

Los Angeles
Audubon Society

VOLUME 28 MARCH 1962 NUMBER 7

The
Western
Tanager

Springtime



LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

PLUMMER PARK
7377 SANTA MONICA BLVD.
LOS ANGELES 46, CALIFORNIA

BY WARREN L. FLOCK



Winters are always long in interior Alaska, but when spring arrives it comes with a bang. On April 21, 1961, snow was still on the ground, and the minimum temperature at Fairbanks was -5° . But three days later a maximum of $+60^{\circ}$ was recorded, and cold weather did not return.

The only really abundant winter bird is the Redpoll. Ravens are seen regularly but usually singly, and Black-capped Chickadees, Boreal Chickadees, and brightly colored Pine Grosbeaks are fairly common. Some fortunate families have the Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, and Northern Three-toed Woodpecker in their neighborhood. Slate-colored Juncos and White-crowned Sparrows have been known to stay near a feeder throughout the winter. A few Gray Jays and an occasional Black-billed Magpie may be found. But birds are generally scarce. One can travel about for several hours and perhaps see three or four species.

The first migrant of the spring is the Snow Bunting, which arrives in large flocks when the snow is still on the ground. We first saw Snow Buntings at Aklavik, Northwest Territories, Canada not far from the Arctic Ocean, on April 8, 1961. Birds were flying about in the school yard, and the teachers credit us with the first report of their arrival. The temperature had been -47° on the previous day in nearby Inuvik. At Creamer's Dairy field near Fairbanks, we saw Snow Buntings on April 16 and again on April 22. The earliest report of this attractive bird for interior Alaska was from Tok on March 18. Our second arrival of the spring was another rather exotic species for Californians, the Bohemian Waxwing. A few of these trim birds were feeding on last year's rose hips across the road from our house on April 17.

The migratory waterfowl season opened on April 22 with an announcement over the radio that the geese had returned. Hurrying to Creamer's Dairy, on the Fairbanks-College road and near the radio station, we found seven Lesser Canada Geese. In the spring, melting snow forms puddles in the dairy fields. The puddles, stubble from the previous year, and natural ponds along the edge of the woods in the rear of the dairy help to provide a haven for migrating water and shore birds. Two days after the first geese, about 150 Lesser Canada Geese, 200 Pintail, and seven Mallards were at Creamer's field. The Canada Geese and Pintails had trebled in numbers by May 2 and by that time White-fronted Geese, a few Baldpate, and two Snow Geese had joined the throng. Two Sandhill Cranes arrived at Creamer's by May 3, and Canvasbacks were present on May 6. Other observers reported the Herring Gull on April 24.

Early in the morning of May 2, we heard our first song bird - a Myrtle Warbler singing in the woods near our house. By May 5 the songs of the

(Continued on page 52)

The Condor Fund is You

Our annual appeal for funds to aid in the protection of the California Condor is commencing with this issue. Here is an opportunity to contribute directly to an important conservation project in your own "back yard". Your contributions will be added to those of the National Audubon Society which partially pays for the expenses of maintaining wardens in the Condor Sanctuary. Please direct your attention to the enclosures with this issue. In the past years, contributions from your local society have been most generous. We expect they will be again.

The Western Tanager

LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY

7377 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles 46
Hollywood 7-9191

Editor	Arnold Small
	3028 Cavendish Drive., Los Angeles 64
Ass't Editor & Art Editor	Robert Sandmeyer
Conservation	Frank Little
Field Notes	Arnold Small
Audubon Activities	Russell Wilson
Calendar	Douglas Dick
Typing	Helen Sandmeyer Caroline Adams
Mailing	Mimi Small

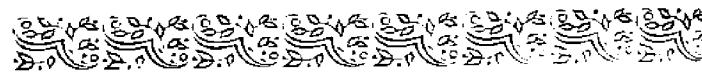
SOCIETY OFFICERS FOR 1962-63 NOMINATED

The nominating committee (comprised of Hugh Weiser - Chairman, Bill Watson, and Effie Mahaffie) has submitted the following slate of members for consideration to elective office for the coming year:

President.....	Arnold Small
First Vice-President.....	Frank Little
Second Vice-President.....	Catherine Freeman
Executive Secretary.....	Marion Wilson
Treasurer.....	Hubert Weiser
Recording Secretary.....	Caroline Adams
Registrar of Members.....	Rose Bussey

PLANS ANNOUNCED FOR BAZAAR WORKSHOP

An Audubon Bazaar Workshop will be held the third Friday of each month at Audubon House from 10--12 o'clock. Refreshments will be served, and new members are welcome. Come and bring your best ideas for the Christmas bazaar. The \$316.65 realized from the last two bazaars is making possible new exhibit cases for the nature museum.



methods insure a low death rate and dispose of carcasses of diseased animals so that there is little food available to the Condors from this source. Deer carcasses furnish some food, but Condors have resorted considerably to poisoned ground squirrels, something they would probably pass by were larger carcasses available.

