

THE

LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

PLUMMER PARK

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LOS ANGELES 46, CALIFORNIA

Western



Tanager

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WINGS, SOME RANDOM NOTES

G. T. Hastings

"Oh that I had wings like a dove" sang the Psalmist, "I would fly away and be at rest". And the Prophet said, "For they who wait for the Lord ... shall mount up with wings like eagles".

The possession of wings times to give freedom from greatly desired. Heavenly beings wings. Artists have usually painted great white feathered wings, - and like wings. But in the are spoken of as resembling are never mentioned as having of angels, cherubims and the pairs.

The ancients also had legends of winged animals. We see Pegasus, the winged horse, on gasoline signs today; the Assyrians had their winged bulls, Chinese winged serpents or dragons, winged lions also appear in mythology. The symbol of the Medical Corps of our army is the caduceus, a winged staff with entwined serpents, that was carried by the Greek god Hermes, or the Latin Mercury, who also wore winged shoes.

In nature wings in birds and bats are the fore limbs, -making it impossible to have both wings and arms. There must also be powerful muscles to move the wings, which are never provided for in the paintings of angels, but possibly they used some other form of energy rather than muscular. If we had to choose between wings and arms and hands, wouldn't we all choose the latter?

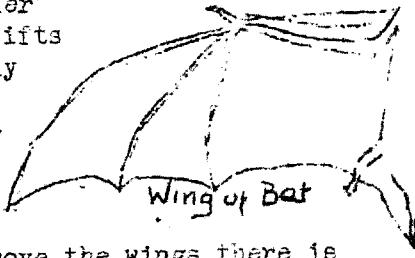
With birds the whole body is designed for flight, but particularly the feathers, wing bones and the breast bone. The arm bones correspond exactly to our own; - shoulder blades, collar bones (making the wish bone), an upper arm bone, two bones in the fore arm, wrist bones - only two in most birds - and the hand bones with three fingers and metacarpels fused into one bone. The primary feathers, quills, that form the front of the wing, usually 9 or 10 in number, are attached to the hand and finger bones. The secondaries, also used in flight, are attached to the fore arm, to the

ulna. The secondaries are usually smaller than the primaries, very short in swifts and hummingbirds which have only

6, but in grebes with 12 primaries and many secondaries they cover the primaries when the wings are closed.



Wing of Tern



Wing of Bat

For the attachment of the large pectoral muscles that move the wings there is developed the keel on the breast bone. This is large in birds of strong flight, relatively smaller in birds that are not strong fliers, and absent in flightless birds such as the ostrich. The pectoral muscles are the largest in the body in all flying birds. In the hummingbirds they are so large that they weigh about as much as all the rest of the body.

### THE WESTERN TANAGER

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### LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY

Organized 1910 Incorporated 1951  
"To promote the study and protection of birds and other wildlife, plants, soil and water."

### MEMBERSHIP

Joint with the National Audubon Society, includes subscription to Audubon Magazine: Regular - \$5.00; Sustaining-\$10.00, Active,-\$25.00; Supporting - \$50.00.

### OFFICERS 1954-1955

President.....Miss Bessie Pope  
1st Vice Pres.....Mrs. Nurtha Dunn  
2nd Vice Pres.....Mr. Herbert Clarke  
Exec. Sec'y....Miss Elizabeth Patterson  
Treasurer.....Miss Lecti Fisher  
Registrar of Members.....Mrs. Charlotte McBride

### We Welcome the following New Members:

Miss Christine Anderbery  
1617 Camden Ave., L.A. 5  
Mrs. Ella Chambers Calvert  
454 West 6th St., Azusa  
Mrs. Margaret L. Dickerson  
1901 Bath St., Santa Barbara  
Miss Gertrude Fogler  
605 No. Welden Dr., Beverly Hills  
Miss Betty Ann Gutherie  
7001 Cimarron St., L.A. 47  
Mrs. Sophia M. Hayford  
8750 Liberator Ave., L.A. 45  
Miss Martha E. Jackson  
1418 Lincoln Blvd., Santa Monica  
Mrs. Robert P. McCulloch  
555 Perugia Way, L.A. 24  
Mr. David Reiss  
10500 Yukon Ave., Inglewood  
Mrs. Helen H. Wilson  
429 West 115th St., L.A. 61

During the past month two of our members were lost to us by death. Mrs. Belle Maguire, a member for many years and formerly a member of our Board; and Mr. Allen Berry,

### THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Some weeks ago a request came from a Camp Fire director for permission to bring fifty girls and their leaders to our Headquarters for instruction. It was perfectly safe to grant the request, for I knew that our curator would have the house in order, even to having food out for the birds and flowers on the table. I was equally certain that at least two of our other experts would be on hand to give the children lessons in bird lore.

