

Western Tanager



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Birding on Kent Island

Just in case you never heard of Kent Island, it is a little island about 3 miles long and one wide. It is across the Bay of Fundy from the northern tip of Maine, but is part of the province of New Brunswick in Canada.

Harlan and I went over to the island about the first of June, spending three wonderful weeks there. Our living was very primitive; Harlan had to cut wood and carry water, while I cooked over an old-fashioned wood range in not too good shape. But our sitting-bed room had a fire place which we did enjoy as the evenings were usually pretty sharp.

There was a nesting colony of 30,000 Herring Gulls on the southern end of the island among the dead and fallen spruce trees. We did not have to look for nests, only for places to step between them. Some nests had one, some two, and others the full clutch of three eggs. These ranged in color from the palest blue to deep olive green heavily splotched - the really characteristic gull egg. On the highest ground, usually against an outcropping of rock, we found some 30 pairs of Great Black-Backed Gulls nesting. Many of them had already brought off young as they usually nest a month earlier than the Herring Gulls. We had fun trying to get the picture of a day old chick. He would hide against the rock, against which he was almost indistinguishable. When I would pick him up, how he would fight and peck at me. They are certainly hatched with the fighting spirit.

The whole north end is a stand of virgin white spruce. Among the roots may be found hundreds of Petrel burrows. We went out one night to try and see the Petrels come in. We didn't see them, but we heard their queer little calls and were quite thrilled at hearing their trilling in their nests. One trilled quite loudly, and the other answered in a soft murmur. Down the center of the island and along the east coast is a great open field of grass hummocks, swampy areas with wild iris, and patches of raspberry bushes. Among the bushes were many Eider nests. The Eiders are off shore by the thousands; the males are beautiful creatures.

Along the southwest shore are some dozens or scores of Black Guillemots nesting. Of course there were other, more common birds, swallows, and warblers nesting, and others we saw stopping for a day or two on migration.

Ruth Eckler

CONDORS IN LOS PADRES NATIONAL FOREST

From Thorn Meadows, at an elevation of 5,000 feet I hiked up a dusty mountain trail $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles to Thornpoint Lookout at an elevation of 7,000 feet. When I rested on the trail I could watch Mountain Quail. Beyond the tower is a huge outcropping of bare rock. Here I took my stand and was rewarded by seeing a Condor pass overhead about 200 feet above me. The white under the fore edge of the wing showed up with startling brilliance. Fifteen or twenty minutes later a pair of Condors soared in circles about half a mile away. Mr. Lemmer, on duty at the Fire Lookout Tower says the lookout is the best observation spot for Condors in the Padres Forest.

Owen Palmer

THE LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY

President... Mrs. Neil H. Lewis, 212 N. Wilton Pl., Los Angeles 4. Phone... GL 3335
 Secretary... Mrs. Bess Hoffman, 1112½ S. Orange Dr., Los Angeles 35. WA 8937
 Treasurer... Mrs. C. J. Parker, 821 N. Garfield Ave., Alhambra. AT 12490
 Editor - The Western Tanager ... George T. Hastings, 517 Euclid St., Santa Monica

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Student (12 to 18 yrs.) 75¢; Annual \$1.50; Life \$25; Patron \$100. Joint membership with the National Audubon Society \$5.00, - includes subscription to Audubon Magazine. Send membership applications, with dues, to the Treasurer.

CALENDAR FOR NOVEMBER, 1949

Thursday, November 3. Field Trip. Cabrillo Beach. Good area for water and shore birds. A conducted trip through the Marine Museum. (Possibly a harbor boat trip.) Our Tanner Bus will leave 6th and Olive Streets (Park side) at 8:30. Round trip fare \$1.60 (please have exact change). Bring lunch. Bus will leave for Los Angeles about 3:00. Make reservations by Nov. 1 with Miss Edith Crane, 4925½ Cimarron St., L. A. 37, AXminster 2-8458. Reservation must be paid for unless cancelled before Tuesday, Nov. 1.

Thursday, November 10. Evening Meeting. Echo Park Branch Library, 520 Glendale Blvd. Take Temple Street Bus (No. 11) or red car on Glendale Blvd. Use outside door to lecture room on north side of building. First half hour - announcements, reports, study of birds to be seen on field trip. At 7:30 Mrs. Harlan Eckler will talk on BIRDS OF KENT ISLAND, showing the koda-chrome picture she and Mr. Eckler took during their visit this summer to this interesting little island, across the Bay of Fundy from Maine.

