

T H E

LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

PLUMMER PARK

7377 SANTA MONICA BLVD.  
LOS ANGELES 46, CALIFORNIA

## Western Tanager



Vol. X

May, 1944

No. 8

BIRD BANDING

One of the first bird banders in America was John J. Audubon, who, in about 1803 used silver wire to mark a brood of phoebe. In the following year two of the birds that he had marked returned to nest in the same vicinity.

In 1909 the American Bird Banding Association was formed. From the work accomplished by that association and from the development of the method of systematic trapping, the possibilities of extensive banding operations were demonstrated. With the realization that the information obtained from banded migratory birds would be of great value in connection with the administration of the migratory-bird treaty act of July 3, 1918, the Biological Survey in 1920 took over the work of the American Bird Banding Association. In 1942 the Fish and Wildlife Service published the following report showing the banding work for 1940 and 1941:

	<u>1940</u>	<u>1941</u>
Banded birds reported	428,185	357,174
Number of species banded	445	431
Returns received	32,016	32,737
Grand total of birds banded since 1920	3,712,327	4,069,501
Grand total of returns since 1920	234,929	267,666

It is to be seen from the totals above that a vast amount of accurate information has been obtained that constitutes an important and interesting field of ornithological research. It is now possible to chart the migration of many species of birds and new records are being established of the longevity of some birds.

When properly done, bird banding is neither cruel nor harmful in any way. In fact it is the experience of all bird banders that many birds return to the traps at very frequent intervals. There is the report that the same song sparrow was caught in a bird banding trap over 200 times in one summer. The small aluminum band that is carefully placed on the leg of the bird weighs less than two drops of water and therefore does not interfere with the birds in any way. It is carefully placed on the leg so that it does not bind the leg nor permit any foreign matter to be lodged between the leg and the band. These bands are numbered and when a bird is banded the Fish and Wildlife Service is furnished a record showing the species of bird, its sex if known and whether it was an immature or adult bird and the date it was banded. If this bird is found dead it is hoped that the finder will notify the Fish and Wildlife Service stating the correct band number, the place found and date, together with an accurate description of the bird. In this way an accurate record is made of the movements of that bird. The members of the Audubon Society may sometime make a very important contribution to the science of Ornithology by reporting the details of the banded birds they have found.

----C. V. Duff

"Cleaving the sky with their moon-edged pinions,  
High over city and village and mart,  
April to pilot them, May speeding after,  
And each bird's compass his small red heart."

THE WESTERN TANAGER

Published monthly except during the summer  
by THE LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY  
Editor.....Mrs. Wm. T. Shelford  
3315 W. 41st St. Los Angeles 43

OFFICERS

President Emeritus.....Mrs. Robert Fargo  
President.....Mrs. J. H. Comby  
Rt. #3, Box 378-F, Whittier, Calif.  
Executive Secretary.....Miss Laura Greely  
904 Kendall Ave., South Pasadena  
Telephone: BLauchard 7-1849  
Treasurer.....Miss Bonnie C. Green  
774 N. Heliotrope Drive, L. A. 27  
Telephone: MO 1-5537  
Corres. Secy.....Mrs. Belle H. Maguire  
Curator & Librarian....Mrs. Mary B. Salmon  
1117 N. Fuller Ave. L. A. 46  
Telephone: GRanite 9312

HEADQUARTERS

Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd.,  
Los Angeles 46. From down-town Los Angeles  
take Santa Monica Blvd.-West Hollywood car,  
Subway terminal; get off at Fuller Ave. and  
walk one block west to park entrance.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Annual \$1.50, Sustaining-\$5 annually, Life,  
\$25; Patron- \$100; Student-75¢. Fiscal year  
ends June 30. Dues are payable at the be-  
ginning of the fiscal year July 1. Those  
who pay promptly not only help the treas-  
urer but assist the editor in keeping the  
mailing list up to date.

During the past month, seven groups of children with their leaders, numbering 125 in all, visited Plummer Park where Mrs. Mary B. Salmon acted as hostess.

One of the highlights of the year was our field trip to Bel Air. As we stepped off the bus we were greeted by a chorus of bird songs and then proceeded to the beau-  
tiful Frank Meline estate where 41 species of birds were found. From there to the  
Miller estate with our host for the day, John J. B. Miller taking charge. At lunch  
time Mrs. Miller kindly furnished coffee for the group and afterwards John delighted  
us with a story of black phoebes nesting under the eaves at his home.