As you read in the September Tanager, the house is open Wednesday and Saturday afternoons, with different members as hostesses, giving graciously of their time for this service. Scarcely has the door been unlocked when guests arrive. There are the children who come in from picnics in the park and want to know if the eagle is alive.

There was the young teacher, one of our own members who came in especially to buy a Peterson Bird Guide and to see our mounted Passenger Pigeon. There was also the Doctor who drove in from Santa Monica with his wife and children to spend a pleasant and profitable Saturday afternoon. The baby was enchanted with the "hoot owls" and the older children could not be dragged away from the butterflies while father and mother enjoyed it all, both birds and books. For you see, as Audubon members, they, like you, have a share in it all.

But this is only one of the many activities of our splendid Society. You have long since received your folder regarding the Screen Tours and we are mailing out the memberships just as fast as the application cards come in.

The yearbook is another summer job. If you have not received your copy by now it will be in your mail box very soon.

You have only to look at the calendar sheet to realize that your officers and committee chairmen have not been idle since we last met together. Programs and field trips don't just happen. It takes much planning on the part of the Committees to find new places to go in the out-of-doors and new speakers for the programs.

Now October has arrived and with all of us working together a wonderful year is in store for us, with the largest membership in our history. How soon can we turn the seven hundred mark? Bessie Pope

BIRDING SOUTH OF THE BORDER  
Dorothy Groner

On June 11 I joined a group of twenty-one persons on a biological expedition into Mexico. Dr. Lloyd G. Ingles, Director of the National Audubon Society Nature Camp at Norden for two summers, headed the party under the auspices of Fresno State College. This was a science course and carried four units of credit.

Nine of the group were studying birds, three were interested in marine biology and mammals, one in parasitology, one in botany and the remainder studied mammals only.

We camped for twenty days, spending two or three days at each camp site, disbanding in Mexico City.

Immediately on crossing the border, you know you are in a "foreign land". Houses of the rural people are usually of adobe but in accordance with temperatures or materials at hand may be built of twigs, or large volcanic rocks carefully fitted together without mortar. Roofs may be of tile, or thatched with cornstalks or palm leaves, but whatever the materials the same will be used throughout the village and all are picturesque and interesting. For the first time in my life I saw no signboards of kleenex desecrating the landscape.

In Guayamas, we began to encounter new forms of bird life. Stout bodied boobies skimming over waves, fifty to one hundred Magnificent Frigate Birds circling over the end of a small island, their effortless flight the embodiment of grace, able to soar on the slightest breeze. Here too, we saw our first Varied Buntings, Mangrove Swallows and noisy Boat-tailed Grackles.

At the next camp near Aduano, a tiny village ten miles from Alamos, we found few familiar birds. Coppery-tailed Trogons with bright red underparts called "cory, cory, cory" like young turkeys; bright, butter-colored Yellow Grosbeaks, Rose-throated Becards, Streak-backed or Flame-headed Orioles, White-throated Robins with bell-like song, exuberant squeaky Sulphur-bellied Flycatchers, the spectacular Magpie Jay twenty to twenty-eight inches in length with recurved crest, and the handsome Bronze or Red-eyed Cowbird, the race here named for

our own Dr. Loye H. Miller whose interesting articles often appear in "The Tanager".

The land is arid with mesquite and organ pipe cactus predominating. Further south, it becomes thorn forest, then arid tropical forest with palms, strangler figs and philodendrons and cut-leaf philodendrons growing luxuriantly up the trunks of the palms.

This was the beginning of the rainy season and trees were leafing out, also many trees and shrubs commencing to bloom.

