

T H E

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Western Tanager



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THE NATIONAL CONVENTION

Grace Harvard Phillips

I must be careful that during the next few months too many of my sentences do not begin "When I was at the National Audubon Convention"

Besides the pleasure of air travel there were four Golden Days seeing the Society as a whole in action: The wide field of its activities in the States and in Canada, working towards conservation in its highest sense, and vitally concerned with educating the youth of North America to see the world of nature about them and to value its preservation.

The National Society inhabits an old red-brick Georgian mansion on Fifth Avenue about half-way down the east side of Central Park. From the windows there is a splendid view of the Park by day and night. The Reservoir there is a fine resting place for migratory waterbirds. A field trip any day of the year rewards bird watchers as migratory song birds are there in season.

At Audubon House one enters a circular lobby with niches for statuary, - one held a handsome bouquet of flowers made of shells, in white, cream, tans and browns. A larger room at the right is for sales; books, cards, stationery, gifts, etc. An Audience room and the well-equipped library are on the second floor. Above are offices and an attractive long room opening onto a roof garden. The whole place is admirably suited for business and for entertainment such as the reception the first day and the buffet luncheon on the last.

Sessions of the Convention were held at the New York Historical Society and the Museum of Natural History. Directors of Audubon Camps gave reports of their work. Colored films showed strikingly the great differences in localities. Especially interesting was the illustrated talk by Mr. Walter Engelke about the first session of the midwest Camp in Minnesota. Mr. Baker asked me to read the report from Mrs. Stultz from our Audubon Center at El Monte. The audience was moved by her stirring account of the fire there and the speedy and successful "come-back."

There was a fine Symposium - BETTER PROTECTION FOR BIRDS OF PREY - showing the variance in laws from state to state, what has been gained and what yet needs to be done in standardizing protective laws for birds that know no boundaries of state or country. Interest in Hawks and Owls is very keen now throughout the entire nation among conservationists and bird lovers.

An outstanding talk was that of Dr. Paul Sears, Director of Conservation at Yale. He cited the worst road blocks to conservation as being Indifference and Ignorance, and the division of beliefs and philosophy that extends into social economy.

W. Winston Mair, of the Canadian Wild Life Service and Robert P. Allen told of the discovery of the Whooping Crane's nesting grounds in Canada, illustrated with kodachrome slides. Popular interest over the whole continent has been aroused and multitudes rejoice that 8 youngsters flew back to Texas with the 20 adult birds.

Organizational leaders of the successful Greenwich (Conn.) Pilot Plan for Audubon Junior Clubs told of their campaign; of help from Garden Clubs, and how the Superintendent of Schools, interested in their objectives, sanctioned forming Junior Audubon Clubs in the schools.

The Convention's Field Trip was to the Audubon Center at Greenwich, a short

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THE WESTERN TANAGER

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THE LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY
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"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; Student \$2.00.

OFFICERS - 1955-1956

President....Mrs. Grace Harvard Phillips
1st Vice-Pres.....Mrs. Paul Dodds
2nd Vice-Pres.....Mr. Herbert Clarke
Exec. Sect'y....Miss Elizabeth Patterson
Treasurer.....Miss Esther Johnson
Registrar.....Mrs. J. L. McBride

WE WELCOME THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS

Mr. Eugene N. Anderson,
318 - 23rd St., Santa Monica
Mr. Lloyd W. Lash,
3429 W. 80th St., Inglewood 4
Miss Marjorie Jane Moody,
1380 Veteran Ave., Los Angeles 24
Mr. Segal,
10860 So. Denker St., Los Angeles 47
Mrs. Helen Sommer,
12001 Chalon, Los Angeles 49
Miss Gertrude Steffen,
1050 Elm Ave., Apt. F, Long Beach

Mrs. Irma Hecht has received a letter
from the President of the Los Angeles Girl
Scouts expressing delight at the help given
on the Scouts at Audubon House. About a
dozen of our members are helping Mrs.
Hecht at the House and nearly as many more
are "on call" for talks to Scout or other
Groups. Miss Gudrum Pepke is making signs
for all the birds on display. Mrs. Yule
is helping classify the many magazines in
the library.