Mrs. Dorothy Dean Sheldon gave a charming informal talk. Sixty-five members  
and guests were present.

Attendance at the evening study meetings has grown to such an extent it was  
necessary to find a larger meeting place and the main lecture room at the Los Angeles  
Public Library at 5th & Grand Ave. was chosen. It is gratifying to note the number  
of men who attend these meetings and the chairman is to be congratulated on the fine  
type of programs being presented. At the April meeting Mr. Guy C. Caldwell gave an  
illustrated talk and Mr. James Murdock led a discussion on warblers. Because of  
limited time it was decided to continue the discussion at the May meeting.

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

Mr. Walter Scott,  
967 S. Sydney Dr. L. A. 22  
Miss Elizabeth Phelps,  
5440 Monroe St. L. A. 38  
Miss Christina N. Huse,  
820 W. Compton Blvd. Compton  
Mrs. Mabel S. Weatherhead,  
3449 Larissa Drive, L. A. 26  
Mrs. Ada Tobitt,  
961 S. Manhattan Pl. L. A. 6  
Mr. Mark Kerr,  
14607 Erwin St., Van Nuys  
Miss I. M. Wilson,  
4314 Los Feliz Blvd. L. A. 27  
Mrs. Vilas P. Sheldon,  
2651-1/8 Ellendale Pl. L. A. 7  
Mr. Walter C. Deuble,  
3823½ Flower Dr., L. A. 37  
Mrs. Mabel Beals,  
5507 Strohm Ave. North Hollywood

-----  
This is wildflower time and it is  
against the laws of the State and the  
policies of the Audubon Societies to  
pick flowers.

"If these blooms delight your eye,  
Please don't pick them, passerby,  
Share their beauty, and enjoy  
Their rich fragrance- don't destroy.  
If you carry them away,  
They will wither in a day.  
If you leave them, they'll impart  
Joy to hundreds--bless your heart!  
--Nell Griffith Wilson

A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT:

Nature's plan of keeping her balance is like a piece of tapestry, each thread of which is necessary to the pattern of the whole. Her interdependence is evident on every hand in soil, plant and wild life. Here we see a guiding force in her simplest forms and thereby learn to understand her complexities.

Francis M. Fultz says:

"Nature balances her forces and nowhere else in the world has she made a nicer adjustment than in southern California."

ROBERT CUSHMAN MURPHY writes in March-April Audubon Magazine: "We know at least that birds play an enormously important part in the balance of nature and, consequently, in the economic life of mankind. They furnish, for example, one of the great natural checks on the pressure of insect population, attacking it in air, earth, water, in the chinks and crannies of rocks and buildings, on the twigs, leaves and trunks of trees, in decaying wood and even in carrion and dung.

By this I do not mean to encourage the false idea that insects are undesirable creatures. On the contrary, they, too, are a necessary part of the world of life. As regards man's interests, most insects might be called neutral; many others are beneficial and only a few are highly destructive or otherwise objectionable. The birds for the most part, do not discriminate between the "desirable" and the "undesirable" kinds of man's selfcentered classification. Nevertheless, any species becomes a pest if it outruns its natural controls and multiplies without hindrance. Were it not for the birds, we would soon face an amazing geometric ratio of increase of insects, until they destroyed their own food supply by eating every green thing on the face of the earth."

Flocks of wood ibis, hundreds of egrets and cardinals singing are some of the interesting observations recounted in a letter from Mrs. Charlotte McKay Edwards in Florida and received recently by Mrs. O. M. Stultz.

"I wish you could hear Mr. & Mrs. Cardinal and see them enjoying their coconut feeding baskets. He is so beautiful and will sit and swing on the basket long after he has eaten all he can. Yesterday they were both in the bird bath together. He puts a mockingbird and a catbird to flight every time he sees them near his basket. One day I heard a soft sweet song and thought I detected the cardinal whistle among the sweetness. I was a long time tracing it but finally within a few feet of me I saw Mrs. Cardinal in the dense foliage singing this heavenly soft music. I watched enchanted for a long time. Her bill did not move or open and only when I saw the vibration of her throat was I satisfied she was the songstress. Another time I heard a soft warbling song and saw a tiny blue-gray gnatcatcher flitting about among the coconut stems. I could never have heard the song had I not been among the tree-tops myself. On a recent trip through the Everglades I listed 56 birds and there must have been as many more I did not know. Many of the cypress trees would have over three dozen American and Snowy egrets on them, hundreds on the landscape at one time, as well as great blue herons, Louisiana herons, little brown cranes, Florida comorants, black and turkey vultures, Everglade kites, belted kingfishers, coots, Florida cranes, purple grackles, broad-tailed grackles, red-winged blackbirds, rusty blackbirds, killdeer, red shouldered hawks and several clouds of wood ibis.