At San Blas, which is arid tropical forest, we saw Citreoline Trogons, Squirrel Cuckoos, Russet-crowned Motmots with racquet tipped tail feathers, Red-crowned Ant Tanager, Parrots, Military Macaws, Parakeets; and in the mangrove swamps, White Ibis, Wood Ibis, Anhingas, Roseate Spoonbills, Little Blue Herons, Black-bellied Tree Ducks, which our native skipper called "Chee-chee-cheens", Green Kingfishers; and on the beach we saw Black Skimmers and American Oystercatchers.

The mammalogists had interesting adventures too, and brought to camp small iguanas about two feet long, two small boa constrictors about 4-1/2 to 5 feet long were content when being held by young John Ingles, aged 7, and being stroked endlessly. A cave of vampire bats was discovered and 8 collected and brought back to camp alive. I saw one take a mouthful out of a pigskin glove as if it had been the tenderest blossom with no tearing or tugging, just a swift smooth cutting.

The bird group saw more than one hundred species of birds new to them.

The most incongruous sight seen was a little family walking along the road near Lake Chapala on Sunday morning. Father was dressed in his best including a fine serape, Mother was likewise garbed including a rebozo, while the tiny brown lad at their side was resplendent without a stitch but carrying a large umbrella - indeed it looked like rain.

National Audubon Society  
Pacific Coast Office

Now in new and larger quarters at  
2426 Bancroft Way, Berkeley 4  
William N. Goodall, Representative,  
Sandy Sprunt IV, Asst. Representative.

## CONSERVATION NOTES

Robert E. Blackstone

Recent encouraging news on the conservation front is that Dinosaur National Monument is saved from exploitation for the time being, the bills authorizing the Upper Colorado Storage Project having been defeated as Congress adjourned. The fight is not over however, as new bills will undoubtedly appear before the next Congress. All conservation groups are united in opposing the project as long as the Echo Park dam is included. So watch and be prepared when new attempts are made to invade the National Monuments and Parks.

Currently there is another threat to our parks in the form of a proposal to build a permanent steel chair lift up the slope of Mount Ranier National Park. This would obviously impare the natural features for the protection of which the Park was established, and the National Parks Association, the National Audubon Society and other conservation groups are vigorously opposing it. Letters regarding this should be addressed to the Honorable Douglas McKay, Secretary of the Interior, Washington 25, D. C., as he is responsible for the decision.

Mrs. Helen Verdi, of the Conservation Committee of the Sierra Club makes these practical suggestions: --

Everyone who is interested in these and similar issues should make every effort to write and let his representative in Congress know how he feels on each issue. To help you make your letters more effective, the following suggestions are passed along: --

1. Be brief and to the point. One page letters are usually best.
2. Write as an individual, NOT as a member of an organization, so your letter will be counted as a separate vote.
3. Have your organization write an official letter, representing the group.
4. In writing about a particular bill, give its number.
5. Bills are given a hearing before an appropriate committee. Write the chairman, and if possible send a copy of your letter to each member of the committee.
6. Always request that your letter be included in the hearings.
7. Let your own representative know where you stand on each issue.

## CHEEPS AND CHIRPS

Leoti Fisher, our new Treasurer, has been treasurer for the Screen Tours, so is well prepared for the difficult, time consuming job to which the Society has elected her. Leoti says she has always been interested in the out-of-doors. Coming to California she joined the Sierra Club in order to take part in their trips. Then one of our members gave her an announcement of our Screen Tours, from that membership in the Society followed. She for a time was in charge of the evening meetings and has been helping with the Screen Tours. The Tanager has published the story - or at least the first chapter of it, of Jackie, her pet California Jay who is still entertaining her and teaching her bird psychology. As a vocation Leoti is an escrow clerk with the Los Angeles Department of Public Works.

Herbert Clarke, our Second Vice President, took charge of our Christmas Bird Count last year. Herb's chief interest is in birds. He has studied them all over the United States and in Mexico and has hopes and plans for birding in other countries. After finishing a term in the navy and air force in 1950 he has been employed in a wholesale business. Two years ago he married a young lady in Louisiana and she is now as enthusiastic a birder as her husband. Last summer they drove to Louisiana to Mrs. Clarke's former home, on the way stopping in the Texas Big Bend region to study the birds there.

