

Western Tanager



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BY THE LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY

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ANOTHER YEAR OF PROGRESS

A brief summary of the reports of the officers and committee chairmen of the Los Angeles Audubon Society for the year 1950-1951.

Our President, Mrs. Alice Lewis, called attention to the changes made in the organization of the Society:- most important, the Society has become incorporated and a new constitution and by-laws adopted. The Executive Board has been reorganized and the annual dues for local members increased to \$2.00. A series of conservation lectures in Junior High Schools was sponsored, these were given by Mrs. Mary V. Hood and reached some 8,700 young people. There has been published, to help in the Nature Study Workshops, three leaflets written by Mrs. Hood; Life Zones of California, What Birds Eat, and Conifers of the San Gabriel Mountains. We gave a slide projector and an electric clock for Fiesta Hall in Plummer Park, the new building where we have already held meetings. An exhibit, Every Garden a Sanctuary, was made for the International Flower Show in Hollywood Park, with a dozen of our members helping in arranging and taking charge of it. Plans are now under way for a Wildlife Sanctuary and Nature Study Center in the new recreation center being prepared by the City Department of Parks and Recreation at Hansen Dam.

Our Second Vice-president, Miss Bessie Pope, represented us at the National Convention of Audubon Societies in New York and took part in one of the panel discussions. She reported on the convention at meetings of the society.

Mrs. Bess Hoffman, Secretary, attended all Board meetings, helped draw up the new constitution, and was chairman of the committee preparing the Yearbook, of which 800 copies were printed. The Society is indebted to Mrs. Hoffman for the Yearbooks for the past two years.

Miss Treva Russell, Treasurer, reports a balance on hand at the end of the year of \$450.97. The chief income was from memberships, \$967.28. Other income was from sales of our own and other publications, \$394.59; from the Silver Tea, \$50.92; registration fees for the Nature Study Workshop and Youth Leadership Courses, \$124.50; profit from the Screen Tours, \$160.38; income from the bonds of the Laura Greely Education Fund, \$218.37; and donations to this fund, \$191.60. The larger items of expense were: the Tanager, \$607.59; Yearbook, \$168.33; Nature Study Workshop and Youth Leadership Courses, \$109.15; for materials sold and leaflets published, \$372.88; expenses of delegates to conventions (half or less paid by the Society), \$175.00; afternoon and evening programs, \$73.60; general expenses of officers and committees, \$153.51; and \$361.25 for conservation lectures and for scholarships at the Audubon Camp at Norden.

Mrs. Caroline Daugherty reported that on the seven Thursday field trips the attendance averaged 42. A total of 152 species of birds were seen. Among the less common were the wild Mallard, Redhead and Bufflehead Ducks, Mountain Quail, Sora Rail, Lesser Yellowlegs, American Knot, Short-billed Gull, Red-breasted Sapsucker, White-headed Woodpecker, Rocky Mountain Creeper, Mountain Bluebird, Phainopepla, Hermit and Nashville Warblers, and Green-tailed Towhee.

For the Christmas Bird Count Mrs. Daugherty assigned 24 parties to our area so that it would all be covered without overlapping. On this, the 13th in which we have taken part, 21,698 birds of 147 species were counted.

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THE WESTERN TANAGER

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THE LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

Founded 1910 - For the protection of birds, other animals and plant life. Membership - joint with the National Audubon Society \$5.00 including subscription to Audubon Magazine. Local- Student (12 to 18 years) \$1.00. Annual \$2.00; Life \$25; Patron \$100.00. Registrar of Members, Mrs. T. H. Fulton, 3605 Tacoma Ave., L. A. 65

OFFICERS FOR 1951-1952

President..... Mrs. Maybelle DeMay
504 E. Oak St., El Segundo
Vice-president..... Miss Bessie M. Pope
Executive Sec'y.. Miss Elizabeth Patterson
6040 West 86th Place, L.A. 45
Treasurer..... Miss Treva Russell
5641 Fountain Ave., L. A. 28
Recording Secretary.Miss Elsa F. Schwartz
Registrar of Members... Mrs. T. H. Fulton
Historian..... Mrs. Ruth McCune
Curator..... Miss Clara Pflager

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Greetings! And thanks for the privilege of being your president for the coming year.

The Los Angeles Audubon Society and the National Society have a fine tradition of service in the field of wildlife education and conservation. It will be our aim to continue this tradition this year.

We are planning an enlarged workshop-type evening program, a series of educational field trips for beginning students of birds, in addition to the usual programs and field trips.

