

# The Campground Route to Alaska

## PART TWO

By BETTY JENNER



Water! It is everywhere, in midsummer, in Mt. McKinley National Park: in the numerous ponds; in streams coursing downcanyon; in the flat "braided" rivers; in the green tundra meadows which look so inviting but turn out to be slushy traps when you walk across them; and there is water falling from the sky all too frequently. --How can our so-called experts claim that this water is "going to waste" when, combined with almost endless sunlight, it produces abundant green forage, flower seeds, and insects, for the vast numbers of birds and animals who summer in the North? Sparrow and Pipit, shorebird and Eagle, fox and Dall sheep -- all these parents, and many more, can find food in plenty for their young, nearly twenty-four hours a day.

Still elated over our early-morning view of the great Denali, we decided to stay at Wonder Lake Campground until the next morning in the hope of a completely cloudless view. We walked the trail toward the Alaska Range, hearing Tree Sparrows and Gray-cheeked Thrushes sing, observing Bohemian Waxwings and Northern Shrikes, and seeing an endless array of fragile-appearing tundra flowers. When the river blocked further walking, we heard an unusual bird song, and could see the singer in the top of a small spruce, just too far away for definite identification. Since returning home, we have listened to our bird song records, and are sure that it was a Lesser Yellowlegs which sang so sweetly. The shorebirds act very differently in summer on the tundra than they do when we see them in California. Another mystery song, since identified by record, was the plaintive call of Dunlin.

This of course is Alpine tundra, interspersed with spruce and willow, as contrasted with the Arctic tundra of the extreme North. There is always permafrost under the thick green growth. Indeed, permafrost and extremely cold winter temperatures are the reason that road building is difficult. We were distressed to see great activity near the Park entrance, where bulldozers, shovels, and trucks were transporting gravel from a river bed to the road bed.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

# ALASKA ||||||||| Continued...

What a pity to disturb the natural aspects of the river, just for an experiment in roadbuilding for the benefit of tourists who want to save a few minutes by driving faster to "look & run." No part of the Park landscape should be spoiled just to please the Sunday driver.

The forested areas are called the "taiga" as contrasted to "tundra" and are circumpolar, that is, are similar in character in all arctic areas of the globe. Spruce, willow, alder, and birch are the dominant trees.

We had brought along a small dome-shaped "pop tent" to use for storing extra clothes, bedding, and so forth at our campsites, while we explored by foot or by car. The little tent proved its worth at Wonder Lake campground. We left our extra gear in it while we drove to a place that had beckoned us since we had first heard of it--Camp Denali, just outside the park boundary, about 90 miles from the entrance. Those who want to get away from it all can do it in rustic surroundings at Camp Denali; there's nothing to do there but enjoy the sights and sounds of Nature. We were graciously received, and can highly recommend this unusual camp to all who wish to enjoy outdoors Alaska to the fullest.

During our second night at Wonder Lake Campground, the water I've mentioned as falling from the sky arrived once more - so we left without seeing the Mountain again. This time we chose Toklat Campground--small, primitive and populated by serious birders and photographers. Here we listened to a noisy Pigeon Hawk family in the tall spruces; and here we learned where to go to see the Gyrfalcon with two young. We learned how to listen for Arctic Warbler, and soon found it in the roadside willows. We learned where to find that handsome little bird, the Wheatear.

Swallows had been the most abundant birds of the entire trip, and it was curious to observe how Bank Swallows used the great mounds of sand by the side of the road, for road repair purposes, as nesting sites. Barn, Tree, Cliff, and Violet-green Swallows were also seen in great numbers.

The following day we set up camp for a three-day stay at Teklanika Campground, where Gray Jay and ground squirrels were our constant visitors, and where Common Redpolls and Boreal Chickadees foraged in the treetops constantly. Helpful fellow-campers told us the best place to see Dall Sheep (Igloo Mountain) and the nicknames of the grizzlies we'd seen--Humpy and Pandy. The increasing wind and rain became a "Williwaw," and our camper was buffeted all night by this strong and gusty windstorm. This was the night that seven experienced mountain climbers were blown off Mt. McKinley.

Dr. Adolph Murie's book, "Birds of Mt. McKinley" was our constant companion, and is recom-

mended to those who want to find a lot of birds in a short time. He also has written extensively of the animals of the Park, of course. His cabin, equipped with short-wave radio, can be seen in a little canyon near the road at the foot of Sable Pass. The path which climbs to Ram Country -- a game-path, really--starts near the cabin. We climbed it for a mile or so, just to get the feeling of remoteness that can be achieved just a short distance from the highway.



