

Western Tanager



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NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

VOLUME 23

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NUMBER 4

REPORT ON THE 52ND ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY By Robert E. Blackstone

It was my privilege and pleasure to be chosen this year as the Los Angeles Audubon Society's delegate to the National Convention in New York City, November 10-13 in place of our President, Mrs. Charlotte McBride, who was unable to attend. Following are the highlights of the meeting.

After registration, which occupied most of the morning of Saturday, November 10, the convention began in earnest with a presentation in the afternoon which emphasized the importance of the Audubon Junior Program. Scout leaders testified to the value of this program in promoting conservation, and told how Audubon Junior Club material was used by 90,000 Cub Scouts for their 'Bird Watchers' theme. A group of Cub Scouts demonstrated the use of the material in a Cub Scout 'den.' In concluding, Mr. Carl W. Bucheister, Vice-President of the Society, further emphasized the value of the program in teaching conservation where it will do the most good in the long run, to the children.

For Sunday, November 11, delegates were given the choice of visiting the Roosevelt Memorial Sanctuary at Oyster Bay, Long Island or the Audubon Center at Greenwich, Conn. I chose the former and found that the trip into the sanctuary, conducted by Mr. James Callaghan, the director, and his illuminating talk, brought out many points in the development and maintenance of a small sanctuary which may be useful to us here. The Roosevelt Memorial Sanctuary is considered a model small sanctuary and is a monument to the ability and devotion of its director.

A talk by Mr. Wayne Short, director of the Audubon Screen Tour Program, opened the session for Monday morning, November 12. His was a hard hitting talk; he brought out that, although the Tours were presented to some 10,000 people last year, the aim of making them self-supporting has not been realized. He also felt that, in general, the opportunity of capitalizing on the program to enlarge Audubon Society membership and promote Audubon philosophy, was largely being lost.

An address by Mr. William N. Goodall, the Pacific Coast Representative, on Audubon Camps in Relation to Local Societies was read by Mr. Bucheister, since Mr. Goodall was unable to attend the convention. He urged that greater effort be made to boost Camp attendance by encouraging other organizations to donate scholarships and suggested that this be accomplished by a strong Camp Committee, and by enlisting the aid of former Audubon Campers.

In speaking of the value of the Audubon Wildlife Tours, Mr. Charles Brookfield, Tropical Florida Representative, brought out that, in addition to influencing the people actually taking the Tours, they were developing conservation attitudes among the people living in the area where the Tours are held.

Mr. Conrad Wirth's talk on Mission 66 in Relation to Wildlife showed the views of the National Park Service on development of the Parks, as outlined by Mr. Wirth, to be generally in accord with those of most conservationists.

Perhaps the most disturbing fact which came to light in the discussion of Pollution Control, was that the United States is one of several nations which have so far failed to ratify the International Convention to control oil pollution on the seas.

(Continued on Page 21)

THE WESTERN Tanager

Free to members.....Others \$1.50 annually
 Editor Emeritus.....George T. Hastings
 Editor.....Mrs. Fern Shelford
 3315 W. 41st St., L.A. 8.....AX 4-0410

THE 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 National Audubon Society in-
 cludes subscription to Audubon Magazine,
 Regular \$5; Sustaining \$10; Active \$25;
 Supporting \$50; Student \$2.

OFFICERS - 1956-1957

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AUDUBON HOUSE

Wednesday.....2-4 p.m.
 Thursday.....2-4 p.m.
 Saturday.....2-4 p.m.
 1st Tuesday.....7:30-8 p.m.
 4th Thursday (Members only).....1-4 p.m.
 Groups by appointment.....POplar 1-7635

Some members have suggested that we
 open one evening for those unable to come
 in the afternoon. We would be glad to
 have the opinion of others who would en-
 joy an evening in which to visit and use
 the library.

There are many things our members can
 do to help. We are still waiting for book
 cases. We have the labor donated for a
 chest for our shells collection, but need
 someone to donate material. A good used
 suction type vacuum cleaner is needed -
 also a school type wall pencil sharpener.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The last part of October a meeting of
 the Committee on the use of Public Lands
 was held in Los Angeles. Senator Regan
 is the chairman of this committee.

