

LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

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THE WESTERN



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THE CALIFORNIA POPPY

From "The State Flower" by Prentiss Maslin

In 1815 Otto Von Kotzebue sailed in the good ship "Rurick" on a voyage of discovery and exploration around the world, under the patronage of Count Romanzoff of Russia. This was a scientific expedition, and carried with it Louis Charles Adelaide de Chamisso as naturalist and Johann Frederick Eschscholtz as surgeon. The voyage lasted three years, and de Chamisso was the first naturalist to picture and describe the Golden Poppy of California; and, in honor of his friend, he gave it the name of Eschscholtzia, and California for its birthplace.

The California Poppy has anything but an agreeable perfume, but its wonderful coloring, and its incomparable, satin-like sheen, have been the wonder, delight and admiration of all lover of nature. Growing throughout the length and breadth of the State, and hardly elsewhere, it is peculiarly typical of California, and, in 1903, under an act of the Legislature, it was made the State Flower.

The California Poppy is a brazen, garish flower. It shuns the woodland, and, unsheltered, fairly revels in the warm sunlight. It possesses none of the modesty of the violet, the sweetness of the lily, nor the beauty of the rose, but, standing alone and unique, it compels our admiration because of its wonderful coloring and sheen, which refuse to be transferred by the limner's art to board or canvas.

The most authentic legend connected with this flower purports to be told in a verse or chant of the Indians of southern California of the time when there was a great drought and vegetation died, and pestilence and famine came upon the land, and intense cold existed, until all the Indians perished save two, Manona (man) and his young squaw Mahala (woman). In dire distress they left the land of their forefathers and journeyed south in search of relief from their destitution, offering up each night and morn, their devout prayers to the Great Spirit of the Red Man. These prayers were heard, and the Great Spirit sent the "Fire Flower" to drive away the evil spirit of the cold and frost, and to fill the land with warmth and plenty.

If this legend is authentic, the California Poppy is doubly typical of the great State of California, with its perpetual sunshine and its glorious climate, and "where the poorest live in abundance."

WILD FLOWERS DELAY TRAFFIC

Reports are coming in daily of the gorgeous displays of wild flowers near Bakersfield, Lebec and Arvin.

President Salmon reports having seen Evening Snow, Evening Primroses, Baby-Blue-Eyes, Bird's Eyes, Owl's Clover, California Poppies, four kinds of Lupine, Coreopsis, Malacothrix, Joshua Trees (in bloom), Chinese Houses, Brodiaea, Cream-cups, Sun-cups, Thistle Sage, Fiddle Necks, Popcorn Flowers and Forget-me-nots. The finest, she says, are to be found at Arvin.

Appreciation by the motoring public of the magnificent wild flower display has been so great that a certain Sacramento attorney and former assemblyman reports having been delayed two hours by the traffic congestion.

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The Los Angeles Audubon Society has regular meetings on the first and third Thursday of each month--the first being a field trip, and the next a program meeting which is held in the State Building at Exposition Park at two o'clock in the afternoon.

Dues for annual membership in the Society are \$1 per year, with life membership \$10, and Patron \$100.

If you are interested in studying and protecting your feathered friends, won't you identify yourself with us?

APRIL						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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				

will give an illustrated talk on "Wild Flowers." Mrs. Oliver C. Edwards and Mrs. Graco S. Hall.

DON'T FORGET that in June we are to celebrate our 25th year of work together as an Audubon Society. President Mary Barnes Salmon and Mrs. Leonard Hall are making the plans. The time and place will be announced later.

AUDUBONITE ANDERSON OBSERVES

"On the morning of March 15," says Ethel M. Anderson, "the cliff swallows were back at their last year's nests under the eaves, peeping over the edge of the gourd-shaped nest and showing the white patch on the head. A pair of California mocking birds were building a nest in the ficus vine on the chimney, just above the feeding tray, where they help themselves to pomegranate and suet. The birds a-twitter! A large hawk crashing down out of a Eugenia tree and flying away as I appeared."

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The following answers have been sent in to questions asked in last month's issue of THE WESTERN TANAGER:

A. Webster gives "titmice" as the plural of "titmouse."

A. The Arctic Tern travels the farthest from season to season.

A. The title of "most prolific bird" should go either to the quail or to the English sparrow.

The other questions are still unanswered. Come on, Audubonites, someone wants to know! Or maybe you have another question. Let's have some real information in the next issue.

SEQUOIA

If you have not already done so, by all means see the current moving picture, "Sequoia."

Photographed in beautiful Sequoia National Park, it tells the story of an unusual friendship--the friendship of a deer and a puma.

Jean Parker is the leading lady, but those you will remember are Malibu, whose name means "a rough journey, and Gato, "the outlaw."

CAL - N - DAR

April 4 - Field trip. Huntington Art Gallery grounds. 10 a.m. 100 tickets have been secured. If you have a friend whom you wish to take, call Mrs. James M. Brennan, Capitol 6960. She has the tickets.

11 - Board meeting. At Mrs. Ventch's beach home at Hermosa. (How Ye Editorress regrets!)

18 - Program meeting. State Building at Exposition Park at 2:00 p.m. Mr. Theodore Payne

will give an illustrated talk on "Wild Flowers."

Those in charge of the program are Mrs. Oliver C. Edwards and Mrs. Graco S. Hall.

MARCH 7, 1935. Trip No. 15

--Evelyn E. Eldridge--

The Audubon Club was scheduled to meet at the land end of the pier at Playa Del Rey at 9:30 A. M. to study the water birds. There was one member (the writer) present, and, before the day was over, I felt very much like a water bird myself.

