

# WESTERN TANAGER

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Part II

## Birding in the Bay Area

by Susanne Luther



The San Francisco area offers a wealth of delights for birders. In addition to the scenic splendors for which the region is justly renowned, the environs of San Francisco boast a varied array of natural habitats, with an appropriately diverse complement of birds—including a number of species rarely seen in Southern California. The article that follows is a continuation of the account in last month's issue (which covered birding localities in Marin and San Francisco Counties). For up-to-date information on Bay Area birds, visitors are advised to call the Bay Area Rare Bird Alert, 415-843-3311. Reports of rare birds observed in the area should be phoned to Joe Morlan, 415-654-1358.

### Sonoma County

#### 7. Bodega Bay

Situated one and one half hours north of San Francisco, Bodega Bay offers an exquisite setting for the best of birding along our mid-Pacific coast. Though birding is excellent at all seasons, fall and winter offer the greatest variety and numbers of birds. To birders, Bodega Bay is the southernmost regular wintering ground of Rock Sandpiper (Nov.-March.). To reach the bay, take the Bodega Bay exit from Hwy. 101 at Petaluma and follow the signs to Hwy. 1. The bay affords excellent views of shorebirds, loons, grebes, ducks, and gulls, and in the fall the canyons have many species of hawks, plus eastern vagrants. Wading shorebirds are best viewed at the southern shore of the bay, at the pond at the entrance of Doran Park and at the marsh to the N.E., by the sewage plant (enter on the first dirt road to your left, N. of Doran Park). Ruff and Sharp-tailed Sandpiper have been recorded here several times in the fall among the hundreds of shorebirds, and Pectoral Sandpiper is regular. Red-necked Grebe can usually be found along the quiet shore of the bay to the east of Doran Park, or between the jetties. Oldsquaw and Black Scoters are uncommon in the bay. To look for Rock Sandpipers and other rocky



Pileated Woodpecker

Ray Robinson

shorebirds, drive around the bay and up onto Bodega Head, taking the right hand turn where the road divides on the head. This leads to a large parking lot. Check the big rock directly below this lookout very carefully. Black Oystercatchers can generally be found on the rock with several other species of rocky shorebirds. If Rock Sandpipers are not on the rock, walk either south or north along the headlands and look for the flocks of feeding rocky shorebirds on the rocks below. (Generally, walking north is the most productive). A scope is advisable. Sometimes Marbled Murrelets and Ancient Murrelets can be seen from the head by scoping. By walking south from the head, it is possible to see nesting Pigeon Guillemots, Common Raven, and Black Oystercatcher, plus Brandt's and Pelagic Cormorants. Osprey is generally a guaranteed bird at Bodega Bay if you spend the day birding there, and often in winter Peregrine Falcon or Merlin may be seen. Eastern vagrant passerines most often occur in the wooded canyon on the western side of the lagoon. One summer a Magnificent Frigatebird roosted at Bodega Bay and was seen off-and-on for a month.

In recent years, during January or February, the Western Field Ornithologists (W.F.O.) have sponsored boat trips from Bodega Bay to the Cordell Banks—among the most exciting pelagic trips on the mid-Pacific coast. The big attraction is the possibility of Laysan

Albatross, which has been recorded Dec.-March in the past three years. It is possible to make arrangements to go out on a commercial fishing boat, but check personally with the boat captain to make sure that he's going to the Cordell Banks. The captain of the *Sea Angler*, Bob Strong, has been very cooperative with birdwatchers. The Cordell Banks will assuredly provide views of Black-footed Albatross and Short-tailed Shearwaters in winter. Look for Marbled Murrelets, Black Scotters, and Red-necked Grebes close to shore.

## 8. Pileated Woodpecker

The magnificent Pileated Woodpecker is an uncommon resident in our central coastal area. The call is similar to that of the Common Flicker, but shorter, louder, and deeper in pitch. **Muir Woods**, or the following three spots in Sonoma County, are the most recommended sites in our area.

A visit to **Willow Creek Road** can easily be combined with a day's birding at Bodega Bay—starting out there at dawn, then proceeding to Bodega Bay for the rest of the day. North of Bodega Bay on Hwy. 1, take a right turn on Willow Creek Road (on the south shore of the Russian River). One half mile after you leave the valley floor, stop frequently and listen for the Pileated Woodpecker and for the Spotted Owl, which can also be heard along here.

**Armstrong Redwoods State Reserve** is located on the N. side of the Russian River. From Hwy. 1, go east on Hwy. 116 and turn N. at Guerneville at the sign for the State Reserve. The two recommended spots are the Picnic Area and the Redwood Amphitheatre. If you are at one of these locations in the early morning you are assured of at least *hearing* Pileated Woodpecker and possibly seeing one. Spotted Owls can be heard at the parking lot at the Redwood Theatre. Hermit Thrush, Winter Wren, and Golden-crowned Kinglet also breed here. You may choose between a  $\frac{1}{2}$ -mile walk to either of these areas, or a \$1.50 entrance fee.

If you are taking a trip to the wine country in the Napa Valley, try for the Pileated Woodpecker early in the morning at the top of **Ida Clayton Road**, (a right turn 7 miles N. of Calistoga on Hwy. 128, just after crossing Redwood Creek). Pileateds can usually be seen here in the morning. The road goes through a variety of habitats, and breeding birds in the area include Mountain Quail; Pygmy, Screech and Great-Horned Owls; Poor-will; Nashville, MacGillivray's and Hermit Warblers; and Rufous-crowned, Sage, and Black-chinned Sparrows. It is best to start at dawn. In Napa County, just N. of St. Helena on Hwy. 128, a walk in early morning in **Bothe Napa Valley State Park** can also produce Pileated Woodpecker.

## San Joaquin County

## 9. The Delta

Among the special attractions of San Joaquin County are the thousands of wintering Whistling Swans and Sandhill Cranes—a spectacle one can see in few other places. Huge numbers of Whistling Swans are traditionally found on Victoria Island along Hwy. 4, just after crossing into San Joaquin County from Contra Costa County. Take Hwy. 4 east from Hwy. 680 and head toward Stockton. The swans may be in the fields along Hwy. 4, but you may be able to get a better view from a side road. Look for large white lumps in the field as you drive. It is among these flocks of swans that one to three Bewick's Swan (a European species that may be lumped with the Whistling Swan), have been found by carefully scoping. Look for a swan with a large amount of yellow on the bill. The swans generally arrive by late November and leave at the end of January.

Several thousand Sandhill Cranes traditionally winter in the Thornton area, N.E. of Victoria Island. Continue E. on Hwy. 4, N. on Hwy. 5, E. on Hammer Lane and N. on Hwy. J8, (Thornton Rd.). Turn west on Woodbridge Rd. just north of the intersection of Hwy. J8 and Hwy. 12 and drive this road slowly. A scope is helpful for close viewing. The cranes arrive in late November and leave in mid-Feb. If you plan your trip in early February, you will be rewarded

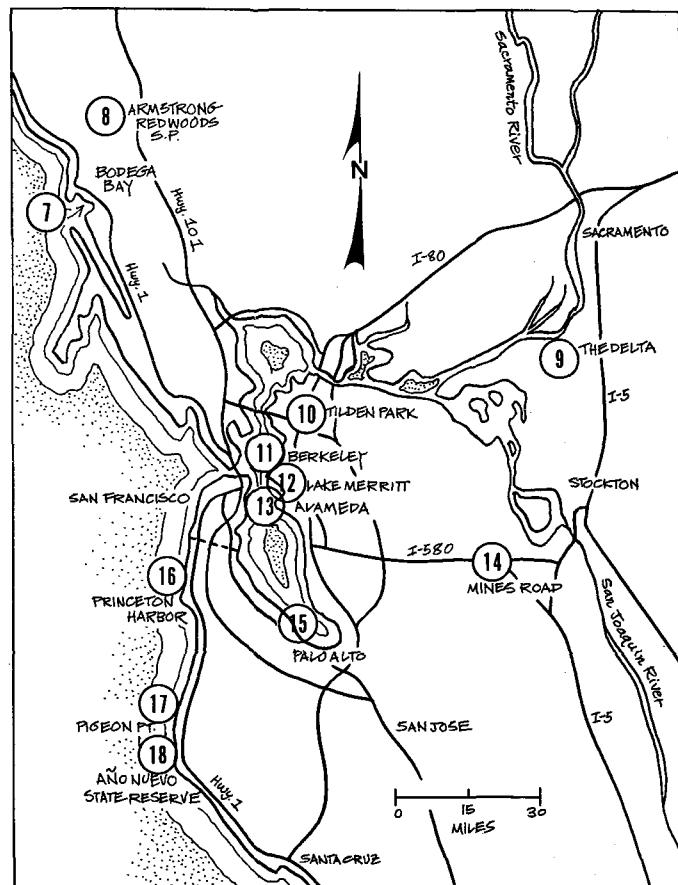
with sights of these majestic birds performing courtship dances. Victor Road., south of Woodbridge off Hwy. J8, can also be good for viewing the cranes.