It has been proposed that our State
 Parks be opened to hunting, and it seems
 there is a great deal of pressure being
 used. These meetings and hearings always
 seemed to be called in such a way that
 groups like ours hear about them at the
 last moment. Mr. William Goddall, our
 Pacific Coast representative received a
 call from Sacramento the day before this
 hearing was to be held. He in turn gave
 the alert to all Audubon groups.

There were many items up for discus-
 sion, and very little time given to hunt-
 ing in the Parks. The majority of those
 present were opposed to such action. One
 group, representing the Sportsmen, spoke
 in favor of it. Your Sportsmen are a very
 powerful group and can bring a lot of pres-
 sure to bear on the subject.

Anza State Park, in the southern part
 of the state is to be used as the opening
 wedge, and once it is allowed there you
 can rest assured there will be hunting in
 all the State Parks.

This issue is far from being settled
 and we must all keep ourselves alert to
 this threat to our Parks. Mr. Goddall's
 office will transmit information as it be-
 comes available and he has asked us - "As
 groups and individuals to be ready to
 voice our opinions at a moment's notice
 and where possible, attend hearings that
 are called to formulate recommendations
 for legislative action."

A moment's notice is usually all we
 get, but you can be sure the Sportsmen
 will be well represented, and so must we.

Charlotte McBride

The philosopher may say, "Astronom-
 ically speaking man is completely neglig-
 ible," the psychologist may reply, "Philo-
 sophically speaking man is the astronomer."

John Bartlow Martin in the
 Saturday Evening Post-Nov. 1956

All calls and messages for the President
 may be left with Bessie Pope - WE 4-5946

ANNUAL CONVENTION - continued

Mr. John Baker, President of the Nat'l Audubon Society, and Dr. Ira N. Gabrielson, President of the Wildlife Management Institute, discussing Federal Hunting Regulations in Relation to Migratory Laws, were agreed that whereas the latter are concerned with protecting the migratory waterfowl, the former tend to show a greater concern with providing the maximum hunting opportunity.

"What Next for the Whooping Crane," a discussion between Dr. W. Winston Mair, Chief of the Canadian Wildlife Service, Mr. Robert P. Allen, Research Associate, Nat'l Audubon Society, and Mr. Griffith of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, brought out a difference of opinion between the former and the latter two. The Canadians were of the opinion artificial propagation of young whoopers should be considered now, while the Americans were opposed to this until the cranes' survival in the wild were found to be hopeless.

Mr. John A. Livingston, Executive Director of the Audubon Society of Canada, told of broadening of their publicity program. He credited their radio program with being instrumental in passage of a model hawk and owl law in Ontario. In the city of Toronto, public nature outings have been held with great success with the help of a Toronto newspaper; they have found these to be excellent publicity for the Society and for the Screen Tours. He announced that the Whooping Crane has been chosen as the symbol of the Audubon Society of Canada.

Mrs. Alma Stultz outlined the work of the Audubon Center at El Monte which is so well known to us, and Mr. Charles Mohr did the same for the center at Greenwich, Conn.

The annual meeting of members was held at Audubon House after the buffet lunch there. Paul Sears was selected Chairman of the Board to succeed Ludlow Griscom.

Some 600 persons were present at the annual banquet held in the ballroom of the Roosevelt Hotel including many notables in the conservation field. The Audubon Conservation Award was presented to Ludlow Griscom, being received by his son Andrew, since Mr. Griscom is still too ill to attend. The program was concluded by a showing of Murl Deusing's fine color film, "Adventure in Africa."

From "CONSERVATION ON THE MARCH"

"The United States is now using up natural resources faster than man, science and nature together are creating them. In the last fifty years alone, while our population has doubled, our consumption of power has increased eleven times, of fuel thirteen times, and of paper (from wood pulp) fourteen times. Today, with less than a tenth of the world's land and population, we consume more than half the world's steel; more than fifty per cent of the world's oil; ninety per cent of the world's natural gas; and fifty-four per cent of its commercially produced energy."

