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Field Notes:

Yellow, Orange-crowned and Wilson's Warblers

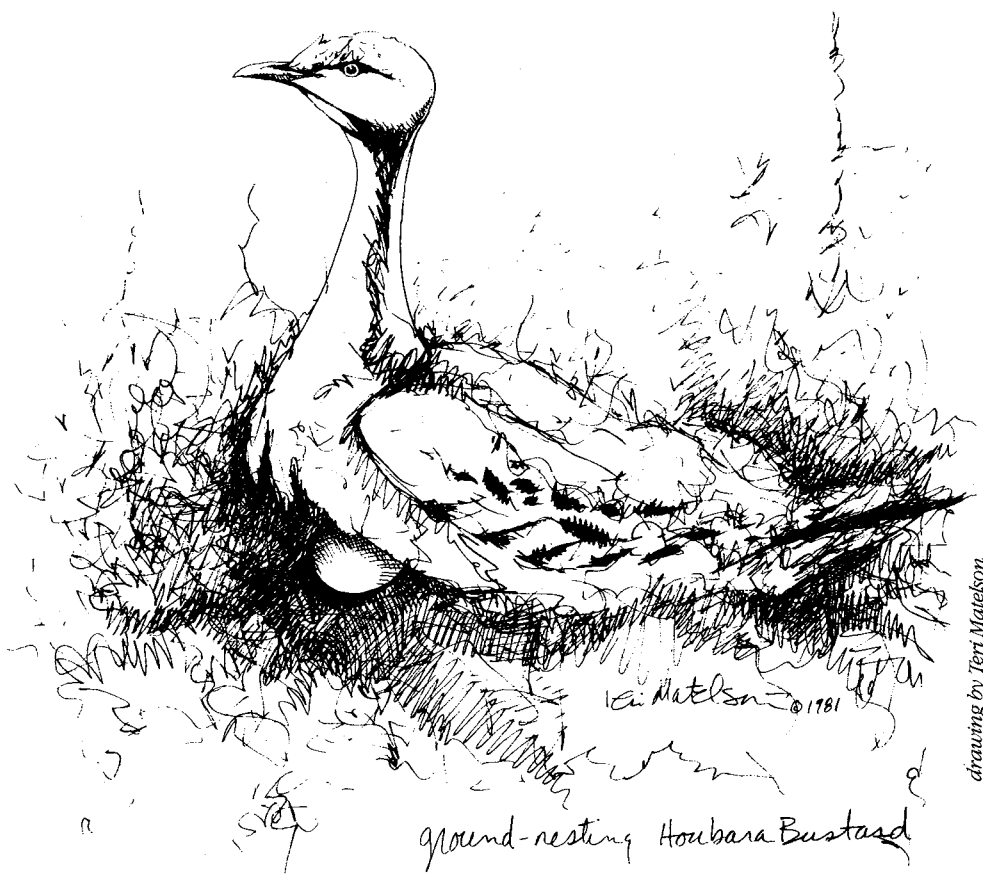
by Jon Dunn
and Kimball Garrett

Virtually all wood warblers (*Parulinae*) are easily identified in alternate — or “breeding” — plumage. In fact, most species are distinctly marked even in their drabest plumages. But we've all seen plates of “confusing fall warblers” in the popular field guides, and if we are genuinely confused it is perhaps largely because of the failure of such field guides to portray differences in shape and *gestalt* among these warblers. This article will make an example of three common warblers which share the trait of being largely yellow below; furthermore, we'll put them in the context of mid-winter birding.

The Orange-crowned Warbler, *Vermivora celata*, is a widespread and rather common winter visitant in southern California (although it decreases in abundance north of Santa Barbara County, and is largely absent from the colder desert regions). Our widespread breeding race, *lutescens*, winters in good numbers. The Channel Islands breeding race, *sordida* (which also breeds locally on the coast), is fairly widespread on the mainland in winter. Specimen evidence shows that the Great Basin/Rocky Mountain breeder, *orestera*, winters in southern California, along with small numbers of the northeastern, nominate race, *celata*. While the subspecies of Orange-crown are not generally identifiable in the field, it should be noted that *lutescens* is the brightest and yellowest race, *sordida* is the duller and duskiest, *orestera* is gray-headed and fairly yellow below, and *celata* is gray-headed and rather dull.

The Yellow Warbler, *Dendroica petechia*, is an abundant migrant which also breeds locally. While not normally expected

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drawing by Teri Matelson

ground-nesting Houbara Bustard

The Houbara Bustard

Houbara Conservation and Research in Pakistan

by Paul D. Goriup

The bustards are a fairly ancient family of large cursorial birds, which include 23 species distributed entirely in the Old World (including Australia). Some members are relatively small — the Eurasian Little Bustard (*Tetrax tetrax*) is a little larger than a partridge — while others stand nearly 150 cm high, with males weighing up to 15 kg: such individuals are the world's heaviest flying land birds and include the endangered Great Indian Bustard (*Ardeotis nigripes*), the Kori Bustard (*Ardeotis kori*) of Africa and the Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*) of Europe.

As a whole, the group is characterized as inhabiting open plains lands where the birds avoid detection with their very shy behavior and extremely cryptic plumages. However, in the breeding season, when the males must attract females, their normal lack of conspicuousness is generally compensated for by gaudy and spectacular displays. A common point of anatomy among all bustards is that the foot has only three rather broad toes, the fourth 'back toe' being absent: thus they leave a very distinctive footprint in loose or soft soil.

