

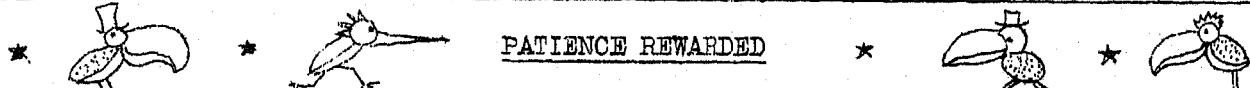
Western Tanager



VOL. V

MARCH 1939

No. 6



The field lay beside a busy highway. It had been recently plowed and prepared for flooding. A series of low dikes criss-crossed the field, laying it out in squares. Mountain Bluebirds perched along the low fence, and viewed from the car they stood out in silhouette against the rich black soil. We had heard that Mountain Plovers had been seen in this field, but there were none to be seen from the car. As we walked into the field (mud sticking to our shoes) flocks of Pipits and Killdeers took to wing, both species of birds uttering their characteristic call-notes. Following with our eyes the flight of the Killdeers, we twice caught sight of a rather compact flock of birds flying close to the ground that appeared to flash more white than the Killdeers. We were encouraged to go on.

Soon we had our reward, for a Mountain Plover appeared about fifty yards away and it was in plain sight as it came up to the top of one of the dikes. Other birds began to appear and soon there were a dozen or so in sight. The Plovers were not nearly so shy as the Killdeers and we had an opportunity to study them through the binoculars.

Finally we got within fifty feet of some of the birds. More and more birds appeared -- birds that had been hidden from view behind the dikes. Often small flocks took wing, skimming low over the ground. In flight the Plovers were inconspicuous, except when their underbodies flashed white when banking a turn. The flight maneuver was under perfect control and all birds turned simultaneously.

In flock formation and flight control the actions of the Mountain Plovers were similar to those of Western Sandpipers, except that the Plover flocks did not sweep upward into the sky as do flocks of small sandpipers. In general appearance, except for their much larger size, in manner of feeding and in all their actions while on the ground, they were strikingly reminiscent of the Snowy Plover. Like robins on a lawn, a few running steps, a pause and an upright stance to look about. And like the Snowy Plover, the Mountain Plover runs with its body in a horizontal position and its head held low.

On the ground, the Mountain Plover appeared but slightly smaller than the Killdeer, but on the wing, the Killdeer seemed much the larger of the two. And the Killdeers could not leave the ground without shouting their complaints to the world, while not once did we hear a peep from the Plovers.

There was a kindly look in the large dark eyes of the Mountain Plover -- that look of wide-eyed innocence that is so sweetly attractive in the eyes of the Mountain Bluebird.

Charles W. Michael



THE WESTERN TANAGER

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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.

MARCH 1939 CALENDAR

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1 (2) 3 4 TWEET!		
	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 (31)	

NOTICES OF MEETINGS

FIELD MEETING - Thursday - March 2nd, 1939, at the Bolsa Chica Gun Club. Those driving will follow the Ocean Highway south of Sunset Beach to the Club sign. Our Tanner bus, the Audubon Special, will leave 544 South Hill Street, Los Angeles, at 8 a.m., sharp. Fare is 80¢ round trip. Call Mrs. George L. Veatch, Parkway 6127, for reservations not later than Wednesday, March 1st. This will be our last chance to study the ducks and many other shore Birds before they take off for the summer. Mrs. Thomas Squire and our Long Beach members are going to serve hot coffee.

BOARD MEETING - March 9th, at the beach home of Mrs. George L. Veatch, 3107 Strand Avenue, Hermosa. Those going by electric car will get off at Longfellow Station. Meeting at 10 a.m. We are to be her guests at luncheon. Anyone wishing to may go birding in the afternoon. Be sure and call Mrs. Veatch if you can attend.

