

Western Tanager



Vol. VIII

November 1941

No. 2

AUDUBON TO THE RESCUE.

~~Mrs. Mary V. Hood, Chairman, Committee on Botany, Los Angeles Audubon Society.~~

We all remember the old tale of the kingdom that was lost for the want of a horse-shoe nail- a sad series of events. But here we have to tell of a many-linked chain of events with a happy ending and the whole an example of what such a society as our Los Angeles Audubon can do and means in a community.

Our story opens beside a pile of discarded telephone poles; a truck is dumping the day's haul. Watching the work, Mr. Collier, the foreman checks the poles - his neighbor, Miss Hamilton, has asked him to save a section of pole well filled with acorns, stored there by the industrious California Woodpeckers. Perhaps such a pole is among those being unloaded. An old green pole rolls off the truck and as Mr. Collier steps forward, wild chatter and confused cries came from it. Two round holes are found just under the place where the cross-arm was once braced, but they are too small to feel inside and too deep for light to enter. A saw is found and the pole cut across, and there, at the bottom of the hole (over 12 inches deep) huddle three young woodpeckers. Shall they have their necks wrung? No! Mr. Collier remembers his neighbor, and besides his mother likes birds; so he packs them in a box with some old rags.

Our scene now changes to Mr. Collier's home. Mrs. Collier reminds her son of their coming vacation, so Miss Hamilton's advice is sought. She cannot undertake the care of the birds, but next morning she phones Mrs. Hood, who also is about to leave the city for the summer, but Mrs. Hood knows Mrs. Willis, who has a "way" with young things.

And so it was that Donald, Woody and Peck came to Ambrose Avenue to live. The long hours of care, the selection of foods, the daily progress of the birds are all parts of the story that Mrs. Willis will, we hope, tell the world about some day.

Here we must continue to follow our chain. For the records, pictures in color both in stills and movies were taken; more members of the Audubon Society came to help in this.

It became apparent that the birds were going to survive their terrible experience. Donald, the youngest, began to get a few more feathers; Peck developed a prodigious appetite, but, and to relate, these three brothers also fought one another whenever the box was opened. So three separate cages had to be found. Friends sent presents of food, meal-worms, canned dogfood, etc. Mr. Duff banded all three and many other interested persons came to visit; even an astronomer was among those captivated by the friendly, cheery birds.

Next came the problem of release. How could this be done so that the birds might have the greatest chance of survival? After various plans were considered it was decided to place them in a large cage at Griffith Park Zoo until they could harden up and perfect their flight.

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	MEMBERSHIP	DUES	
Annual	\$1.50	Life	\$10.00
	Patron		\$100.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

South Pasadena;
Mrs. F. J. Perry, 1432 Wayne Ave.
Mrs. Alva Graham, 515 El Centro St.
Miss Edith M. Newton, 1422 Bank St.,
Los Angeles;
Mrs. Clara Howard, 1319 Angelus Ave.
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Hollywood;
Miss Helen Brigham, 1535 N. Curson Av.
Long Beach;
Mrs. Maybelle Wallace, 1489 Elm Ave.

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BIRD NOTES

Mrs. F. O. Yost reports a visit from an American Redstart who spent more than two hours in her garden.....
Mrs. Bickel has had a family of Arizona Hooded Orioles in her yard all summer...
Miss Greely had a visit from a Hooded Oriole early in October.
Buffeted by the recent storm an American Bittern took refuge in a yard at 27th & Normandie. Taken to the Zoo it was put in the large heron cage where it was fed and last reports were that it has recovered nicely.

