

*Los Angeles Audubon Society*

# The Western Tanager

VOLUME 40, 1973-74 No. 10 July-August



## FORTY YEARS OF THE WESTERN TANAGER - LESLIE WOOD

**T**his issue of THE WESTERN TANAGER completes forty years of publication. To quote from Volume I, Number 1,

"What is 'THE TANAGER'"

"Conceived with the idea of stimulating interest in our feathered friends, THE WESTERN TANAGER will be published monthly by THE LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY for distribution to its members and others interested in the activities of Audubon."

**T**his introduction to the newsletter was the culmination of a long cherished dream of the President of the SOCIETY, Mrs. Mary Barnes Salmon and the first editor of the TANAGER, Mrs. Raymond Brennan. Mrs. Brennan carried the editorship of THE WESTERN TANAGER from the first issue of October 1934 to and including the issue of May 1936. Mrs. Maude Murphy took over THE TANAGER with the November 1936 issue.

**A** review of what had occurred in the history of THE LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY may be of interest to readers. The L.A.A.S. was organized on March 2, 1910 as an auxiliary of THE CALIFORNIA AUDUBON SOCIETY. On January 15, 1914 the L.A.A.S. withdrew from THE CALIFORNIA AUDUBON SOCIETY and became an independent society. The founder of THE LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY, Mrs. Harriet Williams Meyers, was also the first Vice President. The first President, Mrs. Dixon, and Mrs. Myers with the dedicated help of Board Members saw L.A.A.S. through a year of infancy.

**T**he first regular meeting on April 9, 1910, was held in the Y.W.C.A. rooms, then located on West 2nd Street near the Chamber of Commerce. Subsequent meetings were held at the Hotel Clark in downtown Los Angeles. At a later date the meeting place was moved to the State Building at Exposition Park, this being considered a more appropriate location. In 1955 Plummer Park became the meeting place for the evening program meetings.

**B**oard of Directors Meetings, which met at 1:30 P.M., were held at the Clark Hotel, Grosse Building, Y.W.C.A., Los Angeles Public Library and the 8th floor waiting room of the Broadway Department Store. Board meetings were later held at the homes of members during evening hours. After L.A.A.S. acquired the use of Audubon House a suggestion was made that the Board meet at this location. A notation in the minutes of the Board Meetings for October and November of 1918 indicated that the indoor or program meetings for these months were omitted. This was due to "The health authorities of Los Angeles City having placed a ban on all public gatherings on account of the Spanish Influenza, a contagious disease which was raging through the City and County."

**P**rogram meetings had surprising good attendance considering the relatively small membership of the SOCIETY, viz. January 20, 1921, 59 people present. Speakers at the monthly meetings included Enos Mills and Edmund C. Jaeger. Program meetings were held on Thursday at the Los Angeles County Museum State Building for many years. On Tuesday October 11, 1955 the evening meeting was held at Long Hall in Plummer Park; this being a first at this location.



*Los Angeles Audubon Society Headquarters at Plummer Park.*

**M**embership in the early years of L.A.A.S. was small but interesting; as witness the membership report for December 10, 1918: "12 life members, 1 honorary member and 21 annual members, total 34 members". By January of 1922 the membership had more than doubled. L.A.A.S. now had 12 life members, 1 patron, 2 honorary members and 77 active members, a total of 92 members. As a comparison the LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY now has a total of 2,633 members.

**F**ield trips were popular; some of which were known as trail trips. On a trail trip to Eagle Rock Park on November 7, 1918, thirteen people attended, thirty-two species of birds seen. A field day on January 5, 1919 to Silver Lake was attended by thirteen people, thirty-eight species of birds seen including a Whistling Swan!! A very popular trip was to the La Brea Tar Pits, which, until the early 1940's was surrounded by many truck farms and open fields. A yearly trip record was kept, as for instance this trip record for the year 1919-1920; which was reported at the board meeting of June 8, 1920: - "96 trips to 45 places, 167 species of land birds, 87 species of water birds, total 254 species - 57,850 birds".

**\*** THE LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY was "first to take a Christmas Census for 'Bird Lore' December 26, 1915, 122 species - 9,135 birds". It is interesting to note that at the Board Meeting of December 10, 1918 it was "moved and lost to have a Christmas Bird Census". This could have been a direct effect of the Spanish Influenza. The following appeared in THE WESTERN TANAGER of January 1935. "In 1932 THE LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY decided to inaugurate once more the taking of an annual Bird Census, something which was done by the SOCIETY for many years, and then discontinued". This count was reported in 1933 - "156 species, 35,000 individuals". In 1920 L.A.A.S. conducted a nesting bird census. No report is available.

