

PANAMA BIRDING TRIP...

Quetzal

PART TWO
By R. Dudley Ross

You will perhaps recall that the first of these two articles ended with our just having arrived at the Hotel Washington in Ancon.

Following breakfast the next morning, we birded our way from Colon to Gatun, where we crossed the Gatun Locks and continued south. Near Gatun we had our first Giant Cowbirds, sometimes called the Colombian Rice Grackle. Not far south of Gatun we saw two more strikingly beautiful White Hawks. After a delicious luncheon at the American Legion Post Restaurant, near Gatun, we continued south for about eight miles or so, until we found a dirt road to the right, leading to the small town of Pina, on the coast, sixteen miles away. Tom Crebbs had told us of this road and had recommended it very highly. We spent the entire afternoon along it and found it most rewarding. Friends of ours who went there a few weeks later found it equally productive. Along the Pina Road (we called it that for lack of any official name) we found a great many birds, a number of which we had not encountered elsewhere, such as the Spot-crowned Barbet, Streak-headed Woodcreeper, Blue Cotinga, White-winged Becard, White-thighed Swallow, Black-chested Jay, Montezuma Orependerola, Scarlet-rumped Cacique, Yellow-tailed Oriole and Gray-headed Tanager. We considered this area one of the best we found anywhere on the trip.

The following day we drove to Fort San Lorenzo but, except for a Laughing Falcon, did not find the region especially productive. We then returned to Colon and spent considerable time driving around to find the Saffron Finch, an introduced species which has become established locally, but we were not successful. Then off to an abandoned U.S. air field at Coco Solo, where we managed to find a lone Collared Plover. In mid-afternoon we headed back to the Tivoli, thus ending our brief visit to this part of Panama.

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PANAMA BIRDING TRIP

We were due to start driving to the province of Chiriqui, in western Panama, so we checked out of the Tivoli and headed west, our first stop to be at the Posada (inn) de San Antonio at Cerro Campana. This little settlement is 3,500 feet up in the mountains, about 35 miles west of Panama City. On the way we saw several Green Shrike-vireos, Scrub Greenlet, Rufous-breasted Wren, Scrub Flycatcher, Little Hermit and Song Wren. Just before reaching the road up to Cerro Campana, we had a Gray-headed Kite.

On the six-mile drive up into the mountains, we had magnificent views of the Pacific, while the birds seen included Thick-billed and Tawny-capped Euphonias, Bay-headed Tanager, White-throated Robin and Rufous-collared Sparrow. We found this attractive little sparrow to be very common here.

In the morning we were out as usual by daybreak and got in two hours of good birding before returning to the inn for breakfast at eight o'clock. We managed to find the Wedge-tailed Groundfinch, one of the specialties of the area. Other birds found that morning were Silver-throated, Black-and-Yellow and Gray-headed Tanagers, Chestnut-capped Brush-finches, White Hawk and Yellow-faced Grassquit. Also, Chestnut-backed Antbird, Little Hermit, Blue Honeycreeper, Shining Honeycreeper, Dusky-tailed Ant-tanager, Scarlet-rumped Cacique and Black-tailed Flycatcher.



Banded Antshrike

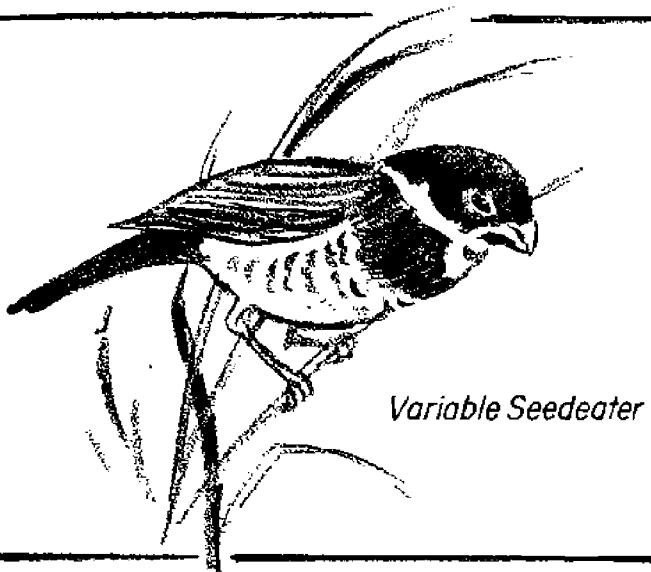
Back on the Panamerican Highway, we continued west, seeing many Fork-tailed Flycatchers and Variable Seedeaters, plus Yellow-backed Oriole, Green-backed Sparrow and Black-headed Tody-flycatcher. We were soon traversing the extensive grasslands of the province of Coclé where we expected to find, and did see, the Yellow-headed Caracara and the Crested Bobwhite. We also saw the Yellow Grass-finches which, a few years before, had been found for the first time in Panama by Gene Eisenmann. In this part of Panama we also saw several Pale-breasted Spinetails, another Savanah Hawk, Blue-black Grassquit and the Barred Antshrike before car trouble forced us to return to Panama City.