NEW MEMBERS, WELCOME

Miss Caroline Carstens,
1405 Ridge Way, Los Angeles 26
Mrs. Mary R. Carver Christian,
1618-1/2 So. Hauser Blvd., L.A. 19
Miss Muriel De Kruif,
2324 Miramar Street, L.A. 57
Miss Alfreda S. Glenn,
5527-1/2 West 118th St., Inglewood 2
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Hayward,
6485 Clear Spgs. Rd., Santa Susana
Miss Armine Janeves,
4972 Vistadecro, L.A. 43
Miss Anita P. Loeber,
9421 Burnet Avenue, Sepulveda, Calif.
Miss Takla B. Loeber,
9421 Burnet Avenue, Sepulveda, Calif.
Mrs. Bonita Root,
1216 Hill Drive, L.A. 41
Mrs. Florence W. Vandermast,
2523 W. 77th Street, Inglewood 4
Ynez Yna Whilton,
16 Sea View Terrace, Santa Monica
Mr. Wilfred K. Chang,
318 Echandia Street, Los Angeles
Mrs. Nancy E. Kampf,
3072 Belden Drive, Hollywood 28
Mr. William W. Kaye,
607 Walden Drive, Beverly Hills
Dr. Paul Smitgen,
5975 Citrus Avenue, L.A. 43
Mrs. Roberdeau Williams,
2215 Lakeshore Avenue, L.A. 39

OBSERVATIONS

Caroline H. Daugherty

WATERBIRDS: Am. Egret 2; Green Heron 1; Black-cr. Night Heron 6; Am. Bittern 1; Audubon Center, El Monte, Oct. (D.B.) HANSEN DAM area; Eared & Pied-billed Grebe; Gt. Blue Heron; Am. Egret; Baldpate; Pintail & Ruddy Ducks; Least, Red-backed & Western Sandpipers; Long-billed Dowitchers; Many Ring-billed Gulls; Horned Larks & Pipits. Nov. 11 (D) KITE, White-tailed; Seen daily. 6 noted Oct. 21 at Audubon Sanctuary (D.B.) GOLDEN EAGLE: Soledad Canyon 3, Oct. 21 (Ware) Pacoima Canyon 2, Nov. 4 (D) QUAIL, Valley: 7 to 10 have worn a little trail to Ruby Curry's feeding tray... when finding no food there they go on to her patio... gently reminding!

BAND-TAILED PIGEONS: Several for past 2 months Sunland area & Little Tujunga Canyon, (D) also Eagle Rock. (C)

ROAD RUNNER: Hansen Dam area 1, Sept. 29 (B&B Wait)

SCREECH OWL & POORWILL: Both heard calling in Eagle Rock area. Oct. (C)

CHICKADEE: Arroyo Ranch, near San Fernando 5, Sept. 28 (Ware)

WRENS: House, Bewick's Cactus - all in cholla cactus area with many cactus wren's nests. Pacoima Canyon Nov. 4 (W-D)

ROBIN: Sespe Canyon 200, Oct. 5. (W) Sunland 50, Nov. 11. (D)

MOJAVE DESERT area: C. J. Parkers saw Mt. Bluebirds, 5 Vesper Sparrows, 1 Sage Sparrow, Jawbone Canyon road to Weldon, Oct. 28. At Lucerne, road to Barstow, Mt. Bluebirds and 8 Starlings Nov. 3. Back at same area Nov. 10 they saw flock of over 80 (Note) Starlings have been reported from China Lake & Willow Springs. (G. Hastings).

PHAINOPEPLA: Soledad Canyon 3, Oct. 21 (Ware)

WARBLERS: Yellow, Audubon's, Black and Gray, Oct. 29, Gardena. (Windle)

RARE VIRGINIA'S WARBLER: Helen S. Pratt, 2451 Ridgeview Ave., Eagle Rock, CI-5-4723, reports this warbler visiting her feeding tray for past 3 years, coming again on Oct. 5. Miss Pratt graciously invites anyone really interested to observe the warbler from her window.

