

LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

T H E

PLUMMER PARK

7377 SANTA MONICA BLVD.  
LOS ANGELES 46, CALIFORNIA

# Western Tanager



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No. 7

## A LETTER FROM THE RED TAILED HAWKS TO YOU (By - W. A. Kent)

Perhaps you have never received a letter like this one before. I hope not, because I wish to be the first to break the news to you.

We are the large Hawks you see so often sailing around in circles overhead and when we turn, you see the beautiful reddish brown color on the upper side of our broad tails. We do not have this color until mature, but considering the fact that all of the different species of large sailing Hawks are about 93% useful to the farmer, you should protect us all and not just the ones that have a reddish tail!

Dr. A. K. Fisher, after examining a great many of our stomachs, gave us this very high rating of usefulness to the farmer, in his book, "Food of the Hawks and Owls", so you see it is true.

We have large, broad and rounded wings, being about  $4\frac{1}{2}$  feet from tip to tip, making us very beautiful and thrilling to look at when alive, but a sad mess when dead and hanging from a fence or left on the ground.

Mr. Sportsman, after you have been waiting for some time in your duck blind, without a duck in sight, one of us is apt to unsuspectingly sail by you within easy shot gun range. Do not shoot at us for practice or just for fun, because we destroy the rodents that live around the lakes and ponds. All of us are rather slow in flight and the damage we do to game birds is very insignificant. Therefore, when you are out hunting grouse, pheasants, doves or quail even, I might be sitting on a limb or post watching for gophers. Do not shoot me because I am your friend. My conscience is clear and that is the reason I let you get so close before I fly; and please tell the other Sportsmen not to shoot me either.

Mr. Farmer, when you shoot us, all the ground squirrels are pleased and proceed to destroy your land and product. If we are dead we can no longer catch them, thereby helping to save your crops. Yes, our dead bodies are hanging on some of your fences that all passers by can see the act you unthinkingly committed. But we worked all our lives for you, each of us catching 1000 or more mice, gophers, ground squirrels, rats, lizards, snakes and thousands and thousands of grasshoppers every year. So our lives were not in vain after all. But now that you know how useful we are to you, we know you will neither shoot nor allow us to be shot anymore.

Mr. Town Dweller, those rodents and insects that are bothering you are a little hard for us to get at but there are some small Owls around; they will catch them better than we can, so we wish to talk with the boys and young men regarding them. You have a rifle or shot gun that you are practicing with and a few times we have seen someone shoot at the owls. They are working hard for you, your mother and father, catching these pests that you may have pretty flowers and a nice lawn. I have told you how useful they are and I am sure you will protect them hereafter.

In conclusion - We are not wailing before you, but have carefully explained how beneficial we all are, so that when you see any of us in the future you will smile, and say, "Go to it, Old Boy, --- We are with you!"

Signed - THE RED TAILED HAWKS

## THE WESTERN TANAGER

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50¢ per yearCONVERSATION AT OUR AUDUBON  
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The Los Angeles Audubon Society holds two regular meetings each month - the first Thursday being Field Day, the third Thursday, a program meeting held in the State Building at Exposition Park, at 2 P. M. The annual dues are \$1.25; Life Membership \$10.00, and Patron \$100.00.

## NOTICES OF MEETINGS

FIELD MEETING-April 7th. 9 A. M. Our trip to Bolsa Chica is again planned by Mrs. Daugherty. A fine opportunity to study the Shore Birds and a delightful place to visit. Wear heavy shoes or goloshes if you are going into the marsh. Bring a picnic lunch as usual. Lunch will be at Recreation Park, 7th and Park Avenue, Long Beach. Our Long Beach members will serve coffee, so include your cups. Mrs. Thomas Squire has arranged to have Mr. Arthur Roseman as guest, who will speak on Homing Pigeons. The bus will leave 544 South Hill Street, at 8 A. M. Fare is \$1.00-round trip. Mrs. Daugherty will be there to show us birds along the way. ALL ABOARD for a happy day! Make reservations with Mrs. Allen or Mrs. Hall, Richmond 7079, 2009 Magnolia Avenue.

\* Hudson 5771

BOARD MEETING-April 1<sup>st</sup>. Will be held at the home of Mrs. Maud Murphy, 1445 No. Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena. Those arriving at 9:30 a.m., may go birding. BRUNCH at 11 a.m., served by the hostess. Board meeting to follow.