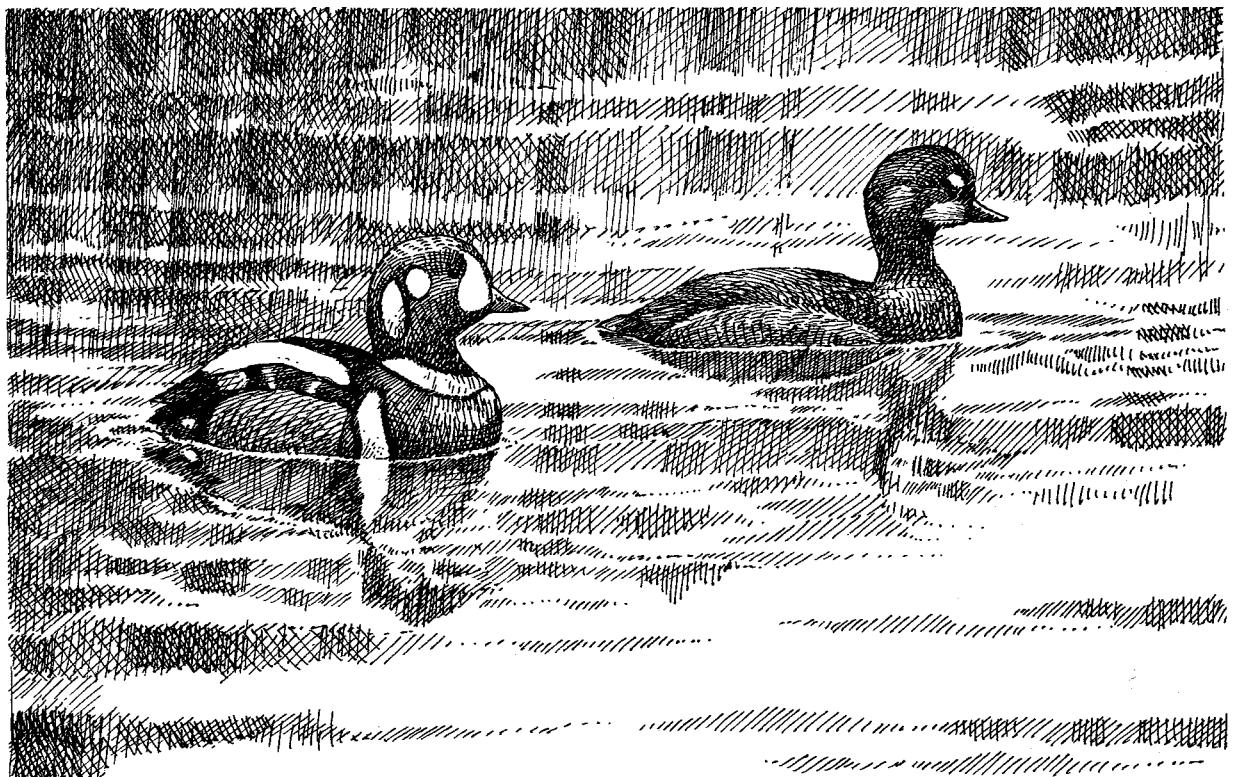
In addition to the cranes and swans you will no doubt see many ducks, geese, and raptors. A good way to return to the Bay Area is via Hwy. 23, with a stop at Grizzly Island Waterfowl Management Area, (take Grizzly Island Rd. near Fairfield). This is an excellent area for wintering waterfowl, and such raptors as Rough-legged, Ferruginous and Red-tailed Hawks. A Northern Shrike sometimes winters, so check every shrike carefully. The Delta, with its marshes, waterways and rich agricultural land, is certain to provide the city dweller with a delightful day of birding.

## Contra Costa County

## 10. Tilden East Bay Regional Park and Jewel Lake.

Because of its proximity to Berkeley and Oakland, Tilden Park is one of the most birded spots in the Bay Area. Although the park has many worthwhile sites to explore, the rich riparian area around Jewel Lake is by far the most productive. Considering its inland location, it is amazing how many eastern vagrant warblers have been recorded at Jewel Lake during the months of June-November; and no matter what time of year, the lake is a very "birdy" spot. Because of the nature of the habitat, however, it is often difficult to re-find rarities. In the winter at least one Hooded Merganser can usually be found on the lake with an assortment of other ducks. If it is not here, check Lake Anza, a larger and deeper lake in the park. Chestnut-backed Chickadees are common residents; Varied Thrush, Golden-crowned Kinglet, and Winter Wren winter; and Allen's Hummingbird breeds. Jewel Lake can be reached from the north side of the U.C. campus in Berkeley by heading up Spruce to the crest of the hills and down Canon Dr.; turn left at the bottom of the hill and go to the parking lot at the end of the road. The lake is a short walk from here.





Harlequin Ducks

### Alameda County

#### 11. The Berkeley Shoreline and Emeryville Crescent

Although this is not a particularly aesthetic area, it is an excellent spot from which to observe wintering loons, grebes, ducks, and shorebirds, including the occasional Yellow-billed Loon, Red-necked Grebe, and Oldsquaw. For proximity to major metropolitan areas this site can't be beat—but be prepared for the constant drone of freeway traffic.

For loons, grebes, and bay ducks, the **Berkeley Pier and Marina** are excellent. Take the University Ave. exit from Hwy. 80 and follow the signs to the marina. Carefully check among the boats at the marina and scope north and south from the pier. The breakwater to the north of the pier sometimes has a Wandering Tattler. Dec.-Feb. are the peak months to look for the wintering species and for the rarities mentioned above. In order to thoroughly check the area, you should also scope from the end of the Powell St. exit (2 exits S. of University). The most recent Yellow-billed Loon in the Bay was among the boats at this spot in 1976. Red-necked Grebe and Oldsquaw, plus a good variety of diving ducks, have also been recorded at **Berkeley Aquatic Park**—a reliable spot for close views of wintering Redheads. The park can be reached by going E. on University from the marina, right on 6th, and right on Addison. The three ponds are all worth checking. Park at the S.E. edge of the second pond and walk through a gate to the third pond, which is excellent for herons, including an occasional Green Heron. For Short-eared Owls (winter), Burrowing Owls (resident) and a great variety of gulls (including Thayer's), take Marina Blvd. N. from the marina to the end and walk north parallel to the shore, across the landfill of the Berkeley Dump.

Close views of our regular wintering shorebirds can be obtained approx. 1 hr. after high tide at two spots near the Berkeley marina. Go north on the frontage road that intersects University Ave. west of Hwy. 80 and turn west at the first corner. This corner, and the corner at the end of the Golden Gate Fields exit (the next exit N.), will give you excellent views of shorebirds. The **Bay Bridge Toll Plaza** offers a wider variety of shorebirds under all tidal conditions, and in addition

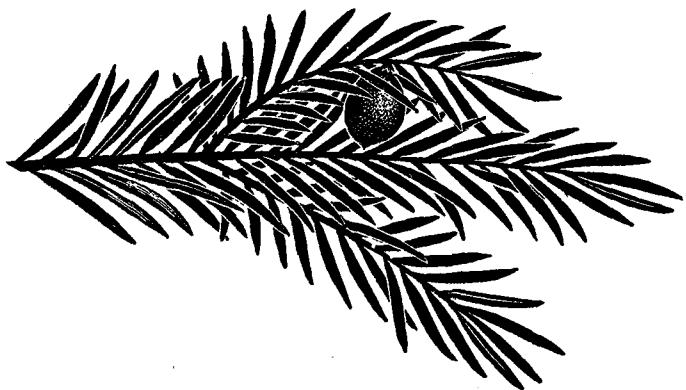
provides a resting spot for terns. A scope is advisable here. Take the Army exit just before the toll booth, but bear left when the road splits, taking a left onto the frontage road at the sign for the radio stations. Park just west of the first radio station and walk out to the edge of the salicornia. At high tide Clapper Rails can sometimes be flushed here. Some shorebirds actually rest on the salicornia marsh at high tide but the majority rest on the sandbar directly N. of the marsh. Scope this area for a variety of shorebirds, gulls, and terns. Fall, winter, and early spring will produce the greatest variety of shorebirds, but in summer, particularly early August, it is possible to see Forster's, Common, Least, Elegant, Caspian, and even a few Arctic Terns. For rocky shorebirds, drive to the end of the road and look along the rocks to the north. Birds, as sensitive as they are, certainly don't seem to be daunted by the roar of the freeways, which dominate the area—but earplugs may be helpful to the birder!