## WHOPPING CRANES FACE ANOTHER TEST

Last fall 24 Cranes returned from the far north to the wintering grounds on the Texas coast, three more than had left in the spring. Now they are on their way back, we hope with the number again increased. They face many dangers on the long trip, but the greatest is from men and boys who find the great white birds a tempting target for their guns. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Canadian Wildlife Service, The National Audubon Society and various state and provincial conservation organizations along with other groups have made special appeals to residents along the migration routes to guard these birds. It is believed that with continued care the Whooping Crane has better than a fighting chance for survival.

## OBSERVATIONS

Ruby Curry

On the Pelagic Trip of August 22, among the birds seen were: Pink-footed Shearwaters, rafts of hundreds of Farallon Cormorants on the water and others with Brandt's Cormorants on rocky islands. 2 mature and 3 immature Bald Eagles over Anacapa and Santa Cruz Islands. On the single beaches of both islands Black Oystercatchers and Wandering Tattlers.

IBISES, DUCKS, SHOREBIRDS:--Aug. 20, Ocean-side and Carlsbad, 21 Wood Ibis, many Avocets, Black-necked Stilts, Northern and Wilson Phalaropes; N. Dunn, B. Hoffman, D. Dodds, also Ruddy Ducks with young. Balboa Back Bay, 3 Royal Terns, D. Dodds. Semi-palmated Plovers and Spotted Sandpiper, Venice Marshes, Sept. 18. Hastings.

HAWKS:-- A Marsh Hawk drinking from a small pool in the fairway of the Palos Verdes Golf Course with a Brewer's Blackbird a foot and a half away at the opposite side of the pool; C. McBride.

PIGEONS, DOVES:--Many young Mourning Doves in the hill section of Eagle Rock.

ROADRUNNER:--In August at Laguna Beach, E. McClean; in the city near John Burrough's School, Mrs. W.C. Brown.

OWLS:-- Pasadena Screech calling from dusk through the night, Eagle Rock.

POORWILL:-- Calling every evening in Sept. in Eagle Rock hills.

HUMMINGBIRDS:-- Several reports of migrating Allen's in Sept. Aug. 17, K. Hart. Sept. 6 - 13 at syrup feeder and nicotiana with Anna's, Hazel Lewis, El Monte, and Black-chinned, May 18 - Sept. 4.

FLYCATCHERS:-- Ash-throated, West Los Angeles, Aug. 25-27, Sophie Hiss.

CHICKADEE:-- Bailey's, feeding in pine tree, Eagle Rock, R.C.

WREN:-- Bewick, feeding on scraps of fat as I stood only two feet away. R.C.

WARBLERS:-- Aug. 19 at Ave. 41, Golden Pileolated, K. Hart; Sept. 12 in Eagle Rock garden, E. McClean; Macgillivray's, Mount Washington, singing his hurriedly repeated song, E. Fulton.

ORIOLES, COWBIRDS:-- Male Hooded feeding on sugar water all summer, last seen Aug. 20, female came until the 28th, Hastings; Sept. 13 still coming many times daily, El Monte, Hazel Lewis. Sophie Hiss reports that last month a

Song Sparrow was feeding one young Cow Bird in her yard in West Los Angeles, a Towhee feeding another.

WATCH NOW for Common, Pacific and Red-throated Loons, Western and Horned Grebes, migrating White Pelicans, Vaux Swifts, Sage Thrashers in the desert; Hermit Thrush, Varied Thrush, Robins, Townsend Warblers.

## EARLY DAYS IN PLUMMER PARK

In 1938 a list of 55 birds was made in Plummer Park. Before the park was bought by the County there was an old barn and a horse lot there. Screech Owls nested there and I have seen three owlets and the parents sitting on top of the wall. A pair of Phainopeplas nesting in a pepper tree on the east side of the porch, raised three young on the elderberries there. A White-throated Sparrow spent three months, coming twice daily for peanuts and grain and often bathing. Waxwings came in flocks of 60 to 70 for the Catalina cherries. Bushtits nested in the olive tree to the west of our house. Quails were often seen. Hermit Thrushes came for many winters and stayed for three months. A Slender-billed Nuthatch found a warm bed in the eucalyptus tree where a strip of bark had turned up for an opening. A Clapper Rail was picked up dead on the parking lot. Titmice and Wrens, both House and Bewicks nested in the gourd and in a cactus plant. Both Kinglets were often seen and four kinds of Warblers. One summer I found five different Hummingbirds visiting the tree tobacco in what is now the parking lot, but was then a weed patch which delighted the birds. A Brown Creeper visited the eucalyptus tree south of our yard. A Sparrow Hawk nested for several years in the tall palm tree in the driveway.