PROGRAM MEETING- April 21st. Mr. W. A. Kent will talk on Hawks and Condors. His interest in birds started in his boyhood and his knowledge and enthusiasm make him an exceptional speaker. An added feature will be Mrs. Veatch's charming "On May Day In the Morning".

STUDY CLASS-April 29th. Field identification of birds under direction of Mrs. Grace Hall, 10 a.m. to 12 a.m. Bring a picnic lunch if you wish.

Visitor: What a nice little library you have here and such fascinating books! But what is the empty niche for?

CURATRIX: Oh, that is the space which is being held for our copy of Audubon's "BIRDS OF AMERICA" which we are now collecting funds to purchase. You know every Audubon Society owes full honor to the man who first gave to the world real studies of our beautiful American birds.

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

Owing to the increased demand for the Audubon Library books it has been found necessary to limit the length of time books may be kept out. The new ruling is that a book may be had for one month, and thereafter a charge of 10¢ per week will be made.

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			

INDOOR MEETING-MARCH 17th, 1938

Those fortunate enough to attend the March Indoor meeting were taken on a delightful trip through Lassen Volcanic National Park with Mr. Joseph E. Burgess as guide and lecturer. His pictures of the birds and those of the park, in color, unfolded before us the wonders and beauties of that great play ground in which he plays so important a part.

Arline Moore, a pupil of Mrs. Milton Jeffs, was the whistler soloist. Her charming verse and bird calls were enthusiastically received.

MORE ABOUT OUR SLOUGHS

By-Mrs. Bertha Fuller

At a meeting of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, held Tuesday, March 15th, 1938, your President, with some thirty other leaders in conservation and history and landmarks preservation and study, enjoyed seeing a project recently renewed by the California History and Landmarks Club of Los Angeles, received with much favor and heard a committee appointed to study further into the possibilities of this project. The name of Nigger Slough officially passed into history and became a "thought mark" - while an old, new name was given this area: Laguna de los Dominguez. The Dominguez family has owned this vast area since, some authorities say, 1784 - others 1822. It is fitting the new park-lake-bird sanctuary be named after this old time Spanish family. No real authentic reason could be given by any old timer as to why Nigger Slough was ever so named. One said a "nigger" drowned there, another that flocks of crows used to be there, another that black clouds of dust used to arise there during droughts, another that a "nigger" used to have a corral there - but at least we know the Dominguez family lived near there and owned the land.

The plan presented by the official committee of the Board of Supervisors, Messrs. Spence D. Turner, County Forester, E. R. Shonard, County Mechanical Engineer, Alfred Jones, County Surveyor, and J. K. Reid, Superintendent of Recreations, with Mrs. C. H. Comby of the District Board of Federation of Women's Clubs, and Mrs. Edwin S. Fuller, places the sanctuary beginning with 182nd street near Vermont, continuing to a point 3000 feet east of Main Street, being a mere strip of land around this water space - 400 acres plus.

At the meeting Tuesday, however, the flood control of all that low area came up - 1600 acres. The owners offered to give the land free if the past paid taxes were refunded. The Flood Control Engineer Howell was sure no permanent effective flood control could be built, even for the figure of three million dollars estimated. He is adverse to drainage, therefore, as it seems impossible anyway.

Your committee will report to you as plans mature. But there is surely, at last, -at long last shall we say- a bird sanctuary to be dedicated in this metropolitan area - thanks to the fine cooperation of you all.

NEW MEMBERS

At this time we wish to welcome into membership Mrs. David Watkins and Dr. F. O. Yost.

LIFE MEMBERS

Mr. R. A. Powell

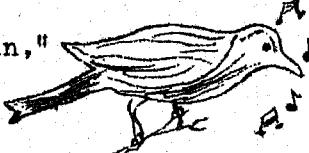
Also, we are happy to report that Miss Laura Greely and Mrs. Alma Stultz recently became Life Members of our Society!

SONG IN SPRING

You saw a robin yesterday.

And I saw one today.

"I saw the spring's first robin,"  
How proudly you will say!



You own a fine superlative

That other folk may quote:

"Jane heard the spring's

first robin

Sing the spring's initial

note."

But how my heart is singing.

"Oh what a lovely thing,

To see the second robin,

On the second day of spring!"