Continued next page

Houbara

The Houbara Bustard (*Chlamydotis undulata*) is of medium size and stands around 75 cm; the males weigh about 2 kg. (in most bustard species the males may be some 30 percent heavier than the females). The plumage and shape recall the more familiar, but much smaller, Stone Curlew (*Burhinus oedicnemus*). It is distributed in two major populations; a third very small group is found on the Canary Islands (*C. u. fuertaventurae*). The first population is largely resident and is distributed from Morocco, through North Africa, the Middle East and parts of the Gulf. The second population breeds in the Kazakh Steppes of the USSR, as far east as Mongolia. These birds migrate in winter in the arid zones of Iran, Pakistan and northwest India.

By bustard standards, the Houbaras wintering in Pakistan may be found in quite high densities, around four birds per ten square kilometers of desert. Particularly favorable areas are those which have been cultivated with mustard and legume crops and watered by the monsoon rainfall. Here the birds can find food such as young shoots and flowers, beetles and grasshoppers, lizards and snakes. When the rains fail, the birds may become highly dispersed; they become dependent on the desert shrubs for food, in particular the berries of *Zizyphus nummularia*.

Falconry has been a favorite sport of the Arab nobility for many hundreds of years, and the traditional quarry is the Houbara; there seem to be several reasons for this. In former times, the "hubra" was the single, large, relatively common game bird in the Arabian deserts, and about as big a target as their Saker Falcons, *Falco cherrug*, or "Hurr," were prepared to tackle. The Houbara rarely escapes death but the battle between the two birds is considered a great spectacle. The Houbara flesh is thought to be quite savory.

Falconry A Favorite Sport

Falconry used to be practiced as a leisure art; the "shikaris" tracked the bustard from horse or camel, and only two or three hawks were flown. However, with the advent of oil wealth, these traditional methods quickly gave way to highly mechanized expeditions, and much of the endemic game of the Gulf was rapidly exhausted. As a consequence, Arab falconers, often members of the ruling families from Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and UAE, began to look further afield for their sport. In their quest for the Houbara, they have hunted over most of North Africa, but it is in Pakistan that they have found the most rewarding falconry. (It is worth mentioning that the only Gulf State where the Houbara enjoys almost complete immunity from hunting is Oman.)

As they tried successively to improve their annual bags, as well as to out-do their colleagues, the Arab hunting expeditions have

become ever more sophisticated. An average party now requires four large trucks to transport all the camping gear (perhaps 30 tents, with carpets, beds and wardrobes), a water tanker, a radio van, a generator lorry (all tents have electricity laid-on, and the whole camp is fully illuminated at night), and a fleet of about 20 hunting vehicles equipped with radios so that the hunt can be coordinated. To fuel all this, one or two petrol tankers are taken along as well. During an average three or four weeks' campaign, anything from 60 to 400 Houbaras may be caught, depending on local conditions. Probably some 3,000 Houbaras are killed each year nationwide.

Management Controls Instituted

Not surprisingly, people throughout the country, in and out of Government became very worried that the Houbara would soon disappear from Pakistan altogether, following the fate of its cousins in the Gulf. Pressure began to mount for controls, and eventually, with the blessing of President Zia ul Haq, a project sponsored jointly by the Government of Pakistan and IUCN, utilizing expertise from ICBP, was initiated in February 1980.

This project is aimed at managing the population of bustards to improve its recruitment potential, and at curbing the intensity of the hunting to within the limits which the population can tolerate. It is envisaged that substantial sanctuary areas will be established, protected, and where possible, the habitat improved to increase natural food sources for the bird; the population will be monitored by capture and color-banding, and experiments on captive propagation carried out. The urgent need for such a program was revealed when a preliminary survey suggested that there had been at least a 20 percent decline in the number of Houbara wintering in Pakistan since 1971, and that if present trends continued, there would be insufficient birds left to make hunting worthwhile. Although it is unlikely that the population will be driven into extinction (thanks to the protection it receives in India), the Arabs would lose their sport, and Pakistan a valuable, harvestable natural resource.

Significant progress has been achieved in the past year. The provinces of Sind and Baluchistan have established four Houbara sanctuaries totaling 46,100 square kilometers of the wintering grounds, and a further two reserves of 18,000 square kilometers are expected to be declared in the Punjab soon. At the same time, the Government of Pakistan is issuing hunting permits for named areas only. Thus, some 40 percent of the wintering grounds should be relieved of disturbance from all forms of hunting.

The next stage will be the appointment, training and equipping of full-time and casual staff to warden the sanctuaries and carry out studies on the population dynamics of

the birds by banding and examining the bags taken by falconers. Moreover, Pakistan and Bahrain are to embark on a cooperative project to investigate the feasibility of augmenting wild populations by releasing captive-reared stock. Houbaras will be sent from Pakistan to a recently completed facility in Bahrain where an expert aviculturist, nominated and supervised by the ICBP Bustard Group, will assume responsibility for the breeding program. ♀

This article is the result of Project 855, end-of-contract report for the World Wildlife Fund Yearbook (February 1981) by Paul Goriup of the International Council for Bird Preservation in Great Britain. The TANAGER thanks Santa Barbara reader Helen Matelson for corresponding with Goriup and securing this article for our use.



Reagan Would Dilute Water Project Rules

The Reagan administration plans to repeal the rules developed by the federal Resources Council for reviewing proposed water projects. The present legally binding regulations are to be replaced by nonbinding "planning guidelines". Administration officials say the council has become snarled in bureaucratic red tape, and that reform is needed "to get water projects going again". But dropping the rules for judging proposed dams and canals on their economic and environmental merits, conservationists say, would be an open invitation to porkbarrel politics.

The guidelines are being drawn up with virtually no public participation. When a member of National Audubon Society's Washington staff asked for a copy, she was given a brief summary and told that no further information would be available. Judging by the summary, the public will have little opportunity, either, for participation in carrying out the new policy if it is instituted. In a formal protest last week, the society noted: "Large sums of money are spent each year by the federal government on water projects, in subsidies for various water uses, and in disaster assistance for floods. The taxpayer has a clear interest in how this money is spent."