This unexpected setback threatened to prevent our planned visit to western Panama, as we lost an entire day. However, I learned that a local airline (Copa Airlines) had a daily early morning flight to David and off we flew next morning, reaching David in about an hour after a pleasant flight over some interesting mountain country. At the David airport I was fortunate enough to be able to make arrangements with a driver to take us to the tiny village of Cerro Punta, situated about half way up the slopes of Chiriqui Volcano. Our driver undertook, for a fixed fee, to spend that entire Thursday with us, to return for us on Saturday at 7 a.m., driving us around all that day, and to pick us up Sunday morning and take us to the airport for our return flight to Panama City.

To reach Cerro Punta from David, one has to proceed about twelve or thirteen miles west on the Panamerican Highway to Concepcion. From here it is a twenty-five mile drive north over a rough dirt road—narrow, hilly, winding and rocky, with many potholes as additional hazards but the birding was so good that it took us half a day to make the trip. Reinaldo, our driver, had keen eyes and was very good at spotting birds, although his name for many of them was simply "pecho amarillo" (yellow breast). Our list for the trip up the mountain included many Fork-tailed Flycatchers, Golden-naped Woodpecker, Streaked Saltator, Gray-capped Flycatcher, Social Flycatcher, Blue-black Grassquit, Variable and Rudy-breasted Seedeaters, Golden-masked Tanager, Gray-crowned Yellowthroat, Masked Tityra, Black-headed Saltator, Scarlet-rumped Tanager, Blue-crowned Motmot, Dusky-tailed Ant-tanager and Slaty Spinetail.

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After lunch at our little boarding house in Cerro Punta (the only place to stay in town), we allowed Reinaldo to return home as we wanted to spend the afternoon birding on foot. We birded our way down the road from town and a partial list of what we saw will show you why we forgot all about time and food. Swallow-tailed Kite, Mountain Elaenia, Band-rumped Swift, Red-crowned Woodpecker, White-winged Tanager, Dusky-tailed Ant-tanager, White-naped

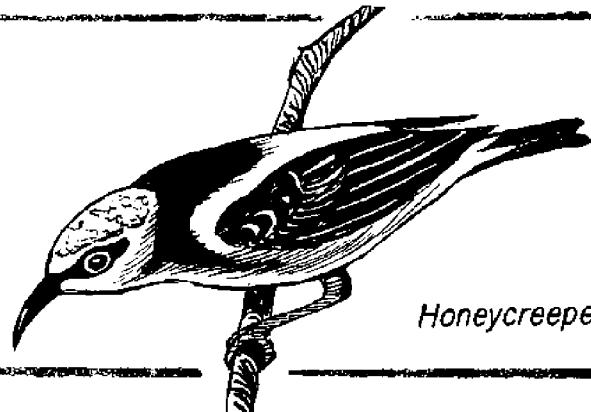


Variable Seedeater

Tanager, Dusky-tailed Ant-tanager, White-naped Pigeon, Blue-throated Toucanet (feeding young), Thick-billed Seed-finch, Prong-billed Barbet, Rufous-browed Peppershrike, Blue-headed Euphonia, Yellow-winged Vireo, Tawny-crowned Greenlet, Silver-throated Tanager, Flame-colored Tanager, Sulphur-winged Parakeet, Gray-striped Brush-finch, Yellow-thighed Finch, Torrent Tyrannulet, Golden-bellied Flycatcher, Yellow-throated Brush-finch and Spot-crowned Woodcreeper.

Having completely lost track of time, we resorted to hitch-hiking in order to get back in time for dinner. The first car we hailed wouldn't stop, but when a truck appeared, the waving of a dollar bill worked magic and we got our lift.

Friday our plan was to work the Boquete Trail, up the Volcan Chiriqui, for some higher mountain birding. Starting immediately after breakfast, we devoted the entire day to the trail, returning to town in the late afternoon. Our efforts produced, among other things, four species of hummingbirds (Violet Sabrewing, Green Hermit, Little Hermit and Scintillant Hummingbird), three warblers (Black-cheeked, Flame-throated and the Collared Redstart), Brown-capped Vireo, Mountain Robin, Ruddy-capped Nightingale-thrush, Forest Elaenia, Laughing Falcon, Chestnut-capped Brush-finch, Ochraceous Wren,



Honeycreeper

Yellowish Flycatcher and Slaty Flower-piercer, a member of the honeycreeper family. It may interest California birders to know that the commonest bird of the day was the familiar Acorn Woodpecker. They were almost unbelievably abundant.

