

LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

T H E

PLUMMER PARK

7377 SANTA MONICA BLVD.

LOS ANGELES 46, CALIFORNIA

# Western Tanager



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## LIFE LISTING

By ARTHUR L. BERRY

The sportsman has his trophy room, the philatelist his stamp album and the golfer his row of silver cups; but what has the bird student to show for his many hours afield, sometimes on cold and frosty mornings? Why, didn't you know? He has his life list, of course. Life listing among field students is becoming more and more popular every year. Boy and Girl Scouts, world travelers, and common, dawn-to-dark check-listers are searching every nook and cranny of this old globe to add new names to their lists of birds they have identified in the field.

The life list serves the purpose of recording the bird student's accomplishments in the field. It can be elaborately kept, or it can be simplified. A ruled loose-leaf notebook is good, using one line or more for each species. If the student has the time he might even allow a full page to each species, filling it up with notes and observations on each bird. If he has no time or inclination for note-book keeping, he can simply write on the margins of his field reference book the date and place the bird was seen. But then he would probably find it difficult to count, and might never know the exact number of birds he has seen.

The hardest problem to solve in life listing is determining just what to count. Some students count all sub-species, whether identifiable in the field or not. Others count only full species, ignoring sub-species names entirely. The rules governing the taking of the annual bird count could well be observed here.

To be really accurate and complete a life list should show all the birds the student has seen and identified in the field. There is often a question in the lister's mind whether or not to include birds shown to him by a more experienced observer. If the bird is seen to good advantage and all field marks noted by the student, the species should certainly be added to the life list; however, if the bird is in flight or otherwise not clearly seen and identification is made solely on the expert's previous experience, the student had best leave it off his list until a more favorable time when definite identification can be made.

Only native birds or species known to be ranging wild or breeding in the region should be counted. Domestic, "planted," and ornamental birds such as the Mallards in our city parks, rescued birds and pinioned decoys kept to attract other birds should not be counted. One might as well make up his list in the zoo as to count these birds.

Life lists grow automatically in the early stages of bird study; but if you are finding it difficult to add more new species as your list grows longer, here are a few suggestions: Visit all types of habitats in your region, to pick up any species previously overlooked. Attend regularly all field trips and meetings of your local bird clubs to obtain suggestions and information as to where desired species can be found. Make special efforts to see rare birds that have recently been reported in your locality. Plan your vacations and holidays to areas where birds unknown in your home territory are common. Learn your field marks thoroughly so that new birds will not be overlooked, but instantly recognized on sight. Try a few of these suggestions and watch your life list grow!

THE WESTERN TANAGER

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MEMBERSHIP DUES: Student (12 to 18 yrs. of  
age), 75¢; Annual, \$1.50; Life, \$25;  
Patron, \$100. Joint membership with  
National Audubon Socy., with "Audubon  
Magazine," \$5 (minimum). Annual dues pay-  
able July 1.

Membership Chairman, Miss Charlotte J. Fox,  
5442 Monroe St., Los Angeles 38.  
Telephone, Highland 2433.

OBSERVATIONS: R. W. Julian reports a  
male wood duck, March 24, Los Angeles  
River area; also flock of chipping sparr-  
ows in Plummer Park. This year's first  
black-headed grosbeak and Bullock's oriole,  
Pasadena area, around March 20; Arizona  
hooded oriole in Glendale April 6, and  
Scott's oriole, also desert sparrows,  
Mohave Desert, April 8. A pair of Cassin's  
purple finch, the male singing, Angeles  
Crest Hwy., same date. Warbler migration  
late this season. Howard Cogswell and  
party, on Colorado River trip April 7:  
one Lucy's warbler (the little desert  
warbler) and only one or two forerunners  
of various migratory warblers, when in  
that area they should be going through in  
great numbers. The Stultz party, on Apr.  
7 Imperial Valley trip (among 122 species  
seen): Vermillion flycatcher, phainopepla  
and ptarmaceous gnatcatcher, nesting; num-  
bers of black-necked stilts; flocks

(100 plus) white-faced glossy ibis (seen  
also by the Cogswell party); 9 little  
brown crane and the rare sight of a flight  
of at least 1000 whistling swan. Howard  
Cogswell reports 5 whistling swan migrat-  
ing over Pasadena April 2.

