

Los Angeles Audubon Society

The Western Tanager

VOLUME 29

SEPTEMBER 1962 LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

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



By James F Clements

"Somehow or other I had never pictured bird watchers QUITE this way, our waiter innocently remarked.

I let my glance wander leisurely from the immaculately attired waiter to Herb Clarke, past Herb to Olga and then to my wife Mary. Seldom has such a motley crew been assembled in one place, at one time, in birding history. We were all drenched from head to toe and were slowly dripping large puddles of salt water on the cantina floor. Our trip to Bird Island (Isla San Jorge) in the Gulf of California had not turned out quite as simple as the Sunset Magazine article had led us to believe.

We had arrived in Penasco after an extremely productive bird photography trip to Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, where we stumbled onto a retired couple who had been feeding the birds regularly for three weeks. We sat for hours watching Lark Buntings, Gila Woodpeckers, Gilded Flickers, Curve-billed Thrashers, Gambel's Quail and other desert birds come within ten feet of us and feed at our feet. We also located the nests of a Great Horned Owl, Road Runner and Red-tailed Hawk, and flushed with the success of birds practically eating out of our gadget bags, we packed lenses, cameras and wives and headed south for Mexico.

According to Sunset's rosy picture, all you had to do was go to the finest hotel (choice of two in town), pay your \$125, and be conveniently ferried out to bird island.

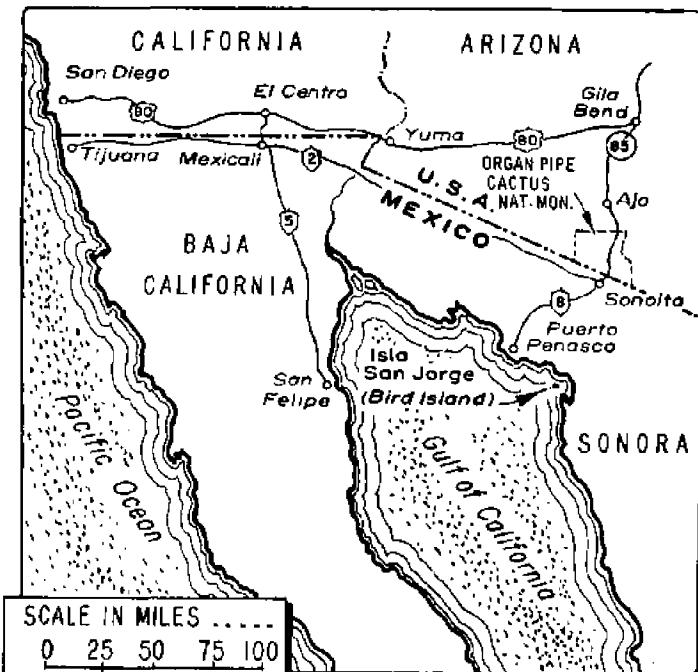
In true birding fashion we located the more luxurious of the two hotels in town, and proceeded to camp on the beach next to it. Our first inquiry at the hotel produced a genuine surprise. We could not only get to the island, but the price was

a surprisingly low \$35. Like all helpful Mexicans however, not only did this fellow not have a boat, he didn't even work at the hotel where we encountered him. He was actively wooing the waitress, and in typical Mexican fashion felt it would have been unkind to do anything but bolster our morale.

Like all good things in life, this dream about a short, easy passage to San Jorge Island vanished with the return of the hotel manager. Not only was he not about to send one of his boats out to the island in the first place, but in the second place we would have to spend the night on the island with millions of flies and mosquitoes and fleas (common to all bird islands), and in the third place, it was much easier to just go fishing. Caramba!!!

