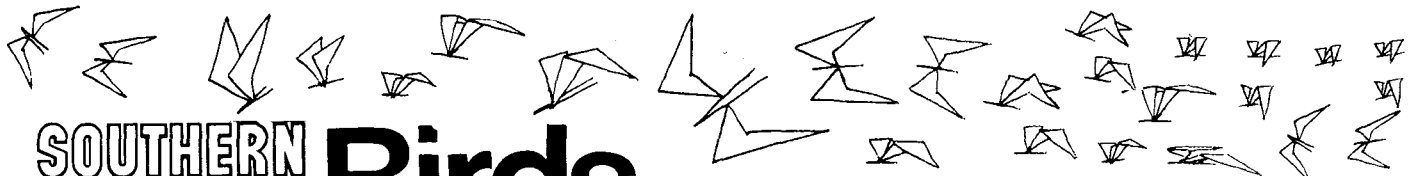
The expansion of the police academy in Elysian Park will be proposition "U" on the November ballot.

The Coastline Initiative will be on the November ballot - Find out what this means to conservation!

Study these measures, and above all, remember "YOUR VOTE COUNTS"



"The lumpers will be bussing us next!"



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA **Birds** SHUMWAY SUFFEL

October is an exciting month to be out in the field. Even though the fall migration migration is tapering off now, there are still many migrants and early winter visitors in our area, and with them are the vagrant birds, some whose normal range is more than a thousand miles to the north or east of us. In the fall, many of the small passerines - the flycatchers, vireos, and warblers which appear so much alike - are a dull and confusing lot. They should be studied in advance, then with your new bird in view, write a detailed description; then, finally, consult the field guides to check your notes against the pictures and descriptions. When you get a feeling for it, you may find fall birding for small passerines the most fascinating part of your birding year. Fall migrants, and especially vagrants, tend to concentrate on coastal promontories and at desert oases, places intensively birded.

A large number of unusual birds were reported in late August and early September. The bird of the month was a ZONE-TAILED HAWK found at tree-top height in the back yard of Tom and Jo Heindel's new home in Big Pine (15 miles south of Bishop) Calif. on Aug. 27. It was soaring with Turkey Vultures when found, but was flying and perching alone the next day, after which it disappeared. Jo and Tom's many friends in Orange County and in L. A. A. S. will find a warm welcome and up-to-date birding information at the Heindels' (280 Dewey St., Big Pine - two blocks off #395). More easily reached was a flightless male HARLEQUIN DUCK (with a dozen or so flightless Scoters) along the Ballona Creek channel at Marina del Rey. Kim Garrett first saw it on Aug. 14 and when the news spread via the bird tape, dozens of birders recorded, at best a "life bird", at worst a "year bird". There seems little doubt that this is the same individual found by Olga Clarke and Allan Keith last June. The LOUISIANA HERON found nearby Aug. 25 by Gus Daniels of New York was also much admired by birders coming to see the HARLEQUIN DUCK.

Latest news from the Salton Sea is that the BOOBIES are dying off rapidly with about fifteen Blue-foots and one Brown remaining in late August. The Sea, obviously, is not a healthy place for boobies, as they seldom last over two months there. The fresh water reservoirs and the ocean are much better, with the Brown Boobies at San Miguel Island and at Martinez Lake on the Colorado River being seen over a span of several years, and one of the surviving Blue-foots from the Sept. 1971 invasion being sighted off Palos Verdes in Feb. 1972. At least one of the boobies from the Gulf found its way up the Colorado

River to the Imperial Dam above Yuma, where Robert Fleisher reported a BROWN BOOBY on Aug. 20. On the same day Sue O'Kelly photographed a single ROSEATE SPOONBILL with the pelicans and skimmers at the north end of the Salton Sea. This is the first sighting north of the south end. The two BLACK SKIMMERS found on Aug. 6 at the Santa Clara River estuary (near Ventura) increased to four by mid-month (the Maisels et al) then disappeared, and by early September there were two skimmers at Imperial Beach below San Diego. Reports of FRIGATEBIRDS decreased as August came to an end, but at least one was still present in the San Diego area as an immature perched on a pole when the pelagic trip left Mission Bay at dawn on Sept. 9.

Raptors, because they are conspicuous, were widely reported, even though they are decreasing alarmingly. Steve Aanestad gives us one of our very few Southern Californian reports of a GOSHAWK - an immature at Mt. Pinos on July 28. He also reports a very early OSPREY at Bols Chica on Aug. 10. The only other sighting (to Sept. 11) was an Osprey which surveyed the Otay Mesa Reservoir on Sept. 10, found no fish and flew on. Lack of habitat and food supply in our area is an increasing hardship for the birds of prey here. Ed Navajosky found that the WHITE TAILED KITES at Legg Lake Park had successfully reared their young in that little bit of open space in an otherwise urban area. They are adapting well to changed conditions and are making a good comeback in California.

Some residents in the Newbury Park area, sparked by the Wm Liebegotts, have organized a protective league for their two immature GOLDEN EAGLES, which perch in the trees across from their homes.

As expected, BAIRD'S SANDPIPERS were widely reported in small numbers from the coastal slope in mid-August - six at Hansen Dam, several at the Sepulveda Recreation Area and up to ten at the mouth of the Santa Clara River (Jon Dun et al). LESSER YELLOWLEGS (early and uncommon on our coast) were sighted in late August in much the same places. There were only five single reports of SOLITARY SANDPIPERS from Mono County to the Mexican border. A single bird was widely reported along Malibu Creek, above the lagoon, during late August and early September. NORTHERN PHALAROPES were present in immense numbers during August in still water both along the coast and inland, but only two RED PHALAROPES were seen in the coastal lagoons - one at Malibu (Lee Jones) and one near Ventura (Kim Garrett). The one near

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