Julia Blauvelt McGrane

OUR CONSERVATIVE WATERFOWL

By - Josiah Keely

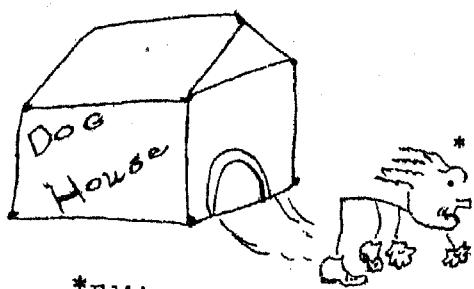
In seven years of gypsying up and down and across, in this and other countries, not the least item of interest has been the variation in plumage, notes and characteristics of birds of the same family and of almost the same species. We are taught that in evolutionary history, a certain isolation is necessary for a sharp differentiation. Perhaps one of the best instances of this is the separation of wild life at the Grand Canyon, where the White Tailed Squirrels of the North Rim have developed, and the difference in ears of the Mule Deer. Just recently, scientists hoped to find other variations on some of the isolated plateaus.

I think it will not be difficult to show that these evolved differences are not as marked in our Waterfowl as in the land birds, and that both, perhaps, show less of change than the animal life that can only travel on land.

As we are here considering the water birds, it might not be out of place to digress into their past history; there seems good evidence that all birds evolved almost directly from reptilian types, and that our waterfowl generally are the more primitive. Flying with legs out behind is considered primitive, and nearly all water birds do it. For some unexplained reason, intelligence does not seek to go with age, for any close observer knows that waterfowl cannot pass an intelligence test. Travel, also, is supposed to "broaden the mind", but, with both wings and paddles, to say nothing of wading legs, the waterfowl must have spent vast ages in educational travel when the waters of the earth covered more of the globe than they do today.

But this ability to "get around" must have resulted in a community of interests and a similarity of living which has produced marked conservatism in bonnets, coats, and even trousers among the Ducks, a Mallard is a Mallard, east and west and north and south. As we run over the list of Gulls, what little variation we find as we check them in various parts of the world; the Storks of Holland and the Wood Ibises; the European Widgeon and the American Bald Pate; the Egrets and Herons of the Southeast and the Southwest; the Dovekies of the Atlantic and the Auklets of the Pacific; the Sea Pigeons of Puget Sound and the Guallemots of the Gulf of St. Lawrence; the Albatross and the Gannet; and our common old Coot, the most traveled and the most narrow minded of all. I have seen Coots in Florida, Cuba, Mexico, California, Holland, Italy, Germany, Alaska, Maine, and on practically every small body of water along the Gypsy Trail; and, if there is any difference in Coots we have failed to note it.

It must, of course, be understood that I speak as an amateur, for there are probably differences recognized by expert ornithologists, but even the novice may distinguish the blue throat of the Western Blue Bird, the white corners of the outer tail feathers of the Eastern Robin; the difference between Golden Shafted and Red Shafted Flickers, the extra song notes of the Western Meadowlark, after hearing the brief two or three notes of the Eastern cousin. It even takes but little training to catch the variations in the notes of the Cardinal that has long been isolated in Florida; but, if there has crept in any variation in the harsh gutterals of most of the waterfowl, it escaped the untrained ear. Some of them we might characterize as beautiful but dumb; others are hardly beautiful; and still others might make a virtue of dumbness. Yet their loyalty to type, in voice, dress, and form, wins the waterfowl the somewhat dubious distinction of being Nature's Conservatives.



\*Editor

Just coming out to apologize for a grammatical error made in condensing Mr. Otto Steiert's recent article on "Sloughs."

(Insert)

(Insert)

TO GRACE HALL

All hail to Hall, she's our "Hall of Fame", The flowers and trees she knows so well  
In your record now go place her name; And when with us she loves to tell  
For years she's tramped the sands, Of nature's gifts for man to use,  
The walks and paths of wildwood lands. She knows that man these gifts abuse.

While oft alone within the trees She learned the birds and all their needs,  
And brought to us the cry of birds And gave us names we'd never heard.

He kills her birds and fells her trees,  
She oft begged man on bended knees  
To save these friends for all of men  
By word of tongue and word of pen.

We give her praise for work well done  
This toiler of the AUDUBON;  
So let us think and never fail,  
To remember Grace who walks the trail!