Our allotted time was gone all too soon, and we retraced our route on the Denali Highway amid gathering clouds. At Paxson we turned south, and took the Glenn Highway route for our return to the Alaska Highway. Rivers and forests, and a few settlements where hardy pioneers are trying to make a go of it, are features of the Glenn Highway. At Tok Junction, it was a luxury to go to a private campground where the hot showers were greatly appreciated. The local laundromat was the social center of town; as we waited for our "load" to wash and dry, we mingled with other travellers, with townspeople, and with Indians who bring their washing from nearby villages.

Our journey southward toward Haines was featured by pleasant weather, but pursuing us was the rain which was to develop into the famous late-season flood of the summer of '67. The rain was falling in earnest at Haines, where we were told that we would have to wait six days for a place on the ferry. We settled in an extremely scenic campsite on Lake Chilcoot, five miles out of town; but, on a hunch, we tried again for a ticket that same afternoon, and got one, and were able to start south that same evening. I mention this, because, unless more ferries have been put into service, other travellers may have the same problem; it could play havoc with your schedule if you really had to wait six days in beautiful downtown Haines.

Once more at Prince Rupert, we took a luxurious motel room, and obtained a ticket for the Canadian ferry, "Queen of Prince Rupert." This really beautiful and well-appointed ship took us down the inland passage to Kelsey Bay, on the northern end of Vancouver Island. The boat trip takes you among mountains where mountain goats may be seen on the heights, and where waterfalls and cascades are commonplace.

As we drove southward on Vancouver Island, we stopped briefly at several places; once, to see the magnificent, towering Douglas firs of Cathedral Grove; for a picnic lunch at Qualicum Beach; and at Nanaimo, where we saw the Crested Mynah without difficulty. Our campground for the evening was Goldstream, just north of Victoria. The island has an abundance of scenic campgrounds; all 153 campsites were filled at this attractive, forested camp.

In contrast to the wet northern weather, Victoria--and indeed all Washington and Oregon--was in the grip of a drought. Our day in Victoria was superlatively beautiful. We took the marine drive; we shared our lunch with a big Glaucous-winged Gull. We had had our car serviced at Bellingham, before starting North, and now we did the same at Victoria, at the end of our rough driving. We had none of the problems that we heard about from some tourists. We never tried to hurry; we started with new tires; we had the car serviced twice. We believe that other travellers can have the same pleasant experience if they take these precautions.

Only a few days were left now; two of them we spent at our favorite place, Dosewallips Campground on Hood Canal, a very birdy area. Then, Rogue River Campground once more, still hot and crowded; then the long descent into California's Great Central Valley. Our last campsite was at an extraordinary place, Caswell State Park, on the Stanislaus River. Here the original growth of towering oaks and thick underbrush has been left intact, just as conditions were before the white man's arrival. It would take too long to list the species of birds that find food and shelter in this virtual jungle. The mosquitoes were more annoying here than any place that we had been--but only at sunset, thank goodness.

Lunch time the next--and final--day, found us at Ft. Tejon picnic ground. Can you imagine our double-take when the three huge birds soaring in the canyon across the highway turned out to be adult Condors? This indeed was the frosting on the cake--a fitting climax to our long journey along an infinite variety of campgrounds.



MORE ABOUT

## ALASKA

reprinted from "The Tundra Telegram - 1967"  
Camp Denali, Mt. McKinley

### MISHAPS AND ACTS OF GOD.

The summer of 1967 seemed to be the year for calamities of one sort or another in McKinley Park, none of which were connected with Camp Denali, but any happening in the Park affects those who live there.

In July, seven climbers from one party lost their lives on McKinley when a sudden, intense storm with winds in excess of 100 mph overtook them after they had made the summit and before they could get back to their high camp. They were a strong, experienced, well-equipped party, but the mountain was stronger.

In August, the Toklat ranger was mauled by a mother bear while he was photographing her and her cub. Evidence seems to indicate that the pair had been photographed once too often - mama bear had had enough of it, and took after him. The chance of being charged by a bear in McKinley Park is less than that of being molested on a city street, but as park visitation increases, and more and more bold photographers begin to crowd the world of the grizzly, incidents like this may increase. Let's hope they don't happen so often that rules will be made confining people to their cars. If this does happen, it will be the fault of people, not the bears.

It was a rainy summer, even for rainy McKinley Park. Over the weekend of July 22-23, the heavens opened. Better than 3 inches of precipitation was recorded at the Wonder Lake ranger station, and by Monday, July 24th, every stream and even the ordinarily dry washes were carrying torrents of muddy water. Between the Toklat and Eielson Visitor's Center, the Park road was cut by a dozen washouts. Our nine guests, as well as the occupants of more than 30 campers and trailers in the Wonder Lake area were marooned for four days by the washouts. This was the first time in 16 years that we had failed to make our scheduled run to the McKinley Park station. However, we drove in as far as the little stream in the gully just beyond Eielson Visitor's Center, whose swollen waters were taking out the road. This convinced both us and our guests that discretion is the better part of valor, and we retreated to camp to sit the storm out.

