

Western Tanager



VOL. VI

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No. 6

BANDING GULLS ON NORTH CORONADO ISLAND, MEXICO

The Coronado Islands are visible from San Diego any clear day. They are just twenty miles off shore - three barren crags jutting out of the Pacific. All summer long the gulls wheel and scream about them in white clouds.

How could we reach the islands? At first it seemed easy. Every May 30th, the San Diego Natural History Museum makes a public excursion to the northern island to look at the nesting birds. So in May, 1938, we obtained permission from Mr. Clinton Abbott, Director of the Museum, to go along as banders. Unfortunately two major difficulties were immediately apparent: - the excursion boat stayed at the island only an hour - too short a time to accomplish much banding; and at this date most of the eggs were still unhatched. Only 15 newborn gulls could be survey banded.

We must charter our own boat for another trip. This apparently simple plan involved weeks of headache - a permit to land on the island, obtainable only from the Mexican Fish and Game Commission officials at Ensenada, 75 miles below the border; interminable interviews with the owner of a fishing boat; with Customs officials; with Immigration officials; with Plant Quarantine officials ...

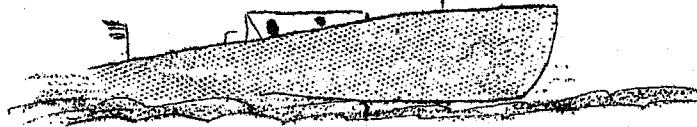
We were off! At 3 A. M., on July 21, 1938, sixteen banders and friends left the silent deserted dock. San Diego Harbor was dim and huge - a few lights from the city shone in the distance. It was after dawn when we arrived at the island. Its cliffs towered above the little bobbing boat. Crying gulls filled the air. There was no harbor - we slipped close to the rocks in a rowboat, then watching our chance, jumped ashore.

The island teemed with birds. At first the speckled downy young gulls were hard to see, but we soon learned to look under the shadow of every rock, under every bush. We went in twos-one to pick up and hold the stolid infant, the other to put on the bands - one aluminum Survey, two bright red celluloid. Gradually we worked our way up the steep slopes, through cactus and slippery mesembryanthemum, returning each infant to its own crevice. The nestlings didn't seem to mind the banding particularly. Occasionally one presented us with his most recent fish dinner, or nipped at an unwary finger. But the angry squawk and swoop of the outraged parents sounded constantly in our ears. An adult would hover 50 feet in the air above our heads and then with a scream catapult downward. As we winced and ducked, the bird would whistle by, missing a human scalp by inches, and soar upward to repeat. Usually they missed - sometimes they didn't.

That second visit we color-banded 153 young gulls before we had to return. On our third visit, June 20, 1939, we got a faster boat and more banders, and banded 375 with color and 111 more with Survey bands only.

Our early records show that some of these young gulls have wandered 400 miles up and down the coast from San Diego. Twice reported by Los Angeles Audubon Society members at San Pedro, they also have been found as far north as Monterey, and as far south as Cedros Island, Lower California. But not all the young birds travel - some have stayed right at San Diego. These stay-at-homes may figure that the San Diego fish piers are as good as any. Where will all these young birds go as they grow older? We hope we will find out.

Grace Sargent
Scripps Institute of Oceanography
La Jolla, California



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CALENDAR MARCH 1940						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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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	
31						

MEETING NOTICES

FIELD DAY - March 7th - Once more we will try to go to CHATSWORTH LAKE, a sanctuary abounding in wild life (and here's hoping the 3rd time is the charm!) Tanner bus leaves 544 S. Hill St., Los Angeles, at 8 a.m. sharp -also at Hollywood Blvd. and Cahuenga, at 8:30 a.m. Fare 75¢ round trip. Make reservations through Mrs. Jesse L. Morain, 1041 S. Gramercy Dr. Los Angeles. Telephone PAkway 0339--EARLY.