We fared better at the other hotel in town. After an hour of converting pesos to dollars, we settled on seven o'clock Monday morning as our

Continued on page 4



THE WESTERN TANAGER
OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY



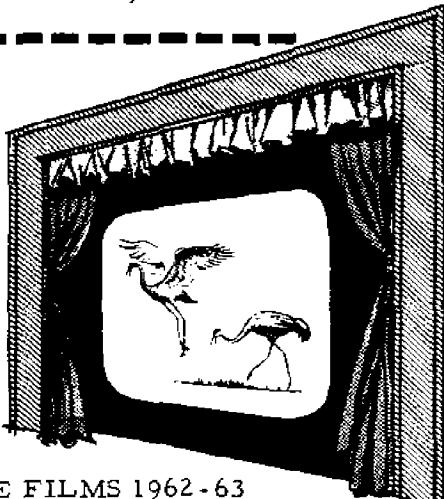
7377 SANTA MONICA BLVD., LOS ANGELES 46, CALIFORNIA
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WILDLIFE
* FILMS



AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILMS 1962-63

Audubon Wildlife Films bring you the finest of natural history color motion picture programs, personally presented by leading naturalists. The film-lecture programs feature mammals, marine life, birds, insects, wild flowers, and travel to out-of-the-way places. All forms of natural wildlife are presented in dramatic action and color. Their far reaching purpose is to promote wildlife protection and conservation education.

SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL SERIES

John Burroughs Junior High School Auditorium
600 S. McCadden Place, Los Angeles, 7:45 PM

CHARLES T. HOTCHKISS.... "TETON TRAILS"
Thursday, October 4, 1962

Breathtaking climb up the Grand Teton and visits with unusual birds and other animals weave a dramatic story of life in a land of awesome beauty.

KENNETH MORRISON....
"THE LONG FLIGHT BACK"
Thursday, November 1, 1962

A unique film of the last-ditch fight to save our vanishing wildlife climaxed by heart-breaking journeys of the whooping cranes.

EDITOR'S MESSAGE
By Bob Blackstone

With this issue of the WESTERN TANAGER I assume my duties and responsibilities as its new editor. This is a much more momentous event to me personally than to the TANAGER or its readers. The magazine will continue to be published much the same as it has been. No change in policy is portended. I do intend to do my best to see that the present high quality of the TANAGER continues, and I hope and trust that the association will be mutually rewarding.

This month some of our "columnists" have not yet returned from vacation. However, with next month's issue we will have all of our regular features again.

This is your magazine and members who have time and talent can participate in its production. Besides the perennial need for articles suitable for the TANAGER, we have a continuing need also for volunteers for less imaginative, but no less essential, jobs such as the stuffing and mailing.

Since our aim is and has been to give our readers the kind of magazine they want, one that they will find both enjoyable and informative, suggestions or criticism will continue to be welcomed.

Yours for a better and better WESTERN TANAGER,

Robert E. Blackstone

WALTER J. BRECKENRIDGE....

"ISLAND TREASURE"
Thursday, November 29, 1962

Dramatic history of an island wilderness far up the Mississippi River. A veritable "treasure island" of songbirds, game birds, animals and plant life common to the United States and Canada.

ROBERT C. HERMES.... "NOVA SCOTIA--LAND OF THE SEA"
Thursday, January 31, 1963

Travel from the woodland source of a tiny stream along its fascinating passage to the sea where time-lapse photography captures a variety of sea life.

KARL H. MASLOWSKI.... "GONE WITH THE WILDERNESS"
Thursday, March 14, 1963

Refutes the familiar remark, "Before we built here there was nothing but a wilderness." An eloquent appraisal of the value of conservation.

Los Angeles Audubon Society

September 1962

CALENDAR

Mrs. Russell Wilson, Executive Secretary

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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.

Sept. 1 SATURDAY - JUNIOR NATURALISTS 9:45 A.M., Fern Dell Museum, Griffith Park. Organizational meeting to plan year's programs. Send ideas for programs and trips to John Peebles, Fern Dell Museum. Two films, "Rainbow Valley" and "Nature's Half Acre" will be shown. For further information call:
Fern Dell Museum HO 7-1661
Bill Watson NO 5-0745

Sept. 6 THURSDAY EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING 7:30 P.M., Audubon House.