#### 12. Lake Merritt, Oakland

To the bird watcher, Lake Merritt means Barrow's Goldeneye—during the months of Nov.-Feb. The best area is the N.E. shore along Lakeshore Ave. A scope is advisable. With persistence several male and female Barrow's can generally be found among the Common Goldeneyes. Females of the two species should be studied carefully. (Head shape seems to be the best method of separating them). A wide variety of ducks winter here, among them Hooded Merganser, Wood Duck, and Tufted Duck (two wintered the past two years). Walk along the entire N.E. arm to the feeding pond on the N. shore, where many gulls bathe. Even Thayer's Gull sometimes occurs here. Morning is the best time, especially on weekends, for the park is very popular.

#### 13. Alameda South Shore

This is one of the finest spots in the Bay Area—and probably the best place in the Oakland-Berkeley region to view a variety of shorebirds at close range, in a relatively picturesque setting. At the S.E. end of the beach is a small salt marsh, which is part of the East Bay Regional



Park District. At high tide Clapper Rails may be seen walking at the edge of the marsh—or you may even flush one from the bushes in the yards across the street! All of our regular wintering shorebirds can also be found here. The optimum time for a visit is during the morning at the high tide, when the sun is at your back and the birds are at rest on the sandy beaches next to the marsh. Due to the shallowness of the beach the tide recedes very quickly here, so the shorebirds feed along the edge of the shore only for a short time. From May to August, Least Terns can be seen along this beach. The area is reached by taking the 23rd Ave. exit from Hwy. 1 (when heading S.) or 29th Ave. exit (when heading N.). 29th Ave. becomes Park St. on the other side of the bridge. Follow Park to the end, turn left and park at the end of Shoreline Dr.

#### 14. Mines Road

Located S.E. of Livermore, Mines Road is the road to bird for Lawrence's Goldfinch (though the species may be resident, it is hard to find in winter). Among Bay Area birders the road is particularly popular in April and May, an ideal time to enjoy species of the oak woodland-Digger Pine association, plus an outstanding wildflower show—in a spectacular canyon setting. In addition to Lawrence's Goldfinch, species that can usually be seen here include Golden Eagle, Lewis' Woodpecker, Nuttall's Woodpecker, Yellow-billed Magpie, Canyon Wren, Rock Wren, Western Bluebird, Phainopepla, Lazuli Bunting (May-August), and Lark, Rufous-crowned, Sage, Chipping, and Black-chinned Sparrows. Take the N. Livermore exit from Hwy. 580, head south through town (the road changes its name to Tesla outside of town), and turn right on Mines Rd. For the best results, start at dawn and allow a full day to bird along Mines Road and Del Puerto Canyon—a loop that will bring you to Hwy. 580 again.

### San Mateo County

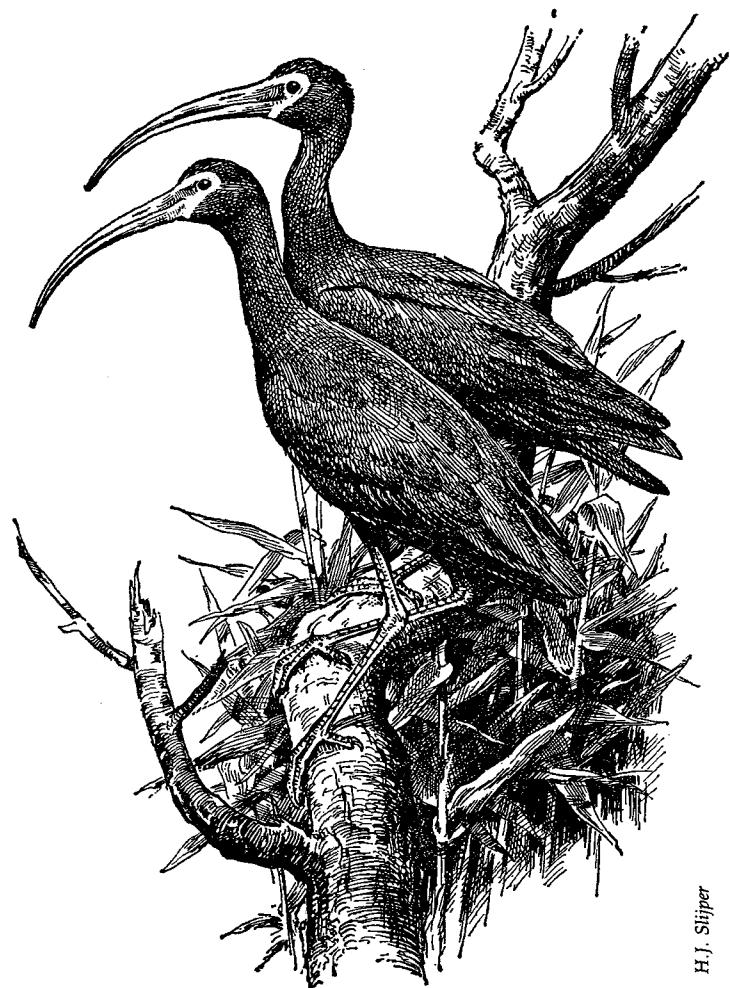
#### 15. Palo Alto Baylands City Park

The most accessible salicornia (salt water) marsh in the Bay Area is situated at the Palo Alto Baylands—the best place to observe the natural vegetation of the bayshore, plus a wide variety of wintering waterbirds. This marsh is also home to the endangered Clapper Rail and the Red-bellied Harvest Mouse, and at high tides between Nov.-Feb., it's also possible to see or hear Sora and Virginia Rails, as well as the elusive Black Rail and Sharp-tailed Sparrow (seen here in Jan., 1978). To reach the Baylands, take the Embarcadero exit E. from Hwy. 101 and follow it to the end of the road, where there is a nature center. Extensive boardwalks lead out over the marsh. This area is best in the winter, when high tides occur during daytime, and multitudes of dabbling ducks and gulls are present in the adjacent sloughs and ponds. For close views of a variety of gulls, the large cement pond just west of the nature center is the best area—a reliable spot for Thayer's Gull in winter and sometimes a wintering Glaucous gull. Hordes of gulls are attracted to this site because of the city dump adjacent to and south of the Baylands. For Blue-winged Teal,

take the loop trail along the slough bordering the pond. The ponds directly to the south of the Baylands, reached via the frontage road, are also excellent for studying gulls and dabbling ducks. Most winters, a European Wigeon can be found among the hundreds of American Wigeon; and the Little Blue Heron plus a hybrid Little Blue x Snowy Egret have also been recorded here. In summer Least Terns nest near the dump and Short-eared Owls can be seen most winters by walking out to the dump. Burrowing Owls are resident in the fields bordering the airport, just west of the Baylands.

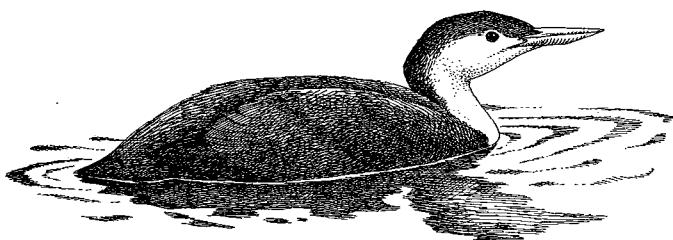
#### 16. Princeton Harbor

Only 25 miles south of San Francisco on Hwy. 1, Princeton Harbor is a picturesque fishing community that provides excellent coastal birding, particularly in the winter. An abundance of loons, grebes, and diving ducks frequent the harbor, and among them one may find Red-necked Grebe, Oldsquaw, and Black Scoter. Amazingly, the only record for Yellow-billed Loon is a non-breeding plumaged individual in mid-June! A fairly good assortment of shorebirds can usually be found feeding along the N.E. edge of the harbor and on the rocks of the N. jetty at the proper tide. A Rock Sandpiper has favored this spot the past two winters and should be looked for among the turnstones and Surfbirds on the rocks. The best way to bird the harbor is to park at the N. end and walk along the N. edge out to the jetty. You can scope most of the harbor along the shore and scope the rest from vantage points along the E. side of the harbor and S. jetty. The willows along the road at the N.E. end of the harbor should be checked for eastern landbird vagrants in the fall. Even in the spring and summer there are generally a few diving birds and shorebirds in



White-faced Ibis

Ray Robinson



Yellow-billed Loon

the harbor—and this time of year is best for Marbled Murrelets (scan from the jetty or the beach just south of the harbor). But at any time of the year, Princeton Harbor is guaranteed to offer excellent birding.

### 17. Pigeon Point

Pigeon Point has become famous in the Bay Area as a seabird lookout. A scope is absolutely essential, and the best viewing time is dawn to noon. This is one of the most reliable spots for Marbled Murrelets, particularly from April-August. The Marbled Murrelet is one of the most difficult species to observe well, for it is seldom seen on boat trips—and, to the frustration of observers on shore, the birds usually swim just beyond the surf. Other alcids can be seen from this point at the appropriate time of year. Pigeon Guillemots nest on the cliffs near the lighthouse; and Ancient Murrelets and Rhinoceros Auklets may be seen in winter. The months of March-May will reward you with the spectacular spring migration of streams of loons, Black Brant, scoters, phalaropes, gulls, and terns. Black-footed Albatross and other tubenoses have also been spotted from this point, following ships. Pigeon Point is located six miles south of Pescadero Beach on Hwy. 1. Park on the dirt shoulder off Pigeon Point Road, N. of the lighthouse.