Both our guests and the scores of campers marooned in the Wonder Lake end of the Park accepted the situation with good humor and equanimity, though for many it meant cancelling out part of their Alaska trip. At the Eielson Visitor's Center, Rangers George Perkins and Gordon Haber opened the "Eielson Hilton," with floor space on a first-come, first-served basis. Rangers and campers continued on page 95

# THE AUDUBON SCENE

## NEWS FROM OTHER SOCIETIES

During a week-end in late February a large number of hawks and eagles were shot by a supposed Jack Rabbit hunter while driving down the roads in the Boardman area of northeastern Oregon. At least seven Golden Eagles were found beneath the telephone poles and it is believed that many more were killed or wounded and were not found. The finding of one in a Portland park would indicate that a Portlander was responsible for this massacre and not a local resident of that area. Although large numbers of hawks were killed, the majority of Rough-legs had already moved farther north and were not involved. Fortunately, the eagles were all Goldens which are somewhat more common than Balds. Large numbers have wintered in this area and were reported in good numbers on the Heppner Christman Bird Count. Although this is a very serious setback in the protection of these rapidly declining birds, it could have been worse. Most of the eagles shot were migrants from farther north and probably came from widely separated areas. If they were all from one area, such as eastern Oregon or Washington, the entire breeding population could have been eliminated by this one act of destruction.

If the birds of prey continue to use Oregon as a wintering area it is inevitable that a greater number will be killed if we do not begin a personal campaign to educate the people of Oregon on their responsibility to save these valuable and enjoyable birds. The laws are on the books protecting these birds, now it is up to the individual to make sure they are carried out. The law cannot do this alone.

From Oregon Audubon Society  
March "Audubon Warbler"

Ferd Ruth, John Bruce, and Dave Mertes (of U.C.) wrote a letter last month to the State Fish & Game, urging them to take steps to convince schools that collecting tidepool life does more harm than good. The letter must have had some effect, because Ed Dolder of Norman Livermore's staff said at Asilomar that State officials are now studying the problem, and that 1200 letters recently went out to high schools, asking them to stop collecting specimens at several beaches in the State.

From Mt. Diablo Audubon Society - May, 1968 "Quail"

Our lunch period, alongside the stream at Bear Gulch Picnic Area, was enlivened by a most enterprising Song Sparrow doing what none of us had ever seen a Song Sparrow do - going underwater much as a Dipper would do to take worms or larvae from the stream bed! Up he'd come and shake like a terrier, and the droplets of shiny water sprayed in all directions! Twice he sang with his mouth full - perhaps only to still the doubters. He was dark enough to appear like a Fox Sparrow - but his bill was wrong for that,

and he didn't scratch. Neither did he have the nictitating eyelid which would have shown had he been a Dipper, so close were we. But, his song was that of an adult male Song Sparrow!

From the Monterey Peninsula  
Audubon Society - May, 1968,  
"Sanderling"

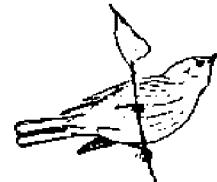
William Penn Mott Jr., Dept. of Parks and Recreation, is a friend of conservation and of our California Condors. Ian McMillan handed me copies of a letter to him on the "California Parkway" plan. Ian viewed with consternation the proposed "Sespe Creek Parkway", and recommended the elimination of that portion of the proposed Camino Cielo Parkway, No 35, which lies to the south of State Highway #154 at San Marcos Pass. These roads would encroach on the Sespe Condor Sanctuary. We have the following report from Mr. Mott:

"The routes in the California Parkway report were suggested to our district superintendents by the various counties. I sent a copy to Ian McMillan asking for his comments, specifically in regard to the parkway suggested in the Condor reserve.

"I have received a letter from Mr. McMillan indicating that placing these parkways in or adjacent to the Condor preserve would be objectionable. Since I consider Mr. McMillan an expert in the field of Condor preservation, I have instructed our staff to remove further consideration of these roads as parkways and to actively support at all hearings Mr. McMillan's disapproval."

Ian is on the job, for which we are grateful. Also, he has a book just off the press, published by E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York. It is titled "MAN AND THE CALIFORNIA CONDOR", The Embattled History and Uncertain Future of North America's Largest Free-living Bird. This book should be in every conservationist's library.

From The Paso Robles Audubon Society  
"The California Thrasher", May, 1968



A FRIEND OF EAGLES

Our Lopez Island member, Mrs. Gertrude Lovejoy Boede, reports that the eagles of San Juan County have a friend: a man who wishes to remain anonymous is quite concerned about the decline of the eagle population. Some farmers, it is claimed, feel they have a right to shoot eagles to protect their lambs. Because of limited funds, game laws cannot always be enforced. Therefore, a conservationist has offered to reimburse anyone in the amount of \$50 who can prove conclusively that the lamb was killed by an eagle.