James M. Brennan, Poet Laureate  
\*\*\* LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY

A phonograph for our headquarters has been given by Mr. and Mrs. James M. Brennan. Miss Charlotte Hamilton and Mrs. Ella W. Hamilton provided A. A. Allen's fine records of bird calls and songs. These gifts will greatly assist in our study classes. Many thanks!

EXCHANGE OF FACTS AND COMMENTS

The following is an excerpt from "The Gull", San Francisco:

Red-Naped Sapsucker in Contra Costa County:

In THE CONDOR for March-April, 1936, Mr. Paul F. Covel reports taking a Red-naped Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus varius nuchalis*) in Santa Cruz County December 11th, 1934. He states he has found only four previous records for the San Francisco Bay Region. Having noted this, I felt that it might be of interest to know that on April 30th, and May 1, 1936, near Diablo Country Club, Contra Costa County, this bird came many times to a tree to inspect sapsucker holes.

He was only ten feet from me and his crimson head bordered by black, crimson throat and black breast, and narrow crimson line at nape as well as his other characteristic markings were plainly seen.

Red-breasted Sapsuckers were in the neighborhood at the same time.

I did not have the bird in hand but as I have seen the Red-naped Sapsucker many times and as this one was only a few feet distant there could be no question as to the bird's identity.

Mrs. C. S. Deuprey  
(Life Member-Los Angeles Audubon Society)

A SPRING SUNRISE

By - Mrs. Alma W. Mason

Awakening just before dawn, the soft, gentle notes of a little owl floated in to me through the bedroom window; the owl, a Screech Owl, but why so named is a mystery to me for the notes which I have heard are soft and mellow - anything but a screech.

Soon the darkness began to fade and I thought what a fine opportunity to view a sunrise, for I was at my daughter's home, high upon a hillside in Eagle Rock. By the time I was dressed it was light, though no color was visible in the east to give promise of the glory which was to come.

(A SPRING SUNRISE - continued)

Standing at the big bay window facing east, a broad and vast panorama, stretching from north to south, spread before me. At the north the mountains - Mt. Wilson, Mt. Lowe, of the Coast Range - next the valley reaching eastward with a lone hill near my right, and then the tree-covered hills with a clump of giant eucalyptus trees standing out boldly against the sky. The clouds, dull gray, were thickest and heaviest near the mountains at my left, gradually narrowing to one long cloud extending nearly across the sky, and slightly above the horizon. Below the cloud the sky was a pale, turquoise blue.

Just above the one lone hill near my right, the first faint color appeared on the clouds - a pale rose tint. Almost imperceptibly it grew and spread to the cloud masses near the mountains. As I watched, and as the sun came nearer, the dark blue of the mountains changed to lavender-rose, the lower peaks standing out clear cut against the sky with mist between the ranges. The color of the clouds changed from rose to gold, and clouds which I had not seen before, appeared faintly in the sky above, tinged with gold. At the right of the hill behind which the sun was still hidden, there appeared a mass of beautiful golden clouds, and it needed but little imagination to see in this exquisitely beautiful cloud mass, the "Golden City" of which we are told "there shall be neither sorrow nor crying there."

From time to time the form of some bird silhouetted against the sky, winged his way silently across the landscape.

When the sun rose above the top of the hill, the flaming light came in waves, and it seemed to me as if a narrow rainbow rimmed the great golden orb.

As the sun came fully into view the sky was full of fleecy clouds, the gold had disappeared and the great blue dome of the heavens was filled with silver clouds as light as down.

I gazed enraptured - but suddenly from the live-oak tree in a neighbor's yard, came the squawk of a California Jay, and the spell was broken. A new day was at hand full of its possibilities and its duties.

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COMMANDMENTS OF THE FLOWERS

Thou shalt learn to know the wild flowers of thy State.

Thou shalt love them and cherish them.

Thou shalt consider the places where they grow as thy garden, and make it thy aim to protect it.

Thou shalt gather no more than thou cans't use.

Thou shalt remember the seedtime of another year, and the joy of others who are to look upon the flowers.

Thou shalt pass along thy knowledge of them, that they may find favor with the careless observer.

Thou shalt learn from them the grace of line and the harmony of color.

Thou shalt consider how carefully the sun and the wind and the rain join hands in completing their beauty for thee.

Thou shalt preserve them in thy mind and in thy heart as a great lesson from Nature's book.

Thou shalt not destroy, but shalt use thy best knowledge to bring two blossoms to the coming year where last year counted one.

Lena Scott Harris