Another aspect limiting the Condor's ability to maintain its population is its low fecundity. Under the most ideal conditions pair can raise only one young in two years. Furthermore, Condors are very sensitive to disturbances near the nesting and roosting sites, and must have absolute protection from intrusion by people within sight and hearing of these places.

One potential danger derives from the small population; namely weakening of the stock by close inbreeding. With inbreeding the small population becomes more homogeneous and therefore less adaptable to changes in the environment; and also the chance of harmful recessive characters being expressed in individuals is increased.

Nevertheless, Condors are still with us, despite early predictions of an early extinction, and this gives hope that they may stay with us many years to come. Whether or not they survive depends on complete protection not only from direct destruction, but from disturbance by people near the nesting and roosting places.

AVES RARAE

The California Condor

BY ERNEST J. WILLOUGHBY

We in southern California are fortunate to be living with one of the rarest birds in the world, the magnificent California Condor, or California Vulture as it was first called. This huge New World Vulture may attain a wing-spread of over 9 1/2 feet and may weigh upwards of 30 pounds.

No one knows how many Condors survive. The most authoritative estimate, by Carl B. Koford, is c0 (The California Condor, Research Report No. 4 of the National Audubon Society, 1953, pg. 17). Whether or not the number has changed since 1953 we do not know. These birds are concentrated at breeding sites in eastern Santa Barbara County, southern Tulare County, and near Fillmore in Ventura County. The Sespe Wildlife Area near Fillmore is the location of the main breeding concentration and is designated an inviolate retreat for these birds. Condors roost or forage over parts of Fresno, Monterey, Kings, San Luis Obispo, Kern and Los Angeles Counties as well, and it would not be out of the question to see occasional individuals over Orange or even San Diego Counties, so great is their potential cruising range.

For many years Condors have been at the brink of extinction, and evidently were never really numerous in recent historic times. They were more abundant and widespread during the Pleistocene Epoch about 30,000 years ago when many of the extinct animals from the famed Rancho La Brea deposits were living in what is now southern California.

The Condor seems best adapted to feeding on large carcasses in open hilly country. One problem it faces today is: limited food supply. Range livestock--cattle and sheep--are reasonably abundant in its range, but modern ranching

March 1962

Los Angeles Audubon Society

CALENDAR

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Mrs. Russell Wilson, Executive Secretary

Headquarters, Nature Museum and Library located at Audubon House, Plummer Park
7377 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles 46 - HO 7-9495.
Telephone hours: Mon., Wed., Thurs., 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
President: James W. Huffman Registrar of Members: Mrs. James Bussey
2912 Manhattan Ave., Manhattan Beach 3507 Hollydale Dr., Los Angeles

March 3 SATURDAY JUNIOR NATURALISTS Noon to 1:00 P.M. - Griffith Park Observatory (Meet on the front steps). Dr. Cleminshaw, Griffith Observatory Director, has arranged for a guided tour of the Hall of Science, the Planetarium and the Telescope. "Celestial Colors" will be featured at the Planetarium at 1:30 and members are welcome to attend, but will be charged the nominal fee of thirty cents as this is not part of the regular meeting.

Chairman: John Peebles HO 7-1661

March 3 SATURDAY FIELD TRIP - 8:30 A.M. The Headquarters of Audubon Center of Southern California. Take San Bernardino Freeway to Rosemead Blvd., right on Rosemead to San Gabriel Blvd., left to North Durfee Ave., left to #1000. Soup will be served but bring lunch and binoculars. We will join other Audubon groups and will see the new 3 acre lake. They had 79 species of birds on their Christmas count.

Host: Paul Howard

March 10 SATURDAY FIELD TRIP 8:00 A.M. Tujunga Wash and Big Tujunga Canyon. Meet on the north side of the Foothill Blvd. bridge over Tujunga Wash in Sunland. Bring lunch. Cactus Wrens are almost a certainty and some migrants should be seen by then.