Sept. 8 SATURDAY FIELD TRIP 7:30 A.M., Malibu Lagoon and Point Dume for gulls, terns, and returning shorebirds. Take Pacific Coast Highway past Malibu Pier to bridge over Malibu Lagoon. Park on ocean side of highway on north end of bridge.
Leader: Bob Blackstone CR 6-3879

Sept. 11 TUESDAY EVENING MEETING - 8:00 P.M., Great Hall, Plummer Park. The guest speaker will be Dr. John Hardy, who will speak on the behavior of parakeets (wild parakeets of Mexico). Dr. Hardy is Director of the Moore Laboratories of Biology at Occidental College which have the largest collection of Mexican birds in the world. Light refreshments will be served following the program.
Program Chairman: Russ Wilson PO 1-7635

Sept. 21 FRIDAY BAZAAR WORKSHOP 10:00 A.M., Audubon House. Many lovely things are being made to sell at the Bazaar in December. New members are welcome to help with this project which provides funds for the Nature Museum at Audubon House.
Chairman: Olive Alvey NO 1-8036

Sept. 23 SUNDAY FIELD TRIP 8:00 A.M., Cabrillo Beach Marine Museum, 3720 Stephen M. White Dr., San Pedro. South on Pacific Avenue to 36th Street then turn left. Time will be spent at the breakwater, Museum and area between Cabrillo and Marineland. Be sure to bring lunch.
Leaders: Dave Robison PO 1-0217
Russ Wilson PO 1-7635

Sept. 30 SUNDAY ANNUAL TEA 2:00 5:00 P.M., at the home of Mr. and Mrs. William Hood, 138 South Wilton Dr., Los Angeles. A cordial invitation is extended to all members and prospective members. Plan to come, meet new acquaintances and renew old.
Social Committee: Olive Alvey, Chairman - NO 1-8036
Helen Sandmeyer TH 2-9328
Effie Mahaffee NO 4-4543
Melba Blackstone CR 6-3879

Oct. 3 WEDNESDAY EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING - 7:30 P.M., Audubon House.

Oct. 4 THURSDAY - WILDLIFE FILM 7:45 P.M., John Burroughs Junior High School, 600 McCadden Place, Los Angeles. Mr. Charles T. Hotchkiss presents "TETON TRAILS".

FIASCO IN PEÑASCO

(Continued)

departure time. Herb and I rushed back to the car to tell Mary and Olga the good fortune in getting a boat for \$50 for Monday.

"Hola, amigo, quire usted pescar manana?" It was the "manana" that interested me most about the question the young Mexican boy that had sauntered up to the car window had asked.

"Got a boat?" I asked in return. He assured me that a boat was the least of his problems, and without further ado he piled into our already over-crowded station wagon and coupled his directions to Herb with an uninterrupted flow of hundred-mile-an-hour Spanish to me.

Ten thousand words, ten miles of dirt road, and an inch of dust later, we were in Cholla Bay, a sleepy fishing village of about 100 Mexicans, 100 gulls, and a collection of fishing boats that the Smithsonian Institute would float a loan to acquire. Our "guide," Juan, disappeared into a cantina and soon beckoned for Herb and me to join him. We were suddenly in the midst of 15 Mexican fishermen, all of whom looked like refugees from Pancho Villa's forces. The spokesman for the group, one Francisco, informed me he had a boat.

--See that beautiful little boat there in the water, the Albatross? No, that isn't it, but it's just like it. San Jorge Island? Senor, this is no test for a true boatman. Two hours, maybe two and a half, and caramba, more birds than you have ever seen in your life! And we leave tomorrow, Sunday -- no have to wait for Monday like the hotel boat. And the cost. Aye, Chihuahua! Only \$25 for the four of us, and we could leave the next morning at five o'clock and spend all day on the island. Of course we would have to give them \$8 now so he could buy gas for the boat we hadn't seen that was going to be piloted by someone we didn't even know, but we handed over the money with much ceremony and repeated mutterings of manana on our part. On the way back to Penasco the girls congratulated us with escaping with our lives.

We went to bed on the beach early in order to be ready for the big day. We dropped off to sleep with a mixture of Cielito Lindo and the local dog menagerie baying at the moon. The night passed. At least at two in the morning the roosters thought it had. The only thing that wasn't alert at four o'clock when we arose was Olga's travel alarm ... it had broken down in the heat of the excitement. We threw our sleeping bags in the car, backed as quietly as possible off the beach, drove to the main road, and the car unequivocally quit. Gave up. Dead. At four in the morning in a Mexican fishing village.