*continued on page five*

# CONSERVATION BARRY CLARK

## LEGG LAKE: MITIGATION OR LITIGATION

The response to Gerald Maisel's plea for contributions to the Conservation and Legal Defense Fund has been very gratifying, with a total of over \$1,600 donated to date. (KEEP IT COMING!) Buoyed up by the enthusiastic show of support, LAAS (joined by the Sierra Club and the Southern Council of Conservation Clubs) has pushed forward with its suit to block the "development" of North Legg Lake as a plastic-bottomed angling pond.

The matter is yet to be officially resolved, but at least our legal action has succeeded in generating a highly interesting "mitigation" proposal. On the provision that the suit be dropped, the County Department of Parks and Recreation has proposed to set aside as a wildlife refuge, about 300 acres of lands below and to the west of the present 100-acre Nature Center. The plan calls for construction to begin as soon as possible on four new lakes, two of them (1 acre and 7 acres in area) within the present Nature Center grounds, and two others (20 acres and 25 acres) on vacant lands nearby. Altogether, a total of 53 acres of new lakes would be provided, to mitigate the loss of the wild habitat around the 12-acre North Legg Lake. We have been assured that every effort would be taken to replicate the kind of habitat that exists today at North Lake, and further, that alteration of North Lake would not commence until June, 1975, by which time the vegetation around the mitigation lakes should have had a few months to develop. In addition to the mitigation lakes, the County may agree to set aside an area along the banks of the Rio Hondo, in order to preserve this luxuriant stretch of natural riparian vegetation. Under the agreement, the water level of the lakes would be regulated year-round, and three of the lakes would be interconnected via a landscaped, meandering stream. The entire area would be included within an expanded Whittier Narrows Wildlife Refuge, to be administered by the biologists on the Nature Center staff. Trails and observation platforms would be built, new interpretive materials provided, and the refuge made accessible to all those with an interest in nature.

So it seems that as a direct result of our "hard line" legal action, we may now contemplate the prospect of a sanctuary which within two to five years may support one of the best waterfowl habitats in Southern California. We are hopeful at this point that the County Board of Supervisors will approve the mitigation proposal, but if for

any reason they do not, we are prepared to proceed with the original plan of litigation.

Regardless of how the case is settled, we are all in debt to everyone who has contributed so generously to the funding of this fight. At last our voice has been clearly heard! We have demonstrated that we possess the muscle to back up our convictions, and we have no intention now of relinquishing this hard-won foothold. Beyond the Legg Lake campaign, there are other issues in sight, with prospects every bit as exciting. (For example: a proposal is afoot to set aside Baldwin Hills as a County Park.)

For her heroic efforts on the Legg Lake project, DIXIE MOHAN deserves everyone's gratitude. As Co-Chairman of the Conservation Committee, she has devoted virtually all of her time for over a month to the complex negotiations which have led up to the present mitigation proposal, and if the campaign ultimately proves successful, it will owe much to her energy and spirit.

## WANTED: AUDUBON ACTIVISTS

*If you have a little free time, or some creative ideas to share, we need your help! Join us in our fight to preserve the last of our natural environment. Phone or call Audubon House on Tuesday, Thursday, or Friday or send a postcard with your name, address, and telephone number to DIXIE MOHAN, Conservation Committee, Audubon House, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90046.*

### SAVE THE CHAPARRAL!

A PUBLIC HEARING on the proposed SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS STATE PARK is scheduled for Friday, July 12, at 10 a.m., in Room 1138 of the State Bldg., 107 South Broadway, Los Angeles. The purpose of the hearing is to consider the classification of the 7200-acre area of the Santa Monica Mountains to the north of Will Rogers State Park. At the hearing, a decision will be made regarding development of the area either for recreation (permitting overnight camping, etc.) or as a refuge in which the natural values of the habitat are preserved.

Harvey Kirk, ecologist at Santa Monica College, addressed the June 20 meeting of the Conservation Committee, and urged our support for the preservation of the area. According to him, the proposed park boasts one of the finest conglomerations of chaparral, natural grassland, and oak woodland to be found in Southern California.

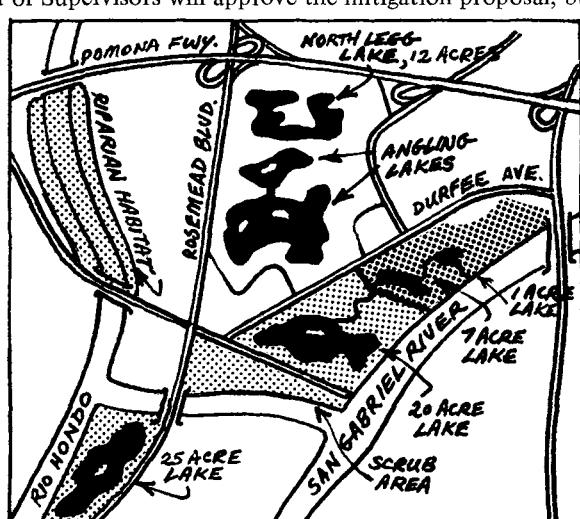
Your weight is needed at the hearing, July 12!