Returning to town, we met a Volkswagen Microbus, as we plodded wearily toward "home. The driver called "howdy" and introduced himself as an American named Lewis, owner of a large finca not very far down the road. Upon learning that we were anxious to find a Quetzal, he said that three pairs had nested on his place this season. With suddenly renewed energy, we accompanied Mr. Lewis back to his estate and, while he attended to some business with his foreman, we followed his suggestion and walked along a narrow trail beside the Rio Chiriqui Viejo, hoping for a Quetzal. We didn't find one, but a fifteen-minute walk gave us Red-headed Barbet, Torrent Tyrannulet and the Black Phoebe, familiar to many westerners. We also had the Central American form of the Slate-throated Redstart, with golden-yellow instead of red underparts. After a couple of drinks with the hospitable Mr. Lewis and then dinner at our "pension," we were more than ready for bed.

Promptly at seven o'clock Saturday morning Reinaldo appeared, even though he had been obliged to leave his home at 4:30 so as to be on time. Our first stop was at the Finca Lewis, Mr. Lewis having left word with his foreman that we were to be made welcome. This was our last chance at the Quetzal. Less than a minute after stopping at a clearing where Mr. Lewis had told us the bird had occasionally been seen, a large, glossy green bird, with long, flowing tail feathers, flew across the opening in the woods. I said to Vivian, "Well, I guess that was our look at a Quetzal" when a trogon-like call was heard and, after carefully scanning the area through my binocular, I located a fine male. Vivian also had a good look before the beauty took off, leaving us both a little breathless but delightfully triumphant!

Continued on page 87

AFTER THE BALL

By BILL WATSON

In June of 1963, the Los Angeles Audubon Society had a camping field trip to the Greenhorn Mountains. That trip was properly reported in the next available WESTERN TANAGER issue. I had participated in this trip as the guest of Jim Denholtz. We camped at Tiger Flat Campground in the Sequoia National Forest with other members and guests on that field trip.

Then Jim and I decided to stay out another night after the trip. Since rain was threatening in the Greenhorn Mountains, we decided to spend Sunday night, June 23rd, far south in the Angeles National Forest at Cottonwood Campground. We arrived there in ample time Sunday afternoon to set up camp.

The next morning, after breakfast and dishes, the two of us took a little bird walk. Even at breakfast, we were getting excited at seeing a Western Bluebird and a White-breasted Nuthatch near our table, along with such other birds as the Plain Titmouse and Nuttall's and Downy Woodpeckers.

Finally, the last dish was washed and we started out upstream. It should be understood to start with that there is a continuous stream running through Elizabeth Canyon in which Cottonwood Campground is located. This stream is the outlet for the Elizabeth, Munz and Hughes Lakes system. These resort lakes are kept full by pumping water from wells, I understand, and this is the source for Elizabeth Canyon's year-round stream.

With a continuous stream to help it, Cottonwood Campground is aptly named. Most of the trees in the campground are Fremont Cottonwoods, with some White Alders and several kinds of willows. It is a typical streamside-woodland habitat. We found that this water doesn't only

favor the plantlife. The Beechey Ground Squirrel was very common in the campground. And the birdlife was most prolific. We could hear birds all about us.

As we walked along the shaded campground road, we were struck by the numbers of Tiger Swallowtails, California Sisters, and Checkerspot Butterflies that flitted about the shrubbery, settled in moist places or on Arizona Thistle blossoms.



At the north end of the campground where we left the road for a path, our attention was instantly alerted when we saw a Western Bluebird disappear into a 1-1/2 inch hole in an Arroyo Willow nearby. This nest hole was not over seven feet high. Close at hand was a House Wren scolding and annoying a Downy Woodpecker without mercy. The House Wrens were all over the woods we had entered, and just as common to be seen were Western Wood Pewees. Violet-green Swallows were sailing and tilting through the trees. Woodpeckers were all about--Downy and Nuttall's. We even saw an Acorn Woodpecker perched on top of a telephone pole at some distance out of the woods.

Winding our way through a lush growth of streamside wild celery and nettles, we were constantly turning our heads to look at the birds all around us. We saw a Western Tanager, several Lawrence's Goldfinch pairs, and several Song Sparrows, including an immature Song Sparrow.

Following a Western Wood Pewee with our binoculars, we saw her settle into a nest in the fork of a branch of a young White Alder. Above us, the Violet-green Swallows were apparently preparing a nest in the dead stump of a large branch in a Cottonwood. A little farther along, we saw a cowbird pair flirting with each other.