FIELD TRIP NO. 2 - March 14th - Having been rained out of two Field Trips, we are going to have an extra one in good old GRIFFITH PARK. Meeting Place-Main Picnic Grounds near entrance to Zoo. TIME -9 a.m. Those coming by street car can transfer to Griffith Park bus which runs North on Vermont Avenue from Santa Monica Blvd., leaving that corner at 8:35, then hourly. Yellow cars transfer to this bus line on 10¢ fares. Bring your lunch as usual. Plenty of parking space for those driving their own cars. Following luncheon there will be a tree walk conducted by Mr. R. E. Bullard, Supervisor of Park Maintenance, Los Angeles City Parks.

BOARD MEETING - March 21st - 10 a.m., in the Directors Room of the State Building Exposition Park, Los Angeles.

PROGRAM MEETING - March 21st-2 p.m. State Building, Exposition Park. Mr. Arthur H. O'Connor, lecturer, will have for his subject "Fascinating Fauna of Australia" - illustrated with sound motion pictures and kodachrome slides. Of especial interest will be pictures and recordings of dances and songs of the Lyre Bird. Guests welcome.

BOTANY CLASS - March 29th - 9 a.m. at Plummer Park. Mrs. Mary V. Hood in charge.

Immediately following will be the

BIRD STUDY CLASS- 10:30 a.m. to 12 o'clock, under Mr. C. V. Duff's direction. After a picnic luncheon there will be trees planted honoring Mrs. Warren J. Holden, Mrs. Leonard S. Hall, Mrs. James M. Brennan and Miss Charlotte A. Hamilton. Program will be in charge of Mrs. William T. Shelford, our tree chairman.

FEBRUARY PROGRAM MEETING

There was a fine attendance of members and friends to view the exceptionally interesting pictures taken by Mr. Ed N. Harrison of his "Cruise of the Kinkajou" along the coast of Mexico. There were lovely water and animal scenes, close-ups of reptiles and pictures of Boobies which can be depended upon to provide the comedy interest.



AUDUBON HOUSE NOTES

Mrs. C. J. Burnham observed a San Diego Wren placing sticks in the gourd bird house, a gift of Mr. B. F. Tucker, which hangs in the Loquat tree ...

A song sparrow has nested and reared a 1940 family in a yucca in the garden ...

The new sanctuary signs have been placed on the posts made of our "Sapsucker tree. V.

Mrs. O. M. Stultz addressed the Sierra Club on Saturday...Feb. 17... Mrs. Thomas R. Shearer met with 20 campfire leaders on Feb. 13 to outline a plan to interest girls in nature study...

Miss Miriam Faddis used some of our mounted specimen to illustrate her talk before the Southwest Bird Study Club ...

Mrs. O. L. Wait was hostess to a group of members of the History and Land Mark Club on Feb. 28th...

Mr. Duff banded six gambel sparrows.. The club rooms are open every Saturday from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. Visitors are most welcome. Mrs. H. W. Anderson will be hostess for March.

Mary Barnes Salmon

FEBRUARY PROGRAM MEETING (Continued from Page 22)

Four species were shown, the Blue-footed, Blue-faced, Brewsters and Red-footed. Their nests vary in type from those carelessly formed on the ground to finely constructed ones in shrubs.

The Man-O'-War birds, of Galapagos Islands, presented a majestic picture outlined against the sky.

Mr. Harrison is very much in demand, but we are hoping for a return visit next year.

BIRD LIFE OF WESTLAKE PARK

The bird life of Westlake Park has been somewhat disturbed since the extension of Wilshire Boulevard, a few years ago; at least the Mergansers that came in from the ocean in the early mornings, and the Black Crowned Night Heron have disappeared; but there are still about twenty species to be seen on the usual morning visit, such as the Lesser Scaup, Mallard, Pintail, Toulouse Goose, Muscovy Duck, Coot, Pied-billed Grebe, California Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Glaucus-winged Gull, Faralone Cormorant and Mute Swan; and now and then, there is something more unusual - a Florida Gallinule, a Western Grebe, a Greater Scaup, or Green-winged Teal.