In this connection, Mrs. Boede has located volunteers on each of the larger of the islands who will investigate reports of lambs killed by eagles.

-- From The Seattle Audubon Society  
"Notes", May, 1968

# Los Angeles Audubon Society



# calendar

WILLIAM T. WATSON, PRESIDENT  
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# June



# 1968

HEADQUARTERS, LIBRARY & NATURE MUSEUM LOCATED AT  
PLUMMER PARK, 7377 SANTA MONICA BLVD., LOS ANGELES 90046 876-0202

## JUNE

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	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

June 6      THURSDAY - EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING - 8:00 p.m., Audubon House

June 8      SATURDAY - FIELD TRIP - Buckhorn Flats. Take Angeles Crest Highway, State #2, to Buckhorn Ranger Station. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at parking area -- about 30 miles from LaCanada. We will walk into the camp, about 1 1/2 miles round trip. Some may wish to camp here for a two day trip.  
Leaders: Don & Kay Hardt      225-6424

June 11     TUESDAY - EVENING MEETING - 8:00 p.m., Great Hall, Plummer Park. Here's your chance to cool off with these three films of the Far North: "Above the Timberline", depicting the hardy plant and animal life of the Alpine Tundra; "Big Game Camera Holiday", in Tweedsmuir National Park, British Columbia -- grizzly, caribou, big-horn sheep; "The Lemmings and The Arctic Bird Life" from the Walt Disney film "White Wilderness". Refreshments will be served after the program.

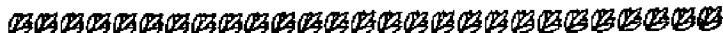
June 15     SATURDAY - FIELD TRIP FOR BEGINNERS - Fernell, Griffith Park. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at Fernell Museum. This trip is designed to help beginners in identifying birds. Bring lunch & binoculars.  
Leader: Pauline Cole      after 5:00 p.m. call: 288-4604

June 22     SATURDAY - SUNDAY - FIELD TRIP - Greenhorn Mountain. This is an overnight camping trip and will involve about 350 miles of driving. Meet 8:00 a.m. at Rancho Bakersfield. Follow U.S. 99 to Bakersfield, take 24th Street off-ramp and go east about 15 blocks to H Street. Turn left (north) to Rancho Bakersfield. If you wish to eat breakfast here, plan to leave here at 8:00 a.m. Caravan to Greenhorn Mountain, birding along the way via Gildale & south branch to Glennville, and camp Saturday night at Tiger Flats campground. Bring warm clothing as nights are cold. Motels available at Kernville, about 15 miles east.  
Information: Otto Widmann      221-8973

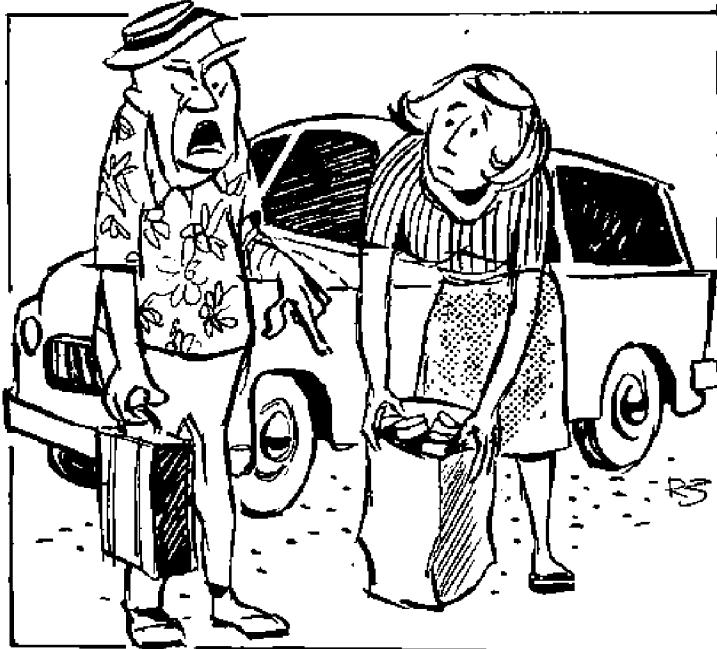
July 13     SATURDAY - POTLUCK DINNER - Fernell, Griffith Park. Meet at 5:00 p.m. at the picnic area opposite Fernell Museum. Bring a hot dish, salad, dessert, or what-you-will. Provide your own table service & hot or cold drink. We will plan to eat at 5:30 p.m. Come earlier if you want to do some birding.  
Information: 221-8973 (Otto Widmann) or 876-0202 (Audubon House)  
ALWAYS bring lunch and binoculars on field trips  
PLEASE no pets, and no collecting of any kind  
EVERYONE WELCOME AT ALL ACTIVITIES