There are many other ways that the Society may be of service, and the Board will welcome your suggestions. In fact, I would like to take this opportunity to warmly invite each member to jot down ideas for the good of the Society on a post card and mail it to me so that the activities of the coming year may be enriched by your suggestions.

Maybelle DeMay

WE ARE HAPPY TO WELCOME THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS

Miss Mary Jo Boyd,
304 Euclid Street, Santa Monica
Miss Alice L. Burkett,
1045-1/2 S. Orange Grove Ave., L.A. 19
Mr. Aron Collons,
713 - 14th St., Santa Monica
Mr. David Elsebusch,
1420 Angelus Ave., L. A. 26
Miss Gladys E. Emmes,
3865 Boyce Ave., L. A. 39
Mrs. Virgil Finley,
7706 Emerson Ave., L. A. 45
Miss Mabel Helzer,
2660 Menlo Ave., L. A. 7
Mrs. Audree Hodel,
1136 N. Formosa Ave., L. A. 46
Dr. Lloyd G. Ingles,
Fresno State College, Fresno
Mrs. Barbara Wylie Jenkins
1028 Yale St., Santa Monica
Mr. George B. Kelly,
2913 Highland Ave., Santa Monica
Miss Ethel M. Kolb,
857 - 3rd St., Santa Monica
Mrs. Maude A. Krug,
457-1/2 S. Rexford Dr., Beverly Hills
Miss Dorothy Lenert,
6131 Horner St., L. A. 35
Miss Virginia M. Pettit,
1048 S. Hudson, L. A. 19
Mr. John T. Plunkett,
1016 Centinela Ave., Santa Monica
Miss Minnie Reed,
2101 S. Gramercy Pl., L. A. 62
Mr. Charles Ryland
Mrs. Gannette Ryland
1857 W. 38th Pl., L. A. 62
Miss Prunella Schubert,
3230 Lowry Rd., L. A. 27
Mrs. A. W. Silver,
340 Lemon Ave., Arcadia
Miss Ruth Cameron Stirn
1527-1/2 Rosalia Rd., L. A. 27
Miss Clare Weber,
2632 Monmouth Ave., L. A. 7
Mrs. Myrtle F. Wiley,
2634 Blimp St., L. A. 39
Mr. Sheridan Williford,
2840 Pinckard Ave., Redondo Beach
Mr. Robert W. Wise,
5127 Briggs Ave., La Crescenta

Save Thursday, October 4, for our first program meeting in the County Museum

Another Year of Progress--cont.

For the past seven years one of the most important contributions of the Society to the cause of Nature and Conservation Education has been the Nature Study Workshop planned and led by Mrs. Hood with the help of a dozen or more other members. There were 12 evening meetings in the winter and early spring, with lectures by experts in various branches of natural history, exhibits to illustrate each topic, with emphasis on handicraft and games suitable for children's groups, and helpful literature and mimeographed notes. As in other years there were many more desirous of taking the course than the 75 announced as the limit for registration and the number had to be increased to about 125.

Miss Bonnie Green, Membership Chairman reports a membership at the end of the year of 613, a net gain of 23. During the year we lost six members through death. Of our members 337 are joint members with the National Society, 33 are Life and 2 are Patron members. Our President, Mrs. Neil Lewis became a Life member of the National.

Mrs. Helen Wikoff, Curator, noted that our headquarters building has a plaque made and donated by Mr. Wilbur Willis--

Oldest House in Hollywood

Built about 1878

by Don Eugene Raphael Plummer

In connection with our library we have a museum with over 100 mounted birds and as many more prepared skins; a large collection of bird's eggs; a collection of butterflies; various charts; 2 framed Audubon prints; 3 large paintings of birds and nests by Dr. Williams, and 11 water-color paintings of birds by Miss Lydia Davenport.

Mrs. Salmon reported the addition of 4 new books to our library, which now has over 200 volumes as well as many pamphlets and magazines. The library was the center for a six weeks' course in bird study for scouts, attended by 35 boys. Also 275 children accompanied by adults met there for bird study. Bird courses for scouts were given in fall and spring in Santa Monica by Mr. Hastings and Mr. John Cunningham, with a total of 48 boys attending.

Mr. Robert Pyle reported for the Conservation Committee that the Society had joined with other groups in securing the establishment of a Condor Refuge in Los Padres National Forest; in helping protect the Carlsbad Sanctuary; and in opposing the construction of the tramway up Mount San Jacinto. The plight of the Ringed Turtle Doves driven out of Pershing Square by the city parking project was considered and two of our members are keeping track of these birds in the library grounds and MacArthur Park to be sure they have enough food and water.