While Herb pounded on the fuel pump and I aimlessly kicked a tire, who should appear on the scene but our boatmen. They also had no luck with the car, not even after trying to start it with white gas from our Coleman stove, then with outboard engine oil (our \$8 was coming home to roost), and finally with a mixture of both which still proved ineffective. We were towed ignominiously into town in the wake of a 1935 Ford. Francisco routed a local mechanic out of bed, and by seven we were ready for the boat.

I dignify the Alba by calling it a boat. Huddled among a fleet of 65-foot, high-beam shrimp boats, our 19-foot rowboat with its outboard motor looked hopelessly inadequate for the 56 mile round trip to Bird Island. Mary and Olga didn't show the slightest hesitation, so taking their cue, Herb and I manfully crept into the rowboat. It wasn't until later I discovered the girls thought this was the boat that was to take us to the boat that would make the trip -- sort of like taking a water taxi to a waiting aircraft carrier.



Our first attempt met with failure. The Gulf of California had been visited by one of the famous local Chubascos, a wind of squall-like proportions, and the gulf was extremely rough. Our boatman, who bore the charming name of Gorila, struggled with the wind-whipped five-foot high waves for about an hour, and decided to give it up in favor of better weather manana.

Another night passed. This one it was difficult to tell when the guitar playing, trumpeting mariachis were replaced by the roosters, but they both finally gave way to the first faint streaks of dawn, and five o'clock found us at the boat dock (still without the aid of Olga's clock). At six there still was no sign of our illustrious, valiant crew.

At six-thirty Gorila arrived. "Buenos dias, patron," he offered. "Hello yourself," I retorted. "Where in the world have you been?" "Sleeping," was his obvious answer to that question. "---- You can see, senor, that the tide is just coming in now, and at five in the morning it was out over a mile-- impossible to launch the boat." "----but why didn't you say something yesterday about the tide not being in until seven? That's two mornings now in a row we have gotten up at four o'clock for nothing." "----Si, senor," he admitted, "but it was your idea to start at five, not mine."

The boat left the dock at seven, after half the able-bodied men in town turned out to push it down the last ten or fifteen feet of mud into the water. Puerto Penasco shares that idiosyncrasy common to the whole upper Gulf of California-- a tremendous tidal range. The extreme range is over 30 feet, and average spring tides that we encountered were 18 feet. It appears that the tide is always out at Penasco. It is either low, or way out, which I'm sure explains why Rocky Point is such a popular shell collecting area. Tide pools abound here, and visitors are constantly besieged by Mexicans ranging in age from six to sixty, selling every conceivable type of marine and aquatic life from tiny conchs to shark skeletons.

Normally, the Gulf of California in this latitude is extremely calm. Our trip to the island was enlivened by our first looks at the Brown Booby. Watching a booby is like watching a cross between a shearwater and a pelican. The bird flies stiff-winged across the water like the former, only higher since he does not seem to get the wind assistance the ocean fliers get. From this stiff-winged position, the booby will suddenly fold his wings pelican fashion and dive straight into the water. He is an excellent fisher, and in these heavily laden waters seldom misses.

When the Spanish conquistadores first encountered the booby in the New World, they were much impressed with its complete lack of fear of man and labeled it "el bobo," the dunce, in Spanish. Our subsequent English corruption of the word of course gives us "booby."



Even in a small open boat, the trip to San Jorge is fascinating. Boobies are in sight constantly, and as you near the island, gulls, cormorants and pelicans pass over the boat in increasing numbers. Schools of curious porpoises and sea lions are constantly in attendance, and flying fish break water in their startling manner and glide away and disappear into the water where they belong.

But there is no describing the sensation of pulling into the small sheltered cove and setting foot on the island that is called San Jorge. It is actually similar to our Anacapa with one major island and four smaller ones. No less than fifteen to twenty thousand adult Heerman's Gulls greeted us in their immaculate full breeding plumage as we landed in their one-square mile nesting grounds. And nesting grounds is a most appropriate name, since the birds just make a slight depression in the hard ground and lay their eggs right in the open. The Mexican boys take great delight in gathering the eggs on their visits to the island, and Gorila assured me that they were much finer eating than hen's eggs.