### HOUSE VOTES 211-204 TO KILL LAND USE BILL, THUS ENDING CHANCES FOR PASSAGE THIS CONGRESS; SPOTLIGHT NOW ON STRIP-MINE LEGISLATION; ALL-OUT SUPPORT VITAL

The House voted June 11 to kill the Land Use Policy and Planning Act legislation by a narrow margin of 211-204, thus ending chances for passage this Congress. The outcome was especially bitter to conservationists in view of the last-minute reversal by the Administration. Strong land use planning had been listed by the President as a priority goal as late as this past January, but the week of June 3 Interior Secretary Rogers C. B. Morton reversed his support of H.R. 10294, the conservationist-backed bill, in favor of a worthless substitute.

### AN APPEAL TO AUDUBON MEMBERS TO BOYCOTT JAPANESE AND RUSSIAN PRODUCTS UNTIL THOSE NATIONS HALT 'NEEDLESS' SLAUGHTER OF WHALES

The Board of Directors is calling on the 300,000 members of the National Audubon Society and the general public to boycott goods from Japan and the Soviet Union until those two countries stop their needless slaughtering of whales. A background statement on this decision, prepared by Audubon President Stahr, has been set to presidents of all Audubon chapters and affiliated organizations.



Proposed Whittier Narrows Wildlife Refuge.

# audubon activities

## BOOK STORE

### MARION PICKETT

Summer is here and many of you will be leaving the Southern California area for a change of bird scenery. Before you go, do check our regional birding information selections. We don't attempt to stock bird books on all the individual states with the area in the title because some of them are so out of date and difficult to obtain. Instead, we try to keep up on the most recent publications and the areas they cover and overlap. Our current regional list is rather lengthy, and we have added the following new ones to our collection during the past few months.

Birds of Pint Lobos, Monterey

Birds of Churchill Region, Manitoba

Birds of Vancouver Island

Pennsylvania Birds

With emphasis on specialized books, a new "Handbook of Wildflowers, Weeds, Wildlife & Weather of the Palos Verdes Peninsula" by D. M. Gales is a collection of information on natural and cultural history of the South Bay Area. NOW AVAILABLE: BIRDS OF THE WORLD: A CHECKLIST by James F. Clements.

#### CONDOR continued.

sky for a sighting. For some it would be their "first"; for others it would be their annual viewing of the great bird. For both people, the anticipation was the same. In the meantime I gave yells of wild excitement such as, "Look, look, a rock wren!" or "would you believe it: I see a violet-green swallow." they believed it but weren't impressed.

After lunch the time was taken up with pleasant conversations on everything from Africa to years condor sightings. Don Adams broke the silence at 1:40 PM with, "Alright, John, when are you going to produce a condor?" I gulped and flippantly said, "At two o'clock, Don Just be patient". A dry, humorless chuckle ran throughout the crowd. More conversation continued. Suddenly, a dark shape appeared off to the northwest about a half a mile away, moving steadily in our direction. The flat plane of the wings and the splayed primaries identified it as a condor. The cry went up, "Condor! Condor!" The mountain top came alive with "Where, where?" and "There! There!" One man said, "My wife is in South Carolina and will kill me when I tell her I saw a condor. We've been here several times without any luck." The condor glided silently behind the ridge to the north of us but reappeared and headed back to the northwest. We followed it until it was just a speck. It circled and headed back toward us again. The excitement rose again. The condor moved steadily closer. It lowered its legs and began to descend in wide circles. It was now about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile away and we were looking down on the huge wings. Some commented on the white square patches on the upper surface of the wings. Now we were only catching glimpses of it between the branches of the white firs that grow on the north slope. Finally it vanished as suddenly as it had appeared. The time of our first sighting was 1:59 PM! Our 2:00 condor was one minute early! As I made sure that everyone knew that the condor appeared on schedule. Those who were new to condor watching looked at me with awe. Those who knew me . . . (deleted)

People invest time, effort and money in condor preservation for a variety of reasons. One of those reasons is "for the enjoyment of this and future generations." This day we all truly "enjoyed" a California condor. John Borneman, Condor Naturalist, N.A.S.

**WANTED: PEOPLE TO HELP FOLD TANGER!** The Tanager mailing crew is seriously depleted during the summer months. If anyone could possibly help with the next mailing, last week in August, please call Olive at Audubon House.