FOUND

After the Christmas party, a pair of
brown gloves and a box of stationery.
These are at the home of the President and
will be mailed to the owners if they notify
Mrs. Phillips.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

January first - and resumption of our
field trips and meetings. New Year's
Day seems to come at the right season
here, for after December rains, it is
spring. Inez Irwin says, "In California
spring comes in the fall, and fall comes
in the summer and summer comes in the
winter, and winter never comes at all."

The divisions of time, though based on
scientific principles, are to the individual,
purely arbitrary. Every day is
a new year if we consider it so; every
morn is the world made new. The thing
is to use our time as wisely and pleas-
antly as we can; and that includes worth,
while activity if we are Audubon Society
members.

To newcomers: Welcome into the group.
We hope you'll volunteer to take part in
the work of the Society. We need each
one of you; and you will find pleasure
in tasks that open the eyes of young and
old to the beauty of the outdoor world,
and the urgent need to conserve it while
that beauty still remains.

Not all thoughts about deep matters are
expressed in serious terms. So I think
Colonel Stoopnagle's remarks about TIME
have their own kind of wisdom: "Time is
what railroads have tables of it; and
what, when you're idle, you've got lots
of it on your hands; and when you're busy
at something good, it runs out too fast;
and when your wife finally meets you, you
exclaim, 'Well, it's about!'"

So, it's about time we here on the West
Coast all helped to assure wise use of
earth's abundance.

Grace Harvard Phillips

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

It is an old and excellent custom to
look ahead on New Year's Day and resolve
to make the coming year better than the
last. The Western Tanager is your paper,
published to aid you in appreciation and
the conservation of our wild life, and to
keep you informed of the work of our So-
ciety. So resolve to share your nature
experiences by sending contributions to
the editor. Also resolve that if you
move to send him your new address.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL

From the Editor

National Convention (Continued)
 drive from New York. Your delegate delighted in the sight and sound of water flowing and soaked up water like a sponge on the Bird Walk led by the naturalist Allen Cruickshank. And Miss Farida Wiley, who has edited in one volume each the best writings of John Burroughs and Ernest Seton Thompson and the nature writings of Theodore Roosevelt.

The new Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary in Florida was beautifully portrayed by slides and the film, "CYPRESS KINGDOM." Roger Tory Peterson gave an informal talk about the writing with James Fisher, visiting British ornithologist, of his new book. The talk was illustrated by a series of drawings that Mr. Peterson made for their book "WILD AMERICA."

At the banquet the final evening, Walt Disney was awarded the Audubon Medal for Distinguished Service to Conservation, for the high quality of his films. Some of you may have heard Mr. Disney's speech of thanks on television. Then followed the showing of the film "PENGUIN SUMMER," photographed by Olin Pettingill, Jr. There were smiles and chuckles, then hearty laughter at the droll antics of the birds, for Mr. Pettingill's comments pointed up the humor of their actions in the nesting colony. The Convention thus closed on a note of hilarity.

But, to fall back on a more sober note, the memory will remain of vaster horizons, and a heightened sense of interdependence in nature and in US, fortunate dwellers in this America, if we but stop, look and listen to the urgent need to "share in conserving its wonders forever," as expressed in "A Statement of Audubon philosophy."

GOLDEN EAGLE PUTS ON AUDUBON SHOW

This is the caption of an article in the New York Herald-Tribune describing the Audubon Convention field trip to the Greenwich Center. A flight of 20 or more red-tailed and red-shouldered hawks, a rare enough sight in itself, was joined by the eagle which soared above the Audubon group for about ten minutes. It was said to be the first time in seven years that a Golden Eagle had been seen in the region.

OBSERVATIONS

PELICAN: White, Hansen Dam, Nov. 28, C. Daugherty, L. Adams.

