

BIRDING FIFTY YEARS AGO

GRANDFATHER on his birding trips through Missouri, would take his eldest son Berthold, my father, along. As a teenager Father got to know the birds of the Ozarks, the Peninsular (southeast corner of Missouri), and favorite areas up the Missouri and Mississippi rivers. There was an interruption in his birding when father was studying in Paris and Berlin. In the meantime grandfather had been helping to organize the St. Louis Audubon Society. Father was the first to become a member. When his family and finances were more settled he began taking advantage of grandfather's growing library. He had the *Auk*, *Wilson's Bulletin*, *Oologist*, *Osprey* and the *Condor* at his disposal. When father's health began to fail in 1912, he was ordered to California for a rest. Six months later mother followed with the four children and by June we were settled and called ourselves Californians from then on. Los Angeles was a small town then and by 1918, when I was old enough to roam about, I could walk south on Hoover to Slauson Avenue, the city limits; farms extended south between Main and Vermont. Here we could see Mountain Bluebirds and Plovers, and always clouds of blackbirds of all species.

Father's birding was ruled by the *Bird Lore*. When H. L. Wyman began reporting on birding in Southern California in 1918, nothing could have pleased him more. Then in 1920, Mrs. Marion B. Schneider began reporting the "Seasons" in Los Angeles and vicinity. These two reporters ruled Father's birding routine. The corresponding season the next year saw us (Father and the 4 kids) heading for Franklin Canyon Dam to see Holboell's Grebe, the European Widgeon, Common Loon or the many ducks and geese that settled there. At Echo Park were Tree Swallows, Calaveras or Lutescent Warblers, Buffleheads, Redheads, and Canvasbacks. Point Fermin always delighted us because Mother always took a picnic basket and we could climb over the rocks down below. Father would be looking for Thurber's Junco or Parkman's Wren, Bank Swallows, Alaska Hermit Thrush, Hudsonian Curlew, Dixson's White-winged Scoters or the Farallon Cormorant, maybe a Dusky Warbler. At Griffith Park Ferndell (it existed before Griffith granted the park to the city) we looked for Thick-billed Sparrows, Harris' or Willow Woodpecker, the Red-naped Sapsucker and sometimes the Blue-fronted Jay. Later when the park was dedicated we hiked to Mt. Hollywood to see the Red-bellied and Swainson's Hawk and over where the golf course and zoo were later established, we looked for Willow Finch and in the oaks the California Jay. Over the riverbed were Violet-green Swallows and White-throated Swifts; and in the water grasses were the San Diego Red-wings and the Tule Wren.

A big occasion was when our neighbor, Mr. Bailey, would take us to Nigger's Slough in his automobile. We had to stay on the dry land, because Mother would have a fit if we came home

Otto Widmann

with muddy shoes; too many people disappeared into the swamp and were never seen again. But here we looked for the White-faced Glossy Ibis, Pipits, Western Gnatcatchers, Yellowthroats;



Continued overleaf

but most of all in 1922 we went to find the Fulvous Tree Ducks, Anthony's Green Heron, and Black Terns, which were seen there several years in a row. Blue Grosbeaks and Marsh Hawks even White-tailed Kites were abundant. Sometimes Mr. Bailey would take us to Anaheim's Landing and we would camp on the beach. Father would disappear into the back country to count the Egrets and Great Blues or try to find Sabine's Gull or Baird's Sandpiper or the Red-backed Sandpiper. On the beach we looked for Fulmars, Jaegers and all the "peeps"—none of which I could tell at this time. Sometimes the White Pelican could be seen from the embankment, but we always went to Newport to see them. We would hike along the cliffs to look down on the thousands of ducks and Phalaropes. The Pelicans were up by the salt works with the Egrets and here we would look for the Golden Eagle and Ospreys.

Besides our trip to Arroyo Seco Canyon to see the Ouzels, Canyon Wren, or to Scholl's Canyon to look for Bell's Sparrow or Harris' Woodpecker, there were the trips to the Los Angeles County Museum where we could study the specimens stuffed in the many cases. Here Mr. Wyman's and later Mr. Willet's birds and Mr. Comstock's butterflies enthralled us. This was as much a part of our birding 50 years ago as trying to find the Golden-winged Flicker that was seen feeding in the ficus outside the building. Father attended the Audubon meetings when they were held here in the basement or over at Bovard Hall—also in the basement. Sometimes the Society would meet at the small Auditorium in the Southwest Museum above Sycamore Grove. Mrs. Bicknell (an A.O.U. Associate) was president then and in 1921 she happily announced that there were 100 members in the Los Angeles Chapter. When they had their Annual Banquet, they could seat only 135 people and at least 50 people were turned away.