All seem to be native Californians, except the geese, a Mandarin duck, the Muscovy, Mute Swan, etc. A Light-footed Rail was seen in November, and the Gallinule has attracted much attention because of its winter plumage, and lack of red bill.

The little Green-winged Teal is a cripple brought in in the fall. Certain of the Pintails are unable to fly. The one male Greater Scaup and the two females are exceedingly hard to locate, but I have seen the male and was told that he has been coming for a number of years. If one depends too much on the green head for identification, it will be difficult to pick him out, for all the male Scaup seem to have both green and purple, depending on whether the light is at your back or in front. After he was pointed out to me as having a somewhat lighter iris than the Lesser Scaup, it was not so difficult; the larger size is not very apparent.

Just why, both in California and in Florida, the winter visitors in the Lesser Scaup should be about two males to one female, I do not know. The nearly three hundred now in the Park is the largest flock for several years.

The Cormorants have already left, perhaps for their breeding grounds. Just now, there seems to be but the three species of Gulls. Among the Ring-bills, "Jo" and "Susan" have been recognized and treated as special pets for five or six years. One Lesser Scaup, with a bullet crease across his head, has been recognized every year for about the same time. Though the Mute Swan flies readily enough, he seems to stay where he is put. I am not sure where their native home is. The "pair" of foreign geese act like males, though they are said to have been seen nest building. At least one pair of Coots nested in West Lake Park last season. So far as I have been able to learn, the Gallinule just came of its own accord.

From now on, daily visits to this city lake will reveal a progress in changing plumage, and, probably, the coming and going of migrant species.



Josiah Keely

ANNOUNCING AN INTERESTING EXHIBIT

Mr. George W. Willett, Senior Curator of Ornithology, Los Angeles Museum, Exposition Park, Los Angeles, will give an address in the Lecture Room of the Museum, on "Birds of Passage," at 7:30 p.m., Sunday, March 24th. This will be the formal opening of an exhibit on bird migration arranged by Mr. Willett which is to be displayed in the rotunda of "the old museum," until the middle of April.

On March 21st, immediately preceding the regular program meeting of the Los Angeles Audubon Society, Mr. Willett, unless unavoidably detained, will be present at the exhibit from 1 to 1:45 p.m., to explain it to our members. Other well-informed persons will assist. Do not fail to take advantage of this exceptionally fine opportunity to learn more about one of the greatest mysteries of bird life.

EXECUTIVE BOARD VISITS INSECT SHOW AT LOS ANGELES MUSEUM (Con't. p.24)

On Feb. 15, Dr. John A. Comstock, Director of Science at the Museum, was host to our Board. He explained the displays which skillfully show the important part which insects play in the natural world. There are many cases of brilliantly colored tropical butterflies and moths as well as our own native ones. The show includes, besides lepidoptera, displays of flies, wasps, beetles, ants, etc. Of special interest:

NOTICES OF THE CALIFORNIA AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

Mrs. Harriet Williams Myers,
President

Mrs. Merta White, Secretary,
Telephone: CLeveland 6-6702

MARCH MEETINGS

March 14th - at 7:30 P. M., in the Los Angeles Central Library, 5th and Grand Streets, Los Angeles. Mr. L. W. Walker, of the Natural History Museum at San Diego, will speak on "Modern Falconry." He will also have a live falcon on exhibit.

Field Day - March 23rd, at 8:30 A.M., to 10 A.M. Fern Dell, Western Avenue and Los Feliz, Griffith Park. Everyone welcome to join the leader on these walks.



JUNIOR AUDUBON CLUBS



Junior Audubon Clubs can boast of breaking all records in California for this school year to January 1940 by enrolling 3,521 members against 2,314 last year. Arizona Clubs have 739 members enrolled against 148 last year.