DUCKS, SWANS: Whistling Swan, 2 immature in a stream north of Whittier Narrows Dam, just before Thanksgiving, Whittier Observer, a flock on Sherwood Lake in the Santa Monica Mts., reported in local papers on Dec. 6 and 7; Ducks on Hansen Dam Nov. 28, Mallard, Gadwall, Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Baldpate, Shoveller, Canvas-back, Lesser Scaup, White-winged Scoter, Surf Scoter, Ruddy, Red-breasted Merganser. Daugherty, Adams.

HAWKS: White-tailed Kite, Playa del Rey, Nov. 28. Daugherty, Adams.

POOR-WILL: One hibernating near Mecca. Cecelia Foulks.

NUTCRACKER: Clark, reported on Nov. 1 at Palos Verdes, seen again in first week of Dec. Charlotte McBride.

THRUSH: Hermit, Chevy Chase Drive, Nov. 27. Bee Becker, Sunland, Nov. 28, Daugherty.

PIPI: Hansen Dam, Nov. 28. Daugherty, Adams.

WARBLER: Pileolated, Los Angeles, Nov. 20. Leona Hoogenboom.

SPARROWS: Fox, Chevy Chase Drive, Nov. 27. Bee Becker; Belding, Playa del Rey, Nov. 28. Daugherty, Adams; Golden-Crowned, Chevy Chase Drive, Nov. 27. Becker.

The Whittier Observer urges that the large area above the Whittier Narrows Dam be posted as a Wild Life Refuge, leaving twenty or more acres as a virgin area in as far as is possible. The Executive Board of the Whittier Audubon Society has voted that a petition for this be made to the Los Angeles County Flood Control Commission. They ask all other conservation organizations in the county to take similar action.

In the Los Angeles Times of December is a short article on finding the imprint of a large bird on stone being quarried near Santa Maria. Dr. Hildegard Howard of the County Museum estimates the age of the fossil to be 19 or 20 million years. She thinks the bird was similar to an albatross with a probable wing spread of fifteen feet.

WHAT'S GONE ON IN THE SOCIETY.

Olive Alvey, Historian

Field Trip of November 11-13 to Joshua Tree National Monument. Forty members took part in this trip, listing among 42 birds a Golden Eagle, Phainopeleas, Pinon Jays, Mountain Chickadees and Say Phoebeas. Superintendent King and Ranger Adams were very cordial, had bird lists and trail guides ready for us and spent time with us on the trail, giving us much help in identifying plants and birds. They also invited us to a very interesting weed show. The leader was Ethel Craig.

Field Trip of Nov. 17 to Playa del Rey. The day was cold with intermittent rain. Only five members of the Society and one visitor from Canada took part. Thirty-two species were seen. A large flock of Snowy Plovers were huddled together on the beach, all facing the wind. With them were a few Sem-palmated Plovers and Sandpipers. On the jetty was a large gathering, well over 100, of brown Pelicans. Six species of Gulls were seen, among them a few little Bonaparts. The leader, George Hastings.

Study Class, Nov. 22 in Plummer Park. Mr. C. V. Duff gave a talk on the books published by the Cooper Ornithological Society, among them one on the natural history of the Magpie, the only known book on this bird.

Mrs. Paul Dodds gave a talk on Hummingbirds. Living close to the Tucker Sanctuary, she often goes there to study these birds. There are 600 species and subspecies of Hummers, all American, most from tropical America. Of the 13 species in the U.S., 6 breed in California.

Hummers' wings are attached to the shoulder in such a way that their motion is rotary, allowing them to fly backwards. When hovering their wings beat 55 times a second. They usually bathe in a spray of water, but Mrs. Dodds has seen them bathe in her bird bath. These little mites make one nest a year and lay two eggs. Papa takes no part in raising the family; after the dive-bombing courtship he brings a speck of material to start the nest, then leaves mother in complete control.

A Hummer's voice is squeaky and tittery, but what they lack in beauty of voice they more than make up in beauty of plumage.

Christmas Tree for the Birds, Dec. 6, Fiesta Hall, Plummer Park.