Father tried to do his part for birding conservation, so in 1915 he took a picture of my brother, Homer (holding the gun barrel) and two neighbors (Henry Allen with the gun; Henry Bebb

CONSERVATION

PROPOSITION U TO BE ON BALLOT
Should 21 acres be excised from Elysian Park for a Police Academy by Charter Amendment? The Citizens Committee to Save Elysian Park believes not. According to the Committee, the City Council's Joint Committee (Recreation and Parks, Police, Fire and Civil Defense) has recommended that a new site be found for the Academy, in part, because the Elysian Park site is now, and will continue to be inadequate for the high quality and comprehensive training required for the L.A.P.D. Also, the Elysian Park Master Plan, and the current Emergency Employment Act watering program will result in increased public use of the park surrounding the academy site, resulting in constant irritation.

has the sign) and sent the picture to the *Examiner*, where it was published with a small story on Bird Protection. Father's harshest expletive around the house was "Oh Pshaw." Once we heard him "oh Pshawing" the killing of 5000 eagles in Alaska for a 50 cents bounty (in 1919) and when the number went to 8,375, Father's "Oh Pshaw" was dismal indeed. He went over to see Mr. Willett at the County Museum and he wrote Mr. Frank Chapman in Washington, D.C., to see if something couldn't be done. His letters to Grandfather were blue.

Once each year the Audubon Man would come and we would assemble in the kindergarten room, because that was the largest room we had at Menlo Ave Grammar School. He would tell us the most horrendous stories of Nature and the Wild Country. Years later at Manual Arts High School in the American Literature Class for outside reading, I was constantly amazed that I knew the story. Then I realized that the Audubon Man had in his story-telling hour introduced us to Bret Harte, Mark Twain, Joaquin Miller, Jack London and on every Nature Walk we had walked with John Muir and John Burroughs. The vividness with which he introduced us city kids to nature still likes pleasantly in my memory.

Now that I look back I can see our birding has not been changed much. We have to go further afield to see our birds, but our parks remain; the slough, now Harbor Park, still has the Ibis and Newport still attracts the birds by the thousands, and the White Pelicans return. We are still as concerned about the slaughter of our eagles and are equally amazed that the old wives' tales from the 19th century still persist about them. But at last we are better organized and can do some few things to save our heritage. The Audubon Man doesn't come anymore but we have Walt Disney and the Wild Life films in season, and we still have members in our society who try in their own way to educate the young so that they too may carry on the tradition. The teachers are gone but the students remain and that makes for a very healthy society indeed.

COASTLINE CONSERVATION

Assemblyman Paul Priolo, chairman of the Assembly Planning and Land Use Committee reports on Proposition 20 in his Sacramento Report for September. It is based on the Sieroty bill passed by the Assembly, but killed while still in committee when sent to the Senate. The proposition, if passed, will establish a state agency and a series of regional boards. Working with the cities and counties in their area, the regional boards will develop a land use plan for their portion of the coastline. An overall plan for the entire coast will then be developed and subproposed to lock the state into a rigid formula. The Legislature is empowered to modify the proposal by a two-thirds vote and the final plan must come back to the Legislature to be implemented, modified, or completely rejected.

BOOK STORE

MARION PICKETT

The Holiday Season is nearly here, that special time of year for special giving. To bring you up-to-date on what is new in the Book Store, we have acquired a variety of specialized bird books that would be life-long gifts for anyone's personal library.

NORTH AMERICA:

"Birds of North America" by Eliot Porter
"Birds of Idaho" by Thomas Burleigh
"Birds of Newfoundland & Labrador" by Oliver L. Austin, Jr.
"Distribution of Birds of California" by Grinnell & Miller (last of these available)
"Guide to Bird Finding in Washington" by Wahl & Paulson
"Combination List for Birds of North America" by J. A. Tucker

AFRICA

"The Birds of West & Equatorial Africa" by David A. Bannerman 2 vols.
"African Handbook of Birds" by C. W. Mackworth Series 2, vol. I & II

ASIA

"Birds of the Philippines" by J. D. Dupont
"Birds of Japan" by K. Kobayashi
"Birds of South Vietnam" by Philip Wildash
"An Introduction to Malayan Birds" by G. D. Madoc
"Handbook of Birds of India & Pakistan" by Salim Ali 7 vols.