On the higher parts of the island the boobies were nesting. The young boobies were in many

cases still in the down stage. Pure white, appearing larger than their parents in their down togs, it was riotous watching an adult try to feed a youngster in his own size who looked like his whole intent in life was to knock down his provider.

Herb and I were fortunate in finding a nesting pair of Oystercatchers that we were able to photograph. During our stalking of the Oystercatchers, Gorila at times would point to a small cave-like depression in the rocks and tell me it was the nest of a "gallito." His description of it sounded like an Elegant Tern, and we wondered what an Elegant Tern was doing nesting in a cave. Suddenly Gorila pointed to the sky and shouted, "Mira, el gallito. Flying over our heads was a magnificent Red-billed Tropic-bird. They obviously had finished nesting, but we sighted six birds at one time in the air, and it was one of the highlights of the trip.

After spending some time trying to photograph the pelicans and a large herd of sea lions, Gorila suddenly declared that it was time to leave. We no sooner got into the boat and started back than the wind came up, and within five minutes water in great sheets was breaking over the bow of the boat. In ten minutes we were soaked to the skin, and in fifteen, the water was literally running down our pants and into our shoes. This went on for four hours. When we finally did reach port, my wool sweater hung down to my knees, Mary's hat looked like a relic from the Mormon settlement at Salt Lake, and we all had great salty white splotches on our skin. In this condition we staggered over to the hotel and had a Carta Blanca a-piece.



Our waiter was probably right in his concept of the average bird watcher. But birding with the Clarkes is always something of an adventure. Despite our paying the Mexican mechanic \$3 American to fix the car, it gave us all kinds of trouble all the way home. We arrived at Mrs. Alexander's in Madera Canyon driving up the canyon the only way the car would make it -- backwards! That night Herb and Olga sought the sanctuary of the station wagon when two skunks decided to play hide and seek around their sleeping bags. Mary and I thought it was too funny for words until one of the skunks discovered my socks and decided to make a meal of the salt residue on them. But birding in Arizona is a story unto itself.



So if you are yearning to broaden your birding horizons, look south next spring when the geese start coming overhead. Plan a trip to Puerto Penasco and San Jorge Island. Take along your spare fuel pump and a Spanish primer. I recommend it for jaded appetites. ■

Welcome!

NEW MEMBERS...

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Your Membership Supports

AUDUBON CAMPS, which better equip teachers, youth leaders and other adults to impart an understanding of man's role in nature, and of the importance of conservation. Summer camps for adults operate at Medomak, Maine; Greenwich, Connecticut; Sarona, Wisconsin and Norden, California.

AUDUBON CENTERS, to which come increasing numbers of children, with their teachers and leaders, to gain personal experience with nature that will vitalize their studies and their outlook on life. Owned and operated by the Society, these are the Audubon Center of Greenwich, Riverside Road, Greenwich, Connecticut; Sharon Audubon Center, Sharon, Connecticut; Aullwood Audubon Center, 1000 Aullwood Road, Dayton 14, Ohio; Audubon Center of Southern California, 1000 North Durfee Avenue, El Monte, California.

AUDUBON JUNIOR CLUBS, in which more than ten million children in schools and youth groups have been enrolled since 1910.

NATURE CENTERS DIVISION, formed in 1961 through a merger with Nature Centers for Young America, Inc., promotes the creation of community-owned and operated centers to bring the advantages of Audubon Centers to more communities by supplying competent advice and other technical assistance to local groups.

PHOTO AND FILM DEPARTMENT, from which rights to reproduce photographs and slides may be purchased, slides bought and educational films rented.

PUBLIC INFORMATION. Growing numbers of people and agencies look to the Society for authentic information on outdoor topics and for independent appraisals of conservation problems. The press, radio and television are increasingly being enrolled in this educational task.