Reasons - One - Good coverage by the new Junior Clubs Secretary, Miss Dorothy A. Treat of the New York office. Two - A special inducement to enroll early (by November 30th, 1939 and April 1st, 1940), by making available to all teachers, a new series, "Nature Study for Schools" in five leaflets - School room activities, Field Trips, Winter Feeding, Bird Houses and Bird Day. Three - "News on the Wing"-a newspaper for Junior Audubon Clubs containing program suggestions and items sent in by Junior members. And Four - New leaflets with color plates as usual but unusual marginal sketches of the life history of the bird illustrated. Also a Junior edition simply phrased in large type.

There are eight subjects for new clubs formed in the grades up to the sixth, and ten subjects for the grades above. For old clubs there is a new set of six subjects; both Junior and Senior editions prepared by Mr. Roger Tory Peterson on the Anna Hummingbird, Red-tailed Hawk, Chickadee, California Quail, Martin and Poorwill.

For order blanks and assistance in organizing, call upon Miss Helen Pratt, Junior Representative for California, Arizona and New Mexico, 2451 Ridgeview, Eagle Rock, California. Telephone: ALbany 4723.

SOUTHWEST BIRD STUDY CLUB NOTICES

March 4 10 A. M. Echo Park Library
March 11 9 A. M. Johnson's Lake and Friendship Forum
March 18 9 A. M. Anaheim Landing
March 25 9 A. M. Dr. Lux - Clover Leaf Canyon, Monrovia



President - Mrs. Alma W. Mason - CApitol 3441 - Secretary - Miss Evelyn McDowell - CLeveland 65349

Cooper Club - annual meeting - March 22 and 23 - Special lectures in Museum - Exposition Park - Audubon members welcome.

WITH APPRECIATION

Our sincere thanks to Mrs. Roy Sargeant for her interesting article on Gulls, and to Mr. Harold Michener for his assistance in securing the enclosed pages of color banding illustrations.

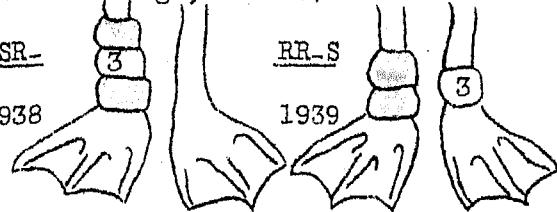
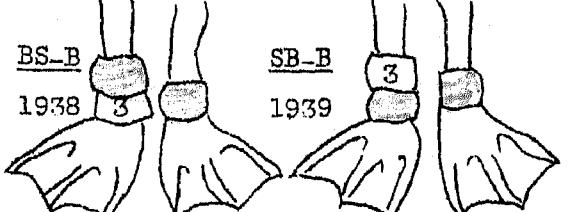
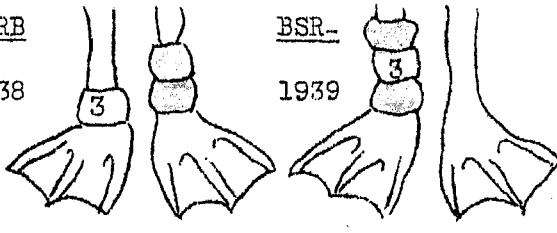
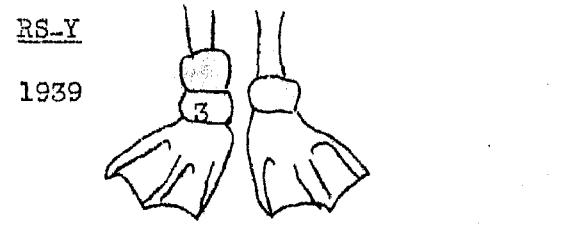
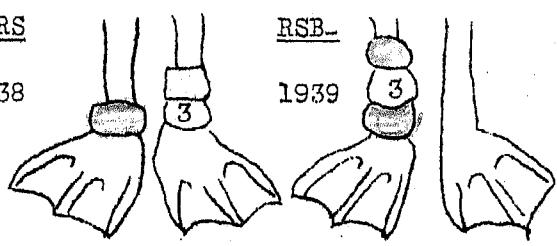
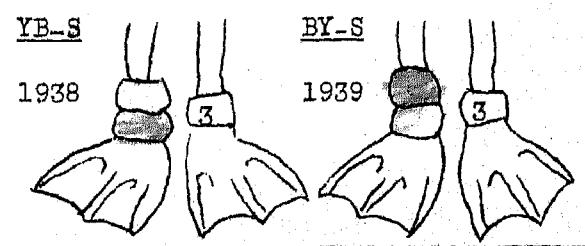
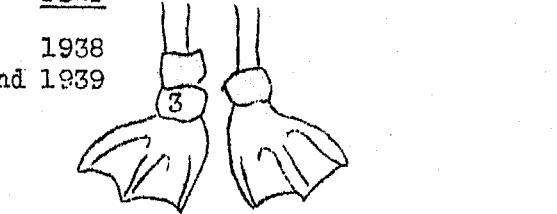
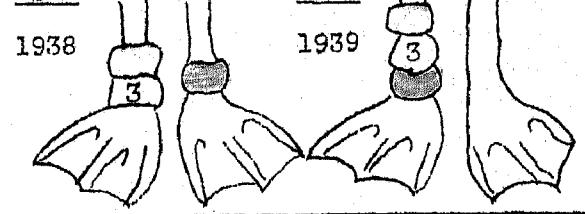
HAVE YOU NOTICED?