**FERN DELL**, May 11. Ten birders met at the Fern Dell parking lot to enjoy a morning walk with bright sunshine, very few people, abundant wildflowers, and 38 species of birds. **BAND-TAILED PIGEONS**, **BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAKS**, **CEDAR WAXWINGS**, and a **DOWNTY WOODPECKER** were seen in the wooded areas, along with an **ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD** at its nest and a **HOUSE WREN** that boldly scolded the group near its nesting site. Migrants were quite evident and good views were had of **WESTERN WOOD PEWEES**, **WESTERN TANAGERS**, and **WILSON'S WARBLERS**, with one each of **YELLOW**, **BLACK-THROATED GRAY**, and a spectacular male **HERMIT WARBLER**. The last was a life bird for nearly everyone. A **WARBLING VIREO** and a **LAZULI BUNTING** were only glimpsed by a few members of the group. The brush provided good sightings of **CALIFORNIA QUAIL**, **WRENTITS**, and other chaparral birds. George Ledec, leader.

**EVENING MEETING**, June 11. Once again L.A.A.S. members and guests were treated to a fine slide presentation by Olga and Herb Clarke. The program which described a tour the Clarkes led this past spring to Surinam and French Guiana, contained not only many beautiful shots of tropical birds, but a great variety of habitat, local color, and scenes of the colorful capital cities, Paramaribo and Cayenne. Herb's informative narrative along with his slides gave all of us armchair travelers a real feeling of being there in "The Forgotten Corner." We don't know what the Clarkes are planning for next year, but we all look forward to another program which we know they will share with us.

**GREENHORN MTN.**, June 8 & 9. A small but congenial group of eight enjoyed excellent birding on the Greenhorn Mountain trip and tallied a total of 70 species. At Poso Creek a pair of **GOLDEN EAGLES** was seen and at the next stop, Bear Hollow Creek, the most exciting find was a **GRASSHOPPER SPARROW**. An afternoon walk along the road north of Panorama Campground was productive. The songs of such outstanding vocalists as **HERMIT THRUSH**, **FOX SPARROW**, **GREEN-TAILED TOWHEE**, **CASSIN'S FINCH** and **TOWNSEND'S SOLITAIRE** added to the pleasure of sighting these species. A pair of **EVENING GROSBEAK**, seen in the same location both Saturday and Sunday, gave indication that they were establishing a nest in the area. At dusk as we were enjoying our campfire by the meadow, we were treated to the mellow hooting of a **PYGMY OWL** for an hour or more, and all night long we heard a puzzling song coming from some bird close by. The identity of the songster was established in the morning — a **SONG SPARROW** with an atypical song and a penchant for singing in the moonlight! The weather was the nicest we have ever had on this trip, not too hot or too cold, even at night, and we were sorry more were not there to enjoy the good birding. Don and Caroline Adams, leaders.

On the road down from Portugese Pass at Cold Springs a remarkable collection of birds was found in the late afternoon — four McGillivray's Warblers, Clark's Nutcrackers, dozens of White-headed Woodpeckers, and two more Golden Eagles in addition to the other mountain birds (Jim Stevens).

#### THE 2:00 O'CLOCK CONDOR

**MT. PINOS**, Jun. 15

The prospects of seeing condors on Mt. Pinos in June are only slightly better than seeing white-crowned sparrows in Ventura in June. The fact that members of Los Angeles Audubon Society had "requested your presence on Mt. Pinos to confirm the existence of the California condor" filled me with great fear and trembling. Perhaps I could pawn off a fleeting glimpse of a raven at three miles as a condor?

Gil King met me at the observation point and could see the look of concern on my face for he kept patting me on the back saying, "That's O.K. John. We know it's the wrong month to see condors up here." Several groups of hopeful condor watchers scanned the

# 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**

Dr. Gerald Maisel, PRESIDENT

Audubon House Hours 10 to 3, Monday through Friday

**Audubon  
Bird Reports  
874-1318**

**Sat., July 6. BUCKHORN FLAT.** Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the entrance to campground. Follow Angeles Crest Highway, State Rt. 2 from its intersection with Foothill Blvd. in La Canada, about 35 miles to Buckhorn Flat. Good area for resident mountain birds. Leader: Otto Widmann, 221-8973.

**Sun., July 14. LEGG LAKE & WHITTIER NARROWS RECREATION AREA.** Meet at 7:30 a.m. Take the Pomona Frwy to Santa Anita offramp. Go south on Santa Anita and turn right into the first parking lot indicating Legg Lake. Meet at north end of the lot near the fenced lake. Leader: Dixie Mohan, 798-8205.

**Sat., July 20. MT. PINOS.** Meet at the summit (no specific meeting time). Birding will be done from the Condor Observation point most of the day. Look for Red Crossbills, Purple and Cassin's Finch, Calliope Hummingbird, and Condor. Leader: John Borneman, Condor Naturalist. For further information call Pam Axelson, 398-2955.