CARDINAL: 1 Female, eating bread and sunflower seeds on feeding tray, Oct. 29 Gardena. (Windle)

GOLDFINCH: Lawrence's Gardena feeding tray, Oct. 29. (Windle) large flocks, Pacoima Canyon, Nov. 3 (Ware) Big Tujunga, Nov. 11. (D)

BIG TUJUNGA CANYON: In a shallow running stream under a low spreading willow growth, almost under the big bridge, the birds had found just the right quiet spot - drinking and bathing were: Audubon's Warblers, House Finch, Lawrence's Goldfinch, Spotted and Brown Towhees, Gambel's and Golden-cr. Sparrows, 1 Fox Sparrow - and higher in the willows looking on were Ruby-crowned Kinglets and a Bell's Sparrow. Nov. 11. (D)

An official of the U. S. F. W. S. reported at the Annual Convention that, of that date (Nov. 13), 22 Whooping Cranes had returned to Arkansas with 2 young of the year, while one crane which had been crippled is still on its way at last report.

It is generally agreed that they are sufficiently well protected on their breeding grounds. It is believed, however, that the carrying capacity of their winter range was reached in 1949-1950 when their number was up to 34, and that if the race is to increase, as is hoped, more winter range will be needed.

The greatest threat at present, as for some time past, is from irresponsible gunners along their migration route. However, the publicity program of the last few years has improved the situation immeasurably. It is felt that a refuge is needed along their migration route - in the Platte River Valley in Nebraska - to serve as a resting and feeding place for the whoopers and other migratory waterfowl.

Robert P. Allen feels that there are grounds for reasonable optimism for the future of the whooping cranes, that, given continued protection and with adequate breeding and wintering areas, they will make a come-back.

2

FEATHERS

George T. Hastings

In a former article we described the basic structure of a feather and in some detail that of a primary wing feather of a gull. But the gull, and all other birds, have several kinds of feathers. Those we see are mostly all the contour feathers which cover the body and form the wings and tail. Semi-plume feathers are soft, most of the barbules be-

ing long and without hooks.

Down feathers are hidden beneath the others and are without vanes. Filo-plumes are hair-like, and Powder-down feathers secrete a waxy powder that spreads over other feathers to give them a gloss. On the wing the primary feathers, the largest flight feathers, 10 or 12 in number, are attached to what corresponds to the hand,

the secondaries, varying in number from 6 in the hummingbird to over 30 in the albatross are attached to the forearm, and the tertiaries in a double series, upper and lower, of variable number, to the upper arm.

Wing coverts grow along the forward edge of the wing on both upper and lower surfaces, covering the bases of the flight feathers, they are in several series decreasing in size from the back to the front. These feathers are nearly symmetrical and their basal parts are soft and downy. The tail feathers are from 10 to 18 in number, similar in structure to the quills of the wing, but more symmetrical, with upper and under covert feathers much as in the wings. The rest of the contour feathers covering the body and head are soft with only the outer half forming a vane.

Down feathers have no shaft, the slender barbs all arising from the short quill, and with long slender barbules. They are found on all birds, but are especially well developed in water birds.

The filo-plumes are degenerate feathers, hair-like but with a tiny vane at the tip. They are found about the base of the bill and as eyelashes in many birds. Pow-

der-down feathers are degenerate down feathers. These various types are not distinct but there are gradations between them. The important thing is, the bird's body is completely covered, though the feathers are not attached uniformly over the entire body (except in penguins and a few others; but grown in definite tracts close enough together so that they spread over and cover the spaces between.

Feathers are splendid insulators, keeping the body from losing heat and so maintaining the high temperature. Most feathers are also waterproof. As to color, one of the first things we notice in birds, most are pigments formed in the feather as it develops, but some colors, such as those in the throat of the hummingbird, are iridescent due to the reflection of light from fine cross lines in the sheath of the barbule. But as to what causes the feathers of the upper wing coverts of the Red-winged Blackbird to be brilliant red, those of the rest of the body jet, why the feathers of the spring moult of the Scarlet Tanager male should be red, but those that replace them after the fall moult should be greenish, and hundreds of other cases no one can tell. We only know that these things are so.

In the November number of the Elepaio, published by the Hawaii Audubon Society, there is an article on William Alanson Bryan, one of a series on Hawaiian Ornithologists being published by the Society. Mr. Bryan was the first curator of the Bishop Museum in Hawaii and prepared many of the habitat groups of birds still on exhibition there. He also wrote extensively on birds of the Hawaiian Islands. Of especial interest to us is the fact that he was Director of the Los Angeles County Museum from 1922 to 1932.