PUBLICATIONS: *Audubon Magazine*, sent to all members; *Audubon Field Notes*, summarizing the status, movements and distribution of North American birds (\$3.00 a year); and *Audubon Nature Bulletins*, for teachers and youth leaders.

AUDUBON SANCTUARIES and warden protection now extend to upwards of one million acres of land and water. Some of these, as along the Gulf Coast and in California, are crucial to the survival of many species. Others, as in the northern United States, protect attractive environments and serve in educating the public to the value of such areas.

AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILMS provide the best in natural color motion pictures of outdoor America, personally narrated by top-ranking photographer-naturalists for community enrichment. Thirty-five lecturers now present 1,300 programs in more than 200 cities.

AUDUBON WILDLIFE TOURS, to Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary, Florida, and into Everglades National Park, including Duck Rock, under direction of trained naturalists.

SERVICE DEPARTMENT, which distributes Audubon Nature Cards and other educational aids, and helps members select the best in nature books, binoculars and other gifts with a nature motif.



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BRANCHES AND AFFILIATES of the National Audubon Society advancing our cause in more than 300 communities.

WILDLIFE RESEARCH, a basic tool of sound management, and an expanding activity of your Society, has already provided fundamental guidance in the preservation of several endangered species.

YOUR WILL: May we suggest that you help to insure the continuance of the ever-widening influence of our program and philosophy by remembering the National Audubon Society in your will. Suggested bequest form: I hereby give, devise and bequeath to the National Audubon Society, Inc., in the City of New York, in the State of New York, the sum of dollars (or otherwise describe the gift) to be used for the general purpose of said Society.

CONSERVATION NEWS

BY ROBERT BLACKSTONE

Mr. Carl Buchheister, president of the National Audubon Society, who has recently returned from an 1100 mile trip by automobile and aircraft through the famous marsh and pothole country of the prairie provinces of Canada has this to report. "I can make only one kind of report, based on my own observations and impressions; I do not purport to speak for Mr. Riaski or the Fish and Wildlife Service. In my opinion there is almost no chance of an increase in the number of ducks coming south this fall compared to 1961, and last year the hunting season unquestionably cut into the breeding stock. The chances are there will be fewer ducks this fall. The Service had earlier reported, in a press release dated June 25, that the first aerial surveys of the summer in Canada and the northern States indicated the smallest breeding population since 1951. In the prairie provinces the mallards were down 12 percent, pintails down 28 percent, compared to 1961.

Those who have the responsibility of setting the hunting regulations face some extremely grave decisions. The open season and bag limits, or whether to permit any hunting at all this fall, have to be decided in August by the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Secretary of the Interior."



The Point Reyes Bill, S. 476, passed the House by voice vote (not a roll call) July 22, marking a victory for conservationists and assuring establishment of the nation's third National Seashore Recreation Area. Cape Hatteras in North Carolina, the first, was authorized by Congress in 1938. Cape Cod became the second last year.

As S. 476 was passed by the Senate in slightly different form, it will be ready for the President's signature as soon as the Senate concurs in the House Amendments, or compromise changes are worked out in a conference committee. The House amendments are not of major importance. The legislation creates a 53,000 acre Seashore Area and authorizes \$14 million for land acquisition. Within a 26,000 acre "pastoral zone" present owners will be permitted to keep their lands as long as they are used only for ranching.

Padre Island also made progress. S. 4, proposing a National Seashore on the wild barrier island off the coast of Texas, was ordered reported favorably July 18 by the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs. House passage is possible as soon as the Rules Committee grants clearance for floor action. As passed by the Senate, S. 4 would establish a National Park unit encompassing 88.5 miles of the narrow island. House committee amendments cut this to 74 miles. ■

AUDUBON ACTIVITIES

by RUSSELL WILSON

Twenty-one birders made the Buckhorn Flats trip, June 9, and we have since learned that several missed us due to the fact that the Forest Service had removed the Buckhorn sign during the time the campgrounds were being redeveloped. Sorry!

In contrast with last year's trip, there were almost no warblers, but this area always produces good observations of Fox Sparrows, Green-tailed Towhees, Olive-sided Flycatchers, Wood Pewees, White-headed Woodpeckers, Creepers, Nuthatches, Tanagers, Grosbeaks and Swallows.