### 18. Año Nuevo State Reserve

This is the most reliable spot in the state for Harlequin Duck. The prime months to look for the bird are Nov.-early April, although there is a single mid-summer record. During September, check for Pectoral Sandpipers among the resting shorebirds at the outer point. Look for Black Scoters off the point Nov.-March, and for Marbled Murrelets April-August. Pigeon Guillemots, Black Swifts, and Bank Swallows nest in the cliffs April-July. The island off the point serves as a breeding ground for the Northern Elephant Seal, and during the winter months, when the seals are breeding, the only way to go out to the point is on a guided tour with a ranger. Año Nuevo is about 50 miles south of San Francisco and 8 mi. south of Pigeon Point on Hwy. 1. Park in the parking lot and take the trail to the cliffs. It is best to walk along the edge of the cliffs, descending to the beach about half way out. Scope frequently from the cliffs and between the point and the island for Harlequin Ducks, Black Scoters, and Marbled Murrelets. The walk out to the point takes about 45 min. at a steady pace. Year-round, Año Nuevo offers not only a spectacular setting but excellent coastal birding.

There are many other fine birding areas in the Bay Area, among which the following are especially deserving of mention: Mt. Diablo State Park (Contra Costa Co.) for chaparral species, Dumbarton Marsh (Alameda Co.) for rails (Black Rail and Sharp-tailed Sparrow have been recorded here), Redwood Regional Park (Alameda Co.) for Saw-whet Owls (winter months best), and Pescadero Creek at Pescadero Beach (San Mateo Co.) for ducks and shorebirds (Curlew Sandpiper has been recorded once). 

Richard Spotts

# The Human Factor

**A**lthough there is almost universal acceptance of the fact that overpopulation is a critical problem in the world's underdeveloped nations, most people seem to ignore population growth here in the United States. Indeed, there seems to be a widespread opinion that we have already reached "zero population growth"—where the number of births and deaths are roughly equal. Yet the truth is, that at current fertility and immigration rates our population will never stop growing, and will increase by 107 million people in just the next 50 years—equivalent to 36 new cities the size of Chicago!

During the last three years, U.S. population has grown by 2.4 million annually. About half of that number represents the excess of births over deaths, with the other half attributable to both legal (400,000) and illegal (estimated at 800,000) immigration. In addition, the national birth rate increased by 5 percent in the first four months of 1977. Given the larger number of women born during the so-called "postwar baby boom," greater numbers of women are now entering their reproductive years. These factors, coupled with the results of surveys of birth expectations, indicate that the birth rate could reach 4 million by 1980—which approaches the 1957 peak of the postwar baby boom, when 4.3 million children were born.

If the birth rate and immigration rate stay constant, we will have 278,205,000 people in the year 2000 and 324,470,000 by the year 2025. For comparison, our present population is 217,000,000.

While our nation's population growth rate is much slower than those of most underdeveloped countries, we cannot afford to be complacent. Even though we may be able to alter wasteful lifestyles and implement strict conservation measures, a constantly rising population will still create problems. It will make existing problems—like pollution, resource depletion, smog, urban sprawl, etc.—more difficult to solve, while inevitably creating new ones as more people compete for limited fuels, food, and other resources.

In light of the numerous problems associated with population growth, many organizations are striving to change public attitudes, with the goal of eventual stabilization of population growth. Among these organizations, one of the most publicized has been Zero Population Growth (ZPG). ZPG seeks to reform antiquated laws or policies which restrict access to contraceptive methods. They promote sex education, voluntary sterilization, and maximum availability of birth control for anyone wanting it—regardless of age, sex, or race. ZPG also seeks to reduce the growing number of unwanted teenage pregnancies. And they hope to expose the myriad, and often subtle, "pronatalist" pressures in society, which lead couples to assume they want children without giving this incredibly important decision serious thought.

For more information, or to join or contribute to this important cause, contact: ZPG—California, 1107 Ninth Street, Room #327, Sacramento, Calif. 95814. 



**Gene Anderson**

# Seabirds off Tahiti

Many years ago, in 1961, I spent most of the southern winter studying the skipjack fishery off Tahiti. As an anthropologist interested in fisheries development, I was primarily preoccupied with people and fish, but since I spent half the days on the water in the fishing boats, I also had exciting opportunities to observe seabirds.

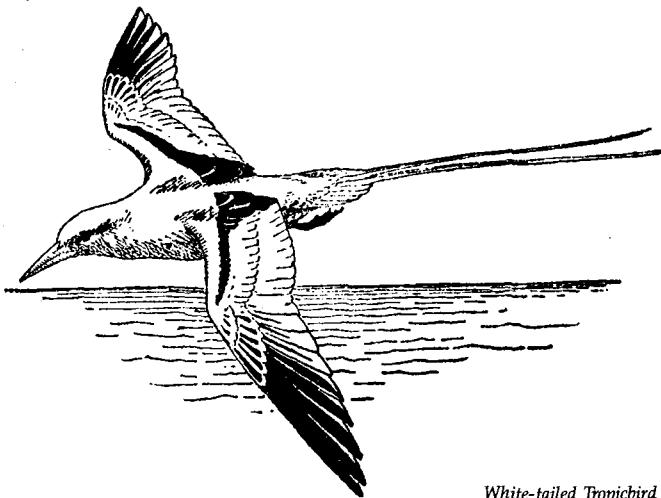
As Polynesian deep-sea fishermen undoubtedly have done for thousands of years, the Tahitians found their fish by watching for birds. They could spot bird flocks from miles away, picking them up with the naked eye before I could find them with my binoculars. To them, some birds meant no worthwhile fish, while others meant *mahimahi* (dolphin-fish, *Coryphaena*), and still others meant tuna and skipjack. The latter species fed together in huge schools, pursuing squid and smaller fish—prey which were sought as well by most of the local seabirds.

A typical flock over tuna (or, in terms of the birds' own interests: over squid and anchovy) was likely to include Sooty Tern, Bridled Tern, Brown Booby, Red-footed Booby, Black Noddy, Common Noddy, and Greater and Lesser Frigatebirds. The Black Noddies were commonest—anywhere up to three or four hundred in a flock; the Red-footed Boobies next, up to 200. A flock that big would have perhaps 50 Bridled Terns, 5-10 Sooties, as many Brown Boobies, and two or three of each frigatebird. These aerial pirates arrived last, always soaring high above the screaming flock until they selected their victims—usually Red-footed Boobies, but also the larger terns. Then, almost in the fashion of falcons, they would dive on their quarry. Relentlessly they pursued their mark—and they almost never lost the game. Now and then a booby would imitate the frigatebirds and chase a tern, but rarely with success, and only in response to the frigate's example.

Often one could observe the seabird flocks forming when schools of fish surfaced. The Black Noddies, almost always in sight somewhere, were normally the first to find the school, as they beat their way over the sea. Then, as they began to strike, other birds flocked to the scene, followed in due course by the fishermen. The Black Noddies usually fished on the surface or dived shallowly, while the other terns dove a bit deeper. By contrast the boobies launched spectacular power dives that carried them far below the surface. Huge circular holes gouged in the sides of the tuna were said by the fishermen to be the work of diving boobies. Of course, the deeper the dive the higher the start, so the birds flew at various altitudes—the Black Noddies near the water, the others higher up.

A flock over *mahimahi* was a different affair: very few birds; and most of these were likely to be White Terns, *Gygis alba*. Sooty Terns, and now and then a booby, were also interested, and of course the frigatebirds were ready to rob anyone. The White Terns dipped and picked at the water. The small fish they sought were fewer, more scattered, and less often at the surface than the schools that swarmed over the tuna. Now and then noddies might fish over *mahimahi*; but the White Terns never fished over tuna.

The local petrels and shearwaters rarely showed much interest in fish schools, with the exception of the little Audubon's Shearwaters, which were usually visible in



White-tailed Tropicbird

Earl L. Poole

numbers almost anywhere that food offered itself. Now and then a New Zealand Shearwater would fly past, steady, uninterested in boats or schools of fish. The Tahitian Petrel was common, but it rarely if ever appeared, except when the clouds had built up in the late afternoon over the mountains of Tahiti, casting a dark shadow on the sea. Tahiti's winter weather is predictable: cool nights, warm sunny days, and steady tradewinds that pile up clouds over the mountains—so that thundershowers often occur in late afternoon, to mar the otherwise sunny weather. The Tahitian Petrels flew fast and steady, keeping in the cloud-shadow, never deviating from their courses. They never came near the boats, and appeared very shy of them—or, at least, uninterested. I never saw them stop or feed, and I can only presume that at such times they were leaving home for a night's fishing, or some twilight feeding offshore. The only other tubenose noted during my sojourn was an ailing Giant Fulmar (*Macronectes giganteus*) that one of the fishermen found and captured.