Leader: Dave Robison PO 1-0217

March 13 TUESDAY EVENING MEETING - 8:00 P.M. - Great Hall, Plummer Park. "The Bald Eagle", photographed by Bayard W. Read and Arthur A. Allen. The film will be presented by Mr. William N. Goodall, the National Audubon Society's West Coast Representative.

Chairman: Robert Blackstone CR 6-3879

March 16 FRIDAY - BAZAAR WORKSHOP 10:00 A.M. - Audubon House, Plummer Park. Items to be sold at the annual Christmas Bazaar will be made throughout the year at this workshop. Refreshments.

Chairman: Olive Alvey - NO 1-8036

March 22 THURSDAY MORNING MEETING 10:00 A.M. - Long Hall, Plummer Park. A study class in which Mrs. Catherine Freeman will play recordings of bird calls, the last half of the program will be review of these calls and their recognition by the audience. One bird will be emphasized.

Chairman: Olive Alvey NO 1-8036

March 25 SUNDAY FIELD TRIP 8:00 A.M. Irvine Park, Tucker Sanctuary, and O'Neill Park. Meet at the entrance to Irvine Park. Take the Santa Ana Freeway to Chapman Ave. (east) turn-off, take Chapman through the city of Orange to the Irvine Park entrance. Bring lunch and binoculars. We should see three species of Goldfinches, Western Kingbirds, Anna's Hummingbirds as well as Black-chinned, Costa's and Rufous Hummers, Bullock's and Hooded Orioles, etc...

Leader: Laura Jenner - RI 8-7510

March 29 THURSDAY MAILING PARTY 7:45 P.M. Audubon House, Plummer Park. Light work, conversation and refreshments.

Chairman: Mimi Small VE 7-2272

April 5 THURSDAY EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING 7:30 P.M. - Audubon House.

April 7 SATURDAY JUNIOR NATURALISTS 9:45 A.M. City Nursery in Griffith Park. (Meet in the front) A program on the propagation and importance of our native chaparral plants will be presented by a member of the nursery staff.

Chairman: John Peebles - HO 7-1661

Southern California

BY ARNOLD SMALL

Birds

Thusfar it has been a most unusual winter - weatherwise and birdwise. To the birder afield who chanced the vagaries of the weather, strange birds were for the finding. In fact I can recall no winter season when we have had such a flood of interesting and unusual birds. Along the sea-coast, Western Grebes were very scarce - as were all cormorants. In fact, no Pelagic Cormorants were seen during the winter at all. Scoters, while present in small flocks along the coast, did not congregate into the huge flocks so characteristic of years past. White-winged Scoters seemed numerous, but Surf Scoters were far below normal.

The usual Surfbirds and Black Turnstones at the Playa del Rey Breakwaters seemed to have deserted there shortly after the Christmas census, although the extremely low tides of Feb. 3-6 brought swarms of Willets, Godwits, Sandpipers, Black Turnstones and gulls to the exposed tidal pools at Malibu and Leo Carrillo State Beach. The Oldsquaw was still to be found near the Santa Monica Pier as late as mid-February. Offshore, the story was even more exciting. Fulmars could be seen from almost any headland, and well out to sea they numbered in the hundreds. Black-legged Kittiwakes came here in one of the largest invasions ever recorded. The Reddish Egret continued to startle uninitiated birders at Upper Newport Bay.



A number of us attempted a Black Rail drive near Sunset Beach on a cold, foggy Feb. 5. As predicted, the rising tide created a lake of the Seal Beach marshes, but despite wet and muddy feet, and excellent prospects, we could gain access to no marsh which seemed likely to have the sparrow-sized Black Rails. We had to content ourselves with excellent views of Clapper Rails caught out in the open and clinging to floating vegetation. A few Soras and Virginia Rails were also found. News of a Common Teal at San Diego spurred some of us on south, but try as we might, we saw only dozens of Cinnamon, Green-winged, and Blue-winged Teal near Chula Vista. We did visit Mrs. Heraty's feeder in San Diego for a good look at the Broad-billed Hummingbird. The day ended at the San Diego Flood Control Channel with excellent views of a male European Widgeon. We did not bother to stop at Laguna Beach for the Caracara reported there since we had news it was an escaped falconer's bird.