At issue is the latest version of the Water

Ode to an *Aphelocoma Coerulescens*

by Dorothy Dimsdale

An elderly English woman recently remarked, "The Blackbirds 'round our way don't know no proper songs; all they sing is little bits o' twiddles they've made up themselves."

On first hearing the American Scrub Jays' raucous, grating calls, one could almost say the same. However, when you've listened to them croon away *sotto voce*, so that you'd never dream they could screech like a fishwife, you'd know that as one of Southern California's most common bird species, they are too often taken for granted, and certainly merit more than a passing glance.

On the negative side, apart from the harsh calls, one does hear of incidents of their attacking small dogs and cats during the nesting season, but then Hummingbirds can be just as aggressive. Overall, I believe that they are too frequently labeled *trash birds* when a moment's thought will reveal the injustice of that misnomer.

For a start, the Scrub Jay is easy to recognize, even with a hangover (the birder's, not the bird's). Once you have noted the coloring, you are home free. In the fall there is none of this "eclipse plumage" nonsense. A bit ratty 'round the tail feathers after a busy breeding summer, perhaps, but easily identified — and did you ever hear of a melanistic phase? NEVER. A Scrub Jay looks like a Scrub Jay all year 'round; that, in spite of years of



"bloody foreigners" calling them Blue Jays.

Even without the coloring, the characteristic bobbing when it is perched is a real giveaway, and often one can see the bird sitting up straight, its large head erect, on a faraway limb. It will bob once and you'll know immediately that you have sighted a Jay.

All year 'round, even if you can't see them, you can surely hear them, and there's no confusing the call with that of a Warbler or a Tern. The sad part is that I have never yet heard anyone say with delight, "Do I hear a Scrub Jay?"


A couple of weeks ago Ed Navajosky swore he heard an Avocet in my backyard. He found it hard to accept that we were several miles away from the nearest body of water. He even had me so convinced that I began searching the bushes. It turned out to be a workman nearby, twisting a wrench onto a clink knob which made the Avocet sound. But Ed never said, "Do I hear a Scrub Jay?" and they were *everywhere*. Perhaps he felt that that would be stating the obvious — it's only fair to give him the benefit of the doubt.

Sometimes, of course, one has to take a

firm stand. Earlier this year there were four Jay couples sparring for territory in our yard. The reason was not that they appreciated my friendly attitude, but rather that our lone apple tree was heavy with 334 apples. All it took, however, was one pecked apple. Quick as a flash, we had the tree encased in netting and the result was Dimsdales 333 apples, Scrub Jays 1. To make up, we did let them in at the very end, to consume any stray Medflies, and the windfalls of course, but by that time they had raised their broods and their aggression had dissipated.

I am deeply indebted to *Aphelocoma coerulescens* for creating my interest in birds as a whole. I arrived in California in 1963 and was living in an apartment. The English habit of putting "crumbs" out for the birds was deeply ingrained, and lo and behold the first birds to be attracted were the ubiquitous Scrub Jays. At first sight how beautiful they were! How amusing! How gutsy! How can one not pursue and encourage them when they respond so well? Of course my life was changed, and now the only difficulty I have is differentiating their sexes and after all, I suppose that's none of my business.

I'd like to add to the end of my biased account, the words of an expert: Arthur Cleveland Bent says, "It may be seen that the California Jay has more faults than virtues. It has few redeeming traits, and economically it does more harm than good. Its beauty and its lively manners make it an attractive feature in the landscape, but it may be that there are too many Jays in California."

Not for me, Arthur, not for me! 

Water Project Rules

Resources Council's "principles, standards, and procedures." It is being revised by an interagency task force under the direction of the President's Cabinet Council on Natural Resources and the Environment. Both councils are chaired by the Secretary of the Interior, James Watt.

The administration contends the revision is necessary to "reduce the burden" on the agencies that must comply with the rules. National Audubon pointed out that no evidence has been offered to show the regulations have been burdensome. What may have been a more candid explanation was given in a recent talk by William R. Giannelli, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, to an audience of civil engineers. "To many of us," he said, "the current version of the principles and standards, which is quite detailed and voluminous, has not enabled the effective movement of good water projects into the authorization and construction process."

He later explained: "National economic development, as opposed to regional or local development or enhancement of environmental values, should be the principal guide under which the benefits and costs of a proposal should be considered."



He added that environmental impacts are "of course to be taken into account." But the guidelines summary made available to the society reads like a return to the days when such environmentally destructive and economically unsound projects as the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway, Garrison Diversion Unit, and Columbia Dam were approved. The current rules were worked out during nine years of public hearings. To scrap them, virtually overnight and without benefit of public participation in the decision, is unjustifiable. Audubon members are urged to write their protests to William R. Giannelli, Office of the Assistant Secretary (Civil Works), Department of the Army, Washington, D.C. 20310, with copies to Gerald D. Seinwill, Water Resources Council, Suite 800, 2120 L Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20037; their representative (House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515); and their senators (U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510).

Pair Relationships in Blackbirds

by Henry E. Childs, Jr.

When King Henry had four and twenty blackbirds baked in a pie, he didn't realize that some blackbirds have more marital problems than he did. Of course, English Blackbirds are thrushes, only very distantly related to ours, which are Icterids, but that detail doesn't hurt my story.

Birds are exciting animals to study; many birders have advanced to the position where it is no longer enough just to identify the bird — they must know what it is doing and why. What survival value do the color variations or behavioral differences have? With patience and study one can understand and appreciate much more from the observation of birds. In this article I am presenting some aspects of the biology of the blackbirds of California that intrigue me.