Thursday, November 17. Afternoon meeting at Los Angeles County Museum at 1:30 p.m. 20,000 MILES WITH A PAIR OF BIRD LOVERS. Mr. and Mrs. Eckler will show pictures of birds and scenery taken on their trip from California to Florida, up the coast to Maine and to Kent Island off the coast of Canada, and back across the central part of the country.

Wednesday, November 23 (Note change of date.) Study Class at 10:00 a.m. in Plummer Park. Take P. E. Santa Monica Blvd. -West Hollywood car- to Fuller Ave. Walk one block west to Park entrance. A discussion of BIRDS AND THE FARMER, considering the roll of birds in eating insects. The second hour - useful and harmful insects. The class will be in charge of Miss Edith Newton. Bring lunch and visit in our headquarters in 'Audubon House'.

Sunday, November 27. Field Trip. Cabrillo Beach. Directions the same as for the trip of November 3rd.

AUDUBON SCREEN TOUR

The first lecture of the series will be by Mr. Bert Harwell on CANADA WEST. Thursday evening, November 1, and Saturday afternoon, November 5. At Virgil Junior High School, 152 N. Vermont Ave. Take Sunset bus, or V, or R car. No lover of the Out-of-Doors should miss this series. If you have not secured your membership (\$2.00 for all 5 lectures), you may do so at the door at the first lecture. For further information write or phone Mr. C.J.Parker, 821 N. Garfield Ave., Alhambra.

Our Library in Plummer Park has a fine collection of Bird and Nature books available to members. In October Jack Miner's new book was added, the gift of Miss Rose Kahn.

YOSEMITE NATURE SCHOOL - 1949

As we read of the long fight to conserve some of the wilderness for future generations, we become increasingly aware of the emphasis all workers in this case put on education, and especially on the arousing of an interest among young people. It was, therefore, particularly gratifying to be invited to help this past summer with a two weeks demonstration Children's Nature School for the students of the Yosemite Field School.

It was decided that the Field Schoolers should spend the mornings with the children in nature walks and games, meeting with situations that they might encounter later as ranger naturalists. But in the afternoons they were exposed to a series of experiences that would help them advise camp counsellors and other youth leaders who might come to them for help, experiences which would be particularly useful should they enter this field themselves.

A series of simple, yet effective handicrafts were prepared, and each afternoon amidst a most delightful state of confusion and enthusiasm various projects took shape. Wood was hammered, clay was thumped, while forty individuals 'expressed' themselves in leaves, squirrels, and owls. But strange to say, there was little or no so-called disciplinary problems. We were all too busy.

What did we achieve? Certainly we had the children's full enthusiasm; the parents showed an added interest when they saw what the children had made; and we hope they got something of the underlying theme, - the balance of nature, conservation, etc. If the children took these thoughts home, that was only part of the plan. The school was designed for the Field Schoolers and it is hoped they got at least half of what they said they had. If that is so, then the pebble has been cast and its rings will spread over the Nation's consciousness. May they and the others see that the work is continued until it reaches all across the land.

Mary V. Hood

HAVASU WILD LIFE REFUGE

In the September issue of American Forests one of our members, Miss Grace Sherritt, authors an interesting description of the federally-protected Havasu Wildlife Refuge established in 1941 primarily for waterfowl and bighorn sheep. It covers 46,000 acres along the California and Arizona borders of the Colorado River from Topoc to Parker Dam. Miss Sherritt reports that 237 species of birds have been found in the refuge; among them 15 species of hawks, one, the rare Harris Hawk begins nesting in February.

Bald and Golden Eagles, Wood Ibises, and Black-chinned Hummers are a few of those mentioned, while visiting ocean birds listed are the Heermann and Sabine Gulls, Red-Throated Loon, Parasitic Jaeger, and - perhaps the most surprising of all - a White-bellied Booby which strayed in during an August migration.

Helen Shearer

FROM OUR EXCHANGES

In the April number of The Wood Duck, the monthly publication of the Hamilton Nature Club of Hamilton, Ontario, is an interesting account of a colony of Black-crowned Night Herons on the shores of Lake Ontario. From the article we quote a paragraph - "We have been amazed to see these herons swimming in the deep waters of Lake Ontario and fishing from that position. We have never gone there in season without seeing several birds out in the water. The heron floats as buoyantly as a gull and rises from the surface as easily."