WATCH NOW FOR: Phalarope; least tern  
along the coast; black-chinned and Costa  
hummingbirds, Western flycatcher, West-  
ern wood pewee, russet-backed thrush  
and Western tanager.

. . . . . Caroline H. Daugherty

ON A RECENT TRIP to Arizona, Mrs. Mary  
Barnes Salmon saw a phrrhuloxia! "The  
singing of the bird attracted me to the  
tree where he sat," she writes. "I had  
a half hour studying the bird and en-  
joying his singing. He looks like the  
female cardinal, but the song is very  
different. He has a rose-red breast,  
scarlet crest and red bill . . . Inca and  
ground doves, not much larger than a  
sparrow, were abundant, but I did not  
see as many other species as I had hoped

AT THE STUDY CLASS March 28, in addition  
to the previously announced program, we  
had an extremely interesting talk on  
"Penguins," by Mr. W. A. Kent. Drawings  
of these remarkable birds and maps indi-  
cating their range added to Mr. Kent's  
highly informative address.

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NEW MEMBERS; WELCOME!

Mrs. Emma V. Berger  
1824 N. Alexandria Ave., Hollywood 27  
Miss Esther V. Berger

1824 N. Alexandria Ave., Hollywood 27  
Mr. Bill Bradish  
1258 Idlewood Road, Glendale 2

Miss Jean Brash  
9055 Krueger Ave., Culver City  
Mr. Bob Kent

729 N. Robinson St., Los Angeles 26  
Miss Lillian D. Lookabelle

2004 Second Ave., Los Angeles 16  
Mr. Allan O'Haver

17205 S. Denker Ave., Gardena  
Mr. C. J. Parker

821 N. Garfield Ave., Alhambra  
Mr. Ralph M. Platt

5040 Eagle Rock Blvd., Los Angeles 41  
Mr. Carl A. Retzoll

3010 Frances Ave., La Crescenta  
Mr. Phil L. Small

618 Friendship Ave., Pico

A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT -

As our countryside bursts into leaf and blossom, and harsh contours of winter's reality assumes a smooth and rounded softness under the mantle of Spring, we experience a feeling of gratitude that ere this the natural process of earth's healing will have begun in those places that have been devastated by war and that soon the outward hideousness will have been smoothed away. Season by season we have seen Nature mend disfiguring scars; we have known her eternal quality in the quiet going forward of her processes, and in the radiance of her sun-warmed earth we have renewed our courage and faith. Surely we can appreciate our landscape even more when we realize that the same processes of Nature are going on in various ways all over the earth.

... ERNA COMBY.

A TREAT is in store for members of the Society for Tuesday, April 30. Mr. and Mrs. Neil V. Bullion have invited us to hold a day of demonstration program, study class and field trip at their Bar V Ranch, a school for boys. The highlight of the trip will be the dedication of the ranch as a wildlife sanctuary. Guests up to 100 will be entertained at luncheon. Advance registration by 2 P.M., Thursday, April 25, is essential. Write or telephone Mrs. W. F. Willis, 4759 Ambrose Ave., Los Angeles 27; MOrningside 1-6350. Bar V Ranch is located five miles beyond Nuevo. From Los Angeles go by Valley Blvd. through Pomona and Ontario to Riverside, thence south 8 miles on Highway 395 (almost to Perris), thence east 5 miles to Nuevo, and continue on 5 miles further south to the ranch. Be there by 10:30 A.M. There is no public transportation. Those driving who can take a passenger, and those desiring transportation; please notify Mrs. Willis. AND DO NOT FAIL TO REGISTER IN ADVANCE!

THE AUDUBON SCREEN TOURS. The success of the recently concluded Audubon Screen Tours series was largely due to the splendid support given it by the Los Angeles Audubon Society and kindred organizations in this area, and leaves little doubt that natural history-minded people are eager for this type of entertainment. This augurs well for the future of the Screen Tours here, as the 1946-47 schedule has been announced by the National Audubon Society and, conforming to the sentiment expressed in the poll just conducted, we have agreed to sponsor it again. The same high quality of the recent season's program has been maintained. All will be nationally known lecturers of outstanding ability, using material never before seen on the Pacific coast. In the poll we have received some constructive and helpful suggestions and intend to do everything we can to carry out as many as possible. The Committee feels it has learned a great deal from the experience of these first lectures, and it anticipates an even greater success for these programs during the coming season than that enjoyed in the past. This, of course, depends entirely on the support of every Audubon Screen Tours Club member. We are counting heavily on this support and confidently expect each one to give it. . . . . THE AUDUBON SCREEN TOURS COMMITTEE