**Sun., July 28. MALIBU LAGOON.** Meet at 8:30 a.m. in the supermarket parking lot adjacent to the lagoon. It is advisable to park on the road to the north of the market. Leader: Virginia Miller, 935-9561.

**Sun., August 11. LEGG LAKE AND WHITTIER NARROWS RECREATION AREA.** Meet at 7:30 a.m. (See July 14.)

**Sat., August 17. MT. PINOS.** (See July 20.)

**Sun., August 25. McGRATH STATE PARK.** Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the entrance to the park. You may either park in the campground (with a \$3 fee) or park on the north side of the bridge over Santa Clara river. Leader: Bob Johnson.

**Thu., Sep. 5. EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING, 8:00 p.m., Audubon House.**

**Sun., Sep. 8. MALIBU LAGOON & BIG Sycamore CANYON.** Returning shore-birds and late summer residents. Leader: George Ledec.

**Tue., Sep. 10. EVENING MEETING, 8:00 p.m., Plummer Park.**  
**Sat., Sep. 14. PELAGIC TRIP FROM SAN DIEGO,** led by California Field Ornithologists. Boat leaves promptly at 5:30 a.m., returns approximately at 7:00 p.m. This trip probably will be to the warm waters south of San Clemente, where the Red-billed Tropicbird has been seen some years ago. Other pelagics such as Craveri's Murrelet, Pale-footed Shearwater were seen last year. Price \$15 to members of CFO or subscribers to "WESTERN BIRDS," others \$16.50. Send check with full names of all in party to Cliff Lyons, 4988 Northaven Ave., San Diego, CA 92110. Departure information will be sent with confirmation. Clothing for cold and wet weather is always advisable. Include stamped addressed envelope.

**Sun., Sep. 22. CABRILLO BEACH.**

**Sat., Oct. 4. PELAGIC TRIP FROM MONTEREY,** lead by California Field Ornithologists. Boat leaves Sam's Wharf promptly at 7:30 a.m. and returns approximately at 4:00 p.m. Monterey has surprises at any time of year. Thousands of Petrels are expected to be in the bay, possibly some Fork-tailed. Price \$11.50 for members of CFO or subscribers to "WESTERN BIRDS," other \$13.00. Send with full names of all in party to Cliff Lyons, 4988 Northaven Ave., San Diego, CA 92110. Departure information will be sent with confirmation. Clothing for cold and wet weather is always advisable. Include stamped addressed envelope.

**Audubon Notable Honored.** The Hudson River Fisherman's Association (Cold Spring, N.Y.) and **Paul M. Howard, Jr.**, Nat'l Audubon's Western Rep received awards at the American Motors 20th Annual Conservation Awards Dinner in Washington, D.C., in May. David Seymour, warden/biologist of Audubon's Constitution Island Marsh Sanctuary, is president of the Hudson River group that was honored for continued success in helping to abate industrial pollution problems on the river; Howard was honored for his leadership of the campaign to end wildlife casualties in California oil sumps.

## WESTERN BIRDS

formerly CALIFORNIA BIRDS

*A quarterly journal of field ornithology for active amateur birders and professional ornithologists. Subscription to WESTERN BIRDS is included with all classes of membership in California Field Ornithologists, Inc., a non-profit organization open to all individuals and institutions. Dues and contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Make check payable to California Field Ornithologists and send to Clifford R. Lyons, Treasurer, Post Office Box 369, Del Mar, California 92014.*

## The Western Tanager

Official Publication of the  
Los Angeles Audubon Society

## TRESPASSING BIRDERS

"You people are ruining it for all of you," said a lady at Oasis Ranch, Mono County, reprimanding two birders caught trespassing. These two had the dubious honor of representing all the birders who had been trespassing that and the previous weekend. The incident occurred not 15 minutes after two earlier parties had departed the premises. Interestingly, one member of the two parties had written for and received permission for a party of six to bird there on the previous weekend. This was particularly upsetting to the owners because they felt that the six had been arrogantly expanded to 25 or 30. She made it plain that such advance letters will not likely receive favorable treatment in the future as it "just opened the door for 25 or 30 people to be tramping all over the place." She told of the payroll expense, effort and worry caused by a colossal blunder when someone left open a livestock gate allowing cattle to reach the alfalfa fields.

This is not the only incident of birders trespassing. The Los Angeles Audubon Society should make an effort through its formal and informal trip leaders to stop its members becoming public nuisances.

EDITOR . . . . .	Gilbert W. King
Field Notes . . . . .	Shumway Suffel
Audubon Activities . . . . .	Donald Adams
Calendar . . . . .	Caroline Adams
Mailing Supervision . . . . .	Hans Hjorth

# SPRING IN MORONGO VALLEY

RUSSELL & MARION WILSON

You will remember that we made a survey of spring migration in Morongo Valley in 1970. Starting April 6 we made a daily census of Covington Park, the Big Morongo Canyon Regional Park and a small portion of the Nature Conservancy area aimed at finding the early arrival date and period of peak migration of each of some 56 species of birds. Our count ended on the 6th of May.