NOVEMBER MEETING NOTICES

FIELD DAY - Thursday November 6 1941-Chatsworth Lake and grounds. This area is a sanctuary and as the hunting season is now on we should find numbers of ducks on this lake, as well as many land birds. Our Tanner Bus will leave 544 South Hill St Los Angeles, at 8. A.M. sharp, and will also pickup passengers at Hollywood and Cahuenga Bvds. at 8:15 A.M. Round trip fare .90¢- Take your lunch. Make reservations with Mrs. Jesse L. Morain, 1041 South Gramercy Drive, L.A.--Parkway 0339. PLEASE, by November 4, if possible. Those driving own cars, go Ventura Blvd. to Topanga Canyon Avenue, turn right-to Roscoe Street, turn left-to Fallbrook, turn right and drive to gate left of building. We will leave Chatsworth grounds by 3. P.M.

BOARD MEETING- Thursday, November 13, 1941- 10 A.M. State Bldg. Exposition Park

PROGRAM MEETING-Thursday November 13, 1941-2 P.M., State Bldg., Exposition Park.
Speaker- Mrs. Erna Comby. Subject- "In step with nature from coast to coast".
Also colored motion pictures will be shown. Let us share this fine program with our friends. They are always welcome.

SPECIAL NOTICE- Our program meeting will be held on the second Thursday in November because of Thanksgiving falling on the third Thursday.

OUTDOOR STUDY CLASSES- Thursday, November 27th, 1941., Redondo Beach City Park, 9:30 A.M. Take Redondo Beach Motor Coach, leaving Subway Terminal, 429 S. Hill St., Los Angeles, at 8:05 A.M. via Del Rey, or 8:20 A.M. via El Segundo. Fare 42¢ each way or 63¢ round trip. Get off at Torrance Blvd., close to Redondo City Park, those who drive will find free parking space on Catalina Ave. at east entrance. Meet at picnic tables at 9:30 A.M. BIRD CLASS will study the seven gulls most frequently found on our beaches. Mrs. T.G. White, leader. BOTANY CLASS, after lunch, led by Mrs. George H. Anderson, will include a study of the trees in the park. AN ADDITIONAL TREAT- Mrs. John Q. Burch invites the group to come to her home to see her collection of shells, Address 1611 Elena Ave., 1½ miles from the park.

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"What does my Audubon Membership Mean to Me Today?" Your answer to this question may win you a first prize of \$50; second prize of \$25, or third prize of \$10. The National Audubon Society is offering these prizes to members of affiliated and contributing Clubs sending in the best statement of not more than three hundred words. All entries must be received by December 15 and winners will be announced in January 1942. Send your entry to the National Audubon Society, 1006 Fifth Ave. New York.

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OCTOBER FIELD TRIP

Again we open the Audubon field season with our first Field Trip, October 2nd 1941, in the grounds of Mrs. M.H. Adamson's Malibu Beach estate, and despite old Neptune's thoughtlessly permitting unusual high tides to flood our main paths, for a time, 94 of us did have an enjoyable day. Our bird list (64 species) included about 20 seldom seen mallard, 3 Red-breasted Merganser, the migrating Northern Phalarope, numbers of beautiful Royal Tern, fleeting glimpses of the Dusky, Golden Pileolated and 1 belated California Yellow Warbler. The lunch period held most interesting talks by Miss Charlotte Hamilton on the white grubs that infest our lawns and Mr. Geo. T. Hastings on the burweed and other common weeds found near the beach. We do learn much from these speakers and our grateful appreciation goes to them, and to Mrs. Adamson for giving our group another fine and interesting day.

--Caroline H. Daugherty.

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OCTOBER PROGRAM MEETING

Mr. Willett, Senior Curator of Ornithology at the L.A. Museum announced the meeting of the Cooper Club at the Museum Bldg., 8 P.M. the last Tuesday of each month, and invited everyone to attend. For the November meeting Mr. Ed Harrison will show his fascinating pictures and anyone who has seen Mr. Harrison's pictures in the past will agree they are worth going far to see.

Mrs. Salmon mentioned the fine collection of birds at Audubon House and the wealth of books in the library which are available to members. Later she gave us highlights of her trip to Yellowstone and vicinity.