The tree for the birds is put up each year at this time. The party we have 'round it is just incidental. The tree is decorated, then each member of the Society puts a gift of food under it for the birds who live near Audubon House.

The party program began with a welcome by Mrs. Phillips, our President. Mrs. Alma Stultz spoke briefly, inviting us to the Center at El Monte. Miss Miriam Faddis, our senior member, 96 years young, gave an inspiring reading, as only she can, "Life is a Splendor." We missed Mrs. Mary Salmon and her sister, Miss Mary Ellen Barns, who have always been with us in the past. Mr. Ralph Platt delighted us with his whistled bird calls, about 25 in all; some of us heard birds sing we have never heard in real life.

A women's trio, composed of Mmes. Baker, Love and Heller, accompanied by Mrs. Hatch, sang three Christmas songs. Mrs. Grace Phillips told a little of her experiences at the National Convention in New York.

Mr. John Zamudio, caretaker at El Monte Audubon Center, sang White Christmas in Spanish, accompanying himself on the guitar with the audience joining in on the English version.

There followed a pleasant social time, with refreshments of cake and hot cider.

We hope the birds enjoy the good things from their Christmas tree as much as we enjoyed the party.

At the request of several members, Miss Patterson has given her recipe for the cider we serve each year at the Christmas Party:

2 quarts cider
8 whole cloves
2 tablespoons crushed bark cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon salt
4 or 5 allspice berries
1/2 teaspoon ginger
3 tablespoons lemon juice
1 cup orange juice
1/2 cup sugar (or more to taste)

Mix cider, spices and salt. Cover and simmer 15 minutes. Strain and add rest of ingredients. Reheat and serve. Spices and cider may be simmered one day and reheated with sugar and citrus juices before serving the next day.

THE NEW EVENING PROGRAM

Arnold Small

After three meetings we can examine the progress made and the plans for the future. The Evening Program was organized to meet the needs and interests of members of the Los Angeles Audubon Society who could not attend the daytime meetings. It was also felt that a need existed for an opportunity to exchange ideas and information by the members of the Society most interested and active in field ornithology. The only requisite for those attending is an active interest in field "birding." (I hesitate to use the word ornithology, but many of our projects will fall well within the boundaries of the science and field "birding" has added a mountain of information to it, as well as being an indispensable part of many phases of it). We have now completed three of the nine scheduled meetings and their success was induced by the enthusiastic support and participation of some fifty members. Our thanks go to Robert Blackstone, Herbert Clarke, James Clements, Mary Hood, James Huffman and Dudley Ross of the Program Committee who worked with the Chairman to organize the program. The meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month, October through June, at 7:45 in Long Hall, Plummer Park.

The aims of the group may be summarized as follows:

- 1 - To encourage interest in field ornithology.
- 2 - To develop skill in field identification.
- 3 - To encourage study in bird biology.
- 4 - To encourage participation in group activities.
- 5 - To coordinate field activities of members so as to supply meaningful information to the science of ornithology.
- 6 - To communicate conservation problems of local and national scope.
- 7 - To provide members a rich and varied experience through field trips, competent speakers, bird literature, exchange of ideas, long range field projects, etc.
- 8 - To encourage the keeping of complete notes of field experiences.