From many sources we heard that the spring migration of 1973 was very poor in Morongo Valley. Many of our friends who come here several times each spring wrote of finding almost nothing in the oasis. And so we decided to repeat our survey and are here again for April and May.

We are very happy to find that the San Bernardino County Parks people have designated their area a Wildlife Reserve. We are pleased that development has been minimal, the parking areas and restrooms are most essential. We are delighted that the wildlife habitat in the cottonwood grove and along the stream is undisturbed and should be as attractive to birds and mammals as it was in 1970.

Migration this year has been characterized overall by an abundance of birds, by actual count a 50% increase over 1970. Blue Grosbeaks, for example, were up 400%. On the other hand, Bell's Vireos, Hutton's Vireos and Pine Siskins were down about 90% from 1970.

Migration has been early. There were three distinct peak periods — April 18 & 19, April 23-25, and May 4 & 5. April 18 was something special. In many years of birding we have never experienced in California such a pronounced wave, such a flood of migrants. We can compare it only to a good spring day at Rockport, Texas. The weather seems to have been a factor in the early migration. April 1970 was a cold month, four nights the temperature dropped below freezing, on the 28th it was 22 degrees. This year all night temperatures have been in the forties and fifties with only four nights in the mid-thirties.

Individual birds have shown their individual peak migration. Five species peaked on that wonderful April 18 — the Black-throated Gray and Orange-crowned Warblers, Warbling Vireo, Ash-throated Flycatcher and Bullock's Oriole. Yellow Warblers peaked May 2 & 3, which is just about their schedule. Western Tanagers had a remarkable peak on May 3. On that single day we counted as many as the sum total for all previous days and following days combined.

The Morongo Valley specialties are back. The pair of Vermilion Flycatchers arrived April 10 and on April 20 began to incubate. This is a later schedule than in 1970 when one of the three nests we were watching hatched young April 17. The Wied's Crested Flycatchers appeared on April 30 as opposed to April 14 in 1970. Lucy's Warbler and Summer Tanager were just about on schedule.

One exciting aspect of birding in Morongo Valley is the always present possibility of finding some unusual bird in the oasis. A Parula appeared in Covington Park on April 18 and it apparently stayed over night as we found it again the next morning. This is an eastern warbler and in California it is considered a very rare vagrant.

## APPRECIATION OF MORONGO VALLEY

Morongo Valley has long been a haunt of the Los Angeles Audubon Society, and all of us should be appreciative of the efforts of San Bernardino County and its Supervisor of Regional Parks to preserve this area in its natural state for wildlife.

Supervisor Mayfield is receiving letters requesting more recreation and he needs letters to balance these from persons urging the continued preservation of this area, persons who know the value of the area as a wildlife preserve. His address is: Supervisor James L. Mayfield, 175 West 5th Street, San Bernardino, CA 92415.

Dr. Gerald Maisel, President of the Los Angeles Audubon Society, has already written his appreciation and support on behalf of the Society as a whole.

## DETECTOR 'PATROLS' PEREGRINE AREA

An electronic trespass detection system has been placed in operation on Morro Rock, San Luis Obispo County, to help protect this historic nesting site of the American peregrine falcon and to promote human safety.



Snow Goose at Morongo Valley, May 5, 1974. Photograph by Paula Robertson.

## FORTY YEARS concluded from page one.

**A** Treasurer's report of June 13, 1921 will be of interest to present day Treasurers; — "Treasurer's report, On hand as of June 13, \$58.09"; very brief indeed. L.A.A.S. at this time had some investments, as reported in the minutes of the Board Meeting for June 14, 1919; "one \$50.00 Liberty Bond, one \$50.00 Victory Bond".

**T**he Western Tanager as emblem bird was chosen early in the history of the SOCIETY as witness the minutes of the Board Meeting of June 8, 1918 — "Motion carried to choose colors of Western Tanager, our Audubon Bird emblem and colors". Mrs. Leonard S. Hall, President 1926-1930 arranged for the L.A.A.S. emblem "The Western Tanager to be printed on the SOCIETY stationery". This was to remain without change for many years.

On December 12, 1922, the Mariposa Lily and the California Live Oak were selected as L.A.A.S. flower and tree emblems. Both are California natives.