Then we discovered an Empidonax Flycatcher, which we tentatively identified as a Trail's, nesting in a neat hole in the bare stump of a willow branch. Standing in the same vantage point, we saw another Western Wood Pewee fly to her nest in the fork of another White Alder branch where she sat all the time we watched her. Then Jim, who was fastest at spotting most of these nests, saw a Violet-green Swallow enter another hole in the same branch stump as the Empidonax Flycatcher, about three feet higher. Thus, standing in one spot we watched the nesting activities of three different species of birds.

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Los Angeles Audubon Society

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HEADQUARTERS CHAIRMAN MRS LAPRELLE EDENS
REGISTRAR OF MEMBERS MRS RUSSELL WILSON



calendar

ARNOLD SMALL, President

MRS DONALD L ADAMS, Executive Secretary

May



M A Y 1 9 6 5

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29

May 1 SATURDAY-SUNDAY FIELD TRIP Morongo Valley and Salton Sea. Meet at 7:00 A.M. Saturday at Covington Park, Morongo Valley, about ten miles north of U.S. 60-70-99 on the Twentynine Palms Highway. This trip will be a repetition of the field trip of April 24-25.

Leaders: Gene Rose and George Venatta 454-0191

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

May 8 SATURDAY PELAGIC TRIP The "Old Timer" will leave Oxnard at 7:00 A.M. for offshore birding around the Channel Islands. Bring lunch, hot drink and motion-sickness pills.

Leader: Dave Robison 761-0217

May 8 SATURDAY - FIELD TRIP Santa Clara Riverbottom and Elizabeth Lake Canyon. Meet at 8:00 A.M. at the first Tip's restaurant on U.S. 99 (9 miles north of junction with U.S. 6).

Leader: Russ Wilson 761-7634

May 11 TUESDAY - EVENING MEETING - 8:00 P.M., Great Hall, Plummer Park. Dr. Richard Holmes of the Dept. of Zoology, U.C.S.B., will give a program on "The Wildlife of Arctic Alaska", based on his experiences during several summers devoted to biological investigations in this region. "Dr. Holmes" is of course Dick Holmes, whom many will remember from several years back as a very likeable young man and a first class birder.

Program Chairman: Don Adams 372-5536

May 19 WEDNESDAY CONSERVATION MEETING 8:00 P.M., Great Hall, Plummer Park. Los Angeles City Councilman John Holland will be present to discuss the threat to Elysian Park by the proposed Convention Center. Mr. Holland has led the fight in the City Council to preserve the park.

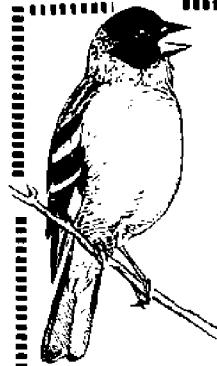
Conservation Chairman: Bill Watson 661-8570

May 23 SUNDAY FIELD TRIP - Mt. Pinos. Although this is scheduled as a Sunday trip, some of us will camp Saturday night at McGill Campground on Mt. Pinos. The scheduled trip will start at 8:00 A.M. Sunday at the turnoff to Frazier Park, about three miles beyond Gorman on U.S. 99. This is a good trip for mountain species. Last year we had a good observation of a Condor.

Leader: Arnold Small VE 7-2272

June 3 THURSDAY EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING 7:30 P.M., Audubon House.

CALENDAR CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



AFTER THE BALL

Continued..

Before we were through with our walk, we also sighted several Black-headed Grosbeaks, House Finches, Scrub Jays, Common Bush-Tits, a Rufous-sided Towhee, Red-shafted Flickers, and Mourning Doves. When we were back at our campsite, we saw a small yellow bird which we identified easily as a Yellow Warbler. We finally concluded that the Nuttall's Woodpecker we had been hearing in the cottonwood over us must be an immature bird in a nest hole, because we never found the bird and the sound came from the same place in the tree for almost twenty-four hours.

All of these birds were found in a moist canyon surrounded by chaparral covered hills. The stream, and the wonderful plant cover that it provided made this a splendid place for birds to nest in. Jim and I both feel that this fine campground had more nests than any other birding spot we had ever been in.

We have held off publishing this article until this issue of the *WESTERN TANAGER* so that other members might be tempted to visit Cottonwood Campground again this year. For those who might be so inclined, this campground can be easily reached from Los Angeles in an hour or so. Take State Route 7, or U. S. Route 99 to Castaic and turn off for Elizabeth Canyon. Follow Elizabeth Canyon road north until you reach Cottonwood Campground. That's all there is to it. Jim and I both recommend it as a close-in camping area well worth being used by campers and birders.

calendar

June 8 TUESDAY - EVENING MEETING 8:00 P.M., Great Hall, Plummer Park. Mrs. Edward (Ruth) Cordner will show a selection from her collection of excellent color slides on nature subjects.