There are four relatively common breeding species of blackbirds in California and all are present within Los Angeles County. Two are chromatically quite similar, the Red-winged and the Tricolored; a close look is needed to see shape differences and the thick white line below the epaulet of the Tricolored instead of the thin yellow of the Red-winged. Both are, in fact, "tricolored". They also differ from the other blackbirds in that the epaulets (upper wing covert) have muscles by which these feathers may be erected during display. The third species, the Yellow-headed, is spectacularly different in its color pattern with its yellow head and white wing

patches. Lastly, the ubiquitous Brewer's Blackbird has only its iridescent black plumage and white eye to recommend it. (These descriptions, of course, apply only to the adult males as the females are brownish and quite different in all four of these sexually dichromatic species.)

Each exhibits a different social system. Each species is a population of reproductively isolated individuals — that is, they don't interbreed — and these individuals cooperate as a group in their intragroup reproductive activities. It is assumed that morphology, behavior and the social system are all the result of natural selection in the evolution of each species.

The Red-winged Blackbird

During the fall and winter, segregation of the sexes is very pronounced in this species, a phenomenon readily apparent in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valleys where the birds feed on seeds and insects in large separate flocks. (However, there is no known docu-

mentation of their eating Medflies.) Red-wings nest in a variety of habitats with most nests located in emergent vegetation, particularly cattails. Males arrive first and set-up the territory whose chief requirement appears to be vegetation strong enough to support the nest and which is surrounded by suitable feeding area.

The territory of this strongly territorial species is defended by song, visual displays and chasing. Polygamy — actually polygyny — is common; the males include in their territory the nests of several females. The number of females per male averages more than two but ranges from one to twelve. Males normally do not breed until they are two years of age but the females usually do during their first year. Territorial size ranges from 2500 to 32,300 square feet and provides most of the food as well as the mating and nesting area. The variation in size appears to be related to available food; larger territories provide all or most of the food required while smaller territories may require both sexes to obtain food from surrounding areas.

In this species the males average 74 grams in weight while the females weigh about one-half that amount. This dimorphism is not particularly obvious in the field.

The Tricolored Blackbird

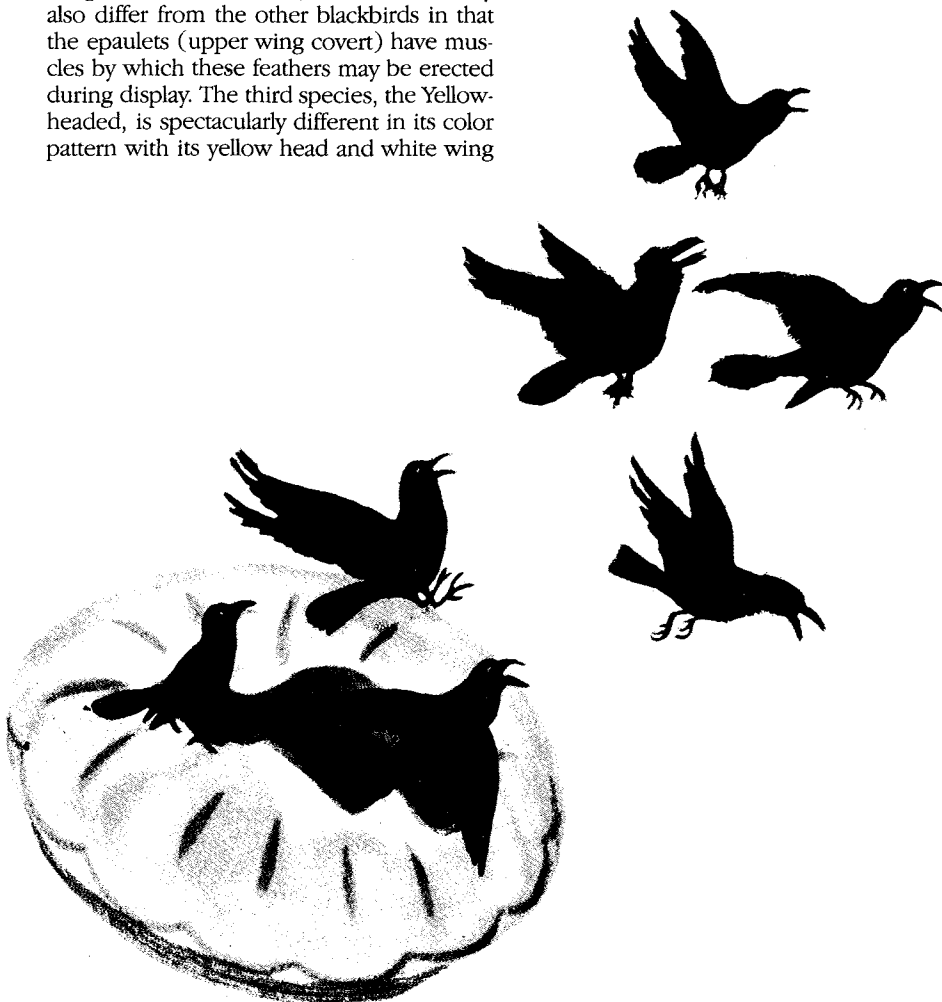
In the non-breeding season, Tricolors, which occur in large numbers in the Great Valley of California (and locally further south), feed in much the same situations as do Red-wings but the sexes do not separate. The species is colonial and nests in dense, emergent vegetation, such as tules, where the number of birds in a single colony may reach as many as 200,000. Synchronous egg-laying is the rule; all eggs are laid in one week.

In this blackbird species, the territory is only nine square feet or less and is defended by the male, without any aerial displays, from a low platform of cattails or tules. The area above the platform is neutral space and other males or females can move through it with impunity. The resident male defends his small territory by chasing for only a one-week period when the females are nestbuilding and receptive to copulation. When the clutch is complete, he leaves the territory until the young hatch.