The same number of the Elepaio has a letter from Bob Pyle, now of Seattle but still one of our members, describing summer trips to the Olympic Peninsula and to the mountains. Part of the past summer he spent at the University Marine Laboratories at Friday Harbor, between Vancouver Island and the mainland of Washington.

Field Trip, Saturday, October 13,
Playa del Rey. 31 members made a count
of 26 varieties on this fine sunny day.
Included were Hudsonian Curlews, Yellow-
legs, 1 Knot, 8 Snowy Egrets, several
Kingfishers, five kinds of gulls and many
others.

Field Trip, Thursday, October 18,
Playa del Rey. Though seen dimly through
the fog, 32 kinds of birds were finally
counted by the 9 members present. Black
and Ruddy Turnstones fed near us, seem-
ingly unafraid. There is an abundance of
natural food there as the rocks on the
jetty are covered with algae and crusta-
ceans. A lone seal swam up and down like
a wave, heading for the open sea and just
as we were leaving we were treated to the
sight of 25 Black-crowned Night Herons and
1 Egret, flying almost overhead.

Study Class, Thursday, October 25.
Attendance 26.

Mr. George Hastings presented his
fine color pictures of plants and birds
as he told interesting stories of how they
got their names - names we use every day
not knowing the romance behind them.
These names come from many lands and have
a different name in each, for instance,
the sycamore is called plane tree, bottle
tree or button ball. In Palestine, a tree
bearing inedible figs is called sycamore.
It is said to be the tree in the Biblical
story of Zacharias who "Climbed a tree his
Master for to see."

Some plants derive their names from
the shape of some part of their structure
-nasturtium; a Latin word, means trophy
because the leaves look like a shield and
the blossoms resemble a helmet.

Birds' names are also of many nation-
alities usually suggesting their call
notes as flickers, kildeer, willet or
phoebe.

Field Trip, Sunday, October 28, Sespe
Canyon. Mr. Jim Huffman led this trip to
see the Condors. An interested group of
60 went into the back country where these
magnificent birds have made their last
stand. On this day 5 were counted and one
nesting site discovered. Also sighted
were 3 Golden Eagles, 1 Prairie Falcon and
1 Cooper's Hawk.

Olive Alvey, Historian

LIBRARY

For the benefit of Audubon members
who are not acquainted with the library
facilities available to them at Audubon
House in Plummer Park, an introduction
to the books there may be the source of
some unexpected information and enjoyment.

The Society possesses a library that
is continually growing through the small
and large donations of books by interest-
ed individuals. These books have been
classified in various categories to facil-
itate locating certain subject matter.
Books devoted to "Western Birds" for ex-
ample, which would probably be of most
interest to us living in California, are
separated from books that deal more gen-
erally with birds of Eastern North America
and Canada. For those whose interests
encompass the whole of natural science -
there are categories for "Botany," "Ani-
mals," and "General Science." For light-
er reading of a non-technical nature there
are autobiographies, biographies, fiction,
poetry, etc. The library also is in pos-
session of a magazine collection which is
for the use of members.

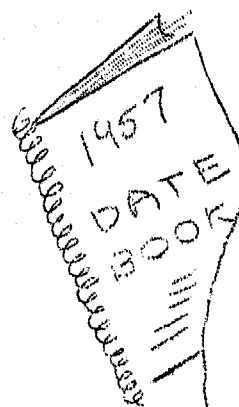
Members are encouraged to visit Au-
dubon House, which, incidentally, is the
old Plummer House and a State Historical
Site, and avail themselves of what their
library has to offer. The House is open
on Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday after-
noons from 2:00-4:00 p.m. as well as one-
half hour before the Tuesday evening
Study Class convenes, and books or maga-
zines may be borrowed at these times. On
the fourth Thursday of each month it is
open from 1:00-4:00 p.m. exclusively for
members. Many people may be interested
to discover that some books are what might
be considered collectors items, having
publication dates in the 1860's, while
the more contemporary ones are dated as
late as 1955. On the shelves, also, are
books authored by two of our own members:
Mrs. Mary Hood and Mr. George Hastings.