Program Chairman: Don Adams 372-5536

June 12 SATURDAY FIELD TRIP Buckhorn Flat and Chilao. Meet at 8:00 A.M. at parking area near Buckhorn Ranger Station on the Angeles Crest Highway. Many birds will be nesting: chickadees, nuthatches, woodpeckers, Martins, and Red-tailed Hawks. Bring lunch.

Leader: Russ Wilson 761-7634

THE AUDUBON SCENE

NEWS FROM OTHER SOCIETIES

"According to published records, the Veery is extremely rare in San Diego County, but my observations indicate that it is a regular migrant in small numbers. I had Veeries at Kissing Rocks Garden on three different occasions, and they were here at Big Boulder both spring and fall last year. In the fall, I saw a Veery and a Swainson's Thrush standing side by side on a rock, so was sure of my identification." So says Frank Gander, P. O. Box 332, Lakeside, Calif. 92040, in appealing to birders to be on the watch for this species. He suggests wooded areas in the foothills as the place to look for them.

San Diego Audubon Society's "SKETCHES" -- April, 1965



"Dr. L. Richard Mewaldt of San Jose State College presented his plans for a Point Reyes Bird Observatory. He said such centers have flourished in Europe for a long time. Ornithologists there do not need a shotgun to place their identifications in the literature. Other functions of such an observatory are study, preservation, informing the public on the biology of birds in general. In the United States, only waterfowl have been so carefully watched. At the Point Reyes center, banding of birds and study of the movements of birds can be extended from waterfowl to small birds and shorebirds. Point Reyes has the greatest variety of these birds to be found anywhere on the West Coast... Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society's "THE AVOCET" -- April, 1965

Continued

CONSERVATION

By
BILL
WATSON

There have been several hearings in recent weeks. No one from the Los Angeles Audubon Society attended any of them. And yet those hearings were concerned with things that jeopardize local places that we love and want to protect.

Every so often someone sends in a newspaper clipping that announces a hearing on a matter of definite interest to this Society. A note is attached suggesting that I can send someone. There is only one problem. Whom?

We have had representatives at hearings in the past. There was enough time to discuss the matter at a board meeting and find someone to go. But most often, there is no time for this, and it is impossible to find anyone to go on short notice because no one is prepared. There is no point in just finding anyone to attend a hearing. You must find someone who is articulate, unafraid, and fully informed. This is not accomplished at the snap of your fingers.

Representatives at hearings should be backed by as many compatriots as possible, too. And we should insist that hearings be held in the evening so that more of us can attend.

I want to make these recommendations to you:

1. If you never write to the folks back home, do write to your public officials and representatives, expressing your considered opinion on any matter that concerns you. If your letter is in agreement with the official position of your organization, you enhance immeasurably the effectiveness of that position.

2. Get together with your leadership and organize to attend hearings. This is vitally important to any conservation organization. Work to induce officials to hold their hearings in the evening. One reason why hearings are not held in the evening around here is because no one goes to them anyway.

NOTES

3. Be actively interested and concerned about what is going on. Don't depend on your conservation chairman to work miracles. Don't just come up with suggestions for work for someone else to do. If you have a project you want your organization to work on, be the first to volunteer to help, or don't make suggestions.