GENERAL

"Darwin's Islands" by Ian Thornton
"The New Dictionary of Birds" by A. Thomson
"The Leaf Book" by Ida Geary

Besides over 350 different kinds of bird and nature books, we also have an unusual new line of stationery and Xmas note paper not to mention the brilliantly colored towels which are always useful as well as decorative. We have added a new artist to our stationery collection, Jean Perkins, whose original silk screened works feature an assortment of wild birds drawn directly from life. Please remember that you may make mail or phone orders directly to Audubon House. Meanwhile, we do appreciate all your thoughtful suggestions regarding new stock for the store and hope to continue to fill the birding needs of all our members and friends.

Marsh

CONCLUDED

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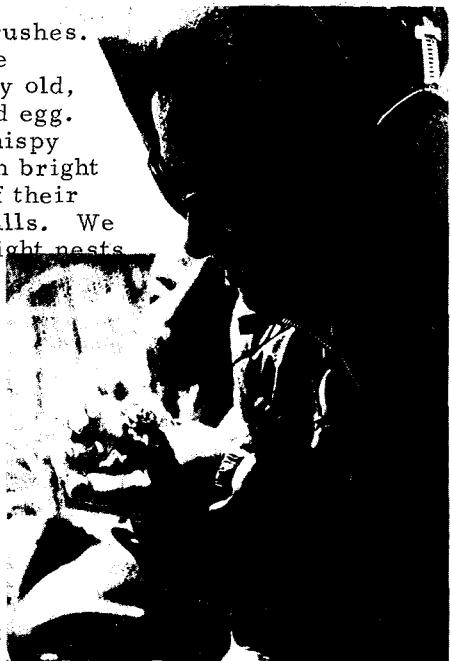
looked in the bulrushes. Another has three chicks about a day old, and one unhatched egg. The young are wispy downy black, with bright red skin on top of their heads, and red bills. We tag the sites of eight nests and leave, and are pleased to see the adults return to their brooding almost immediately.

Heading for home, we flush a marsh hawk.

Three young birds, fairly well advanced, dash for the water and land sprawled out in the reeds, but they remain close

Photograph by Gerald Maisel to the nest as we do not approach closer. About 2-1/2 miles from shore, a startled barn owl takes to the air. Suddenly, Franklin's gulls materialize, mobbing the bird until it is forced to land again. Each time it rises the performance is repeated, and we watch the beleaguered owl make its slow progress toward shore.

It is getting late, and we must return before dark. We hold on to the boat as it speeds across the open water. I look ahead, right into the lowering sun, and it has a straight path to me over the lake. A path of shimmering gold. Tips of grasses, half bent, poke up out of the water, and to each side are green rushes, spreading off into the far distance. Birds are flying home. Great blue herons, with their slow powerful beat, glide smoothly past in the boundless expanse above. Coots run ahead and disappear. Pairs of ducks flush off to left and right, always well ahead of us, and are gone. Away to the east, the sky is turning the violet pink of evening, the hills in the distance are now silhouetted, and here and there clumps of Lombardy poplars tell of habitation a long way off. This is a land of space and clear air and reeds and water and birds, and it is glorious. As we come ashore, the sun is well below the horizon. The common nighthawks make fast passes overhead, calling their sharp nasal "peent!" And somewhere in the distance, Canada geese, flying high, are heard honking as they go.



audubon activities

DONALD ADAMS

HARBOR PARK, Sept. 24. A group of 43 birders met at the south end of the lake on a balmy morning, but our combined efforts produced little in the way of birds except for a WHITE-TAILED KITE. We soon moved on to Pt. Firmin Park and managed to get close observations of TOWNSEND'S WARBLERS, and satisfactory glimpses of TRAILL'S FLYCATCHER. A little group of NORTHERN PHALAROPE were circling beyond the breakers, a pair of WHIMBRELS flew by, but nothing of real excitement could be found. After lunch about half the group drove to the South Coast Botanic Garden and were rewarded for their perseverance by the sight of a TENNESSEE WARBLER in excellent plumage, a PALM WARBLER tail-wagging vigorously by the stream, and a BLACKPOLL in fall plumage. Several LAZULI BUNTINGS were feeding in a shrub and some excitement was created when a TRI-COLORED NUN, obviously an escaped bird, joined them. A COMMON SNIPE spent the afternoon feeding in a muddy furrow of the grassy hillside and a GREATER YELLOWLEGS and several SPOTTED SANDPIPER bobbed at the edge of the pond. A total of 83 species was logged for the day under the leadership of Shirley Wells in the morning and Hal Baxter in the afternoon.