There were many swimming and wading birds in the canal - coots, pied-bill grebes, scaups, gallinules and many kinds of ducks and several rails. I was told the ivory-bill woodpecker and the spoonbill are to be seen but I missed them. At Naples I saw a flock of black skimmers, herring gulls, ring-bills, terns, brown pelicans, Bonaparte gulls, plovers, an eastern kingbird, robin, flicker, covey of Bob-whites, white-throated sparrow, palm warblers, etc.

At Hialeah Park I enjoyed the beautiful flamingos. There are 400 of them and 150 were raised at Hialeah. Scattered among them are black and white swans which make an unbelievably beautiful picture. Two dozen or more nests, built of mud and standing about 15 inches high."

APRIL MEETING - The regular meeting was held on the 20th in the Los Angeles County Museum. President, Mrs. J. H. Comby presiding. Mr. W. Scott Lewis presented another in his series of nature quizzes which are very popular and give us food for thought. Mrs. Dorothy Dean Sheldon gave us an inspirational talk and then, with colored motion pictures, carried us on a magic trip to the desert in springtime- Joshua trees in bloom and closeups of desert flowers and birds. An exquisite view of a vermillion flycatcher and numerous other interesting subjects. There was a record attendance in the hall.

CALENDAR FOR MAY, 1944

FIELD TRIP - Thursday, May 4, 1944: Huntington Library, San Marino. Take (REAR) Sierra Madre car on Monrovia Line, Gate 12, Pacific Electric Station, 6th and Main Sts. Los Angeles at 8:14 a.m. arriving at HUNTINGTON LIBRARY STATION around 8:52. Fare 25¢ each way. Ten minute walk up San Marino Avenue and Stratford Road to entrance where party will be met by guide. No admission to grounds after party starts at 9:15 and party must stay together. This is to be "HASTINGS DAY" in tribute to Mr. George T. Hastings, who has given us so generously of his time and fine information. Leave grounds at 12 noon. Cars leave San Marino Station for Los Angeles at 12:40 - 1:40 etc. hourly. Those wishing to stay for lunch and trip discussion or to return to grounds at 1 p.m. will bring their lunch and gather just outside gates, immediately after 12 noon.

BOARD MEETING - Tuesday, May 9, - 10 a.m. at the home of Mrs. Mary B. Salmon, 1117 N. Fuller Avenue.

EVENING MEETING - Thursday, May 11, - 7 p.m. Main lecture hall, LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY, 5th & Grand Ave. The discussion of warblers will be continued and Mr. W. Scott Lewis will give an illustrated lecture on "Exploring the Insect World."

SUNDAY FIELD TRIP - May 14, San Gabriel River Bird Sanctuary. Walk will start from entrance, 2578 Durfee Road at 9 a.m. At Pacific Electric station take any bus going east which connects with the Pasadena-Long Beach bus leaving El Monte at 8:37 a.m. Consult P.E. information bureau (TU 7272) for connecting time. Get off at Temple School and walk 1/2 block north to entrance.

PROGRAM MEETING - Thursday, May 18, - 1:30 p.m. L. A. County Museum, Exposition Park. Mrs. Mary V. Hood will present "California Color Contrasts" and will show her colored pictures of birds, flowers and some of the lovely places we are unable to visit now.

STUDY CLASSES - Thursday, May 25, Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd. At 10 a.m. Mrs. Elsie Humphreys will talk on "Butterflies in Our Dooryards" and "Doves of the Southwest Pacific." At 11 a.m. the botany class will meet out of doors to identify trees and shrubs, birds and butterflies of the park. This will be the last study class of the year. Bring lunch and enjoy a social hour after the meeting.

SUNDAY FIELD TRIP - May 28, Griffith Park, near Zoo. Griffith Park bus leaves from Vermont Ave. and Monroe St. (end of V car line) every half hour. Walk will start from park cafe bus stop at 9 a.m. Bring lunch.