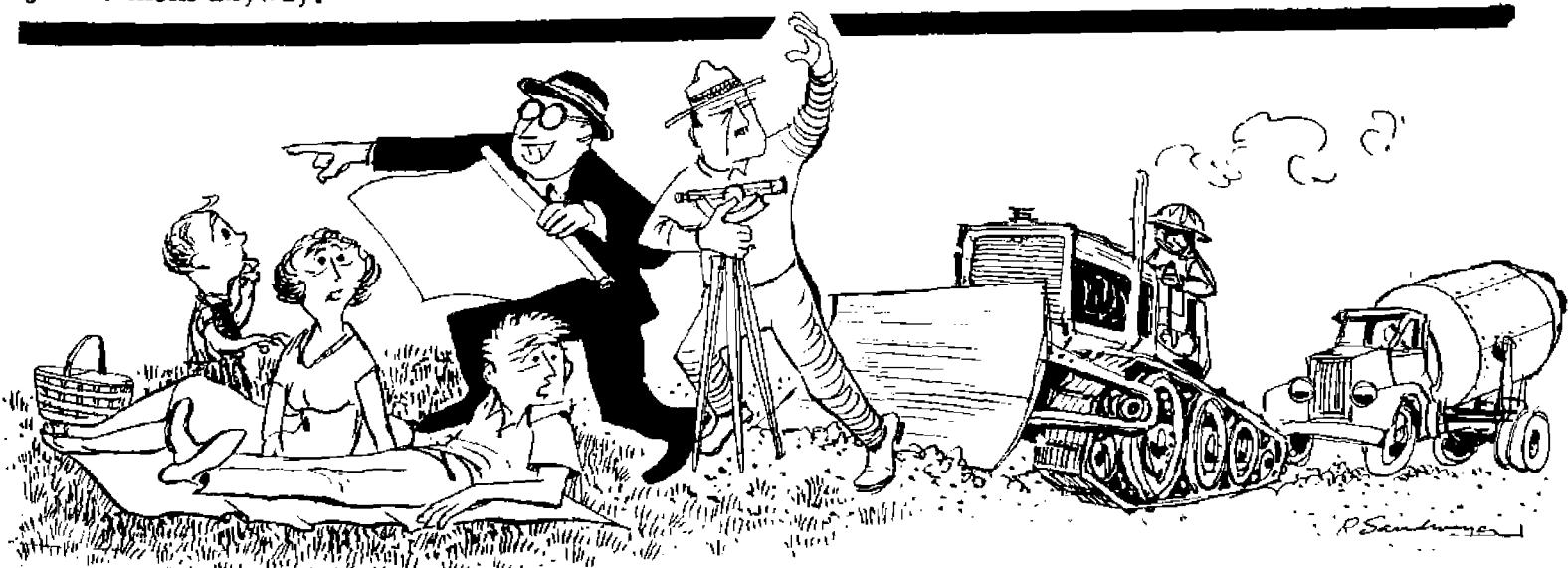
4. Do everything possible to ward off any apathy to which you may be subject. You are not apathetic about birdwatching. Why be apathetic about actively fighting to save places to enjoy? If everyone would fight his own apathy, no one would have to worry about the other fellow's apathy.

There is an organization in this city that has finally come into being that is the least apathetic of any I know. It is the Citizen's Committee to Save Elysian Park for the People. I have attended their meetings and helped them with their programs. I am so impressed by the dedication and willingness to work of every member of that Committee that I am going to help them in every way I can.

This Citizen's Committee is going to be the most effective organization in this city to fight for our parks. They attend hearings in force. They form committees and work on them. I have never seen such organization and undaunted dedication as this. I urge each and every one of you to support the work of this Citizen's Committee in every way you can.

If you think that Elysian Park is irrevocably lost, I highly recommend that you attend our Conservation meetings. This is one way in which you can become informed. The Citizen's Committee isn't quitting. Come and find out why.

The Citizen's Committee to Save Elysian Park for the People may be reached at 1860 Lucretia Ave., Los Angeles, Calif., 90026. Phone: 662-7978. Tell them I sent you.



AUDUBON

ACTIVITIES

By Otto Widman

March 13

The promise of rain held off for a later day, but the coldness lingered all day. We had two guests from San Fernando Valley: Al Ryan and T. Frick of Tujunga. Our leader, Dave Robison, led us about the Tujunga Wash and the Hanson Dam area so that we could count 54 different birds. Both the Cactus Wren and California Thrasher were in song. We saw the House, Bewick's and Rock wrens also. We had a good chance to study the difference between the American, Lesser and Lawrence's Goldfinch. The hawks were: Red-tailed, Marsh and Cooper's. At Hanson Dam we flushed a Great Horned Owl. In the water areas we saw Snipe, gallinules, Hooded Mergansers, and Green Heron. The ducks were Cinnamon Teal, Mallard, Ruddy Ducks, Canvas-backs and Lesser Scaups. Right against the dam we saw Long-billed Dowitchers, Lesser Yellow-legs and Least Sandpipers.

March 17

The Wednesday night Conservation Meeting covered four subjects: (1) Secretary of Interior Udall's program for the desalination of water. The use of atomic energy in this program will effect revolutionary changes in southwestern United States living. (2) A 'new' book is on the market, published 1865--that is correct, 1865--wherein predictions are made that are all too rapidly coming true. George Perkins Marsh wrote his "Man and Nature" as one of the first books in the United States dealing in conservation of our resources, both natural and human. (3) Concerning our condor problem, a new movie has been made by the San Fernando Audubon Society with a narrative by Al Ryan for the purpose of educating the public about our condor problem. The work is a quiet and philosophical approach that is unique and informative. (4) Bill Watson has covered this in his column in the April issue--Elysian Park and the proposed Convention Center.

March 25

It was with regret and at the same time with joy that I looked at the Robert C. Hermes "Delta of the Orinoco" film: regret that this beautifully filmed and narrated series was over with this showing, and joy that I was able to see an artist at work. The birds he showed had familiar names to us (oriole, flycatcher, meadowlark) for the most part, but what a difference! The colors were spectacular. The delta was not as dangerous as it has been made out to be. True, it is

jungle but the disease and dangers of swamp animals were minimized and the rich wildlife (most of it protected by the Venezuelan Government) and the beauty of the delta region were shown in as many scenes as he could crowd into his program. The last few minutes were given to river scenes that have been recorded well both on his film and in my memory.