A Harlan's Hawk and a Rough-legged Hawk plus a Bald Eagle made for a very profitable day for the Clarkes and myself at the Ventura County Gunclubs in early February. Anna's Hummingbirds were reported nesting at the U.C.L.A. Botanical Garden by the first week in January, and this should give us pause to think that spring is almost upon us.

Audubon Activities

BY RUSSELL WILSON

In spite of light rain in the Los Angeles basin Friday evening January 12, which might have discouraged some, an unusually large number of birders made the trip to Ramer Lake and Salton Sea. This was the largest response the Society has had to any of its longer trips, which is a matter of satisfaction and pleasure to your field trip chairman. Clouds, which threatened sprinkles Friday night, had been dispelled by Saturday morning and two beautiful, sunny desert days were ushered in by a brilliant sunrise.

Rolf Mall, manager of the Imperial State Waterfowl Management Area, very kindly devoted the day to us and with him and Arnold in the lead car we spent Saturday on the federal and state lands on the south east corner of Salton Sea. We were able to approach very close to a flock of Snow Geese, which Rolf estimated to contain over four thousand birds. Among these was one Blue Goose, a life bird for those of us who have done our birding only in the west. The outstanding bird of the day and a life bird for most of us was spotted by Guy Raymond, a Palm Warbler. The check list shows only one other record for this bird in Southern California in 1952-53.

Bill Anderson, biologist with the State Fish and Game Department, joined us at our campfire Saturday night and entertained us with some of his experiences in banding ducks and expressed his views as a professional biologist on many conservation matters.

Pre-dawn birders who joined Arnold Sunday morning at Ramer Lake had a good view of a flock of fifty White-faced Ibises and of a good flight of Yellow-headed Blackbirds that had roosted in the marsh. We spent the morning at the Federal Wildlife area near the town of Westmoreland. The rising water of Salton Sea continues to encroach here and many of the dikes on which we used to be able to drive far out into the sea are now under water and many of those that remain above water are barely negotiable on foot. Thousands of ducks and geese rest here and our last stop provided us a close observation of many Canada Geese and a half dozen White-fronted Geese.

Our two day list of one hundred and six species included many of the birds we go here to see, such as Abert's Towhees, Verdins, Sage Thrashers, Cactus Wrens, Ladder-backed Woodpeckers, Gamble's Quail and Ground Doves.

Olive Alvey, Second Vice President who chairmans the Thursday Morning Meeting, reports the meeting of January 25 as follows: This day's feature was a beautifully planned and executed symposium. Mr. George Hastings was the able planner; the efficient panelists, Mrs. Harry Hoffman, Mrs. Paul Dodds, Mrs. Neil Lewis, Mrs. Tracy Fulton, and Mrs. Arthur Koehler. "Distribution and habits of California birds and their eastern counterparts" was the subject studied.

Using Mr. Hastings' life-sized cutouts of 10 of our familiar birds and their eastern cousins

along with a series of outline maps of habitat and summer and winter range, the panelists showed where the birds spend their lives all through the year.

The Sunday trip to Chatsworth Reservoir on January 28 was marred by a wind so strong it was virtually impossible to steady one's binoculars sufficiently to make a satisfactory observation. When Reg Julian was unable to lead this trip, which over the years has become his specialty, the responsibility fell to Harold Swanton. Present were fifty-seven of our members and friends, among the latter Mr. Wilbur Mount from Sufern, New York, and Gina Wilcox and her guest Henry Wilcoxon.

There were good flocks of Canada Geese and White-fronted Geese and a small number of American Mergansers, also a good showing of Mountain Bluebirds. Our short list of forty-two species testifies to the adverse weather conditions.

On Saturday, February 3, Jim Huffman, Arnold Small, Frank Little and Marion and Russ Wilson represented our Society at the annual meeting of Audubon branches and affiliates which was held in San Bernardino, hosted by the San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society.

Bill Goodall had prepared a fine agenda, which led to an exchange of ideas among the local societies and between the local societies and National on such subjects of common interest as leadership training, legislation, membership, screen tours promotion, sanctuaries, field trips and finances. High point of the meeting was the presence of Carl Buchheister, President of the National Audubon Society. The last hour was given over to Mr. Buchheister, who solicited local support for the programs of the national society.