- 9 - to promote participation in such projects as the following:
 - a - Rare Bird Alert - A system of notifying subscribers (no charge) rapidly of the location of any rare or unusual bird in our area.
 - b - Map Making - A set of maps of our best bird-finding areas will be prepared by our members. These will serve as guides for beginners and for those coming from other parts of the country. The maps will include brief summaries of habitat and kinds of birds to be found as well as directions for reaching the area and working it. As fast as maps are prepared, they will be distributed to members of the Evening Group. Eventually, they will be compiled in a booklet for sale at a nominal price.
 - c - Sanctuary - Location, acquisition and maintenance of a natural area.
 - d - Identification Guides - Preparation of a set of guides for the critical field identification of such difficult species as terns, gulls, shorebirds, jaegers, alcids fall warblers, etc.
 - e - Migration Counting - Accurate quantitative counts of such visible migrants as loons, scoters, shearwaters, hawks, swallows, swifts and pelicans.
 - f - Effects of Weather on Spring Migration - A coordinated effort over a period of years to be correlated (if possible) of spring movements of birds into the state.
 - g - Spring Migration Roundup - An effort to tabulate migrant species as well as residents within a circle of 100 miles diameter during the height of the spring migration (probably the first week-end in May). This will be a competitive effort with other cities and areas to achieve a big list, but more important to determine the relative abundance of birds and their preferred habitat during migration.
 - h - Southern California Migration Routes - An effort to tract and plot routes of visible migrants as they enter Calif. and cross the southern section of the state.
 - i - Christmas Count - To assume leadership in the annual Christmas count.
 - j - Pelagic Observations - Little has been done along these lines in Calif. (Continued next page)

CONSERVATION NOTES
Robert Blackstone

In writing such a column as this it is difficult not to be forever an alarmist. Lord knows, there is plenty to be alarmed over. However, the idea of conservation is beginning to penetrate the public consciousness, and there is real, though slow, progress to be observed. The past few months in particular, have seen some notable successes achieved. The most significant of these, of course, is the admission of defeat by the proponents of Echo Park Dam. Other worthwhile achievements in the cause of conservation were the enactment of Public Law 167, aimed at the correction of mining claim abuses and hailed as the outstanding conservation accomplishment of the 84th Congress' first session; abandonment by the Air Force, in the face of protests from all over the U.S. and from the Canadian government, of the plans for establishment of a flash bombing range in the vicinity of the Aransas Wild Life Refuge; withdrawal by the Navy, after negotiations with the Dept. of the Interior, of its proposal to use a portion of the Death Valley National Monument as an aerial gunnery range.

Also encouraging were the ten percent increases in direct appropriations which Congress voted for the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Forest Service and the Soil Conservation Service. The National Park Service was voted a forty percent increase.

There is a growing sentiment, too, in favor of wilderness preservation. Printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, at the request of Senator Humphrey of Minnesota, an address by Howard Zahniser, Executive Secretary of the Wilderness Society, which points out the need for areas of wilderness for recreational and other purposes and discussing the underlying philosophy and proposing the establishment of a national wilderness system. I think all conservationists will concur in this.

A number of cases of arrogant defiance of conservation rules on military reservations, such as the illegal deer hunt conducted at Fort Huachuca, Arizona last year by Commanding General Lanzeair and his staff officers, and the current controversy between the State of New Mexico and Major General Rutledge, commanding officer of Fort Bliss, with regard to hunting permits for his troops, have re-

sulted in the introduction in Congress of the Scott-Ervin Bill, S. 2301. This Bill, introduced by Senators W. Kerr Scott and Sam J. Ervin, Jr. of North Carolina, would require simply that any hunting or fishing done on Federal lands must be done according to the conservation laws of the state in which the area is located.

The New Evening Program (Continued)

k - Breeding Bird Censuses - Encourage the taking of these, especially in neglected areas.

l - Winter Bird Population Count - To study winter bird populations accurately within well-defined habitats.

These, then, are some of the rather ambitious plans for the long-range future of the Evening Program Group. How successful they will be must of course depend upon the support of the members. The success of these projects it might be said, will be in direct proportion to satisfaction and enjoyment of the Program by members. I encourage all who wish to embark on such a program, regardless of your experience or knowledge, to attend. All that is required is enthusiasm.

The Evening Program has the following standing Committees: Program, for the formulating of the program for this year; Book Chairman - Dudley Ross (who will review a book of interest on birds at each meeting); Sales - Elsa Schwartz (who is responsible for sales of publications at each meeting); Conservation - Robert Blackstone, who is Chairman of the Conservation Committee of the Society; Map - James Huffman, Chairman, and the following members: Marjorie J. Moody, Bess Hoffman, Mary V. Hood, William P. Hawkins; Field Trip Chairman - James Clements.

Programs planned for the remainder of the season include "Bird Watching in Florida," Symposium on Rare and Endangered Birds.