Gifts of additional books are always
gratefully received by the Society. It
may be well to note that a few books are
in need of rebinding in case anyone de-
sires to make a monetary donation to be
used for such specific purpose.

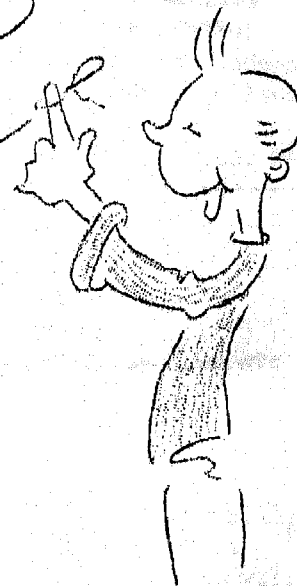
Helen Sandmeyer, Librarian

REMINDING YOU

TO CIRCLE THE DAYS



APRIL 13
SATURDAY
APRIL 14
SUNDAY
APRIL 15
MONDAY
APRIL 16
TUESDAY
(PALM SUNDAY WEEKEND)



SAVE ONE DAY TO FOUR — AT THE SEA AND SHORE
ASILOMAR CALIFORNIA



AUDUBON BIENNIAL

PACIFIC COAST



CONVENTION

FIELD TRIPS

COLOR
PICTURES

EXHIBITS

TALKS AND DISCUSSIONS

OLD FRIENDS

BOAT TRIPS

ADVANCE REGISTRATION BEGINS JANUARY

Write

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY-PACIFIC COAST OFFICE
2426 BANCROFT WAY, BERKELEY 4, CALIFORNIA

LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY
OFFICERS....1956-1957

President.....Mrs. J. L. McBride	2224 Via Guadaluana, Palos Verdes Estates
1st Vice-President....Mr. Herbert Clarke	Exec. Sec'y.....Miss Elizabeth Patterson
2nd Vice-President....Mrs. Paul D. Dodds	Record. Sec'y.....Miss Dorothy Goddard
Treasurer.....Miss Esther Johnson	Curator.....Mrs. Russell E. Wilson
	Historian.....Mrs. Olive Alvey
Registrar of Members.....Miss Marjorie J. Moody,	1380 Veteran Ave., Los Angeles 24

CALENDAR FOR DECEMBER 1956

December 4, Tuesday EVENING MEETING, at 8:00 p.m. in Long Hall, Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd. Mr. Warren Flock will present color slides for his talk on "Mountains West."

Arnold Small, Chairman

December 6, Thursday, ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. in Fiesta Hall, Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd. Miss Miriam Faddis, 96 years young, will give one of her inimitable readings. Mrs. Alma Stultz will tell us about her recent trip to Guatamala - "Land where the Rainbow Begins," and there will be a fine musical program. Bring gifts of food - seed, raisins and nuts - for the Birds Christmas Tree, and take advantage of the variety of gift items that will be for sale including Audubon Christmas Cards for 1956. Gifts for children will include: Books, Lotto-type games, Records, Bird Calls, State Bird and Flower Maps. For adults: Books, Stationery, Playing Cards, Feeders - seed and sugar, Membership pins-NAS and Membership Arm Emblems-NAS. Money derived from sales is applied directly to support National Audubon Society program of conservation of all our natural resources. There will be an opportunity to visit with friends old and new. Take West Hollywood Bus on Santa Monica Blvd. to Fuller.

December 8, Saturday FIELD TRIP to Audubon Center of Calif., 1000 No. Durfee Avenue, El Monte. Meet at the picnic tables near the museum at 9:00 a.m. We will have a leader from the Center. Bring lunch and binoculars.

Ethel Craig, Chairman

December 13, EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING, Thursday, 7:30 p.m., at 912 Victoria Avenue.

December 23, Sunday-ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS. For those who wish to participate, please get in touch with Mr. Tom Goodman, WEBster 6-3590.

* * * * *

Mark these dates on your calendar - January 8 and January 12
AUDUBON SCREEN TOURS