Hooded Orioles have nested for many years in one of the palm trees. Night Hawks, Barn and Cliff Swallows fed over the weed patch. Once I saw a Road Runner passing thru in a great hurry. Shrikes nested there and took toll of our small birds. And most of our more usual birds were there, as they still are. There were few houses in the area, a Japanese florist had a large garden which added to the food supply of the birds. -Mary B. Salmon

LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY  
OFFICERS, 1954-1955

President ... Miss Bessie Pope, 912 Victoria Ave., Los Angeles 19;--Whitney 5946  
1st Vice-Pres. Mrs. Nurtha Dunn Secretary... Miss Elizabeth Patterson  
2nd Vice-Pres. Mr. Herbert Clarke Treasurer... Miss Leoti Fisher  
Registrar of Members .. Mrs. Charlotte McBride, 2224 Via Guadalupe, Palos Verdes

CALENDAR FOR OCTOBER

Thursday, October 7. AFTERNOON PROGRAM MEETING; Los Angeles County Museum, Exposition Park; 1:30. "Bird of the Month," presented by Kenneth Stager. Vacation High Lights: Mrs. Mary Hood, Mrs. Charlotte McBride, and others. Talk, illustrated with colored slides, HORTICULTURAL JOURNEY INTO SOUTH AMERICA, Mrs. Samuel Ayres, Jr. who is active in the Pasadena Garden Club and Audubon Society and has recently returned from a trip to South America.

Saturday, October 9. FIELD TRIP: Playa del Rey. The Out-of-Doors with Friends group will meet at the south end of the Lagoon at 9:45. Bring lunch and field glasses. If you have never met our Shore and Marsh Friends come along and we will introduce you. Take Metropolitan Coach Company bus at 5th and Olive Streets at 8:50, arriving at Playa del Rey at 9:36. Leader Miss Ethel Craig.

Thursday, October 14. MEETING OF EXECUTIVE BOARD at the home of the president,  
912 Victoria Avenue at 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, October 21. FIELD TRIP; to San Dimas Experimental Forest Area. Meet in Glendora at the U.S. Forestry Headquarters, corner of Foothill Blvd. and Wabash St., one block east of the City Hall, at 9:45. Regular Metropolitan bus leaves 610 S. Main St. at 8:21 a.m., reaching Glendora at 9:43. Round trip fare \$1.54. Those going by automobile form auto caravan (filling cars with Bird Watchers who came on bus) which will be conducted through gates by a leader from the Forest Service to the Tan Bark Flats Headquarters in the mountain area. Bring lunch. For further information call DU 8-7935.

Sunday, October 24. FIELD TRIP; to Playa del Rey for the study of shore and water birds. Bring lunch and binoculars. Meet at south end of lagoon at 9 a.m. Afternoon to Malibu Creek. Leader Dorothy Groner.

Thursday, October 28. STUDY CLASS at Plummer Park, 10 a.m.

First hour: talk "OUR RESTLESS EARTH" by W. Scott Lewis. With his beautiful kodachrome slides he will show some of the many changes in the earth's surface in the past, with more changes to come.  
Second hour: Bird Study, FLICKERS and other TREE-CLIMBING BIRDS, presented by Mrs. Olive Alvey.

GUESTS ARE WELCOME AT ALL THESE MEETINGS AND TRIPS

AUDUBON CENTER OF CALIFORNIA

664 N. Durfee Ave., El Monte - Phone- FOrrest 0-1872  
Mrs. O. M. Stultz, Director - Mrs. M. Gertrude Woods, Asst. Director

Nature Museum open daily 2 to 5 p.m., except Sundays and Mondays.

The second Sunday field trips have been discontinued.