The profusion of flowers and the abundance of bird life in the Carolinas were among the highlights of Mr. Quattlebaum's related events on several trips across the continent.

Mrs. Lee told of seeing many black-billed magpies in Utah and Wyoming.

In Colorado, Mrs. Humphries has seen a road runner with three babies, a zone-tailed hawk in Arizona and many Texas nighthawks at a station in California.

Mrs. Hood delighted the audience with kodachrome slides of "Woody", "Peck" and "Dad", and held them thrilled with scenes from her vacation trip to the Sierras.

Mrs. Brennan listed the many birds observed in the vicinity of Fallbrook and Mr. Brennan presented the society with an album of poems which he had been inspired to write while on vacation.

QUESTION: What are those birds with the green backs? Mrs. May Wait, our treasurer is eager to give you the answer if accompanied with a request for membership renewal.

AUDUBON TO THE RESCUE (Continued from front page)

So much interest has been shown by the public for these new birds that the Zoo decided to keep them as long as the birds appeared happy and contented, with the possibility of releasing them in the spring. Peck, however, finding an opportunity, decided not to wait but left of his own accord. Mrs. Willis feels sure she has identified Peck, quite happy among other woodpeckers in the park. Woody continues to be very tame, coming freely to the wires for peanuts and serving as a "feathered ambassador" for the cause.

Five main steps appear in this story- each person knowing only two others in the chain, but all linked with a common interest- a love for birds. The existence of the Audubon Society brought us together and three lives have been saved- not very important lives perhaps, but a pebble cast into a pond or a little leaven in a lump of dough may reach far and high. Let us remember this when our efforts seem fruitless or when we become tired and discouraged. Perhaps if one sparrow is worth so much, the saving of these young birds was well worth the trouble. We think so.

ANNOUNCEMENT- Open house at the Tucker Bird Sanctuary is scheduled for November 1 to 10 inclusive. Our own Mrs. Holden will serve as hostess on Monday, November 3 so why not plan your visit for that day.

STUPIDITY STREET

"I saw with my open eyes
Singing birds sweet-
Sold in shops
For people to eat, (quail)
Sold in the shops of
Stupidity Street.

I saw in vision
The worm in the wheat-
And in the shops nothing
For people to eat.
Nothing for sale in
Stupidity Street."

The economic value of birds to man, lies in the service they render in preventing the increase of injurious insects, devouring rodents, destroying weed seed, and acting as scavengers. Insects are said to destroy 2 hundred million dollars worth of food in the U.S. every year- incredible as the statement seems- it is based on reliable statistics.

Birds are the natural enemies of insects; in the sky the swallows and swifts sweep the air for insect food- at night the night-hawks and whip-por-wills take up the chase. Flycatchers and gnatcatchers are always busy with flying insects. The warblers find this food on the terminal branches; the vireos patiently explore the underside of the leaves. The woodpeckers, nuthatches and creepers attend to the bark of the trees for insects, eggs and larvae. On the ground the hunt is continued by the thrushes, sparrows, blackbirds, towhees and meadowlarks that feed on the innumerable forms of terrestrial insects. The service rendered man by birds in killing small rodents, is performed by the owls and hawks. The vultures and gulls are scavengers, keeping our health safe from disease. Yet, we may be indebted past believing to the birds and be unaware of their existence. This is one practical reason for Audubon societies. This side of bird study alone is profitable to us. We usually consider the aesthetic side of bird study most attractive- but let us realize, in this day when food for men, the world over, is necessary to conserve, that we should protect and encourage our bird "partners" in this effort.

.....Mary B. Salmon
Have you noticed the "fall song" of the mockingbirds? Instead of seeking the highest and most conspicuous places, they hide in the dense foliage and their song is thrush-like and wonderfully sweet. -- A.H.

PROGRAM MEETING NOVEMBER THIRTEENTH/SECOND THURSDAY BE SURE AND MARK THIS DATE ON
YOUR CALENDAR