The remaining members of the seabird community included the Crested Tern, which preferred to spend most of its time fishing within the reef, and the White-tailed Tropicbird, which bred in pairs in the inland mountain cliffs, commuting from there to the sea to fish. Occasionally tropicbirds would appear in the flocks over tuna or *mahimahi*, but never in sizable numbers.

Most of the birds bred locally. A few, including the White Tern, Tahitian Petrel, the tropicbirds, and probably several others, bred on Tahiti and Moorea, while the rest nested nearby, or in the Tuamotu Islands to the north. The Crested Tern and New Zealand Shearwater came from the Australasian region, and the Giant Fulmar from the subantarctic islands—where it had, in fact, been banded! As the season progressed, migrating Northern Hemisphere shorebirds became common—especially Wandering Tattlers—but no identifiably northern seabirds appeared.

I was glad of the chance to see Tahiti before the waves of tourists, and gladder still to be out on the water on those cool windy days among thousands of screaming seabirds—a succession of memorable days in a world I shall not see again. Today, tragically, Tahiti's native landbirds are all but gone, and on the island one sees mostly exotics. But still the seabirds remain, as they were for me, an unfailing source of wonder and excitement. ♡

## OPINION/Harold Swanton

# Audubon on the Wing

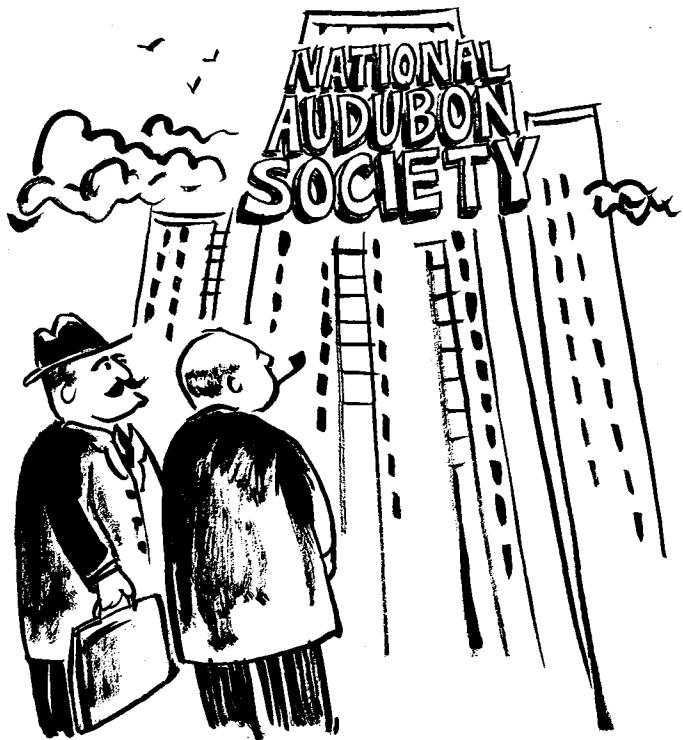
**FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS....**

With the Furbish Lousewort and Snail Darter decisions on the books, Wall Street is eyeing the environmental movement with an interest it hasn't shown since Xerox. Audubon, born a stodgy birdwatching organization a century ago, is a brand new bird.

A licensing arm now puts the Audubon imprimatur on bird-embossed medals and coins, plates, crockery, silverware, limited edition bird prints, and bird figurines selling for \$2800 a shot and up. Profit margins are widening, distribution guaranteed to a waiting market of millions of birdwatchers reachable via bimonthly *Audubon*, and the Society's fat membership roster.

A dynamic Audubon management has launched its Hospital Plan, a pilot venture into the lucrative insurance field, with underwriting in Travel, Fire, Auto, and Life on the drawing boards. An overseas arm in Germany is test marketing an *Audubon on the Autobahn* program aimed at the Volks-driver, with the Flying Egret symbol as a license plate emblem.

The trendy leisure time field will be tapped by Audubon's new motel chain, centering on such birding hotspots as Brownsville, Hawk Mountain, Aransas, and Cave Creek, tentatively flying the "Audubideawee" banner. Rooms are wired for closed-circuit TV, with programs including such items as the Allen footage of the last Ivory-billed Woodpecker, etc. A subsidiary arm is distributing the films in the syndication market in the "Audutelly" program package.



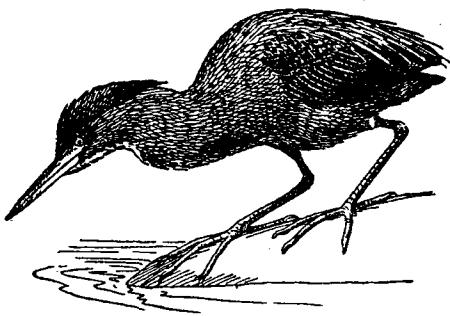
*"I know it's hard to believe, but we actually started out as a little society of nature lovers!"*

A Theme Park in Florida is on the agenda, targetted for a 1985 opening, modelled on Disney World. It will include a Last Look Ride, with audio-animated Labrador Ducks, Great Auks, Passenger Pigeons, and Carolina Parakeets.

Audusouvenirs, Inc. will market plush Audubunnies, and the fast-food arm will sell Auduburgers. Recreational items include Kondor Kites for Kiddies plus Whooping Crane scooters, and a tie-in with Kellogg and Post will distribute plastic Heath Hens and Eskimo Curlews as prizes in cereal boxes.

Acquisition plans are aimed at affluent Wildlife Federation, Wilderness Society, and even the potent Sierra Club, all targets of Audubon tender offers. Acquisition of any or all could increase cash flow from 18-40%. In parallel actions, management is divesting itself of its sanctuary system and warden staff, both money-losers in recent years.

At present levels, Audubon is a good buy, upside potential near term in the 10-20% range, long term almost unlimited. A far cry, say Audubon spokesmen, from *Bird Lore*. 



## Ballona Report

The battle for Ballona continues to be waged on several fronts, as the **Friends of Ballona Wetlands** gears up for an anticipated showdown with the Summa Corporation over the future of this last remnant of the once-extensive Playa del Rey marshland—home to the endangered Calif. Least Tern and the Belding's Savanna Sparrow. It is hoped that the California Coastal Commission will designate the area an estuarine sanctuary, forestalling further development, and to this end a public workshop was held in late August to gather input on the status of the marsh. Larry Sansone is coordinating L.A. Audubon's involvement in the project, and further information may be obtained from him, at 463-4056. All those interested are also invited to attend a multi-media presentation, **Ballona Wetlands: an Endangered Ecosystem** at 7:30 p.m., Thursday, Sept. 28, at St. Robert's Hall, Loyola University, Westminster. Letters urging preservation of the marsh are still urgently needed. Write to the L.A. Co. Supervisors, Peter F. Schabarum, Kenneth Hahn, Edmund D. Edelman, James A. Hayes, and Baxter Ward (all at 500 W. Temple St., L.A. 90012.) To join the **Friends**, send \$1.00 (or more) to Ruth Lansford, 6953 Trolley Way, Playa del Rey, Calif. 90291, or call Ruth at 823-9586.

Jean Brandt/BIRDING in the

# Higher San Gabriels

The Angeles Crest Highway, east of Buckhorn Campground, climbs to elevations of 7000' and more, with a gradual change of habitat. These higher elevations offer the opportunity to observe such birds of the Lower Canadian Zone as Williamson's Sapsucker, Clark's Nutcracker, Pygmy Nuthatch, Townsend's Solitaire, Cassin's Finch, and Red Crossbill (a lucky find)—in a few specific locations described below. In addition, the more common birds of montane chaparral and forest may be found throughout the mountains: among them, Mountain Quail, White-headed Woodpecker, Western Wood Pewee, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Violet-green Swallow, Mountain Chickadee, Purple Finch, Green-tailed Towhee, and Fox Sparrow.

The locations that follow are numbered on the map:

1. Near the **tunnel**: look for resident Rock Wrens and Dusky Flycatchers, May through summer. There is also a local flock of Bighorn Sheep which *may* be seen near any of the tunnels on the highway at any time of the year.

2. The open **chaparral** on the south side of the highway has Black-chinned Sparrows in summer.

3. **Cortelyou Springs** has breeding Green-tailed Towhees and Fox Sparrows, plus MacGillivray's and Wilson's Warblers—and the area is good for hummingbirds, especially during migration. Check all the springs and creeks along the highway at this elevation for similar birds.

4. **Dawson's Saddle**: walk behind the maintenance buildings on the north side of the highway and up the trail for Clark's Nutcrackers and Red-breasted Nuthatches.