Mr. Hastings reported that the regular 9 issues of the Tanager were prepared, the cost of the Tanager being approximately one dollar per member for the year.

Mrs. Bush reported for the Youth Activities Committee that she had conducted 5 nature workshops for girl scout leaders, instructed 3 groups of scout leaders on making nature trails and set up sample trails in parks, had 2 meetings with camp directors, and led 10 nature trips for girl scouts.

Reporting on the Laura Greely Education Fund Mrs. Stultz said \$150 had been spent in printing the pamphlets prepared by Mrs. Hood. One full and one partial scholarship were awarded for the Nature Camp at Norden.

Other reports were by Mrs. Celia Christensen on sales; Miss Christine Kemp, Historian, on the preparation of the nature scrap-book now in our library; Miss Pflager on the use of our collection of 635 kodachrome slides of birds; Mrs. Dunn on getting publicity for our meetings in city papers; Mrs. Knox on the work the Hospitality Committee did for the Christmas party and the Silver Tea; and Mr. R. W. Julian of the Finance Committee on the making of the budget and preparing of a new accounting system.

Regular activities of the Society have included 7 Thursday afternoon programs at the County Museum, and 7 evening programs at the Union Avenue School, all illustrated. Afternoon programs were in charge of Miss Leta Adams, evening ones of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Berry. Study classes led by Mr. Hastings were held 7 Thursday mornings in Plummer Park. And 7 Thursday and 7 Sunday Field Trips, planned by Mrs. Daugherty and Mr. Berry were held.

HUMMING BIRD NOTES

I was walking on the lawn in my Long Beach back yard on a late and warm July afternoon when suddenly a gay little hummingbird flew in my direction and stopped in mid-air at about eye level only a few feet away.

It looked at me, I looked at it! I said, "My, but you are a pretty little bird!", as I took a step forward. It flew a little backward and finally perched on the clothes line near by. Seeing that this little bird was unusually friendly, I endeavored to get it to perch on my finger. Several times it would let me get my finger within an inch or two of its legs before it would move its position a few feet along the clothes line. This procedure was repeated about eight times within a period of two minutes, while all the time I kept talking softly to it. Finally my little new friend (either a female Allen's or Rufous Hummingbird) flew to my honey-suckle vine for a bit of nectar. Who could ask for a more exciting two minutes of birding in one's yard?

Roland Truman

One brisk morning last December my dad and I were out on a bird hike. While walking along a path beside a small canyon filled with cacti, we heard the squealing song of an Anna's Hummingbird. Suddenly a flash of red, as if jet propelled headed straight for me. I ducked and the midget sped to a perch on a small bush. I crept to within thirty feet of the bush before I spotted him. Such beauty in a bird scarcely four inches long amazed me. When the sun struck him right his throat and forehead were brilliant red, contrasting with the metallic green of his back. I do not know if he was trying to scare me away or was just saying Good Morning in an unusual way.

William R. Young

Rare Birds Visit our Coast

An adult Franklin's Gull in breeding plumage was observed at close range, July 28, at Santa Marguerita Inlet. (R. Pyle) An immature Skua on the beach north of Santa Monica pier on April 4. It was sitting apart from a large group of California and Heermann's Gulls. The bird was approached closely and observed for an hour. The only other recent report of the Skua on our beaches was on Feb. 10 and 20, 1946 by Mrs. Stultz and others.

(W. Lasky)

OBSERVATIONS

From the San Gabriel River Wildlife Sanctuary Mrs. Stultz reports the brook completely dry, the first time since 1869. Many young Cardinals, a pair of White-tailed Kites nested and reared one young. Blue Grosbeaks nested with four known young. A pair of Yellow-billed Cuckoos raised 3 young, Long-tailed Chats, Black-chinned Hummingbirds, Song Sparrows, Valley Quail, Arizona Hooded Orioles and Bullock's Orioles had above average success in nesting. Young Hooded Orioles, sometimes 6 at a time at the Hummingbird feeders up to Aug. 21, though adults left by the 11th. Mrs. Robert Lewis reports 7 Cardinals at her feeding shelves.

Mrs. Shearer reports comparatively few birds about Sunland, no young Quail, few Hummingbirds. Four or five Phainopeplas and a few Black-headed Grosbeaks stayed through August. "I don't remember a summer so devoid of bird life."

Mrs. Salmon reports that Mockingbirds raised 4 broods since April near her home, 8 young ones have come to her feeding trays.