MALIBU LAGOON, Sept. 25. A sunny, warm and windless morning started well at Malibu Pier with the sighting of 35 BROWN PELICANS. Noteworthy birds at the lagoon included BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER, ELEGANT TERN, WIDGEON, BLACK TURNSTONE and GREAT-EX YELLOWLEGS. As the group wandered upstream, an OYSTERCATCHER circled a few times, an omen of the good birding to come. Many warblers were feeding on aphids in the willows, including a VIRGINIA'S and a TENNESSEE (a life bird for many of us). A COMMON SNIPE zigzagged along the stream and a pair of RED-SHOULDERED HAWKS perched in a large sycamore.

While lunching at Pt. Mugu, we watched a COMMON LOON attempting to drive off SURF SCOTERS by diving under them. Here were counted 250 more BROWN PELICANS, as well as BRANDT'S CORMORANTS, CASPIAN TERNS and a PARASITIC JAEGER. Some of us continued on to Santa Clara Estuary where we found 12 immature BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERONS and saw, in with many waders and ducks, DUNLIN and 2 PECTORAL SANDPIPER. As evening approached, five eager birders, all that remained from the original fifteen, went on to the Ventura County Fair Grounds where thousands of SOOTY SHEARWATERS were flying offshore. To our surprise, our total count was 103!

AUDUBON CAMP OF THE WEST

Anyone wishing to nominate candidates for partial or full scholarships to the Audubon Camp of the West 1973, provided by the Los Angeles Audubon Society, please submit by December 1 biographical details to the Executive Secretary.

With us were Mr. Charles Kaigler, president of the Honolulu Audubon Society, and his wife Hilda and they were able to add four life birds to their lists. Leader, Ed Navajosky.

PELAGIC TRIP - MONTEREY BAY October 7.

The California Field Ornithologists ran two boats out of Sam's Wharf. Strong westerlies raised a chop of Pt. Piños, but to the eastward the waters were calm, and good seeing prevailed. The outstanding bird was a THICK-BILLED MURRE, in excellent plumage - dark head, marked gape, distinct sharp angle between the black and white feathers on the breast. The last discovery of the thick-billed was by Ellen Stephenson in the fall of 1968. A TUFTED PUFFIN was seen flying away at same distance. An extremely well-marked SKUA showed its white wing patches very well, as did several POMERINE JAEGERS. Several NEW ZEALAND SHEARWATERS few close to the boats, showing good field marks.

Petrels were unusually scarce, only the BLACK and ASHY being present. CASSIN'S AUKLET were common, and a flight of 7 RHINOCEROS AUKLET was seen.

PELAGIC TRIP - OXNARD to ANCAPA ISLAND - Oct. 8

Sea & Sage organized a trip to the Channel Islands. A good selection of pelagic birds were seen, including POMERINE & PARASITIC JAEGERS, BLACK & ASHY PETRELS, SOOTY & PINK-FOOTED SHEARWATERS, RED & NORTHERN PHALAROPES. Herb Clarke, Leader.

EVENING MEETING - Oct. 10. Ben & Miriam Romero gave an excellent but disturbing account of the invasion of Death Valley National Monument and Bureau of Land Management areas by alfalfa growers pumping and lowering the water level, mandatory for the continued life of the endemic pupfish; of the BLM proposal to make a motor-cycle park over the spectacular sand dunes and canyon of the Amargosa River; the diversion of the river (the only source of water for Bad Water) for the City of Las Vegas.

Information needed on established exotic bird species in Southern California.

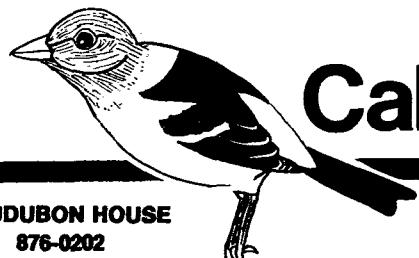
We need facts. If you have word of mouth information you can best help us by trying to track down the information to its original source.

We need to know the exact species involved, not just a general name like parakeet or parrotlet etc.

We need to know the extent of range, the time the birds have been around, the size of their population, and their status--are they breeding (what evidence?), do their numbers change? do they seem to pose a pest threat (is there evidence of damage?), how do they fit into the ecological community (what do they eat?, do they live in natural or manmade areas of vegetation?), what evidence is there of their origin--escaped, released, etc.?