5. **Vincent's Gap**: good for Mountain Quail, which are resident (but hard to find) throughout the montane chaparral. From here take:

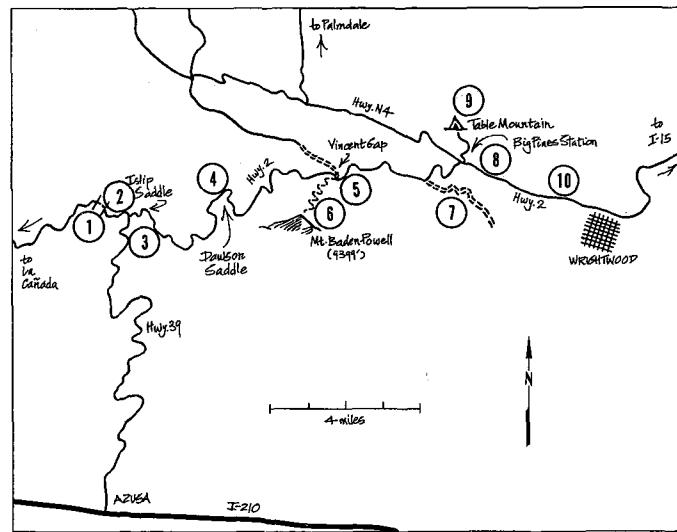
6. The trail up **Mt. Baden Powell** (3.5 miles): the best place to look for Williamson's Sapsuckers, throughout the Limber Pines (though more regular in the winter than in summer). Calliope Hummingbirds, Dusky Flycatchers, Clark's Nutcrackers, and Townsend's Solitaires are also found along this trail.

7. **Blue Ridge**: walk or drive this good dirt road for typical montane chaparral birds—in a particularly picturesque location.

8. **Big Pines**. Here the highway crosses N4 (to Pearblossom). On the south side of the intersection there is a lush meadow where Lincoln's Sparrows nest. Calliope Hummingbirds and Nashville Warblers are also a possibility.

9. **Table Mountain**. Whip-poor-wills have been found on the south side of the campground the past two summers, and Common Nighthawks were seen in July 1978 (the first summer records for L.A. Co.). Also look here for Red-breasted Sapsuckers (*S.v. daggetti*), White-headed and Hairy Woodpeckers, Red Crossbills (uncommon), and Lawrence's Goldfinches.

10. **The valley** between Big Pines and Wrightwood. Here the road parallels a lush willow-lined creek bottom which has breeding MacGillivray's Warblers, and probably breeding Calliope Hummingbirds.



Motels, gasoline, and supplies are all available in Wrightwood. Winter snows close the highway, but at all other times of the year this is a very beautiful and birdy road to travel. *Good birding!* (•)

## The Whitewater Marsh

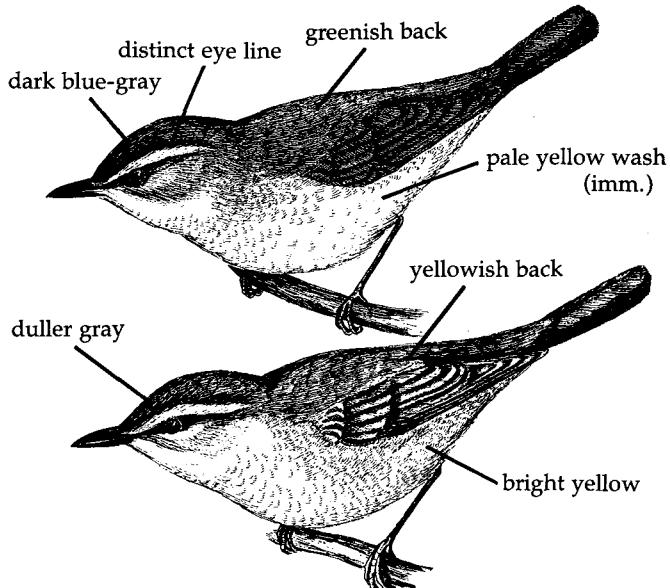
The marsh at the mouth of the Whitewater River, at the north end of the Salton Sea, has a national reputation among birders and naturalists, for it offers excellent nesting habitat for Least Bitterns, Yellow-headed Blackbirds, and Western Grebes, while supporting some 25 nesting pairs of the declining White-faced Ibis, as well as the endangered California Black Rail and the Yuma Clapper Rail. Unfortunately, however, continued public access to the marsh, and even its very existence, may now be in jeopardy. The Coachella Valley County Water District, which assumes management authority over the Whitewater channel and delta, has recently placed cables across the road to the marsh and posted "No Trespassing" signs to discourage visitors to the area. This action was timed to coincide with the water district's massive Whitewater River channelization project, funded in cooperation with the U.S. Soil Conservation Service. L.A. Audubon, along with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Dept. of Fish and Game, is concerned about this project, because it may threaten the lifeblood of the marsh—its freshwater supply.

In mid-July the chapter took the initial steps toward legal action to seek protection for the marsh and its water source. Then, on July 28, representatives from various government agencies met with water district officials to work out a tentative management plan. While specific details are as yet unclear, the plan reportedly insures at least some water flow to the marsh. In the weeks ahead, however, we will seek firm assurances from the participating agencies that a sound management plan will in fact be implemented—with provision for free access to the marsh in order to monitor compliance. Though the prospect exists of an acceptable solution to the problem, LAAS remains ready to pursue the matter in court if it appears that the survival of this valuable ecosystem is threatened.

## Jon Dunn/FIELD NOTES

## Plain-winged Vireos

## Red-eyed Vireo



## Yellow-green Vireo

The Red-eyed Vireo, like the Philadelphia Vireo (discussed in last month's column) is another of the species that is often confused with the Warbling Vireo. In general, the bird occurs as a casual spring and fall vagrant on the coast and in the interior of So. California, with almost all the records from the traditional southern vagrant spots. It should be pointed out, however, that a number of reports of this species actually pertain to the Warbling Vireo. The Red-eyed Vireo occurs regularly from early to mid-September in the N.E. portion of our region, and it is suspected that these northern birds are migrants moving south from their breeding grounds in the eastern part of the Pacific Northwest.

The best way to tell a Red-eyed from a Warbling Vireo is by size—for the Red-eyed is substantially *larger*, suggesting, at first glance, a tanager or an oriole. Shape can also be helpful, for the Red-eyed has a *long, flat crown* and a *long bill*, while the Warbling Vireo has a *smaller bill and a rounder head*. The Red-eyed also appears to have proportionately *longer wings* than the Warbling. The crown of the Red-eyed is a *dark blue-gray*, bordered by *white*, with a thin *black eye stripe*, while the *bright greenish back* markedly contrasts with the cap. The Warbling, on the other hand, has a *duller grayish-brown cap*, and a *duller white eye stripe*, with no black eye line; and the *grayish back* does not contrast markedly with the cap. The Red-eyed also has *cleaner white* underparts than the Warbling, though the fall immatures do show a faint wash of *pale yellow* on the sides, flanks, and undertail coverts. These immatures can also be confused with the Yellow-green Vireo (see below). As a mark, the *red eye* is of little value, for by the time this feature is noted, more obvious marks should have established the bird's identity. Furthermore, only the adults display the red iris, the immatures showing a brown iris—as do the immature Yellow-greens.

Like the Red-eyed, the **Yellow-green Vireo** occurs as a casual vagrant to So. California. All eight records of the species are from the fall. All but one of these are from the coast, and all but one are immature birds. It is believed that these birds are migrants, moving 180° in the wrong direction from their breeding grounds in Western Mexico—a pattern exhibited on a broader scale by the Tropical Kingbird.

The taxonomic status of the Yellow-green Vireo remains in question, as many ornithologists regard it as merely a race of the Red-eyed Vireo. As one moves south into the tropics, the Yellow-green grows progressively darker, until it very closely resembles a population of the Red-eyed Vireo in temperate South America. Whatever their status, however, the birds occurring in So. California can be identified with ease, and the fact that they may actually belong to the same species should not diminish their significance to field observers.

The fall immature Yellow-green Vireo is particularly distinctive, for the underparts are *bright yellow*, paling to whitish only on the throat and on the center of the breast and belly. The bird is just as large as the Red-eyed Vireo, and is similarly shaped—though the bill of the Yellow-green is a bit larger. In addition, the cap is a *duller gray*, with the eye lines not nearly so pronounced—and the back has a strong *yellowish hue*. The adult Yellow-green is not so extensively yellow below as the immature, the color extending only from the sides to the undertail coverts. In some cases, in fact, the immature Red-eyed Vireo may be confused with the adult Yellow-green—though the sides, flanks, and undertail coverts of the Yellow-green will always be *much brighter and more extensively yellow* than those of the Red-eyed. The yellow on these areas of the Yellow-green is also very slightly tinged with *green*, while that of the immature Red-eyed is a *pure yellowish hue*.