We returned to Chilao for lunch, where several parties had set up camp for the weekend. Here we had a fine opportunity to watch a Red-tailed Hawk family feed a single chick at a nest in the top of a Bigcone Spruce. Also nesting in the area were Purple Martins, Violet-green Swallows, Wood Pewees and Black-chinned Sparrows.

Almost everyone made a weekend outing of the Big Bear Lake trip, which was scheduled for Sunday, June 24, and was led by Dave Robison. Many arrived Friday, others Saturday and either camped at Hannah Flat or took lodgings in Fawnskin.

The early arrivals got in a trip to Butler Peak, which affords one of the most extensive views to be had anywhere in Southern California, and where our best bird was a Townsend's Solitaire. Some Saturday afternoon birding at the Big Pine Flat campground produced two Vesper Sparrows, which were carefully observed at close range and all listed field marks distinguished. Campfire activities ended with popcorn and hot chocolate and so to bed.

Sunday morning birding proved to be slow and our list of thirty-six failed to include the Pinon Jay, although we did find Mountain Bluebirds near Baldwin Lake, now dry. The trip broke up early for the drive home by way of Barton Flats.



Bill and Betty Jenner led the July 14 trip to the Tucker Sanctuary (Laura Lou had left the previous day for the Hawaiian Islands) and we were pleased to see many newcomers among the thirty who participated.

Only three hummingbirds were coming to the feeders, Anna's, Rufous and Black-chinned. Other birds in the area were Hooded Orioles, Band-tailed Pigeons, California Thrashers, and Black-headed Grosbeaks. Blue Grosbeaks, Lazuli Buntings and a Red-shouldered Hawk were seen in the canyons between Irvine Lake and O'Neil Park.

After lunch at O'Neil Park, Mr. Francis Raymond led us up Trabuco Canyon where he had located a Swainson's Thrush and although no one of us got the bird in his binoculars, it repeated its melodious song for us many times.

Mr. Raymond also led us by numerous back roads to upper Newport Bay, where we finished out the day. Here we found perhaps five hundred phalaropes, mostly Northern with perhaps ten per cent Wilson's, many with considerable summer plumage. There were also Least and Caspian Terns feeding young, Black-necked Stilts on their nest, several Bonaparte's Gulls, and numerous Avocets, Dowitchers, Greater Yellowlegs and Black-bellied Plovers. Our list for the day contained sixty-one species.



Scalloped potatoes, chili beans, molded salads, ham, turkey, fried chicken, deviled eggs, chocolate cake, angel food cake, and watermelon in quantities sufficient to satisfy the heartiest appetites made a success of the potluck dinner at Tapia Park for those who came to eat. For those who came to bird, a list of thirty-five species was compiled under the leadership of George Venatta, which is a very good number indeed for this area in mid summer.

The good rainfall of last winter has markedly improved the condition of the vegetative power of the park, the little stream has a good flow of water still and presumably will not go dry this summer, good news for birds and birders.

Among the thirty-seven present we were happy to greet some new members; Dr. and Mrs. Maurice Kamins and son Ben (the Kamins are friends of Dave Robison), Thelma Barnard, Marie Allen, Clare Smurda, and we hope they will be encouraged to join subsequent field trips. Larry Steinberg brought his family and it was our first chance to meet Mrs. Steinberg and the children, Bobby and Gail. ■

What Manner of Birds are These?

This summer a "Western USA Excursion" was organized for the ornithologists attending the International Ornithological Congress at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York. In connection with this the following anecdote of a field trip into the Condor country back of Fillmore has come to us. The visiting ornithologists were from several different countries of Europe, as well as South Africa and South America. The objective of the trip was achieved, and our guests were duly impressed with their views of the California Condor. On the way back, however, the party encountered a group of riders in western attire, complete apparently with big hats, cowboy boots, lariats and all. With a cry of, "Cowboys", the visitors converged on the group cameras in hand. There was only one thing missing; one asked the riders where their guns were! They were delighted. It seems that the real highlight of this ornithological field trip for these visitors from overseas was this encounter with a group of "real cowboys". ■