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THE SUNDAY FIELD TRIP, March 24, to a fresh-water marsh in Chino Valley, was one of the year's highlights. From among the 19 auto-loads which caravanned to the area, several members (those who didn't mind wet feet) flushed 27 Wilson's snipe from a boggy pasture and 20 more were seen in another place. American bitterns flew up from all parts of the marsh, and one group heard a least bittern "coo" off in the cat-tails, but it would not fly despite our crashing into knee-deep water after it. Marsh hawks "looped the loop" in nuptial display; at least 4 golden eagles, and flock after flock of migrating turkey vultures were all part of a grand day's birding. . . . H.L.C.

\* \* \* \* \*

A GROUP OF OUR MEMBERS, en route to Catalina Island March 23, saw 14 pelagic birds, including the Pacific fulmar, pink-footed shearwater, sooty shearwater and the three cormorants of this region. On the island they saw, among many more common species, the Catalina quail, the dusky warbler, which nests on Catalina, and the island shrike. They also visited the famous aviary on the island. Mr. D. Mobley is still in charge.

\* \* \* \* \*

BIRDING IN THE DESERT

By Howard L. Cogswell

A visit to the California side of the Colorado River north of Yuma on April 6 provided a lot of rugged desert scenery and a morning of birding in an area untouched by field observers in recent years. The party consisted of the Cogswell family, who camped in a most desolate spot in the hills ten miles south of their goal, - the little settlement of Picacho - and Dr. M. W. deLauenfels and four of his Pasadena Junior College students, who arrived at Picacho somewhat late after car trouble and an all-night hike back to civilization for a mechanic.

The river bank area at Picacho is within the Imperial National Wildlife Refuge with overflow ponds on either side of the stream which are filled with scattered drowned trees or patches of cat-tails. Here we saw three vermillion flycatchers, two cactus woodpeckers, three kingfishers, gallinules, cormorants, egrets and, over the river, one osprey. In the low bushes and palo verde trees on the drier flats numerous migrating warblers foraged with the characteristic desert species: verdin, plumbous gnatcatcher, Abert's towhee, crissal thrasher, phainopepla and Costa's hummingbird. The best find of all, though, was a single Lucy's warbler, little grayish and white with a bright chestnut rump patch, which here on the California side of our boundary river reaches the westernmost part of its main range.

We also searched the area around Potholes (now Laguna Dam) nearer Yuma, but were unable to locate the stand of giant cactus, or Sahuaro, which formerly harbored California's only elf owls. Perhaps the extensive construction work on the Dam and All-American Canal intake at that point erased them from the landscape.

Back through Imperial Valley we encountered flock after flock of tree swallows, a really tremendous migration movement of them was evident, with concentrations at farmhouses and reservoirs. Several Gila woodpeckers, 500 white-faced glossy ibis, flocks of red-wings with a few yellow-headed blackbirds among them, 1000 or more mourning doves, 100 avocets and a like number of black-necked stilts were other highlights of the area south of Salton Sea.

Saturday night's camp at Mullet Island, on the shore of the sea, favored us with four Texas nighthawks trilling and "whinnying" with a mewing quality as they flew over our heads. Say's phoebe awakened us gently at 5 A.M. and we were away on the long trek home through Indio and over the San Jacinto Mountains to Hemet; but not before seeing white pelicans over the Alamo River, singing Brewer's sparrows and more migrating warblers, including one Calaveras, in the creosote bush belt at the base of the mountains, and of course, some pine forest and mountain meadow birds up along Hurkey Creek, bringing our total list for the trip to 114 species.

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THE CALIFORNIA CAMPING ASSOCIATION is presenting a series of five planetarium lectures for all leaders of youth, parents and other interested adults. The lectures will be given at the Planetarium, in Griffith Park, by Dr. Clarence H. Cleminshaw, acting director. The time is 7:30 to 9:30 P.M., Thursdays, April 25 to May 23, 1946, and the course will be repeated June 13 to July 18. Admission, 50 cents per lecture. Topics to be discussed include: Identifying the principal stars and constellations; The planets and their motions; The moon and its phases; The sun and the seasons; Time and the calendar; Comets and meteors; The telescope; Tides; Etc. For desired information, telephone Mrs. Ann Woolf, Olympia 1215.