The young are fed by the adults with food collected entirely outside of the territory, up to four miles from the nest. The birds in a colony may cover the surrounding 30 square miles in their search for food. Because of this behavior, an entire marsh may not be utilized for nesting by the colony as a result of the inability of the surrounding land to produce enough of the right kind of food at the right time in the breeding cycle.

The Yellow-headed Blackbird

The large Yellow-headed Blackbirds are socially similar to the Red-wings. Territoriality is strong in the males who are also polygynous. The females build the nest and incubate



the young without his help. Male Yellow-heads, however, more regularly help in the feeding of the nestlings than do Red-wing males, the territory's being more important to them as a source of food than it is in Red-wings. Spectacularly dichromatic, they also show sexual dimorphism in size with the males weighing about 100 grams; the females are relatively larger than Redwings at 65 grams.

The largest colony in the Los Angeles area is located at the Edwards Air Force Marsh at Avenue C in Lancaster. Here the birds can be seen from early April to September. One of the great bird sights of California is the arrival of these beautiful birds at Finney Lake, south of Calipatria, in late March. Tens of thousands are present and occupy every reed and cattail. Their raucous chorus is delightful and makes waiting until after dark for the calls of the Black Rail eminently enjoyable. The spotty distribution of the Yellow-head in Southern California contrasts with its more regular appearance in marshes in the arid and semi-arid areas of the Northwest and south into Texas.

The Brewer's Blackbird

Brewer's Blackbird is the least attractive of the four blackbirds in California and is the most "square" in its behavior. There is less


sexual dichromatism, and dimorphism in size finds the female only 10 grams smaller than the 70-gram males. The species is non-territorial, breeds in small colonies and is generally monogamous. In winter, it may form small flocks and wander about California whereas northern representatives of this species are truly migratory and arrive at the breeding grounds already paired. It nests in a variety of situations up to 10,000 feet in elevation, from surface nests in hay fields to marshes, bushes and trees. Windbreak vegetation is utilized in agricultural areas in California as well as vegetation along freeways.

Summary

The blackbirds of California exhibit quite a range in their social systems. Two, the Red-wing and the Yellow-headed, are territorial in the classic sense of utilizing and defending an area for food, mating and nesting. They differ, however, in their utilization of the territory. The Tricolored defends a very small territory for only one week. Brewer's is non-territorial.

Two, the Tricolored and Brewer's, are colonial. In fact, the Tricolored may be the most intensely colonial passerine bird in North America with some colonies containing more than 200,000 individuals. Brewer's rarely has more than 20 pairs in a colony.

All except Brewer's are regularly polygynous. Brewer's may only rarely slip from monogamy. None of the males incubate the eggs and they vary in their assistance to the female in the feeding and raising of the young.

One should ask the question, "Why are there these differences between such closely related species? What are the advantages and disadvantages in these behavioral and morphological differences? Why and how did they evolve?" For some of the answers and for more information on these questions, the reader is referred to the following sources which provided the information contained in this article. 


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The Watt Line

It is an extraordinary thing. Not since Watergate has so much negative energy been focussed on one man in the public eye. He is a cartoonist's delight: the shiny expanse of naked scalp, the bright eyes peering through coke-bottle glasses, the mouthful of sparkling teeth. But few of us are laughing. With the confident brashness of a Sagebrush Rebel, James Watt is shooting from the hip wherever he goes. And wherever is everywhere. The mighty fortress of the Interior Department encompasses many powerful and wide-flung fiefdoms, and Watt is its feudal monarch.

Though Mr. Watt is sincerely as anti-environment as his newspaper clippings portray him, it would be a mistake to look upon him as the devil incarnate. James Watt is a lightning rod on the roof drawing the full charge of an outraged public while the administration quietly carves and chips at the environmental foundation of America. The administration is not (for the moment) advocating the demise of the protective agencies. In the name of the sacred balanced budget, it whittles away at personnel, it withholds funds, it replaces experienced, dedicated staff with anti-environmental good ole boys. The President doesn't want to eliminate all regulations, he wants to "fine-tune" them. With the big polluters now sitting in judgment on themselves, it takes little imagination to see where the fine-tuning will lead.

So it is not enough to make Mr. Watt the villain of the piece: the man you love to hate. The President's other appointments reflect a consistent determination to exploit and feed on our natural resources posthaste and the hell with tomorrow. John Crowell, formerly chief counsel of Louisiana-Pacific Lumber and now head of the National Forest Service, addressed the summer convention of the National Audubon Society and unabashedly called for more clear-cutting, tripling the harvest in national forests — and if you don't like it, tough! If Mr. Watt is ever replaced, it will probably be by a less flamboyant low-key "nice guy," less apt to raise the hackles of the multitudes, less abrasively outspoken. But the philosophy of the quick buck and let your grandchildren beware would still be "operative". Behind the feisty Mr. Watt stand a host of more congenial Watts; behind them stands the ultimate nice guy: Mr. Reagan. 



The Can and Bottle Recycling Initiative

Help Clean up California

A Can and Bottle Recycling Initiative is being undertaken by Californians Against Waste. This initiative requires that beverage containers sold or offered for sale on or after 1 March 1984 have a refund value of not less than five cents. This refund value will be required to be marked on the container and dealers and distributors will be required to pay this amount to the consumer on return of the empty container. The initiative provides violation of the statute would be an infraction punishable by fine. The Joint Legislative Budget Committee and the Department of Finance advise that savings in state and local litter cleanup and waste disposal costs are possible if the proposed initiative is enacted.