In the October 1937 WESTERN TANGER, Mrs. Mary Barnes Salmon announced the good news that L.A.A.S. had finally found a home. She stated "We are to have 'Audubon Room' in the newly acquired County Park". Mrs. Salmon said "Our regular Board Meetings are to be held here". And on January 13, 1938 at 10 A.M. the Board Meeting was held at Plummer Park. "Audubon Room" was acquired through the untiring efforts of Mrs. Salmon, President of L.A.A.S. from 1934 to 1936.

What is presently known as "Audubon House" is the result of the work of another dedicated member, Mrs. Russell E. Wilson, who was instrumental in acquiring the remaining rooms of the building, and also the redwood fence which surrounds the garden.

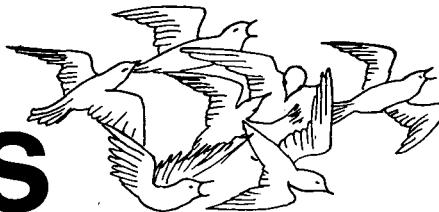
The Library consisting of 82 volumes was given a permanent location within the building. The library presently consists of 640 volumes on birds and related nature subjects. The books are available to members on a noncirculating basis.

Books and note forms on sale on a non-profit basis for the convenience of members was moved to the newly acquired "Audubon Room". This operation consisted of two guide books and a dozen or so forms and notes. At present bird feeders are available as well as numerous foreign guide books for members who plan birding in distant lands.

Housing was also provided for a number of bird and insect specimens. In 1937, quoting again from THE TANGER "Dr. Bryan, of the Los Angeles Museum, sent us 50 mounted birds.

As a result of all this growth, the newsletter, THE WESTERN TANGER, has become one of the most widely circulated newsletters of any Audubon Society. Copies are mailed to nearly all the States and to many foreign countries. From a publication, which a few short years ago could be folded, placed in envelopes and mailed in a single evening; THE WESTERN TANGER is produced in such numbers as to require the combined efforts of 20 to 25 dedicated members to produce and mail the nearly 3,000 copies necessary to supply demand.

# SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA Birds



## Shumway Suffel

**LAST SUMMER** we had an unprecedented invasion of

immature Roseate Spoonbills (over 60 individuals vs. a maximum of 7 in their seven previous occurrences) and a few Spoonbills even reached the coast for the first time. Each of the previous five summers had equally unexpected avian events, mostly invasions of the Salton Sea area by post-breeding Mexican wanderers: Frigate-birds there and along the coast; Blue-footed Boobies (about 100 in 1971), many of which reached the coast as far north as Monterey; the first five Black Skimmers in 1968; a few southern herons each year—Little Blues, Louisianas and Reddish Egrets; and Black-bellied Tree Ducks in 1972 and 1973. Rare land birds, too, were found in late summer—California's first Whip-poor-wills in the San Jacinto Mountains; our first coastal Chimney Swifts; our only Red-headed Woodpecker and second Wood Thrush were both found in August. What will July and August of 1974 have to offer?

On Memorial Day weekend in the Inyo-Mono region were seen a SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER at Furnace Creek Ranch on May 24; two EASTERN KINGBIRDS, two CATBIRDS (California's 6th and 7th) on May 30 and at Deep Springs June 1; a male BROWN THRASHER at Oasis on May 29; two RED-EYED VIREOS at Scotty's on May 28 and Deep Springs on May 30; three or more BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLERS; a male PROTHONOTARY WARBLER at Furnace Creek Ranch, May 25-28; two GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLERS (7th and 8th California records); four TENNESSEE WARBLERS; four PARULAS; a male MAGNOLIA WARBLER at Oasis June 1-8; a female CERULEAN WARBLER (3rd record) at Oasis May 27; two CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLERS at Oasis and Scotty's on May 25; three OVENBIRDS at Oasis, Furnace Creek and Scotty's; at least four WATER THRUSHES; nine or more REDSTARTS; five BOBLINKS; three male ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAKS (a few elsewhere too); seven or more INDIGO BUNTINGS, mostly males; and a CLAY-COLORED SPARROW (almost unknown in spring).

A HARLEQUIN DUCK found in the Ballona Creek Channel, studied on Santa Barbara Island by Lee Jones on May 31. This bird Marina del Rey on June 21 by Ed Navajosky may be the same male, is rare and difficult to identify. now in eclipse plumage that has been seen there off and on since 1973. Russ and Marion Wilson found a WHITE-TAILED KITE at Morongo Valley on May 11. This is the first report from the area for this bird of the coastal valleys. Three OSPREYS on the desert in early summer were unusual—one at a small pond near Baker on May 25, and one each at the north end of the Salton Sea, and at West Pond above Yuma on June 21. A very late FERRUGINOUS HAWK was found by Shirley Wells and Grace Nixon on May 22 while running their Breeding-Bird Census near Lancaster. Several BLACK RAILS and YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOOS were heard between Laguna and Imperial Dams on June 21 (Hal Baxter and Shum Suffel). SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPERs are seldom reported because of difficulties in identification, but one identified near the Salton Sea by Guy McCaskie on May 11 remained there for several days. The storm which forced cancellation of the L.A.A.S. pelagic trip on May 19 evidently blew a few strictly pelagic RED PHALAROPES to inland waters—Guy Comeau found one as far inland as Holiday Valley, between Gorman and Lancaster, and two were seen along the San Gabriel River near El Monte and another at nearby Legg Lake. For the first time in many years, there were several reports of nesting LONG-EARED OWLS.