John William Hardy, Curator
Moore Laboratory of Zoology
Occidental College, LA, CA,
90041 213-256-3037

Los Angeles Audubon Society



Calendar

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

DOROTHY DIMSDALE
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

CHRISTMAS COUNTS

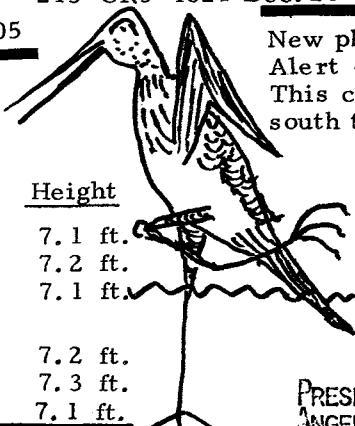
Name	Compiler	Telephone	Date	Description
Los Angeles	Sandy Wohlgemuth	213-344-8531	Dec. 31	The Annual Convention of the National
Palos Verdes	Shirley Wells	213-831-4281	Dec. 18	Audubon Society will be held at the Denver
Santa Barbara	Wm. Ure*	805-966-5350	Dec. 16	
Topanga-Malibu	Joan Mills	213-CR5-4821	Dec. 20	Hilton Hotel, Denver, Colorado, June 10,

*2310 Sta Barbara St S.B. 93105

EXCEPTIONALLY
HIGH TIDES IN

NOVEMBER

Date	Time	Height
Monday Nov. 20	7:30 am	7.1 ft.
Tuesday Nov. 21	8:15 am	7.2 ft.
Wednesday Nov. 22	8:59 am	7.1 ft.
DECEMBER		
Tuesday Dec. 19	7:16 am	7.2 ft.
Wednesday Dec. 20	8:05 am	7.3 ft.
Thursday Dec. 21	3:57 am	7.1 ft.



Audubon Bird Reports
874-1318

CAROLINE ADAMS CALENDAR

New phone number for the New York Rare Bird Alert - 212 - 832-6523
This covers all of Long Island, New Jersey, south to Cape May & Brigantine Refuge -

ANNUAL DINNER

OF THE
LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY

WILL BE HELD
FEBRUARY 13, 1973

PRESENT PLANS ARE TO HOLD THE DINNER AT THE LOS ANGELES AIR FORCE STATION AT EL SEGUNDO.

- Nov. 2 THURSDAY - EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING - 8:00 p.m., Audubon House.
- Nov. 11 SATURDAY - SANTA BARBARA, GOLETA SLOUGH. Meet at 8:30 a.m. As you enter Santa Barbara, turn off Highway 101 at Cabrillo Blvd. (left-hand off ramp). Meet at bird refuge to the right, just under bridge. Wood Duck has wintered here. Leader: Nelson Metcalf. Call Audubon House for further information.
- Nov. 14 TUESDAY - EVENING MEETING - 8:00 p.m., Plummer Park. Russell Wilson, author of "Five Years in a Box" and other articles, will give a slide program entitled "To Churchill '72." The Wilsons travelled to Churchill on the Hudson Bay to photograph waterfowl on their northern nesting site.
- Nov. 19 SUNDAY - SANTA CLARA RIVER, MC GRATH STATE PARK. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at McGrath State Park. We will bird the riverbottom and be taken on a Nature walk by the park's head ranger. This area is excellent for wintering shore birds and famous for rare and unusual finds. Leaders: Pamela Greene and Dennis McMullin, Ranger. Phone: 394-2255.
- Nov. 20 MONDAY - NEWPORT BACK BAY - Meet at 7:30 a.m. at west end of Back Bay Dr. behind Newport Inn (early meeting time is to take advantage of unusually high tide). Late comers may join the group along Back Bay Dr. Leader: Ellen Stephenson. Phone: 794-1764.
- Dec. 7 THURSDAY - EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING - 8:00 p.m., Audubon House.
- Dec. 9 SATURDAY-SUNDAY - CARRIZO PLAIN. Meet at 8:30 a.m. in Maricopa at the junction of State 33 & State 166. Besides Sandhill Cranes, this trip usually produces LeConte's Thrasher, Ferruginous Hawk, Golden Eagle and Mountain Plover. Those planning to stay at the California Valley Lodge should write for reservations early as it is usually sold out before the trip. Lodge address: California Valley, CA 93453, or phone (805) 475-2272. Leader: Larry Sansone, 870-6398.
- Dec. 11 MONDAY - CAMP PENDLETON for monthly bird census. For directions call Jean Brandt, 788-5188.
- Dec. 12 TUESDAY - EVENING MEETING - 8:00 p.m., Plummer Park. Scott Sway will give a program on the myths of terrorizing wolves and the true story based on research at Isle Royale National Park.