PROGRAM MEETING - Thursday, March 16th, 1939, at 2 p.m., State Building, Exposition Park. Through the courtesy of the Santa Catalina Island Company, Mr. D. Mobley, Manager of the huge aviary of the Island, will exhibit birds, and give interesting information about this great project. He will also show color motion pictures of the Island. Guests always welcome.

STUDY CLASS - Friday, March 31st, 1939, 10 to 12 a.m., Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Boulevard. Mr. C. V. Duff will take up the study of the California Thrasher and speak about the birds which will be seen on Field Day. Bring lunch if you wish.

IMPRESSIONS

Field Day - Feb. 2 - Chatsworth Lake. A beautiful sunny day with very little wind.

Many water birds on the lake but they were very shy, which seemed to indicate that they had reason to expect shooting.

Four White Pelicans in the air was a lovely sight.

A treat to see a pair of Rock Wrens.

Flying low as if to display his full beauty before an appreciative audience the great hawk circled directly overhead against a blue and silent sky and as he banked the turns his broad tail flashed red in the sunshine.

Mountain Plover gave us the big thrill of the day. In company with a large flock of Killdeer these rare birds were feeding in a wet field. We approached within a hundred feet of a number of the birds. They were not nearly so shy as the Killdeer. In the half hour visit with the birds we often saw flocks on the wing, they flew in compact flocks very close to the ground and were only conspicuous when they turned about flashing their pure white under-bodies.

The largest raft of American Mergansers that I ever saw, several hundred birds.

Meadowlarks too were present in large flocks and we often heard them singing in chorus.

Charles Michael

DEDICATION OF MICKEY'S BIRD BATH - February 24th

With introductory remarks by our President, Mrs. O. M. Stultz, Mrs. Harriet W. Meyers, President of the California Audubon Society, and Miss Helen S. Pratt, Junior representative of the National Audubon Society, Mickey's Bird Bath was presented by Mrs. John E. Bishop, the generous donor. Mrs. Florence Lewis Scott, Director of Plummer Park, accepted the gift to the Audubon garden with gracious thanks.

Soon after the fountain had been turned on, a Ruby-crowned Kinglet curiously inspected it, and seeming to approve, took its bath.

 AUDUBON HOUSE NOTES 

In 1935, during the Los Angeles Audubon Society census taking, an Eucalyptus tree was found in the Cold Water Canyon, Beverly Hills, that had been perforated by Sapsuckers in a striking way. From the ground up, spaced about seven inches apart, were rings of holes about the trunk and limbs. The bird was seen working on the tree. For four years this tree has been under observation by different members of our Society, and the desire to bring this "museum piece" to our Audubon House in Plummer Park, was often expressed.

Through the continued efforts of our President and others, this has been accomplished, and this interesting specimen may be seen among our other exhibits. Though punctured its entire length, and ringed from root to tip, the tree lived and thrived. This is an argument for the sapsucker, as the tree did not die from the loss of sap. The tree being 60 feet high was cut in three lengths to facilitate handling. In a space of thirty feet, the writer counted 110 rings of 80 holes each.

When first observed, the rings were seven inches apart, but after two years, the birds had worked between, making it only two or three inch spaces between rings.

(The bird is probably the Red-breasted Sapsucker)

"The California Woodpecker and I", by William Emerson Ritter, is the title of a new book in our Library.

(Notes by Mrs. Mary Barnes Salmon,
Curator)

FEBRUARY PROGRAM MEETING

Mr. John S. Garth, Scientist-Lecturer, showed Kadochrome slides and motion pictures of oceanic birds taken on the Captain Allan Hancock Expeditions to the Tropical Waters, and the Bird Islands of Peru. The curious antics of the Albatross during mating season, the Booby, a bird with a low I.Q., but reputed to be ideal parents, the Man-of-War bird, looking the part, and a flock of beautiful Arctic Terns stopping for a few hours at the Bird Islands enroute to the Antarctic, were just a few of the unusual bird pictures.

THESE BIRDS ARE SETTING OUT TO FIND SUMMER !