The Saturday field trip to Malibu Lagoon, Feb. 10, fell in the middle of five days of uninterrupted rain that brought from eight to ten inches of precipitation to the coastal plain. While most of us, hearing rain on the roof, turned over again in bed and slept late, Dick Miller, Catherine Shaw, Larry Sansone, Dave Pearson, Bill Watson and Elizabeth and Gene Rose met leader Irwin Woldman at the appointed time and place. They found that heavy run-off had broken through the sand barrier and that the lagoon will be tidal again for a while.

When it was apparent that the weather was not going to improve and since only the commoner species were being seen, the Roses invited everyone to their home for late breakfast. Over hot coffee, breakfast and more coffee the rest of the morning passed pleasantly in discussion of birds, birding and books.

Bill Watson reports real progress in the organization of a new group for boys fourteen to seventeen with the purpose of studying nature through appropriate field trips. On Dec. 16 Bill Watson, David DuVal, Bruce Behar, Ronald Franklyn, Barry Greenslate, Robert Robitaille, Larry Sansone, Robert Trevor, and Kit Sudhirak, the latter from Thailand, met at Audubon House and planned the first field trip.

On Dec. 22, in spite of thick fog, the group arrived in two cars at 7:30 at Bixby Slough and in the course of the morning's birding walked completely around the slough while compiling a list of 41 species. A second field trip was made to Corona del Mar on Saturday, Feb. 4, to study tide pools. Bill Watson and Warren Hunt provided transportation, and May Wilson and Barbara and John Hopper helped with the identification of over fifty species of marine animals.

Attendance at the Tuesday evening meeting has been increasing steadily and this trend continued to be evident on the evening of Feb. 13. It was very gratifying to have present Mrs. Mary B. Salmon, President Emeritus, and her sister Sarah Ellen Barnes, as well as new members Esther Olsen and Mr. and Mrs. Robert F. Conner.

President Jim Huffman reported plans that are already well advanced for the National Convention, which will be held in Corpus Christi, Texas, where birders will have a chance to see Whooping Cranes as well as other Texas specialties.

Bill Watson reported the reissue of some of Bent's Life Histories; available now are his Birds of Prey. Arnold Small reported finding many Clapper, Virginia and Sora Rails at Bolsa Chica during the high tide Feb. 4, although no Black Rails were flushed.

Herb Clark's "Birder's Potpourri" proved to be a delightful photographic record of a year's birding and travel and established Herb and Olga as two of our finest wildlife photographers. Starting in their own yard they ranged over the Arizona desert, Cave Creek, Ramsey Canyon, the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, traveled north to Monterey, the Oregon Coast, Olympic Peninsula, Mount Rainier, and finished with a Great Horned Owl at Hansen Dam. Herb's slides have a crispness and faithful color reproduction that are very pleasing. Prolonged applause indicated the delight of an appreciative audience.

Proposed Amendments to By-Laws

At the February Board meeting it was moved that the Executive Board submit the following amendment to the By-Laws, to the membership for vote at the March 13 evening meeting.

AMENDMENT

Article III, Section 1, delete from this section the offices of Curator and Historian. Article V, Section 2, add the words Exhibits, Membership, Social, and Library.

SECTION TO BE AMENDED

Article III, Section 1. The elective officers of the Society shall be: President, 1st Vice-President, 2nd Vice-President, Executive Secretary, Treasurer, Recording Secretary, Registrar of Members, Curator, and Historian.

Article V, Section 2. The names of the standing committees shall be: Conservation, Finance, Headquarters, Youth Instruction, Field Trips, Laura Greely Educational Fund, Leadership Training, Meetings, Publicity, Sales, Sanctuaries, Screen Tours, Public Relations, Tanager, EXHIBITS, MEMBERSHIP, SOCIAL, AND LIBRARY.



Springtime in ALASKA

(Continued)

Myrtle Warbler, Robin, and Fox Sparrow began to form a morning chorus. You can imagine how welcome these songs were after seven months of winter.

Birding on May 7 was enlivened by encountering three moose at close range in a beautiful aquatic setting three miles from our house. As May progressed the influx of birds became more and more impressive. A day's list was never so long compared to those for other areas, but the relatively sudden change from scarcity to abundance was spectacular. Towards the end of May a respectable list of more than forty species could rather easily be formed in some hours of birding.