Tricks of identifying pelagic birds, nature slide exhibition, and the Spring Migration Roundup.

It is hoped that members who attend meetings will join in the projects and contribute to the meetings. Once the program has been successfully launched, I hope that other members will take an active part on the various committees that guide and stimulate the group.

LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY
OFFICERS -- 1955-1956

President - Mrs. Grace H. Phillips - - - 1237 1/2 So. Bronson Ave., Los Angeles 19
1st Vice-President - - Mrs. Paul Dodds Executive Secretary - Miss Eliz. Patterson
2nd Vice-President - Mr. Herbert Clarke Recording Secretary - - Mrs. Bess Hoffman
Treasurer - - - - - Miss Esther Johnson Curator - - - - - Mrs. Irma Hecht
Historian - Mrs. Olive Alvey
Registrar of Members - Mrs. J. L. McBride, 2224 Via Guadalana, Palos Verdes Estates

Calendar for January, 1956

January 3, Tuesday Evening, at 7:45 in Long Hall, Plummer Park.

R. Dudley Ross will give a talk on BIRD WATCHING IN FLORIDA. There will be a film in color of Florida Birds. Study skins of especially interesting Florida Birds will be available for examination.

January 5, Thursday Afternoon at 1:30 in Exposition Community House, 3990 Menlo Ave., corner of Santa Barbara in Exposition Park.

Mr. Gibson Reaves, Assistant Professor of Astronomy at the University of Southern California will give a talk - STAR WATCHING. He will also show a film - STORMS ON THE SURFACE OF THE SUN and make comments on how these storms affect weather, men and birds.

January 14, Saturday Field Trip to Fern Dell, Griffith Park. Meet at 9 A.M. near the Nature Museum. Bring lunch. We will leave in time to attend the Saturday afternoon Screen Tour.

January 19, Thursday Field Trip to Hansen Dam. A new trip for us for land and water birds. Bring lunch and binoculars.

Our Tanner Motor Bus will leave Los Angeles from the Grand Avenue entrance to the Biltmore Hotel between 5th and 6th Streets at 9 A.M. sharp. Round trip fare \$2.25. Please have exact change. Returning to Los Angeles by 4 P.M. The bus and those driving - go north on Glenoaks Blvd., through Burbank and Sun Valley to Osborne St. Turn right to intersection of Foot-hill and Stonehurst. Turn right on Stonehurst, per signs to picnic grounds, where Field Leader will meet bus. Birding until 12. Short program after lunch, then more birding.

For bus reservations call Miss Edna Burt, 1211 W. 90th Street, Los Angeles 44, Phone PL 1-6984. Leader Caroline Daugherty.

January 21-22, Saturday and Sunday Field Trip to Mecca and the Salton Sea area, - to study desert birds, ducks and geese.

Meet Saturday at 11 A.M. at Mecca, 2 blocks to right from Junction 195 off Number 111 (Miss Foulke's) Eat lunch beside pond. Please do NOT ask to use bathroom facilities. 1:30 leave Mecca, drive through Niland, turn right at water tower and meet at Mr. O'Neill's white bungalow on right.

Mr. O'Neill is manager of the Fish and Wildlife Refuge.

Sunday, 8 A.M., lobby of Hotel Planters, Brawley, or 8:30 A.M. at Vendels Gas Station on #99 north of Westmoreland.

Note--Make reservations now for Hotel Planters. Please drive carefully and stay on dikes if permitted to drive out on them. Leader Dorothy Groner.

January 26, Thursday Morning Study Class, Long Hall, Plummer Park at 10 A.M. Professor Tena Shultz Clare will talk on TREES. Mrs. Bess Hoffman will talk on FERNS. Mrs. Irene Schmitz will give a Book Review.

AUDUBON SCREEN TOURS - Cleveland P. Grant, "AMERICAN BIRDS AND BIG GAME"

Tuesday, January 10 Virgil Jr. High School; Saturday, January 14, John Burroughs Jr. High.