CHIMNEY SWIFTS were reported at Buena Vista Lagoon on May 31 (Harry Kreuger), and calling over South Los Angeles on June 5 (Herb Clarke). An EASTERN KINGBIRD appeared May 18

at Morongo Valley, but was recognized only by John Goldstein. A LEAST FLYCATCHER (So. Calif. first) was studied on June 8 on San Nicholas Island by Lee Jones, Guy McCaskie, and Jon Dunn.

Ed Navajosky found the nest of the Bendire's Thrashers in Windmill Wash, north of Yucca Valley, originally reported by Jim and Polly Huffman, on May 4th, with three young in it. A week later a second Bendire's nest near Yucca Valley was found and photographed by Herb Clarke.

BELL'S VIREOS were heard or seen in several places during May and June—in Mission Gorge, San Diego; along the Colorado River; at Morongo Valley; in Tuna Canyon, Malibu, on May 12 (Jerry Maisel—possibly a late migrant); and along a willow bordered stream in Duarte in April. This is rather encouraging as Bell's Vireos have been increasingly difficult to find in recent years. GRAY VIREOS, too, were found at several places near Round Valley in the eastern San Bernardino Mountains. A tape recorder is almost a necessity to bring forth of these shy vireos into the open where they can be seen.

All local reports of BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLERS came from the Palos Verdes area where at least four individuals were seen in May (Shirley Wells and Georgine Foster). Shirley also had two TENNESSEE WARBLERS in San Pedro—a female which she netted on May 27, and a singing male in her yard about a week later. The only VIRGINIA'S WARBLERS reported were a late migrant at Cottonwood Springs on May 24 (Jim Stevens) and a probable summer resident in Wyman Canyon, White Mountains on June 9 (Larry Sansone). A male MAGNOLIA WARBLER flew into a window in Palos Verdes on June 21 and ended up as a museum specimen (Shirley Wells). The only PALM WARBLER of the spring was seen by Harry Kreuger near Chatsworth on May 10. An OVENBIRD and a ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK were found on Pt. Loma, San Diego, on June 3 by Jon Dunn.

A mini-invasion of PAINTED REDSTARTS hit our mountains in early June, with a pair which may nest in the Laguna Mts. east of San Diego (fide Guy McCaskie) and a singing male in the South Fork (Santa Ana River) Campground, San Bernardino Mts., on June 3 (Shirley Wells). A CONNECTICUT WARBLER female was

studied on Santa Barbara Island by Lee Jones on May 31. This bird

Every year a few SCOTT'S ORIOLES stray away from their preferred high desert habitat toward the coast and 1974 was no exception—a male in Isobel Ludlom's Palos Verdes garden on May 14, and another male bathed at Paula Randall's in Sierra Madre on June 9. There were no reports of HEPATIC TANAGERS at Arrastrate Creek or elsewhere to mid-June, but three male SUMMER TANAGERS returned to Morongo Valley in May. Another male was seen along the Colorado River above Yuma on June 21, and an immature male strayed north to Tecopa in Inyo County on May 17 (Jan Tarble). The only ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK reported locally was a male in La Jolla Canyon, (Sandy and Curt Wohlgemuth).

By mid-July the shorebirds should be returning to the coastal marshes and mudflats in good numbers, and with them will be a few of the rarer species—Baird's and Pectoral Sandpipers, and a little later Solitary and possibly Stilt Sandpipers. The latter are more reliably seen at the south end of the Salton Sea, however. A trip to the Salton Sea on June 20 with Hal Baxter showed that about fifty

WOOD STORKS, one BLACK SKIMMER (there were at least four there in May), several GULL-BILLED TERNS, the first LAUGHING GULL and at least 14 WESTERN GULLS of the yellow-legged Gulf race had already arrived from the south. A few days earlier Van Remsen sighted two early FRIGATE BIRDS at the north end of the sea, and they were seen again at the south end on June 21 by Charles Collins' party.

**EDITOR'S LAST INCH.** In this last inch of forty volumes the Editor, on behalf of the Society, expresses his great appreciation for the assistance in publishing "The Western Tanager," from the contributor, through ARC Graphics for the excellent typesetting, MEN OF LETTERS for the fine printing, Hans Hjorth for managing the folding and mailing.