Annual subscription to "The Western Tanager" is \$3.00; first class postage \$4.00. Free to members assigned by the National Audubon Society to the Los Angeles Audubon Society.

Los Angeles Audubon Society

The Western Tanager

Official Publication of the LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY

EDITOR
Field Notes
Audubon Activities
Calendar
Typing
Mailing Supervision

Gilbert W. King
Shumway Suffel
Donald Adams
Caroline Adams
Hanna Stadler
Hans Hjorth



Song for a Marsh



continued

by Laurette Maisel

dotted with occasional soft white billows. Against this background, the black, white, and tiny red accents of these lovely creatures swirling, ascending, descending, often only a few feet over our heads, filling the sky, is breathtaking! As birds flash near the sun, soft light pours through the wings, while around the edges a bright halo intensifies the contrast of blue and white. The incessant tumultuous clamor is almost deafening.

Here is a nest, a low platform in the reeds, with two fluffy chicks, one grey and one buffy, with dark spots. There is also an egg from which a bird is hatching. We peek in and see the tooth in the process of breaking the shell, and hear the chick cheeping from within.

Some distance away, the great blue herons have their own housing project. Here the nests are more spread out, large twiggy structures of dried bulrushes, well made and sitting high out of the water. Some have eggs only, others have chicks a few days old, with only patchy blue grey down tufts sticking out in disarray, and still a lot of skin showing. The bills are remarkably large and prominent for such helpless little creatures. They perform a Punch and Judy act, jabbing at one another with their bills, and each in turn retracting with wobbly head on scrawny neck, only to gather strength for another jab.

We look into common egret nests, smaller and lighter in build than the great blue herons', and snowy egret and double-crested cormorant nests, which are smaller still, but all are remarkably similar in construction. The black-crowned night herons build large platforms, lower to the water than the others, and by now most of them are occupied by chicks and juveniles of varying ages.

It takes sharp eyes to find a coot's nest, artfully concealed under a tunnel of loosely arched rushes. The run so formed permits the bird to enter or leave some distance from the nest. They must be wary birds indeed, because we never managed to surprise one on the nest, or, for that matter, in the vicinity of the run.

Marsh wrens' nests are to be seen everywhere, and most of them are unoccupied. Little globular structures with entrance at the side, suspended in the green rushes, they are built by the male who may construct as many as five or six dummies, although the female builds the real nest.

Late in the afternoon, we look for the white-faced ibis. Eldon has been asked to make a study of their breeding success here, as they are not doing well at Bear River Refuge in Utah. We find the colony, and count sixteen in the air at one time, with excellent views of them in splendid breeding plumage showing the white face, and also the lovely deep titian body and dark iridescent green wings. The first nest has three blue-green eggs. It is a fair-sized cup lined with chewed-up vegetation, but easily over-

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We drive out on the long dike which leads toward the lake. As we come to more open water, the western grebes are gracefully swimming beside us. They are obviously paired, the time for dancing passed. But as they swim they make gracious movements to one another, each in turn curling its head sideways onto its back. The male ruddy ducks stand out even from a long way off, like small shining jewels on the water. Here there are hundreds of eared grebes in breeding plumage, spread out all over the water in pairs. They are in continuous movement, and the air vibrates gently with their quiet, constant calling, a multitudinous chatter. Handsome little birds with their golden ear plumes, red eyes, and deep chestnut bodies. On another day, we were to have the fortune to find one nest, way out in the marsh, with a clutch of six small beige eggs. It was a floating cup of aquatic plant material anchored to the bladderwort. At our approach, the grebe had covered the eggs with wet vegetation and vanished.

It is amusing, on approaching the outer marsh, to see the coots and ruddy ducks, flapping furiously, get up and patter across the water, with little feet going as fast as they can make them, then finally plop! They plunge below the surface. Most of the time the ruddies save such energy, and long before we get to them, they dive out of sight, as do the western grebes. Here, too, are redheads and shovanders, and up fly those most handsome of ducks, the pintails, and always, it seems, in pairs.