March 28

Laura Lou Jenner, our leader for the day, welcomed her guests: Mr. E. Green and Mr. and Mrs. Ricky Martin. Freda Dutton introduced her daughter, Mrs. Anne Bently, and her guest Robin Brooke from Santa Fe, New Mexico. Then all 29 of us began looking for 67 birds for our list. What did we see in the hills and mountains? Yellow-legs, pipits, Lesser Scaup, Ruddy Ducks, American Mergansers, grebes, teal, Snipe, Sora Rail, Blue Heron, Green Heron, plovers and the Osprey. The ponds were loaded with these birds. Gene and Liz Rose and Jim Denholtz saw American Golden-eye and a Pigeon Hawk, a life bird for them. At the Modjeska Canyon Sanctuary Mr. Paul Colburn pointed out his work with native plants both about the sanctuary and on the hill-sides above. Mr. Beebe's article in the April issue explains this admirably. Here we saw our first Costa's Hummer; the place was loaded with Golden-crowned Sparrows. At O'Neil Park I was very much pleased to see so many people making use of our parks. We lunched here, then went up on the mesa to find Cactus Wren, a Barn Owl, and Lark Sparrows. Western Bluebirds were among the American Goldfinch and Chipping Sparrows--what a colorful contrast! The Bullock's Orioles have returned but the warblers are still rare: Audubon's and Orange-crowned in few sightings.

April 10

After the deluge you would expect some pretty wet birds and birders. The day was cold, cloudless (unbelievably so until noon), windy and the snow above us was gorgeous, both economically and aesthetically speaking, but everything was dry with mud. There was a lot of water behind Devil's Gate Dam. We saw Ruddy Duck, Coots, Lesser Scaup, Buffle-head, Cinnamon Teal, Canvas-back, Green-winged Teal, Pied-billed Grebe, all taking advantage of the 'goodies' in the debris. Bullock's Oriole again entranced us with his bright orange finery. This was a day for sparrows: Song, Sav-annah, White-crowned, House and lots of Linnets. Swallows were having a field day; Violet-green, Rough-winged and Cliff dotted the water by the dozens. The first Wilson's Warblers were here. The Yellow-throat was at the water's edge. At the dam we saw the kingfisher. Don and Caroline Adams, our leaders, joined in the fun we had around our picnic lunch in the hot sun. Our guests were Irma Rogers and Min Gerhardt, both from Monrovia. Eva Millsap and Leone Johnson were still birding after the rest of us took off. What birds can they add to our list of 43?

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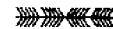
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Help Needed At Audubon Center of Southern California

Sales and phone answering help needed at Audubon Center of Southern California, El Monte from May 6 - June 1, during regular employee vacations. Hours are from 9:00-5:00 week days (no Saturday or Sunday help required). Contact Mrs. Ruff, 11028 Dicky St., Whittier. Phone: 692-6552.



California Condor Conservation Corps Organized

Organization of the Condor Preservation Corps was begun at the Conservation Meeting on April 21. It was voted to form a separate, autonomous group and Frances Kohn was elected Director. It is anticipated that two committees will work under her: Condor Observation, and Information and Education. Chairmen for these committees are needed. The Conservation Meeting was presided over by Bill Watson, Conservation Chairman. John Borneman, the National Audubon Society's new "Condor Warden", was present to assist.

PANAMA BIRDING TRIP

Continued ...

We then birded our way down the mountain road and explored a few side roads until lunch time and I hope we can be forgiven for feeling that almost everything was anti-climactic after the Quetzal. Nevertheless, our notes show that we had many good birds but only two of them were new for the trip — a Tawny-winged Woodcreeper and some Red-lored Parrots. We stopped for lunch at the Hotel and Restaurant "El Volcan," where chickens ran freely about the kitchen and wandered through the restaurant, picking up crumbs and scraps of food — sort of ambulatory vacuum cleaners. At this point the rain, which had been intermittent, turned into a torrential downpour and virtually ended our birding for the day. When we again reached the Panamerican Highway, we did go west to the Costa Rican border and managed to talk the border guards into letting us cross into their country, on the understanding that we would be back that afternoon. However, the rain was so heavy that birding would have been impossible even if there had been any birds to see. Smarter than we, they were all keeping very much under cover so, after about an hour of this, we went back into Panama and to the Hotel Nacional in David for our last night in that country.