To receive copies of this petition to circulate at work or around your neighborhood, write to Californians Against Waste, 1517 23rd. St., #2, Sacramento, CA 95816. Or at the very least, come into Audubon House to sign the petition yourself. It is important that this be done quickly; all petitions must be signed and reach Sacramento by 15 March 1982 for the measure to be considered. Help clean up California! Circulate a petition!

The Lancaster Christmas Count

by Fred Heath

The Lancaster Christmas Count managed to set an all-time high count of 105 species in 1980. Of course, breaking records was fairly easy for this count since 1980 was only the second year it was run. The number of participants had almost doubled, though, from 11 in 1979 to 21 in 1980. Most exciting of all — 21 new species were discovered which were not noted in the first count.

The weather for the second straight year was unusually mild for the Antelope Valley, with the temperature reaching 75=F. And more importantly, there was no wind. This made the birding very pleasant, and most of the observers found it easy to put in a full day of birding.

We managed to get national high counts for five species in 1980, including 385 Mountain Plovers, 24,874 Horned Larks (probably a record because the Morton County, Kansas, count with over 50,000 birds was not run in 1980), 1054 Holarctic Ravens (for the second year), seven Le Conte's Thrashers (one more than in 1979 and again tying with Joshua Tree National Monument for top national honors) and 197 Sage Sparrows.

The other highlights for 1980 were: a single White Pelican, 15 species of **Anatidae** including four Whistling Swans, 13 Snow Geese and one Common Merganser, and 11 species of falconiforms, including ten Ferruginous Hawks, three Rough-legs and two Merlins. Eight species of shorebirds were found with eight Western Sandpipers being the most notable. The warm fall and early winter probably had something to do with the lingering Anna's Hummingbirds, but the Hutton's Vireo found in a ranch yard was almost unprecedented. A rare Gray Flycatcher was also discovered and runs second only to the Hutton's Vireo as the best bird seen on the count. Three species of thrasher were found — the above mentioned Le Conte's, three more unusual Sage Thrashers and a surprising California Thrasher.

This year's count will take place on Saturday 19 December and it should continue the record-setting trend. You are all invited to be a part of this unique count. Even if you don't find a new species, you can always count Ravens and Horned Larks!

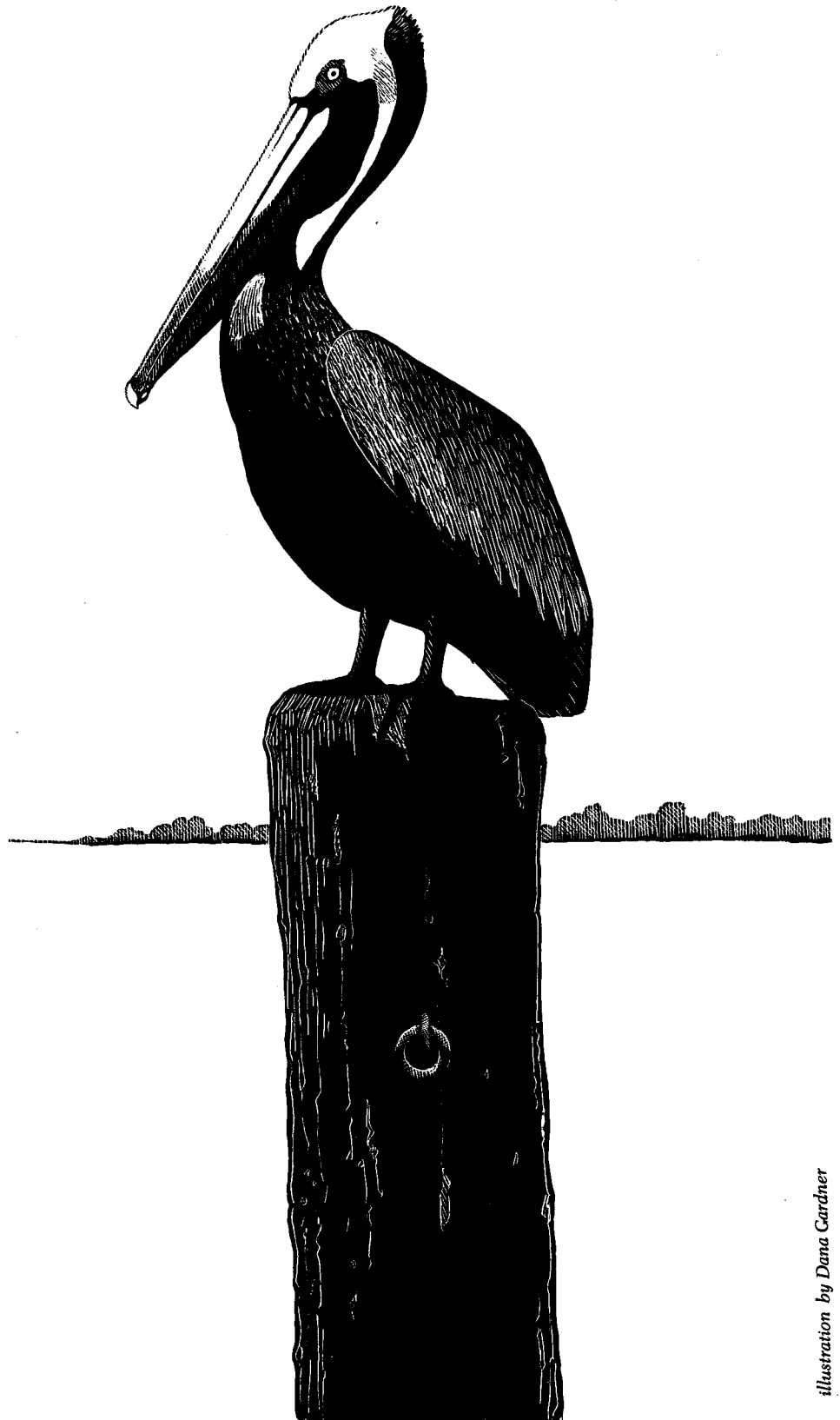


illustration by Dana Gardner

Reflections on the New Lake Henshaw Christmas Bird Count

by Claude G. Edwards, Jr.