We have a great stroke of luck. Eldon McLaury, the Refuge biologist, plans to spend the day examining the status of the many nesting birds far out in the lake, and has asked us to join him. His airboat is the only vehicle allowed on the lake, and we appreciate that we have a rare privilege. We cast off at about 10:00 a.m. and head first for the Franklin's gull colony, which, we are told, holds approximately 250 nests and is a mile by a half-mile across. On hearing our approach, hundreds of gulls rise into the air. It is one of those perfect days, intensely luminous, the sky impressively blue, spacious, and

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA BIRDS

Continued from back page

Seedeaters, too, were well represented in September, with thirty-nine species, including 22 species of sparrows being reported. Among the more noteworthy occurrences were: another male ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK banded by Shirley Wells in San Pedro on Sept. 24; a male INDIGO (or Indigo x Lazuli hybrid) BUNTING (pied blue and rusty with light wingbars) found at Yucca Valley on Oct. 2; two DICKCISSELS - one at Kelso Station, Mojave Desert, in mid-Sept. (Jon Atwood) and one at Yucca Valley (Mike San Miguel); BLACK-THROATED SPARROWS (normally desert birds) at Duarte, west of the mountains, and at Pt. Fermin Park, on the ocean; a GRAY-HEADED JUNCO (our rarest junco) with the earliest Oregon Juncos at Yucca Valley on Sept. 23 (Jerry Johnson); our only observation of a CLAY-COLORED SPARROW to date above Santa Barbara on Sept. 14 (Richard W.) and an early report of a SWAMP SPARROW along Malibu Creek in late Sept. (Ken Landis).

There were other reports of general interest: ORCHARD ORIOLES (rare here and difficult to separate from Hooded Orioles when they are in immature or female plumage, as they usually are) were seen at Shoshone, Inyo County on Sept. 23 (Lee Jones et al), and above Santa Barbara on Sept. 21 (Richard W.); BOBOLINKS recently have been found locally in small numbers, in green, grassy areas from mid-September to mid-October. This fall there was one around the sewer ponds below San Louis Obispo on Oct. 6 and 8 and two above Santa Barbara on Sept. 24 (Richard W.); one in the Sepulveda Rec. Area, Encino, on Oct. 4 (Ed N.), and five below San Diego on Sept. 30 (between 15 and 30 have been found there each fall for the last few years, Guy McCaskie et al). While searching for Condors (unsuccessfully) in the Sespe Canyon with Chuck Lawson from Las Vegas on Oct. 4, we saw WHITE-THROATED SWIFTS overhead and with them were

at least ten BLACK SWIFTS, the first that I, personally have seen in the fall, and a life bird for Chuck. While talking with John Borneman, the Audubon Condor Naturalist, that evening, Chuck learned that most of the condors are on the Tejon Ranch in October. He saw three or four from the Edmiston Pumping Station parking lot (turn off #5 at sign at the foot of the grade, thirty miles south of Bakersfield).

This month should see the return of the last of our normal winter residents and this winter, particularly, we should have more unusual mountain birds. This does not necessarily mean that we will have invasions of northern birds, which would be driven south by unfavorable food and population conditions in their usual wintering areas. There is no evidence to date that such conditions exist to the north of us, even though there is a drought and consequent lack of food in our local mountains. Death Valley is at its best in November with Lewis' Woodpeckers, Yellow-shafted Flickers, and Harris and White-throated Sparrows to be expected, and with the possibility of Rusty Blackbirds, Tree Sparrows, and Longspurs if one is very lucky. Ducks and Geese will be back at the Salton Sea in numbers, but hunting season is in full swing until mid-January, which restricts access to many areas. Divers, sea ducks, northern gulls and a few alcids should be present along the coast which makes the coastal waters, harbors and lagoons attractive for local birders in early winter. Hummingbird feeders and blooming eucalyptus trees should be watched for wintering orioles. Oddly enough, winter orioles are just about evenly divided between western species (Bullock's and Hooded) and eastern species (Baltimore and Orchard), but they are all noteworthy and interesting. This is an excellent time to brush up on the winter birds, in anticipation of the Christmas Counts.

MALAYSIA & INDIA BIRDING TOUR

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In the September "Southern California Birds" the reference to Pelicans should have read:

"These (hundreds of Brown Pelicans) are probably NOT California hatched birds..."

as there is northward dispersal every fall, up the coast from Mexico to California; sometimes even to Oregon. This movement is well documented:

"Three immatures [Brown Pelicans] seen in Monterey Bay in September 1971 were marked with green, indicating they came from Angel de la Guardia Island in the Gulf of California." (American Birds, Jan, 71)

RESERVATIONS TAKEN NOW!