## Nature Centers in Peril

As part of the fallout from Proposition 13, the L.A. Co. Board of Supervisors has cut  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the budget of the 9 local Natural Areas, reducing to 4 the total staff responsible for administering such farflung sites as **Whittier Narrows**, the **Santa Fe Dam**, **Eaton Canyon**, **Placerita Canyon**, and **Vasquez Rocks**. While the post-Prop. 13 era is necessarily a time of belt-tightening, the Natural Areas represent invaluable resources which may easily be destroyed. Those concerned are urged to convey their thoughts to the L.A. County Supervisors (see the Ballona note, pg. 7) and to Ralph Cryder, Director of L.A. Co. Parks and Recreation, 155 W. Washington Blvd., L.A. 90015.



Shumway Suffel

# BIRDS of the Season



Normally our nesting season is pretty routine, and the whole ritual generally proceeds unobserved until we hear the calls of hungry nestlings in our yards, or find a fledgling in the clutches of a neighbor's cat. But this year's nesting season was definitely worthy of note. Among the season's events were the successful liaison of California's first **Blue-throated Hummingbird** with a male of unknown species, plus the first known nesting of **Lark Buntings** in eastern S.Bd. Co. Our hopes that California's first small flock of **Cassin's Sparrows** (found nearby) might also nest were, however, not to be realized, as the birds moved on in mid-June. The **Water Pipits**, previously noted on Mt. San Gorgonio (11,500'), were observed carrying food on at least three occasions in early July, although no young were actually seen (Doug Morton). This area is well above timberline, with large, jagged rocks underfoot and patches of snow in protected spots. A pair of **Blue-winged Teal** summered at McGrath State Park, and may have successfully nested, as a probable female (very similar to a female "Cinnamon") was seen with four ducklings in late July (Richard Webster). Richard also reports the nesting there of three pair of **Spotted Sandpipers** (usually absent in summer.) One of the nests proved successful. But dreams of nesting **Red-faced Warblers** at Charlton Flats in the San Gabriel Mts. evaporated by mid-July, as neither bird was heard to sing—unlikely behavior for a male warbler in breeding season. Kimball Garrett found at least 5 pairs of breeding **MacGillivray's Warblers** at Green Valley Campground in the S.Bd. Mts., where they have been known to nest the last few years. Two years ago he found nesting Hermit Warblers nearby. Just five years ago, neither species was known to nest south of the Sierra Nevadas. An interesting example of avian opportunism is the nesting of two pairs of **Bell's Vireos** in the Van Norman Dam basin near San Fernando (Sharon Goldwasser). This basin contained a deep lake prior to the earthquake in 1971, at which time the severely damaged earth-filled dam was condemned, and young willows began to grow in the dry lake bottom. Several **Solitary Vireos** of the Rocky Mt. (Plumbeous) race were singing along upper Big Rock Creek (S.E. of Valyermo, on the desert slope of the San Gabriels) on July 15 (K.G.), the first to summer in L.A. Co. The presence here of an individual of the coastal (Cassin's) race suggests that these forms may interbreed or coexist in this area.

Although a few **Chimney Swifts** have been noted locally during the last ten summers, and pairs have nested in Ventura and in N.W. Calif., Jean Brandt's discovery (July 6) of a large roost in an airshaft at the Burbank Studios was unprecedented west of the Rockies. Hopes for a nesting colony there were shattered, however, when Charles Collins of Long Beach State pointed out that the swifts are not colonial nesters, and that, even at this early date, this is probably a colonial roost. A meticulous count of 48 swifts was made on July 27, far surpassing the previous high count of only 5 birds. **Black Swifts** continued to nest under the falls in

Santa Anita Canyon above Arcadia, where a group from Sta. Monica Audubon counted 8 birds on July 8. The swifts were also nesting at Fallsville, N.E. of Redlands, where 6 to 8 were seen on June 12 (Don Sterba).

A few summering loons, mostly still in immature or winter plumage, are to be expected, but the 5 **Common Loons** near Laguna Beach (Jerry Johnson, June 25) were unusual. Shorebirds, as expected, returned early, but 20+ **Red Knots** along the Silver Strand below San Diego on July 3 (J.J. and S.S.) and a few **Wilson's Phalaropes** at McGrath S.P. several days later (Ed Navojosky) were rushing the season. A **Red Knot** north of Lancaster on July 25 was unusual inland (K.G. and Jon Dunn). By mid-July, "peeps" (**Western, Least, and Sanderlings**) were common along the coast, and a few **dowitchers**, plus both species of **yellowlegs**, were present. A breeding plumaged **Stilt Sandpiper** (rare away from the Salton Sea) was at McGrath for at least a week after July 18 (R.W.) and the first **Solitary Sandpiper** of the fall was found in the grassy ponds of the Sepulveda Rec. Area on July 25 (J.D.).

The Salton Sea was well birded, but not too exciting in July. The first **Magnificent Frigatebird** of the year was at the south end on July 9 (J.D. and the LAAS field trip), and the **Roseate Spoonbill** was found again at the north end. With prospects for tropical storms and the possible arrival of boobies and tropical herons, August should be an interesting time at the Sea.

On July 28, at Table Mt. Campground (in the San Gabriel Mts.), while searching (in vain) for the **Whip-poor-will** he heard there in June, K.G. (with Diane Riska) found about 20 **Common Nighthawks**—rare birds in L.A. Co. The appearance in So. Calif. of **Scissor-tailed Flycatchers** in mid-summer is difficult to explain. The first was in the Salt Creek tamarisks, 30 miles north of Baker (Sid England, July 18), and another was not far from the Colorado River north of Needles (Steve Cardiff, July 26). The brief sighting of a **Great-tailed Grackle** in a flock of Starlings at Pt. Fermin Park, San Pedro, reminded old timers of the male grackle which fed on dog food at nearby Ft. McArthur in March 1968. Since at that time there was only one recognized species (the Boat-tailed Grackle), no descriptions were written. Does anyone remember? Were the eyes golden yellow (Great-tailed) or dull yellow to dark brown (Boat-tailed)? (see *Birding*, Oct. '74). The adult female **Blackpoll Warbler** in San Diego on June 24 (Guy McCaskie) and the **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** there on June 22 (Elizabeth Copper) were certainly very lost, late spring migrants, but the juvenile **Townsend's Warbler** in Glendale on July 25 (Olga Clarke) was our first report of a fall migrant warbler. The sighting of two **Red Crossbills** at Iris Meadows on Mt. Pinos, where they are seldom seen, is typical of their erratic habits (the Gilbert Kings and Carolyn Adams, June 27).

Doubts regarding the status of the sub-adult **White Ibis** at Pt. Mugu N.A.S. in early June made a visit to Busch Gardens in Van Nuys seem advisable. Most of the birds in the park—the original stock at least—are banded, but those

hatched at the Gardens are not visibly marked, and some of them are able to fly. An adult White Ibis had a juvenile nearby, which the riverboat announcer stated was "hatched this year." Not far away was a sub-adult, with the body mostly white but the neck and head still brown—a bird which could easily be a nest-mate of the Pt. Mugu individual. Unfortunately we must conclude that the large and fascinating collection of waterbirds at the park offers many opportunities for pollution of our wild avifauna. Those birds most likely to create problems include two or more species of Whistling Ducks; two Whooper Swans; one or more Bewick's Swans; several species of grey geese, including some exotic White-fronted; Snow, "Blue," and Ross' Geese; two Bar-headed Geese; a few Canadas; at least four species of Shelducks (including Ruddy Shelducks similar to the one at Sepulveda Rec. Area last March); various exotic dabbling ducks, plus some U.S. species; a Rosy-billed Pochard like the one at McGrath during August 1976; several other pochards and scaup; Wood Ducks; goldeneyes; and stifftails. In this sprawling, heavily landscaped area, the potential for escape is great.

Southeastern Arizona continued to attract birders from all over the U.S. during July, particularly so because of the A.B.A. birding weekend in mid-month. Those present before July 19 were treated to a **Plain-capped Starthroat** (the 2nd U.S. record of this large Mexican hummingbird) at a feeder in Patagonia. The next Friday, however, to the dismay of several L.A. birders whose bags were packed and engines running, the folks in Patagonia pulled in their feeders and went on vacation—and the Starthroat was not seen again. The **Buff-collared Nightjar**, however, continued to be found on occasional moonlit nights—and during the month the count of **Berylline Hummingbirds** at Ramsey Canyon rose to four. Further afield, the **Spoon-billed Sandpiper** at the Iona Sewage Plant near Vancouver, B.C. (July 30) is apparently the first record south of extreme N.W. Alaska (Dave Marks).

So what's in store for September? The peak of the fall passerine migration, plus mudflats and marshes swarming with shorebirds, early waterfowl on the lakes and bays, and a pelagic trip every weekend! ☺



## WESTERN TANAGER

EDITOR Barry Clark

ASSISTANT EDITOR Corliss Kristensen

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PRESIDENT Sanford Wohlgemuth

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## Steve Strann

# BOOKS

**THE BIRDS OF PARADISE AND BOWER BIRDS**, by William T. Cooper and Joseph M. Forshaw. William Collins Publishers Pt. Ltd., Sydney, Australia, 1977: 304 pp., 61 color plates, range maps, field sketches. \$125.00.