To start the day out right, just as I was leaving the house, above the noise of drizzling rain, I heard a sweet, low, gurgling sound. Perched high up on the light wire sat a little Cow Bird, trying desperately to make himself heard.

The rain poured down in torrents, but the birds, being something of the nature of us humans, eat rain or shine, and they flocked to the shore in great numbers. They were very good-natured being very reluctant about moving; so one could study them from only a few yards.



Though they are not uncommon, I never fail to get a thrill out of the little Sanderlings running back and forth. It seems to me they show more than the usual amount of human intelligence, keeping just far enough away from the water to avoid getting wet. Here and there along the water the Surf Scoters tried to float, but the waves were so high they were rolled right up on the bank... There were about twenty Marbled Godwits feeding, keeping up their continual guttural scolding. They were so wet I don't believe they could have flown had they wished to do so, and I was able to study them at very close range. One lonely Greater Yellow Legs stood bobbing up and down, all unmindful of the pouring rain. As I stood looking over the birds, trying to pick out the uncommon, my eyes fell upon a little brown bird standing so still with his bill straight up as if to make you believe he really was not there at all. I looked a second time, and, sure enough, it was an American Bittern. It is most interesting to watch the Forster Tern fly up and down the shore, bill pointed downward, and suddenly plunge straight down striking the water with a splash. Quite a number of Hudsonian Curlews were probing along the beach. The Black Turnstones were standing atop the rocks waiting for the water to wash up bits of food. Some fifteen or twenty Snowy Plovers were hovering in the cracks of the ground trying to keep dry. There were two or three Common Loons riding the waves, not caring how high they went.

About three o'clock, after having listed sixty-nine birds, I decided no one else would show up, and so being pretty wet, I started for home. On the way I stopped long enough to take a look at the Short Eared Owl, who, quite contrary to the tradition of the Owl family, feeds by day. It had rained so hard, and the water was so deep in places, that it ran over the running board into the car. On one occasion it was necessary to have the car pulled out. My only regret, however, was that other members of the club had not shared this interesting, most exciting day.

SEEN IN AND AROUND SACRAMENTO

Robins, sparrows and juncos making merry in beautiful Capitol Park. Hundreds of bi-colored redwings around Woodland and Dixon.

More Magpies than that near Oroville.

Sparrows inhabiting an old brick house built in 1855--the sole remains of what was once the town of Timbuctoo.

Characters: Two of the legislators' wives and Ye Editress bicycling near William Land Park. The latter not too proficient. Distraction: A bird singing in a nearby tree. Action: Ye Editress removes one hand to point. (Poor etiquette) More action: A pile-up. Result: A skinned finger, and a more than skinned knee. Moral: Cycling and birding don't mix--unless you are good!

INTERESTING CLIPPINGS

Two clippings have just reached us from members of Audubon which are so newsworthy that we present them for your perusal.

Mrs. Roy Sergeant, our Butterfly Chairman, found the following in the TIMES Sunday Magazine:

"What may happen to human beings during the next war--winged death from the sky--has been the lot in recent years of at least 1,000,000 hives, or colonies of honey bees.

"Dr. J. E. Eckert and H. W. Allinger, University of California scientists, estimate this carnage among the nation's apiaries already has occurred as a result of the growing practice of scattering poisonous dust from airplanes to kill harmful insects.

"The Berkeley studies disclose that the dust drifts down into the faces of the flowers which bees are robbing of nectar, killing the industrious honey-makers before they reach their hives.

"A further menace to the bee population is that the pollen-carrying bees bring home the poisoned food, thus destroying the young bees. In brief the poor bees are experiencing what we should be forced to undergo if some enemy should succeed in poisoning our milk supply.

"This appears only one more example of the mounting problems which ensue when we tinker with nature."

Effie Tamblyn, an interested Long Beach member, is responsible for this startling bit of information:

"The United States has been divided into four parts by its wild duck family, the Government has learned, and nothing can persuade a duck from one section to invade another.

"These four skyways of the fowls are said to be as exclusive as though the nation were divided into four areas by fences a mile high.

"Three families of California ducks must nest in the same marsh in Northern Canada in Summer with three families of Mississippi ducks," F. C. Lincoln, Naturalist of the United States Biological Survey said today. "But when the southward migration starts the two groups will not fly together."

"The California ducks will return to the lowlands of the Golden State and the Mississippi ducks will return to the swamps of Mississippi.

"A wild duck, Lincoln said, keeps to the trodden path of its ancestors and even if food is scarce along its father's route and is plentiful in another section, the duck still keeps to its own ancestral trail.

"This habit of the birds," he continued, "means that along each of these skyways sportsmen must protect their own birds.

"Too much killing of ducks in one skyway will ruin that skyway and the shooters there can not expect to benefit by conservation efforts in another."

DID YOU KNOW THAT

Mrs. Eldridge was the only one to get to Playa Del Rey for the field trip on March 7. Her story appears elsewhere in this issue.

Miss Miriam Faddis, because of her interest in bird life and her help to Los Angeles Audubon, was elected an honorary member of our society at the last board meeting?

A female Arizona hooded oriole was seen on December 27, 1934, and during the first week of January, 1935, at 917 North Orange Grove Avenue, Hollywood, by Mr. and Mrs. H. W. Anderson?

Although Mrs. Roy Sergeant could not get to Playa Del Rey on account of the rain, her day was not spoiled, for about noon of the same day she saw a Rufous Hummer on a Japanese Plum Tree having such a feast on the beautiful pink blossoms! It was not raining at the time, but it was cloudy and cold. Later in the same day she saw twelve bush tits on the same tree.