AUDUBON FIELD

NOTES



Those of our readers who do not subscribe to "Audubon Field Notes" are missing some very fine accounts of bird populations. We will quote from the most recent issue, in order to show what a really sharp observer can find. The person I refer to is Eleanor Pugh, and this study is of breeding birds on Lodge Hill, Cambria, Calif. Without listing numbers we will name the species: Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Western Flycatcher, Oregon Junco, Wilson's Warbler, Bushtit, Pygmy Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Purple Finch, Calif. Quail, Song Sparrow, Orange-crowned Warbler, Mourning Dove, Winter Wren, Robin, Anna's Hummer, Allen's Hummer, Hutton's Vireo, Brown Towhee, Nuttall's Woodpecker, Violet-green Swallow, Swainson's Thrush, Rufous-sided Towhee, Sparrow Hawk, Pygmy Owl, Red-shafted Flicker, Hairy Woodpecker, Steller's Jay, Scrub Jay, Starling; and visitors - Turkey Vulture, Downy Woodpecker, Western Wood Pewee, Crow, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Solitary Vireo, Nashville Warbler, Black-throated Gray, Townsend's, and Hermit Warblers, Bullock's Oriole, Western Tanager, Black-headed Grosbeak, House Finch, Lawrence's Goldfinch, and Golden-crowned Sparrow. --- This stand of Cambria Pines constitutes almost the southern breeding habitat for Chestnut-backed Chickadees and Winter Wren. By May 12, most of the Pygmy Nuthatches were nest-feeding, while Oregon Juncos were beginning territorial song for second nestings; yet Swainson's Thrushes were just starting early song. --- This area comprised 43.1 acres.



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THE WESTERN TANAGER  
OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE  
LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY

7377 SANTA MONICA BLVD., LOS ANGELES 46, CALIFORNIA

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PLEASE CALL 876-0202 IF YOU CAN HELP  
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Deadlines: Feature Article - 1st of Month  
Other Material - 10th of Month

# conservation

## NOTES

Since we are a non-profit organization, your editor is not allowed to influence your thinking regarding legislation. However, we are quite sure that the following will be of great interest to you, - and you can act as you wish after reading it. Opponents are promised equal space.

\*\*\*\*\*

ASSEMBLY BILL #1660, introduced April 15, 1968, by Assemblyman John Stull, Encinitas, California, is a MAJOR STEP FORWARD in conservation in our state. It would add Article 4 (commencing with Section 1580) to chapter 5 of Division 2 of the Fish and Game Code which would be entitled:

### ECOLOGICAL RESERVES

The very wording of the title is of real importance as it indicates increasing awareness of the interrelationships and structure of our natural communities. To quote from the Legislative Counsel's Digest:

"Authorizes Department of Fish and Game to obtain land and water for the purpose of establishing ecological reserves for the purpose of protecting rare or endangered wildlife or aquatic organisms or specialized habitat."

The bill stresses that such reserves would not be classified as wildlife management areas, thus freeing the Fish and Game Department from having to pay money in lieu of taxes which is necessary under the older classification. This would allow additional wildlife reserve land to be acquired with less expenditure.

If this meets with your approval, URGE THE PASSING OF THIS BILL! Write NOW to: Assemblyman Stull, Rm. 4134, Capitol Bldg., Sacramento, California. Also write to members of the Assembly Committee on Conservation and Wildlife: Pauline Davis, chairman, Rm. 4148, Walter J. Karabian, Rm. 2176, W. Craig Biddle, Rm. 5175, Ken MacDonald, Rm. 4149, George Milias, Rm. 2016, Walter Powers, Rm. 4140, Vincent Thomas, Rm. 4126, Floyd Wakeman, Rm. 4160, Patrick McGee, Rm. 4141.

MANY CALIFORNIA SPECIES OF WILDLIFE NEED ALL THE PROTECTION THEY CAN GET!

The American Cetacean Society will hold monthly meetings the last Monday of each month, - at the Marina Del Rey Hotel - in the Admiralty Room East, 8 p.m.

Those of our members who are interested in pelagic birding are urged to attend, and to make plans to join some of the many boating trips that are planned.

### PROPOSED STATE PARK

Scarcely anyone has missed seeing the Red Rock Canyon when driving north on the inland highway. There are evidences of vandalism at this beautiful place. Help save this by making your wishes known regarding AB561. This was introduced by Assemblyman Kent H. Stacy, to appropriate \$440,000 to Parks & Recreation, to acquire Red Rock Canyon, Kern County, for the State Park System. Write to:

Robert W. Crown, Chairman  
Assembly Ways & Means Committee  
State Capitol Building  
Sacramento, Calif. 95814

Suggested for that birding friend or relative in Viet Nam:

Birds of South Viet Nam..... Wildash - \$7.50



Trogon

Your editor had the pleasure of camping at Bog Springs Campground in Madera Canyon, south of Tucson, on May 14, 15, and 16. I can report that the Trogons have arrived! How exciting it was to hear that unmistakable "kowm, kowm" in the small canyon just a few yards from my campsite! I watched a handsome male as he went from tree to tree, catching insects.