Buds of the birch and aspen were making good progress by May 11, the catkins of the aspen having already been conspicuous for several days. These broadleafed trees and the white spruce, black spruce, and eastern larch are the principal trees of the region. Tree Sparrows sang their clear, sweet song on May 13, and the Wilson's Snipe made a curious winnowing sound as it flew high over swampy or muskeg areas. Many White-crowned Sparrows were singing on May 14, and the call of the Hammond's Flycatcher was familiar sound after that date. On May 6, Smith Lake on the University of Alaska campus had been still frozen over, but on May 14 it was free from ice and teeming with birds.

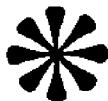
A pair of Mew Gulls took possession of a tree providing a choice viewpoint over Smith Lake and attempted to drive away all intruders, including birdwatchers. Noisy Lesser Yellowlegs perched on top of black spruces along the edge of the lake. Red-necked Grebes in attractive breeding plumage often filled the air with their weird calls which may begin with loon-like wailing cries and end with a chattering trill or with quacking sounds. Northern Phalaropes were abundant and easily approached as were the Horned Grebes. I had not realized how resplendent the grebes are in their breeding plumage. Surf Scoters and Pacific Loons were present in good numbers but apparently silent. Rusty Blackbirds were quite prominent and vocal.

Violet-green Swallows had been seen as early as April 26 by others at Creamer's field, but it was May 15 before they were common on the campus. On that same day two more old friends, the Hermit Thrush and Varied Thrush, sang at dusk. By this time the leaves on the trees were beginning to open rapidly. A beautiful purple anemone, one of the earliest flowers, was blooming. On the 16th a Swainson's Thrush joined the chorus, and an Orange-crowned Warbler was recorded on the 17th. Lapland Longspurs were at Creamer's field on the same day. The Fox Sparrow, Tree Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, and White-crowned Sparrow combined to produce an impressive concert at Smith Lake on May 21. Savannah Sparrows and Pipits were plentiful in nearby fields, and the Wilson's Snipe, Dowitcher, Solitary Sandpiper, and Pectoral Sandpiper were numerous in moist areas. Wilson's Warblers sang from willow and alder thickets. New birds at Smith Lake on the 27th were the Wood Pewee, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Bank Swallow, Yellow Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, and Northern Waterthrush. Large numbers of Bank Swallows were flying about over the surface of the water, and the vigorous song of the Waterthrush rang from the tops of small spruces. It was pleasing, on May 30th, to hear the descending notes of the Gray-cheeked Thrush's song.

Space does not permit, of course, mention of every species seen, but an effort has been made to describe the highlights. Note the presence of some primarily eastern species, or species generally lacking on the west coast at least, such as the Tree Sparrow, Blackpoll Warbler, Rusty Blackbird, Gray-cheeked Thrush, and Northern Waterthrush.

May is a beautiful and exciting spring month in interior Alaska. By early June most of the birds have arrived and the excitement abates. Wild roses, *Mertensiana* (sometimes called chiming bells), and high bush cranberry bloom profusely in the nearby woods. Mosquitoes first become noticeable, but they are not as bad as anticipated. The season for outdoor planting of flowers and vegetables arrives; many plants are started earlier indoors. In June of 1961 our more or less regular observations of nearby areas were interrupted as we began to travel to more distant places in Alaska. With the long days of June - the sun is slightly below the horizon for a few hours, but the sky is never dark - the Tanana valley's brief springtime comes to an end. The pleasant summer months to follow are another story.

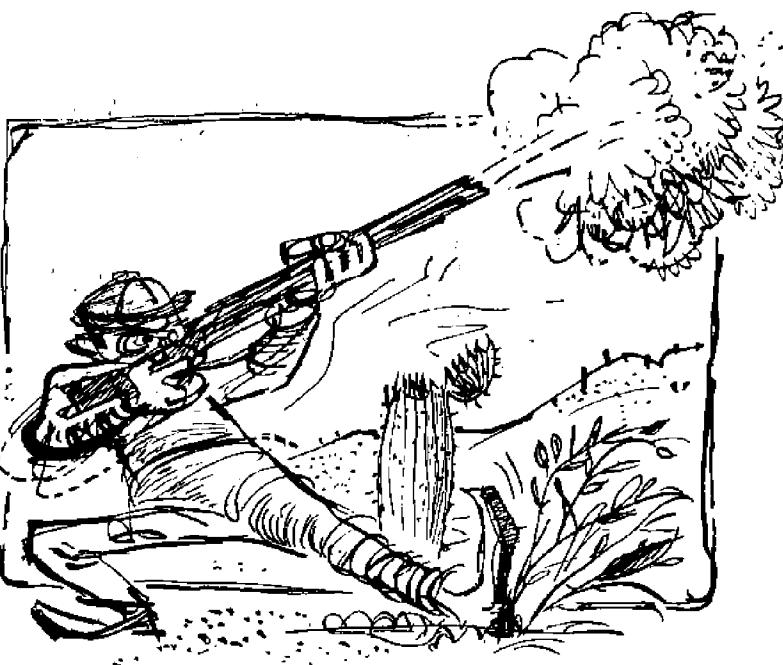
**TANGER
FOLDING & MAILING PARTY**
Thursday, March 29th.