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AT PLUMMER PARK one day recently there were seen a golden-crowned, a Gambel, a white-throated and a song sparrow, all on the feeding tray at the same time. The white-throat, rare Eastern visitor, arrived at the park in January and has now spent four months there.

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THURSDAY, May 2. Field Trip: Charlton Flat, up Angeles Crest Highway. Mountain birds, pines, flowering shrubs and wildflowers! Our Tanner Motor Bus will leave Sixth and Olive Streets (Park side), Los Angeles, 8:30 A.M. Will stop to pick up passengers at Sunset and Glendale Blvds. (in front of Angelus Temple), 8:35; in Glendale, corner of Los Feliz Blvd. and Glendale Ave., 8:45, and corner of Broadway and Glendale Ave. 8:47; Angeles Crest Hwy. and Foothill Blvd., 8:50. Round trip fare, \$1.50 (in exact change, please). Bus will return to Los Angeles about 4 P.M. Please make reservation promptly with Mrs. W.F. Willis, 4759 Ambrose Ave., Los Angeles 27; telephone, MOrningside, 1-6350. Take lunch. Leader, Mrs. Caroline H. Daugherty.

THURSDAY, May 9. 7 P.M. Central Library, Fifth St. and Grand Ave. First Floor. Illustrated address by Dr. Samuel Ayres, Jr. "Flowering Trees and Shrubs." Mr. R.W. Julian presiding.

SATURDAY, May 11. 9 A.M. to 12 Noon. San Gabriel River Wildlife Sanctuary. (See notice below for directions.) Illustrated talk on birds for Student Members and other young people, presented by the Committee on Youth Leadership; Mrs. O.B. Pratt, chairman.

THURSDAY, May 16. 1:30 P.M. Program Meeting, Los Angeles County Museum, Exposition Park. Second floor. Speaker, Mr. George T. Hastings. Subject, "Coming of Spring." Illustrated with kodachrome slides. Mrs. Carl P. Smith, Program Chairman. Election of officers for 1946-47.

THURSDAY, May 23. Study Class, Long Hall, Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd. Mrs. Thomas R. Shearer, chairman of Committee on Nature Study, presiding. Study period, 10 to 11 A.M.: "Rugged Individualists: The water ouzel, road-runner, phainopepla, Sierra creeper and wren-tit." Discussion, 11 to 12: Have I learned anything new this year? If so, what? This discussion open to all members. WE HOPE ALL WILL TAKE PART. A short review of subjects covered during the year. Bring lunch.

SUNDAY, May 26. Field Trip: Buckhorn Flat, on north slope of Mt. Waterman, near end of Angeles Crest Highway. This will be the ideal time of year to study the high mountain birds, - nuthatches, chickadees, creepers, Cassin's purple finches, Steller's jay, green-tailed towhees, Calliope hummingbirds, Clark's nutcrackers (we hope), etc. Singing and nesting will be in full swing. Drive from La Canada 3½ miles on Angeles Crest Hwy. to side road into Buckhorn one-half mile beyond ski lift. (If side road is closed, walk 8/10 mi. into public camp, where we will also meet at lunch time.) Charlton Flat and Chilao, somewhat less rugged areas in pines at lower altitude than Buckhorn may be visited on way up, if you prefer; but join us at Buckhorn by noon for the climax in mountain birding. Leader, Howard L. Cogswell.

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SAN GABRIEL RIVER WILDLIFE SANCTUARY  
Owned and Operated by the National Audubon Society

SUNDAY, May 12. Field trip, starting from the entrance, 2610 S. Durfee Ave., El Monte, at 9 A.M. Leader supplied by the local committee, Mrs. J.H. Comby, chairman; telephone, Whittier 41-4236. Sanctuary telephone, Whittier 6-3748. Take lunch. Pasadena-Long Beach (P.E.) bus, four trips each way daily, stops at Temple School, opposite Sanctuary entrance. From downtown Los Angeles go to El Monte by P.E. bus or train and transfer to Long Beach bus leaving El Monte at 8:38 A.M. Telephone Information Tucker 7272, for best schedule. If driving, go east on Third Street to Beverly Blvd. continue on Beverly to Durfee Ave., thence north to Sanctuary.

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VISITORS WELCOME AT ALL MEETINGS  
For desired information, telephone NOrmandy 1-4279 or MOrningside 1-6350