Lake Henshaw, CA. 33° 12' N, 116° 41' W, center on hill 2430, ¼ mile east of Morettis Junction, to include Warner Springs, San Felipe, Santa Ysabel, Wynola, Mesa Grande, Lake Henshaw, Mataguay Valley, and the Volcan Mtns. Elev. 2450 to 5400 feet. Habitat coverage: grasslands and pastures 28%, riparian woodland & ponds 19%, chaparral brush 17%, oak woodland 16%, residential 10%, fresh water lake & shore 6%, oak-conifer woodland 4%. — 3 Jan, 6:30 am to 3:30 pm. AM partly cloudy, PM mostly cloudy, Temperature: 40-68°. Wind 0-15 mph, 50 observers in 14-19 parties. Total party-hours 106¼ (90½ on foot, 9¼ by car, 6½ by boat) plus 1 hour at feeder and 5 owling, total party-miles 366½ (17½ on foot, 334 by car, 15 by boat).

Sometime during the winter of 1979-80, I got the urge to consider and perhaps even organize a new Christmas Bird Count somewhere in the mountainous region of San Diego County. There were already two well-established counts, San Diego and Ocean-side-Vista-Carlsbad, which have proved to be quite productive and exciting over the years. My goal was to find a spot that was sufficiently varied in habitat, had enough roads for adequate access to those areas, and had a potential for good species diversity.

After letting it lie for a few months, I looked at several maps and considered a number of possible sites for the count, keeping in mind those qualities I was looking for. The choice I came up with was an area that included Lake Henshaw, well-known for large waterfowl numbers, and the possibility of shorebirds, Bald Eagle and others; Mesa Grande, where Lewis' Woodpeckers have wintered; Earthquake Valley, good for wintering Ferruginous and occasionally Rough-legged Hawks as well as Prairie Falcon and

Mountain Bluebird; and the Volcan Mountains, the only hope for conifer-loving species like Spotted Owl, Pygmy Nuthatch and Williamson's Sapsucker. There was a nice variety of habitats within this proposed circle, from fresh water marsh and riparian, to sage scrub and chaparral, to grassland, oak woodland, some conifers, and even some high desert transition, not to mention at least one large body of fresh water.

After making my big decision, I sent my necessary information to American Birds, made dozens of flyers, many phone calls, and generally got most of my birding associates excited and interested in helping do the count. With the date set for Saturday 3 January 1980, I avoided conflicting with the two big San Diego counts. My tentative count goal was 110 species; I was conservative enough not to hope for too large a number of species.

I was up and about at 4 am, listening for and hearing owls — Barn, Great Horned and Screech. There was a thick fog over the lake, though I could hear geese calling in the distance. The temperature was relatively mild, a mere 44 degrees.

I had fourteen groups in the field, from two to six people per group. I was too busy thinking of the birds in my own area to get worried or concerned for the efforts and results of the other groups.


I knew I made a good choice in locating near Lake Henshaw when at the midday meeting we came up with a sub-total of 111 species and, boy, was I excited. Even with all the excitement, we were not without our troubles. I went out to the lake at mid-morning, leaving my group behind, to help a good friend who had the boat out all to him-

self. We had a leisurely and exciting ride on the water. Hunters all around us were shooting ducks out of the sky; we were finding dead and injured birds all over the lake. By lunch time, I managed to get a flat tire. Thank goodness for spares! I was on my way again.

The day continued, and we all reassembled for the big tally. There were two groups missing during lunch, and so I knew we had even more than the 111 that we had earlier, but that didn't matter because we had already bested my expectations. The group I was most anxious about was the Volcan Mountain group which had a gentleman who lived there and knew his way around. The excitement was mounting.

I was busy collecting count forms, money, answering questions, thanking people who came out, trying to get a bite of dinner in edgewise. I made sure rarities were fully described on paper and I was slowly getting through the mass of lists and forms, calling out additional species as we went along. By the time I got the forms and money for group 14, we had come up with a total of 132 species seen in one day here in this new count circle! What a thrill, a real achievement! Everyone seemed to have such a good time, and I was glad for that. I wanted everyone else to have as much fun as I.

Come Sunday morning, still elated about our count's results, I was surprised and sobered to find that my car had another flat tire. Oh well, it was worth it all; such is birding in California.

The 1981 Lake Henshaw CBC will be held on Tuesday, 29 December. Please contact Claude at 2932 Greyling Drive, San Diego, CA 92123, if you are interested in participating. Thanks very much. 

Help Future Generations of Condors Get off the Ground

On 14 September, the nestling California Condor at the Sespe Condor Sanctuary nesting site took its first short flight. The young condor was estimated to be four and one-half to five months old and it flew a distance of about 200 yards, Condor Research Center observers reported. This first flight was anything but controlled or graceful. The parent condors did, however, join the chick on its new perch a few hours after the flight.

This information and information like it has served to reinforce investigators' theories that accidental injury to a condor is most likely to occur during the first few weeks or

months of flight. But until they are able to closely monitor the movements of all newly fledged birds with radio transmitters, they will not be able to offer the condors the full measure of increased protection the species may need to survive.

And it is only with your help that the California Condor will survive. In the October issue of the TANAGER, we sent you a reply envelope for your contribution to this year's Condor Fund. Please write your check today and forward it in the envelope provided. If you didn't keep your envelope, send your contribution to the Condor Fund, % Audubon House. Every dollar counts!