The people at the Santa Rita Lodge are of the opinion that there may be as many as six pairs of Trogons in Madera Canyon this season. They have been observed from the Lodge itself. This is fine news for birders, since there are few birds more exciting to observe than this colorful tropical species, - so like a parrot, yet so much more gentle in action and appearance.

I strongly recommend a visit to the Arizona canyons this year. Flycatchers seemed to be abundant, and the Becard is being seen at Patagonia. There was late snow in the Chiricahuas, so the plant life should be abundant, which is fine for the birds.

# AUDUBON ACTIVITIES

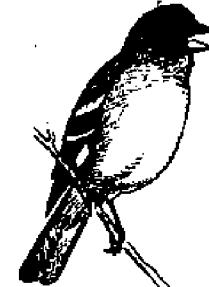
By Otto Widmann

April 9 - EVENING MEETING - Easter vacation lured many of our members out of town, but those who attended were delighted with the program of slides and movies shown simultaneously and narrated by Fern Sanders. Fern's movies vied with Ed's slides to hold the viewer's attention. The birds, as well as some mammals and reptiles, of Florida and the Gulf Coast were pictured in a variety of activities and the sight of the Skimmers skimming was only one of many fascinating shots. Richard Wilson, our recently appointed Sanctuary Chairman, reported that his committee is working with a local group in the Pacific Palisades, attempting to establish a sanctuary in Los Liones Canyon. Caroline Adams, chairman of the Nominating Committee, reported the slate of officers proposed for 1968-69 as follows: President, Laura Lou Jenner; 1st Vice President, Herbert Clarke; 2nd Vice President, Richard Wilson; Executive Secretary, Abigail King; Recording Secretary, Frances Kohn; Treasurer, Olga Clarke; and Registrar, Margery Wilson.

April 20-21 - MORONGO VALLEY - The trip "lucked out" both weatherwise and birdwise. We had high winds through "The Pass" and at Whitewater, and saw evidence of blowing sand down Indio-way, but at Morongo it was beautifully clear with just enough breeze to ruffle the cottonwood leaves. Our two dozen L.A.A.S. birders were greeted by treesful of migrant warblers (12 species), vireos (3 species), flycatchers (7 species) and sparrows (5 species). Our other sightings were a colorful lot - flaming orange Bullock's Orioles and Western Tanagers, seemingly in every tree; deep Blue Grosbeaks in the warm morning light; Lazuli Buntings with unbelievable sky blue, white, and russet plumage; and best of all, a Summer Tanager, singing loud and clear, then flying away, glowing brilliantly in the sunlight. Nests we had aplenty - a somber little Vermilion Flycatcher, sitting on her nest in a horizontal mesquite branch; hen Gambel's Quail, flushing noisily, giving away her secret, - fifteen speckled eggs tightly fitted into a grass-lined cup on the ground; the great yellow eyes of a Horned Owl looking down from a nest high in a cottonwood; and our only family of the day - three downy white Long-eared Owls overflowing their nest while Mother stood watch, long ears straight up from the top of her head, not from the corners as in the Great Horned Owl.

After lunch all plans for the Salton Sea and camping at Finney Lake were abandoned, due to the wind and blowing sand. The Adams', Fran Kohn, Ellen Stephenson, and Jim Huffman birded around the oasis at Monument Headquarters, and camped at Indian Cove. The Baxters, Jerry John-

son, Bruce Broadbooks, Dennis Coskren, Ralph Mancke, and Shum Suffel continued their birding at Whitewater despite the wind. They were well rewarded by more migrants: a Virginia's Warbler seen by Dennis, 20-some Vaux' Swifts, several Chats and a Gray Flycatcher - studied to the satisfaction of everyone. The last bird of the day seen from the car looked like a gull, but on closer inspection proved to be an Osprey, fighting its way through the Pass against the wind.



April 27-28 - MORONGO VALLEY, INDIAN COVE, WHITEWATER CANYON - We didn't have wind to contend with, but many of the migrants had left. Interesting sightings: 60 White Pelicans, circling for altitude; LeConte's Thrasher; several singing Lucy's Warblers; and the young Long-eared Owls, out of the nest, and getting feathers instead of down. Shorebirds at the pond: Killdeer, Lesser Yellowlegs, and Long-billed Dowitchers. On the 26th I saw a Black-crowned Night Heron at Covington. Several of our members camped at Indian Cove, and were fortunate enough to see the Harris' Sparrow at Whitewater Canyon on Sunday.