In 1973, Forshaw and Cooper published the magnificent *Parrots of the World*, in which every Psittaciform species was illustrated and described. Since then, demand for the original edition has escalated, until today it commands up to eight times its original selling price of \$65.00. With the publication of their new monograph, *The Birds of Paradise and Bower Birds*, the authors have surpassed even their previous collaboration. Quite simply, this book is the most beautiful ornithological work I have seen in the past five years.

To no small extent, my initial impression stems from the inherent beauty of the subject matter. The Birds of Paradise (Paradisaeidae) and a to lesser extent the Bower Birds (Ptilonorhynchidae) are considered by many to be among the most striking of birds. Restricted to an arc of sub-tropical and montane rainforests extending through the center of New Guinea and down the eastern coast of Australia, the male Bird of Paradise combines a predominantly arboreal display with brilliant, ornamental plumage, while the somewhat duller Bower Birds build intricate terrestrial bowers during courtship. Long coveted for their magnificent skins and plumes (up to 30,000 exported per year at the turn of the century), they have recently become the subject of much scientific interest.

Cooper and Forshaw have attempted a comprehensive survey of these two families. As this work is intended to be a companion volume to E. Thomas Gilliard's *Birds of Paradise and Bower Birds* (1969), only data published since 1965 is included. This data is supplemented by copious observations from Cooper's field notes together with unpublished information furnished by other field workers. Each species account, written by Forshaw, is accompanied by a detailed description of all sub-species and their distribution, plus a general section containing data on calls, displays, nesting, eggs, etc. The writing style is lucid, the data factual and concise.

The major contribution of this book, however, lies in the illustrations. Each color plate is 11 to 16 inches, depicting both the male and female of each species, in a natural setting. Cooper's style is remarkable: each bird is intricately detailed, and very natural in posture. The background is ecologically accurate and equally detailed, yet unobtrusive. The colors are vibrant without being garish, and the printing is of a quality rarely seen in books today. The purple sheen of the corvid-like Manucodes, for example, literally glistens on the page. The birds seem to be alive, ready to fly at any moment. Of course, even the best work is not perfect. The male King Bird of Paradise seems unfinished and unnatural—but this is only nit-picking.

Cooper has also included field sketches that are equally important to the finished work. These pen and ink drawings depicting courtship postures, bower construction techniques and the like, are rougher than the color plates. But combined with Cooper's field notations, they are a useful aid to understanding the vast diversity of species-specific behavior within these families.

In conclusion, this volume is a valuable acquisition for the dedicated ornithologist or for any lover of art. If you have the money (the price is steep), buy it. The quality of the text and the subtle majesty of the illustrations make the book well worth every cent.

Steve Strann is a graduate student in ornithology at UCLA.

Commencing with this issue, his reviews will appear on a regular basis in the WESTERN TANAGER. All books reviewed in this column are available at the Audubon House Bookstore in Plummer Park. LAAS members and TANAGER subscribers are entitled to 10% discounts on most purchases.

# CALENDAR

Los Angeles Audubon Headquarters, Library, Bookstore, and Nature Museum are located at Audubon House, Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles 90046. Telephone: 876-0202. Hours: 10-3, Tuesday through Saturday.

*Audubon Bird Report—call 874-1318*

#### Field Trip Reservations

To make reservations for bus and pelagic trips, send a check payable to LAAS plus a self-addressed, stamped envelope, your phone number, and the names of all those in your party to the Reservations Chairman, Audubon House. No reservations will be accepted or refunds made within 48 hours of departure. To guarantee your space make reservations as early as possible. Trips will be cancelled 30 days prior to departure if there is insufficient response.

**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 4—McGrath State Beach Park.** Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the bridge over the Santa Clara River. Migrant shorebirds will be searched for, including Baird's and Pectoral Sandpipers. Take Hwy. 101 north and exit at Victoria Ave. in Ventura (1½ hours from L.A.). Pass under the freeway to Olivas Park Dr., then turn right to the traffic light at Harbor Blvd. Turn left and park by the bridge. Leader: to be announced.

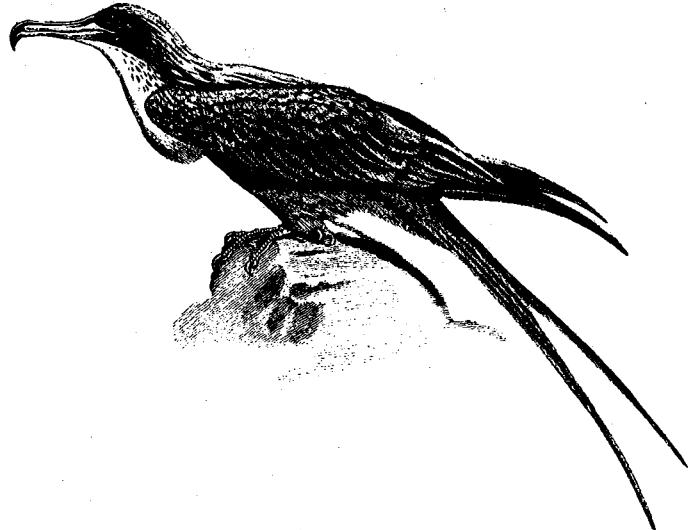
**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 7—Executive Board Meeting,** 8:00 p.m., Audubon House.

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10—San Pedro to San Clemente Island.** The *Vantuna* will leave San Pedro at 6:00 a.m. to return at 6:00 p.m. Red-billed Tropicbird is a possibility. Cost: \$18.00 per person. Leaders: Jon Dunn and Terry Clark.

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12—Evening Meeting,** 8:00 p.m., Plummer Park. Everyone welcome. *Tanager* columnist Jon Dunn will discuss techniques in the **Field Identification of Birds**, with special emphasis upon accurate note-taking.

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16—San Diego and the Tijuana Estuary.** Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Hungry Hunter Restaurant parking lot, on Palm Avenue west of I-5 in Imperial Beach. The area below San Diego is outstanding for fall migrants and vagrants—an exceptional site for observing both land and water birds, plus an occasional stray from the East. In the afternoon the group will bird Point Loma, another migrant hot spot. Leader: Larry Sansone, 463-4056.

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23—Monterey Bay Pelagic Trip.** The *Miss Monterey* will depart from Fisherman's Wharf, Sam's Fishery Cruises, at 8:00 a.m., to return at 3:00 p.m. Price is \$15.00 per person. Leaders: Arnold Small and Shum Sustell.



**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 25—Tapia Park and Malibu Lagoon.** Meet at 8:00 a.m. at Tapia Park, to look for Western migrants plus resident oak woodland and chaparral species. After checking the shorebirds at Malibu, the group may proceed to Big Sycamore Cyn. in quest of additional migrants. Leader: Jean Brandt, 788-5188.

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 28—Ballona Wetlands meeting,** 7:30 p.m. at St. Robert's Hall, Loyola University, Westminster. A multi-media slide program, entitled **The Ballona Wetlands: an Endangered Ecosystem**, will be presented by Douglas Allan, with the assistance of Mark Hoffman and Walter Sakai (all of the Biology Dept. of Santa Monica College), plus Roger Cobb of the Western Fnd. of Vertebrate Zoology. Everyone is welcome.

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7—Santa Barbara.** Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Andree Clark Bird Refuge. Take the Hot Springs Rd. turnoff from Hwy. 101, cross under the RR tracks and turn right one block. The Santa Barbara area is noted for fall migrants and vagrants, and the trip will include visits to several of the best spots between the Refuge and Goleta. See Brad Schram's article in the May-June '77 *Tanager* for details. Leader: Paul Lehman, 805-968-7394.

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 10—Evening Meeting,** 8:00 p.m., Plummer Park. Everyone Welcome. **James Clements**, author of *Birds of the World: a Checklist*, and president of Santa Monica Bay Audubon, will present an illustrated slide program on the **Flightless Birds of the World**.

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14—Monterey Bay Pelagic Trip.** The *Miss Monterey* will depart from Fisherman's Wharf, Sam's Fishery Cruises, Monterey, at 8:00 a.m., to return at 3:00 p.m. Price \$15.00 per person. Leaders: Phil Sayre and Bruce Broadbooks.

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 22—Anacapa Island and out to sea.** The boat (to be announced) will leave from the Oxnard Marina at 8:00 a.m. and return at 6:00 p.m. Cost: \$20.00 per person. Leaders: Larry Norris and Ed Navojosky.

Los Angeles Audubon Society  
7377 Santa Monica Blvd.  
Los Angeles, California 90046

Miss Ruth M. Price  
20932 Balgair Circle  
Huntington Beach, Calif. 92646

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