CONSERVATION NEWS

from FRANK LITTLE

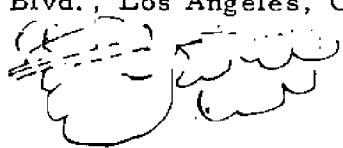
The specter of hunting in our state parks has again raised its ugly head! The issue has been reopened by certain public statements made by State Beaches and Parks Commissioner John Elsbach. In the January 28th issue of the Los Angeles Times, sportsman columnist Lupi Saldana quoted Elsbach as saying that he feels "...Anza (State Park) lends itself very well to shotgun shooting for quail, doves and rabbits..." and that "...it should be opened for that purpose. Moreover, when asked what stand the Parks Commission would take if the sportsmen had a bill introduced in the State Legislature to open Anza for hunting, Elsbach replied that he was "...sure the commission would support it."



This alarming news convinces us once again that "eternal vigilance" is our lot. Only last spring a bill was introduced in Sacramento by Senator Collier and others that would have, among other things, opened up state parks to hunting.

The response by conservationists throughout the state was overwhelmingly against this feature; we of the Los Angeles Audubon Society went on record as being unalterably opposed to any hunting in any state park and sent an official resolution to such effect to our state Senator. The response was so great, in fact, that the bill had to be rewritten so as to exclude all existing state parks from hunting. This revised bill was passed last spring.

And now, just when we were beginning to feel a measure of security as a result of the Collier Bill, Mr. Elsbach, a State Park Commissioner no less, proposes a bill to open Anza State Park to hunting. Such a bill has not yet been written, but you may rest assured that if such a measure be introduced we will quickly spread the alarm so that friends of conservation can express their views to the Legislature. Many conservationists feel that citizens who disapprove of Commissioner Elsbach's views should write him to this effect now. It might possibly temper any future actions by him in this regard. (His address is: Sheraton West Hotel, 2961 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif.)

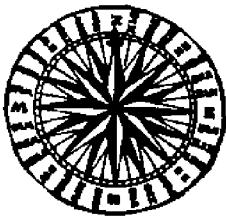


"Sportsmen in Anza?"

Another hot issue, this time on the national level, is House Joint Resolution No. 479 that would afford complete protection to the Golden Eagle by amending the existing Bald Eagle Act. Such legislation is sorely needed not only to protect the Golden Eagle which is ruthlessly hunted from airplanes in the mistaken notion that it is a menace to livestock, but to further protect the Bald Eagle which is frequently confused with the Golden Eagle and thereby shot. This bill is sure to meet spirited opposition from the livestock interest; it should, therefore, be strongly supported by the conservationists. Anyone having an opinion on the matter can express his personal views to the House Subcommittee on Fisheries and Wildlife, Frank W. Boykin, Chairman, House Office Building, Washington 25, D.C. A copy to the writer's own representative should also be sent.

BIRDING IN THE SOUTHWEST

CONDOR COUNTRY



.....By Arnold Small

You can still see California Condors. Possibly fifty of these giants still range the great expanses of wild country in the Los Padres National Forest west of Gorman. With a little effort (and no walking at all) chances are excellent to obtain fairly close views of these magnificent birds at choice viewing stations. I recall that Dudley Ross and I escorted a visiting British birder on a trip to Mt. Pinos in southern Kern County several years ago. He remarked casually that the bird he most wished to see in America was the California Condor. We didn't want to raise any false hopes in him, but we commented that the chances were not too bad provided we watched carefully. As it turned out, aside from the Mountain Chickadees, the most abundant bird on that memorable day was the Condor! Within two minutes after turning into the Frazier Park road from U.S. 99 we saw one; near the little meadow below the summit of Mt. Pinos we had 17 in view at once; and at the summit itself were at least ten more! In fact, those at the summit were so close that he had to back up to get them in the frame of his motion picture camera!