May 12 - PELAGIC TRIP - PASADENA AUDUBON SOCIETY - High winds and high seas caused the cancellation of this trip. Forty disappointed Auduboners from five local societies packed up their gear and headed for alternate birding localities. More than half the group met at the Newport Pier, and saw a surprising number of pelagic birds. Common Terns were everywhere; Bonaparte Gulls fished in the shelter of the pier; at least four Jaegers (probably Parasitic) flew by, low to the water, into the teeth of the gale. Most amazing were sightings of Petrels (Black?) at long binocular range, and Shearwaters (Sooty?) at long 'scope range. A small caravan moved to Upper Newport Bay, where they found a smattering of shorebirds and ducks, of nearly all the expected winter species but in very small numbers. We heard Clapper Rails in the Salicornia, and some of our younger members found a Blue-winged Teal in the 'scope. The Venattas, Kings, Jim Schlesinger, and Dennis Coskren lunched at Doheny Beach and were met at the sewer ponds by Grace Nixon and Shum Suffel. Shorebirds were lacking, but late Violet-green and Tree Swallows supplemented the resident Rough-wings and Cliff Swallows.

May 14 - EVENING MEETING - Sandy Woldman, aged 3 1/2, daughter of Irwin Woldman, made her first visit to an Audubon Society Evening Meeting. She heard Pres. Bill Watson announce that he will continue his California Condor program atop Mt. Pinos this summer. The Forestry



(Continued)

Service will construct directional signs; there will be Saturday night Naturalist Lectures at McGill Campground on Mt. Pinos. Caroline Adams read the list of nominees for office for the coming year; since there were no challenges, the slate was elected unanimously. The list appears above. It was announced that our own Pauline Cole has been granted a half scholarship to the Audubon Camp of the West. An excellent choice!

Phillip Klasing, from the Netherlands, presented his film, "Coincidental Meetings" with accompanying sound by Niels Klasing. It began with a dazzling display of Swans in an ice-rimmed pond. The close-up studies were truly remarkable. Then, a procession of Chaffinch, Green Finch, and Black-headed Gulls followed, all intimately studied by the camera. European Spring followed, and nesting of Flycatchers, Blue-winged Grebe, and the peregrinations of a lone Ouzel in a bog. Sand Martins cliff-hanging, Goldfinch in an apple orchard! Here was an excellent set of pictures, where Mr. Klasing left the camera on the species long enough for the audience to study the individual. The courting of the European Ruff was especially well done.



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**Dr. & Mrs. Freeman A. Tatum**  
767 Paseo Miramar  
Pacific Palisades, Calif. 90272

**Mr. Bernard Wilets**  
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## **Alaska** .....Continued .....

pooled their food for community pot-luck suppers, and evening folk sings and poetry readings were held in the observation room. In fact, there were more than a few who were almost sorry when the Park bulldozers finally pushed through the rubble that had once been a road and escorted 32 vehicles out in convoy.

For the rest of the summer, there was either a bridge out on the Denali highway, preventing cars from getting into the Park, or a washout on the railroad that curtailed train traffic between the Park and Anchorage or Fairbanks. Even though we had been booked solid for the rest of the season, from July 24th on we operated at less than half capacity.

It appears that the Park Service is going ahead with plans for development of a hotel-campground complex for Wonder Lake at the site we, at Camp Denali, call "Chain of Lakes" - the area across the road east of Reflection Pond. Here a series of tundra ponds nestle among the hills, and we have taken many of you to watch plovers, curlews ('scuse me, whimbrels), and willow ptarmigan and their chicks in late June and early July. Here we have been able to give even those who aren't hardy hikers a taste of walking over tundra to observe the plants and edaphic conditions that make up this arctic ground cover.

While it was a relief to know that a huge camp-ground won't be sprawled out below Camp Denali, we cannot help but grieve a bit that this delightful spot, so accessible and yet so completely undisturbed by man, may soon be scarred by bulldozers and buildings, and trampled by cars and crowds for the sake of the holy word "development."

Survey stakes appeared in late August, and rumor had it that drilling equipment would soon move in to drill testholes to determine permafrost conditions. We aren't engineers, but we can't help but worry about some very practical aspects, such as pollution of Wonder Lake from such a concentration of people within its gathering basin, water supply, cost of building so far from the railroad and major highway supply lines, what happens to the present Park road with such a surging increase in traffic, and most of all, why aren't alternative proposals being considered? One such alternative seems to us to make good sense: with talk of expanding the Park boundary southward already current, why not build a Banff-type hotel complex south of the Alaska Range, where the site would be almost as close to the peak, would not be troubled by permafrost, could be supplied directly by rail and highway, and have year-round accessibility and use?

Since the master plan for McKinley Park is being revised, now would be the time to bring forth imaginative proposals which could reconcile the two seemingly contradictory directives given the National Park Service: to preserve the priceless natural treasures of this outstanding scenic area and to develop the facilities which make it possible for the public to have access to them.

# SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA BIRDS

By G. SHUMWAY SUFFEL



June is the month for a "change of pace". The spring migration is virtually over, the shorebirds are gone except for a few non-breeders, and the height of the nesting season in the lowlands has passed. Now we must look to the local mountains - the Sierra Madres, San Bernhardinos, Mt. Pinos and others are at their very best this month.

The California side of the Colorado River has many Arizona birds, but can be incredibly hot and humid - an air-conditioned motel and an early morning birding session are suggested. Gila Woodpeckers and Wied's Crested Flycatchers are nesting in the date groves. Summer Tanagers, Lucy's Warblers, and those hard-to-find Yellow-billed Cuckoos should be looked for (maybe it should be "listened for") in the shantytown above Laguna Darn. West Pond is good for Least Bitterns and possibly for Boat-tailed Grackles (Bruce Broadbooks saw five of them there in April). Bronzed Cowbirds might be found near the cattle pens, and California's only colony of Inca Doves resides in Parker Dam City. If you have time, return via Needles, and turn north at Goff's to Cima. This is a dirt road through uninhabited country but you should find Bendire's and LeConte's Thrashers and possibly a Gray Vireo or a Gilded Flicker.

The spring migration was not spectacular in most places, but high winds blowing through San Gorgonio Pass resulted in a noteworthy concentration of small passerines at Whitewater Canyon on April 20th. A steady stream of warblers was reported from all points in Los Angeles, the first two weeks of May, especially. Yellows, Wilson's, Hermits, Townsend's, Black-throated Grays, and Nashvilles were commonly seen. About on schedule, an Ash-throated Flycatcher was in the Jenners' yard on May 19. A pair of Wied's Flycatchers was at Covington Park, on May 11, also two Vermilion Flycatcher nests with five young. Thousands of Western Tanagers migrated through Morongo Valley. The Virginia Rails in the cattail marsh at the Levin Ranch, on April 20, provided a chance to experiment. We knew they were there, but could get no answer to our imitated calls. David Gaines suggested tapping two stones together. Does it work? An enthusiastic "kee-dick, kee-dick, kee-dick" from the rails provided our answer.

The pelagic trip from San Diego on April 27th produced thousands of Sooty and Pink-footed Shearwaters and with them at least two rare Pale-footed Shearwaters. In the morning we had Leach's Petrels (the dark-rumped race) and in the afternoon, Black Petrels. The best bird of the day was a Tufted Puffin - far south of its normal range. The top of Mt. Palomar proved that it is a good place for Spotted Owls. At least three of them were calling simultaneously.

Brown Thrashers took the spotlight as our most surprising vagrants. The bird which wintered at Cabrillo Beach got most of the attention, but Guy McCaskie worked his magic at the Arboretum in Arcadia and produced a fine rufous adult within 15 minutes on April 22nd. Shirley Wells, never to be outdone, found another in the willow clumps at Marina Del Rey on the 26th. On April 27, a group in Santa Barbara found one at Tucker's Grove. Not over a dozen have been recorded in California prior to these four birds. --John Dunn had a good day on May 4th at Sepulveda Recreation Area; at least five Bank Swallows and a Solitary Sandpiper, rare in spring. A Northern Waterthrush was discovered by Grace Nixon at Averill Park on May 7, also a White-throated Sparrow.

Two banding returns may be of interest. Don Falconer reports a banded first-year male Hooded Oriole at his Rolling Hills home. This is probably one of the nestlings banded there by Jay Sheppard just one year ago. Jay also netted a Yellow-breasted Chat at Morongo Valley, which he had banded there two years ago.

Least Terns arrived in late April and were seen at their protected Huntington Beach nesting area. A Golden Plover, still in winter plumage, was at Cabrillo Beach on April sixteenth (Shirley Wells). A late immature Kittiwake was seen at the Santa Monica Pier on the first of May, and on the same day an adult Sabine's Gull, in beautiful plumage even to a slight rosy glow on the breast, was at Marina del Rey. A small amount of oil on the undertail coverts probably accounted for its inshore occurrence. Arctic Loons in full breeding plumage were also in the main channel.

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Mr. Levin, of the ranch in Morongo Valley, is ill and has requested that no one bother him asking permission to bird on his property. Unfortunately, several field trip groups abused his hospitality by driving onto his property, and walking in his fields. Our own group has never shown him this courtesy, but of course must suffer the consequences of the actions of others. We wish to thank him once more for allowing us to visit his ranch, so remarkable for rare birds, down through the years. It has been an unforgettable experience for all who have had the opportunity to wander underneath the great cottonwoods and by the pond. Thank you, Mr. Levin, - and may your health improve.

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'WANTED TO PURCHASE: A copy of Greenewalt's "Hummingbirds".

ALSO WANTED: Someone to work part time in a photographic laboratory, processing photographs of birds. Will train.

Don Bleitz  
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