Our Treasurer, Mrs. O. L. Wait, has been looking worried lately. Can it be that some of the members have forgotten to send in their dues? Don't forget - Mrs. Wait's address is 8972 Dicks Street - West Hollywood - Telephone OXFORD 1990. (Continued from p.23) EXECUTIVE BOARD VISITS INSECT SHOW AT LOS ANGELES MUSEUM is a case which shows the almost unbelievable way in which insects have adapted themselves to their surroundings by mimicing them so as to be completely undetected by their natural enemies.

The exhibit will remain at the Museum until March 10th.

PACIFIC GULL COLOR-BANDING PROJECT

In this project, sponsored by the Western Bird-Banding Association to study gull migration and life history, 4000 young gulls of three species have been color-banded at the following nesting colonies:

<p>1. N. CORONADO ISLAND MEXICO (off San Diego, Calif.)</p> <p>Western Gulls</p> <p><u>RSR-</u> 1938</p> <p><u>RR-S</u> 1939</p> 	<p>2. MONO LAKE CALIFORNIA</p> <p>California Gulls</p> <p><u>BS-B</u> 1938</p> <p><u>SB-B</u> 1939</p> 
<p>3. THREE ARCH ISLANDS OREGON</p> <p>Western Gulls</p> <p><u>S-RB</u> 1938</p> <p><u>BSR-</u> 1939</p> 	<p>4. GREAT SALT LAKE UTAH</p> <p>California Gulls</p> <p><u>RS-Y</u> 1939</p> 
<p>5. HAYSTACK ROCK OREGON</p> <p>Western Gulls</p> <p><u>B-RS</u> 1938</p> <p><u>RSB-</u> 1939</p> 	<p>6. YELLOW ISLAND HARO STRAITS, B.C.</p> <p>Glaucous-winged Gulls</p> <p><u>YB-S</u> 1938</p> <p><u>BY-S</u> 1939</p> 
<p>7. MITTLENATCH ISLAND GULF OF GEORGIA, B.C.</p> <p>Glaucous-winged Gulls</p> <p><u>YS-Y</u> 1938 and 1939</p> 	<p>8. GULL ISLAND HOWE SOUND, B.C.</p> <p>Glaucous-winged Gulls</p> <p><u>YS-B</u> 1938</p> <p><u>YSB-</u> 1939</p> 

WATCH FOR THESE GULLS!

Note carefully the exact color combination, date and place and report to -

MRS. M. C. SARGENT, SCRIPPS INST., LA JOLLA, CALIF.

If a bird is found dead, send the numbered aluminum Survey band to
the Biological Survey, Washington, D.C.