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SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA Birds SHUMWAY SUFFEL

NOV-

EMBER

should see a continuance of the invasion of the lowlands by mountain birds, which was such a conspicuous feature of the birder's world in early fall. RED-BREASTED and WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCHES

MOUNTAIN CHICKADEES were downright common in parts of our area, but FIVE CLARK'S NUTCRACKERS flying and calling over Shirley Wells' home in the Palos Verdes Hills on Sept. 20, and a male WHITE-HEADED WOODPECKER in Pt. Fermin Park, San Pedro (less than 100 ft. from the ocean) on Sept. 20 and 21 (Ed Navajosky et al) were unprecedented. This early downslope movement may indicate an early cold winter, but we suspect that a lack of food in the mountains due to our record breaking drought (less than one inch of rain from January to October) is the reason. Other mountain birds put in an early appearance - three GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLETS were reported at Rosedale Cemetery on Sept. 8 (Ed N.), a small flock of PYGMY NUTHATCHES was sighted in the pines at U. C. L. A. on Sept. 17 (Kim Garrett); ten PINYON JAYS were found on Sept. 17 in the west San Fernando Valley on Oct. 3 (Ron Beck); while Lewis' Woodpeckers, Juncos and Fox Sparrows were numerous in the lowlands by late September. What the late fall will produce in the way of mountain birds is a matter for speculation, but it should be an interesting winter.

Shorebirds received a lot of attention in September with one or two SOLITARY SANDPIPERs along Malibu Creek in mid-September being the most popular individuals. The last report of a BAIRD'S SANDPIPER was also at Malibu on September 14 (Olga Clarke). PECTORAL SANDPIPERs were widely reported with as many as four together at a small pond in the South Coast Botanic Gardens (Shirley Wells), and another four near Upper Newport Bay (Lee Jones). The only GOLDEN PLOVER report came from Ron Beck at the Sepulveda Rec. Area in Encino on Sept. 19. The Shorebird this fall, however, was a RUFF (or maybe a REEVE) reported by Richard Webster, who stopped at Morro Bay on Oct. 6 on his way to the Monterey pelagic trip. While shorebirding, Ed Navajosky saw an OSPREY above Malibu on Sept. 26 and another one was found by Lee Jones at Newport Bay on Sept. 21. The first report of a FERRUGINOUS HAWK comes from Richard Webster in Santa Barbara on Sept. 16, but by month's end they were sighted from the top of Mt. Pinos and in the southern San Joaquin Valley (Chuck Lawson). PARASITIC JAEGERS (our only coastal species) were seen harrying the terns and small gulls along the coast - six at the mouth of the Santa Clara River on Sept. 26 (Ed N.) and two off Pt. Fermin on the 19th (Shirley Wells).

TWENTY-EIGHT species of WARBLERS were seen in our area during September and it is probable that a few more species will be added in October. Twelve of these species are "Western" warblers; five others - TENNESSEES (about fifteen reports), VIRGINIA'S (almost thirty reports - Ron Beck alone had eleven sightings E. of the mountains, but the individual at nearby Malibu Creek in mid-September received the most attention), and AMERICAN REDSTART (over twenty sightings) - are uncommon but regular; the rarer eleven species were reported singly or, at most, a very few

times. Two BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLERS were previously reported, but a female was seen near Goleta, Santa Barbara County on Sept. 21 and 23 (Richard Webster), and a male was at Morongo Valley on Sept. 30. The only report of a PARULA WARBLER (a rare bird especially in the fall) comes from Jon Atwood, near Goleta on Sept. 25. Two MAGNOLIA WARBLERS were previously reported at Deep Springs, Inyo County. BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLERS are seldom seen and are easily confused with Townsend x Hermit hybrids, but an immature was found at Pt. Fermin Park (Ed N. and Lee Jones) and a well marked individual was seen below San Diego on Sept. 29. Two female BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLERS were seen above Santa Barbara on Sept. 14 and 21, (Richard W.) and a male was previously reported in San Pedro. There were also two sightings of BLACKBURNIAN WARBLERS - one from Goleta on Sept. 14, and another below San Diego on Sept. 29. The only PRAIRIE WARBLER was the one so widely seen in the willows at Marina del Rey in early September. Three PALM WARBLERS were seen - one on Sept. 22 above Santa Barbara (Richard W.), one in the South Coast Botanic Gardens, after the L. A. S. field trip to Palos Verdes on Sept. 23 (the Hal Baxters et al), and one on the Yucca Valley Golf Course on Sept. 30. The Fall of 1971 was a poor one for PALM WARBLERS, but three is about normal to date as they are inclined to be late, even to winter here occasionally. Two CANADA WARBLERS appeared briefly below San Diego in late September. The only OVENBIRD (a very secretive bird) was one found by Kim Garrett at Oasis Ranch on Sept. 23. There were two reports of PAINTED REDSTARTS (very rare here) - this one previously mentioned at sea off Oceanside, and another below San Diego in late September.

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