In Great Britain just now on its way to find summer in New Zealand is the godwit, a bird like a snipe which appears to walk on stilts. Godwits are found on most seaboards outside the tropics, and are plentiful in Northern Asia. Somewhere in Siberia, before the harsh winter locks the land in ice they collect in their myriads before migrating to New Zealand. They arrive there in early October, in good time for the New Zealand summer. Having flown 8,000 miles non stop, they land on the wide beaches of the Bay of Islands and elsewhere, utterly exhausted and miserable, thin, often too weak to flutter out of the way of man. But in a month or so they regain their strength and distribute themselves all over New Zealand, growing plumper and stronger on the wing every day.

(Excerpt from article by
Herbert Noyes)

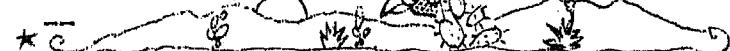
NOTICES OF THE CALIFORNIA AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

March 9, 1939, at 7:30 p.m., in the Los Angeles Central Library, 5th and Grand, Los Angeles, there will be a lecture illustrated with motion pictures, by Charles and Enid Michael on "Wild Life in Yosemite National Park."

Field study of wild birds -- Fern Dell -- Griffith Park, the "4th Saturday" March 25th, 1939 - 8:30 a.m., to 10 a.m., led by Mrs. Clara Weedmark.

Junior Audubon Bird Club of the Air - Saturdays - 10:45 a.m., over radio station KEHE - Audubon whistlers under the direction of Mrs. Bertha Caroline Stockwell -- Listen in!

Miss Blanche Vignos, Vice-President and Program Chairman of the California is making a six weeks visit to Honolulu.



A Bird-Club trip to the desert during February 2nd, -3rd, resulted in an opportunity to speak before the 4th and 6th grades of the Palm Springs school with a view to forming Junior Audubon Clubs. The children were given a chance to select their six leaflets from about twelve which I recommended. One boy's choice was the Black-necked Stilt, another, "That white bird that we almost lost, and the Audubon Society helped save", meaning the Snowy Egret. They finally agreed upon the Vermillion Flycatcher, as it is a desert bird. I think it appealed to them because it is such a fiery little red tyke. It was fun hearing them electioneering. Since my return, forty-one memberships have come in.

A stop at 29 Palms, revealed an interesting combination of migratory birds at this oasis. Robins and Phainopeplas! ...both enjoying mistletoe berries clustered on the mesquite - Mockingbirds and Gambel Sparrows, and others expected. The Lazuli Bunting had been observed a few days earlier.

This is a trip well worth taking at this time.

Miss Helen S. Pratt

Junior Audubon Representative

Don't Forget-Conservation Week-March 7-14, 1939.

NOTICES OF THE SOUTHWEST BIRD STUDY CLUB MEETINGS --- MARCH --- 1939

March 6th	10 A. M.	Echo Park Library.
March 13th	9 A. M.	Little Tujunga and Kagel Canyons. Lunch at Dexter Park.
March 20th	9 A. M.	Mineral Wells in Griffith Park.
March 27th	9 A. M.	Chantry Flats in Big Santa Anita Canyon.

Mrs. Alma W. Mason, President - Capitol 3441

NEW MEMBERS

We are happy to welcome into membership the following persons: Mrs. C. Worth
Mrs. Ralph Hoffman Mrs. Carol Schoonlank

PROFESSOR DUFF

I'm a Student now of Sparrows
Under Professor C. V. Duff,
He informs us of the birdies
And the bugs on which they stuff.

Some of these live in the mountains
And some types in city streets,
I will know the chirping rascals
By the toe-nails on their feet.



These birdies come from sparrow eggs
And most of them have wings
We are told the feathers that they wear
Are to warm the little things.

Now friends and neighbors come along
And join the school of Duff --
Remember he is big and strong
And can really do his stuff.



But when he makes an error
The girls all gently smile
And know he's pulled a boner
From the facts within his file.



James Brennan
Poet Laureate