An excellent year for nesting robins in the Los Angeles metropolitan area. (Pyle)

Two pairs of Blue Grosbeaks nested in or near the County Arboretum in Arcadia. One pair feeding 3 young on July 28, and another pair, about a quarter of a mile away, with 2. (W. D. Quattlebaum)

At the Venice marshes. Eared Grebes the middle of the month, Snowy Egrets all summer, but no American till end of month. A Yellow-crowned Night Heron for several days in late July. Some of the ponds were flooded the first week in August before the end of the month seven species of ducks had come in, Willets abundant all summer, but few Godwits and Stilts. Avocets seen first on Aug. 12. Northern Phalaropes in large numbers and a few Wilson's, Aug. 12 and up to the end of the month. Many Terns, Caspian, Royal and Elegant with a few black and Forester's, Aug. 12 and later. Least Terns nested in the area but were not seen after the 11th. Many Arkansas Kingbirds in migration on the 12th.

(Bennet and Hastings)

The outstanding event of the year has been the influx of Elegant Terns. A few were seen on July 29. Since then they have increased greatly. On Aug. 19 Arnold Small estimated that there were 1100 in the Venice marshes, over 100 have been seen regularly at Bolsa Chica and Santa Marguerita Inlet and others at Malibu Lagoon.

(Robert Pyle)

MONTHLY MEETINGS OF THE SOCIETY

1st Thursday...Afternoon Program, the Los Angeles County Museum, Exposition Park...1:30

2nd Wednesday...Evening Program, County Museum...7 P.M.

3rd Thursday...Field Trip

4th Sunday....Field Trip

Some Further Observations

In Back Bay at Balboa hundreds, possibly thousands of Northern and Wilsons Phalaropes, Aug. 11 (Curry, Groner)

Many Northern Phalaropes in the ocean, just beyond the line of breakers, Aug. 27, 30 (Hastings)

In the Lagoon at Carlsbad, 66 Wood Ibis, July 22 to Aug. 11. 7 White-faced Glossy Ibis at Santa Marguerita Inlet, July 14. 2 Golden Eagles near Mt. Palomar, July 21. (Pyle)

REQUESTS FOR COOPERATION

In line with the suggestion of our president here are several definite requests to our members.

To aid in getting publicity for our Society we are all urged to spread the word in our neighborhoods that unusual birds or bird behavior should be reported to Hiram Beebe, Chairman of Publicity, 1847 N. Wilcox Ave., Hollywood 28. Phone-GRanite 9572. This is especially true regarding banded birds. Mr. Beebe has banded several thousand birds in his former home in South Dakota. He will attend to reporting cases of banded birds to the Biological Survey, and all items of interest to the local papers.

Parents might send notes by their children to nature teachers asking them to be on the lookout and have their pupils report. Be sure and mention the Audubon Society.

Elegant Terns. Bill Lasky says one of the commercial fishermen tells him the fishermen call Terns Albacore Birds, and that when a large number appear it means a great number of the fish. This year this is certainly true.

Bob Pyle suggests that all of our members look for Elegant Terns, count those seen and report to him, 851 Malcome Ave., Los Angeles 24, or to the editor.

All the bird books emphasize the difficulty of distinguishing these from the Royal Terns. The Elegant are about half way between the Royal and Forster's in size. The bill is spike-like, about the same proportions of a heron's, while the Caspian's is about the proportions of a crow's and the Bill of the Royal is intermediate. The color of the Elegant's bill is usually yellow or orange, sometimes yellow with an orange tip. The rosy bloom on the under parts is a certain indication when present, but at this time of year few show this color.

Report sick, injured or dead birds. Anyone finding such birds are asked to get in touch with Mr. William Lasky, 551 26th Street, Santa Monica. Phone-EXbrook 31904. If possible get such birds to him. Bill will try to cure or help ailing birds, determine the cause of death of the others.

A case of Avian Tuberculosis

On March 5 of this year while observing ducks and shore birds at the Point Mugu Gun Club I found two dead Avocets lying on the damp mud flats at the side of the marsh. One had died evidently about a week before and was very much decomposed. The second bird had been dead only a few days and was in excellent condition. On autopsying both birds I found the second bird to have numerous hard nodules about the spleen, liver and intestinal tract. There were no pathological signs in the first bird. There were no signs of either having been shot. It seemed that the second bird had died of Avian Tuberculosis or a secondary infection encouraged by advanced tuberculosis. The first bird was in good body weight, the second extremely emaciated. Bacteriological smears were made and examined by Mr. Wm. W. Blackman and Dr. James J. Short of the Soto Medical Laboratories in Los Angeles. The presence of organisms resembling *Mycobacterium avium* predominating in the smears showed that the cause of death was definitely Avian Tuberculosis. The cause of the death of the first bird had to remain undetermined.

William R. Lasky.