Sunday, our last day, proved to be a busy one. Waking up in David, approximately 300 miles west of Panama City, we took off at 9:30 a.m., reaching Panama City just after 10:30. Knowing that our flight to Miami didn't leave until late afternoon, I had made a reservation at La Siesta Motel, located but a half mile from Tocumen Airport, a new beautiful and very modern motel. We had actually planned to spend the afternoon birding in the airport area but we were again rained out. In spite of this, we were destined to see one more new bird before departing for home. As we sat on the motel patio before lunch, sipping a planter's punch and enjoying the exotic plants of the extensive gardens, a hummingbird appeared at one of the flowering shrubs. It was a male Blue-crowned Woodnymph and we had numerous excellent looks at it, as well as at a female of the same species.

After some trials and tribulations, our flight left Panama City at 7:20 that evening, arriving in Miami at 9:40, considerably late, but somehow we managed to get through immigration, health and customs and still catch our 10:30 connecting flight. We arrived in Philadelphia at 1:34 a.m. and home slightly before "three o'clock in the morning." What a day and what a trip! Were we tired? Most certainly. Was it all worth it? You can just bet it was!

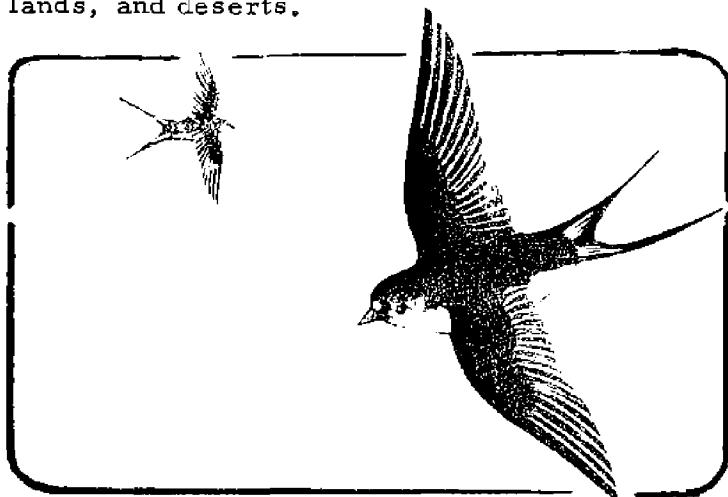
southern california

BIRDS

By Arnold Small

At this time of writing, the spring migration is well underway and should continue at a brisk pace until the time of reading. The nearly two weeks of rain, cool weather, and wind which encompassed our area served to accentuate the migratory movement. The continuous series of storms which commenced about April 3, continued, virtually unabated, until April 13. This series of low pressure disturbances moved through the length of the state in rapid succession and reached southern California only because the Pacific High Pressure System, which normally deflects these storms towards the east, had moved far eastward to north of Hawaii. By the time this Pacific High had established itself off our coast, more than seven inches of rain had fallen on Los Angeles, bringing the season total to near-normal levels of about 13 inches by mid-April and well ahead of last year's figures.

Snowpacks in the Sierra Nevadas were more than 10 feet deep in places, and in the local mountains (Tehachapis, San Gabriels, San Bernadinos, San Jacinto, etc.) snow levels often reached 2000 feet. This should insure free-flowing streams, rich flower fields, and abundant insects and seeds through the summer months. The early rains of November, coupled with the late rains of spring should produce a superb wildflower display in the foothills, grasslands, and deserts.



Although numerous migrants were noted in desert and foothill canyons during the latter part of March, this was nothing compared with the flood of migrants which poured through these areas on April 13-16, and April 17-18. Both species of Orioles had arrived by late March, but their numbers were swelled by the incoming migrants following the storms. These storms, which brought gale-force winds and sandstorms to the deserts, no doubt retarded the northward movement of the birds and caused the collection

Members Respond to Condor Fund Drive

Response to the California Condor Sanctuary Fund has been very encouraging--\$850. 00 have been received as of the end of April. There is still time to send in further contributions, but do it soon!



Welcome!

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and stalling of thousands of migrants in the Imperial and Coachella Valleys. Doubtless, many migrants could not even make it that far north as the wind blew steadily from west and northwest.

On April 11, we saw thousands of swallows attempting to breast the winds in the Imperial Valley, but were consistently forced to change direction. Small numbers of wintering waterfowl were still in evidence, but the large flocks had departed by the end of March. A large concentration of almost 2000 White Pelicans had assembled near Red Hill, at the south end of the Salton Sea during the late winter, and were still present on April 16. Although the large flocks of Western Tanagers had not yet appeared, mixed flocks of the usual warblers roamed across the deserts, through the oases, and into the foothill canyons. Desert oases should continue to be rewarding through mid-May, the peak flights of some fly-catchers, Swainson's Thrushes, Blue Grosbeaks, and Western Tanagers should be in evidence early in May. During late May, look for good movements of shorebirds in high plumage, and birding near the south end of the Salton Sea should be excellent, although somewhat warm.