In the October number of The Gull, published by the Golden Gate Audubon Society is a report of what seems an unusual field trip along the shores of San Francisco Bay on the 18th of September. Eighty members of the society divided into groups to cover 7 areas at the same time. The birds seen included 25,000 Western Sandpipers, 3,750 Avocets, 3,042 Willets, 2,550 Dowitchers, 1,960 Black-bellied Plovers, 1,520 Godwits, and smaller numbers of nearly 40 other species.

A REAL NATURE FILM

In viewing the fifteen minute educational film, "The Boy and the Eagle," it is very obvious that here we have a director and a young actor who are definitely interested in producing nature films.

We watched Dickie Moore tame a Bald Eagle which had an injured wing. When through his help it achieves the confidence to fly again, the boy, too, realizes that he is no longer limited physically.

The story unfolds very naturally against a background of the Malibu Hills. It is a tribute to the photography and the excellent choice of setting to say that the scenic beauty of the chaparrel covered hills, the California haze, and the blue of the ocean and sky share the attention equally with the story.

The Eagle used in the film was blown from a nest in Florida during a wind-storm and had been in captivity for twelve years. All details in the film have been carefully and sympathetically handled.

At the present time, William R. Lasky, producer director of the picture, is considering making an hour film on the Coyote, a sympathetic treatment of its life and control. He is at present engaged in a joint venture with Bill Pemberton and Ed Harrison in making a film depicting the life of the California Condor.

Ruth McCune

COWBIRD BROUGHT UP BY ORIOLE

Mrs. Jesse Morain watched a young Cowbird being fed by a male Hooded Oriole. She saw the pair in her yard both morning and afternoon on July 6, and for five successive days. The Cowbird followed the Oriole about, receiving food frequently. Several times the female Oriole was there at the same time feeding one of her own young, paying no attention to the cowbird.

GROUND-BREAKING IN PLUMMER PARK

A new club house to cost \$135,000 is being built in Plummer Park. All organizations using the park were invited to take part in the ground-breaking ceremonies on Sept. 30. Our society was represented by Mrs. Mary B. Salmon and Mrs. May Wait, each of whom turned over a shovelful of earth.

OBSERVATIONS

GEESE-DUCKS: Large flocks Canada Geese and great flocks of Ducks reported along the Colorado River, in the new Davis Dam area, Oct. 13 to 16. Two fishermen flushed many flocks feeding in marshy areas. Pintail was the common species of duck, several small flocks of Cinnamon Teal, a few Mallards, and 10 Buffle-heads.

SHORE-BIRDS: In Playa del Rey's back tidal areas, Oct. 6, Mr. Hastings found the shy Light-footed Rail, many Red-backed Sandpipers, 50 Avocets, 2 Black-necked Stilts, and on Oct. 10, on the jetty, 3 Surf-birds.

HAWKS: On Oct. 6 Alma Stultz found 2 Duck Hawks, Playa del Rey Gun Club area.

VULTURES: In Apple Valley, near the Mojave River, Sept. 30 to Oct. 10, Mrs. Elizabeth Burnell Smith and Mrs. Mary Salmon were the interested spectators of one of the mysteries of bird life...the soaring, shifting, and wheeling of thousands of Turkey Vultures. The Turkey Vulture is master of the art of soaring, and these thousands of Vultures would form into three great flocks, wheeling in the sky by the hour. Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Salmon report they roost in the tall dead willow trees that grew along the Mojave River and at about eight o'clock each morning would appear in two black clouds to start forming into these great soaring wheels.

OWLS-WOODPECKERS: In this same Apple Valley these ladies found 2 Long-eared Owls in an old orchard, also, Lewis's Woodpeckers, insect catching from Joshua tree perches.

SWIFTS: Leola Doner reports Vaux's over Escondido area, Sept. 26. This is our smallest Swift, spiny-tailed, and similar to the eastern Chimney Swift.

GAMBEL'S SPARROWS: Edith Newton's South Pasadena yard had its earliest record of Gambel's arrival, Sept. 19.

WATCH NOW FOR: Wild Ducks on city ponds, Hermit Thrush, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Pipits, Purple Finch, Juncos, Chipping, Golden-crowned, Lincoln's and Fox Sparrows.

Caroline H. Daugherty