Admittedly, this was an exceptional day, but I have never failed to see a Condor when I really wanted to or wanted to show some to visiting birders. The Cooper Ornithological

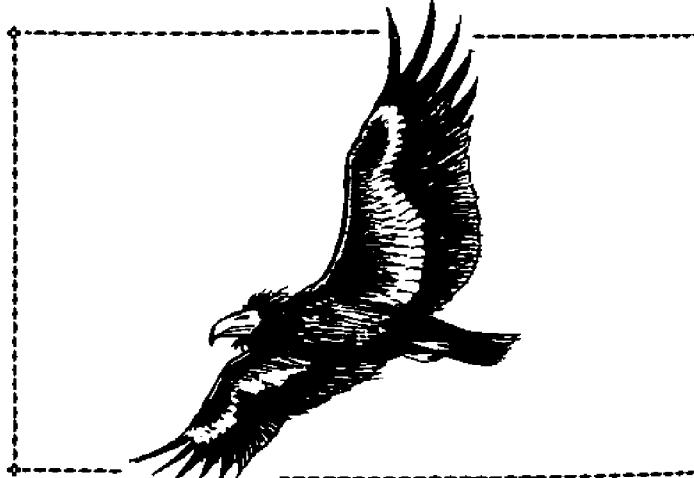
Welcome! NEW MEMBERS

Mrs. W. Lisle Copping
2605 Orange Grove, Alhambra
Mr. & Mrs. William A. Feuerer
2471 Sawtelle Blvd., L. A. 64
Mr. & Mrs. Harold Houston
2332 Selby Ave., L. A. 64
Mr. Roswell H. Johnson
1212 N. Sycamore Ave., L. A. 38
Mr. & Mrs. William Plunk
27810 Potevedra Dr., East View
Mr. Daniel M. Popper
712 Muskingum Ave., Pacific Palisades
Mr. Robert Robitaille
1828 1/2 N. Normandie Ave., L. A. 27
Mrs. Louise Vann
1801 W. 35th Pl., L. A. 18

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP 762
January 31, 1962

CAN YOU HELP US REACH 1000?

Society arranged for a trip to the Condor country two years ago and succeeded in showing more than one hundred enthusiasts a flock of Condors numbering better than twenty. Occasional Condors may be seen from near Gorman on U.S. 99, especially in early afternoon when they are returning from the large ranches in Kern County near Lake Lebec is another good place. I have seen Condors on a number of occasions near Granite Station northeast of Bakersfield, and have watched them ride the updrafts near the summit of Bear Mountain. There may still be a few Condors in the Sisquoc River Valley of Santa Barbara County, but this is difficult country to get into. Eben McMillan sees them fairly regularly over his ranch in Cholame, and Alma Stultz had one recently over her house in Morro Bay. I once saw one over Tucker Sanctuary in Orange County and last year one was reported from the area near Charlton Flats. For the hiking enthusiast, the trail to Thorn Point Lookout (from Thorn Meadows near Lockwood Valley) takes you six miles up to the north end of Sespe Gorge. During spring, summer, and fall Condors are almost a certainty here. The Mount Pinos Road itself is very good - all the way to the summit, and I have seen Condors along this road on about one-third of my trips there.



But by far the best area for the Condor-watcher is the Sespe Canyon area north of Fillmore. I have never missed the Condor there, nor has anyone I've sent there. From Fillmore take "A" Street north for 3.1 miles and watch for a U.S. Forest Service Road to the right. It should be marked Squaw Flat, Dough Flat, and Cow Spring. The road is passable for an auto with sensible care exercised in driving. It may be very bad during or after a rain, however. There are several forks in this road, but all wrong turns are closed by locked gates (you are surrounded by Condor Sanctuary here). It is about six miles to Dough Flat (old, rusting oil-drilling equipment here) and the ridge to your right (east) is where the Condors breed and roost in caves. A short rise in the road beyond Dough Flat brings you to another excellent vantage point - again look towards the ridge. The road ends about a mile farther on, and Condors may also be seen here. However, don't complain to me if you don't see one. Remember, I've never missed it there.