Topa-Topa

Field Notes:

in winter, this species has proved to be regular in small numbers in tamarisk thickets around the Salton Sea and along the Colorado River, and in willows and flowering shrubs along the coast. Yellow Warblers vary slightly in size and paleness through North America. More distinct forms occur in tropical and subtropical woodlands and mangrove swamps (for example, a chestnut-headed subspecies — or species? — occurs in coastal mangroves as near to us as central Baja California).

We all know the **Wilson's Warbler**, *Wilsonia pusilla*, to be one of our most abundant transients. Fall migration is largely over by mid-October, but a very few birds remain to winter along the coast (usually in wet, brushy thickets). There are no definite records of birds spending the winter in southern California's interior. Geographical variation in the Wilson's Warbler primarily involves a westward cline of increasing brightness. Our Pacific Coast birds (*calycivola*) are rather brilliant golden below and bright yellow-green above. The eastern nominate race is relatively dull and olive and lacks bright yellow on the lores and forehead. An intermediate race, *pileolata*, breeds north and east from easternmost California, and migrates through the state.


The figures and following notes should help the winter birder (and Christmas-counter) distinguish these yellowish warblers with even a quick glance.

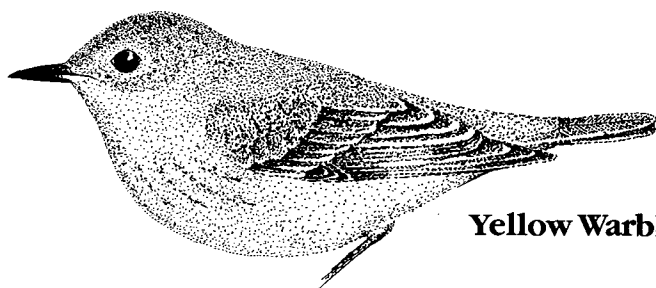
Size and Shape: Orange-crowned is rather slim, with a sharp-pointed bill and a medium-length, slightly-notched tail. The undertail coverts fall well short of the tail tip. Yellow is large and robust, with a heavier bill and a short tail (the undertail coverts appearing to nearly reach the tip). Wilson's is smallest, with a small rounded head, rather small and flat bill, and a rather long and expressive rounded tail.

Head Pattern: The Orange-crowned has only the faintest hint of an eye-ring, but has a faint greenish-yellow supercilium. It is the only one of the three species to lack an area of yellowish around the eye; thus the eye does not stand out as exceptionally "beady" as it does in the other two species. Some birds are quite dusky or olive-gray on the head, unlike Wilson's or Yellow. Yellows have very blank faces, with the dark eye surrounded by a diffuse, yellow ring. All of our Wilson's are quite bright yellow around the lores and eye, contributing to a "beady-eyed" look. On the Wilson's, a contrasting cap is always present; it is black in adult males, largely black in young males and adult females, and green with a darker edging in young females.

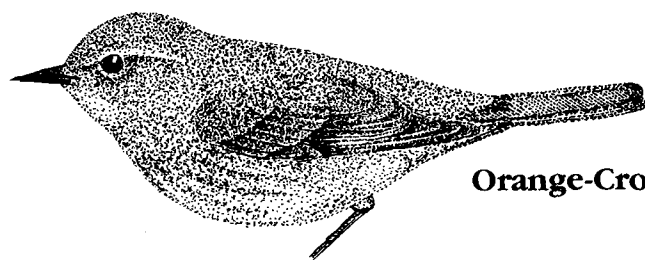
Underparts: Orange-crowns range from rather bright yellow with indistinct olive streaks to rather dull olive-yellow with heavy dull olive streaks. Yellows may be quite bright yellow with thin reddish streaks (males), to very pale whitish yellow or even grayish. Heavy, diffuse streaks are never present. Wilson's are bright golden-yellow, with no streaks.

Other Plumage Characters: The wings of Orange-crowns are plain olive (often showing a contrastingly pale "bend" of the wing). In contrast, Yellows have the coverts and secondaries prominently edged with pale yellow in all unworn plumages. Yellows are also unique in having extensive pale yellow in the tail feathers (Wilson's and Orange-crowned have plain olive-green tails).

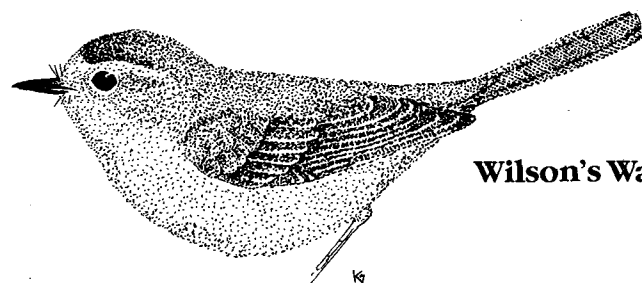
Behavior and Calls: Wilson's is the most active, often raising the expressive tail in wren-like fashion. Yellows (especially) and Orange-crowns frequently wag or dip the tail. The common calls are a sharp "chip" or "stick" (Orange-crowned); a loud, slurred "chip" (Yellow); and a soft "chimp" or "timp" (Wilson's). In flight Yellows give a buzzy "zeet" while Orange-crowns give a softer "seep"; Wilson's may utter a soft, slurred "chip" in flight. 



Yellow Warbler (imm.)



Orange-Crowned Warbler



Wilson's Warbler (imm. fem.)

Undertails



Yellow



Orange-Crowned



Wilson's

Topics of Conservation

by Sandy Wohlgenuth

The California Coastal Act — as many of the good things in the world we've taken for granted — is in jeopardy. Most of us remember the exhilarating victory won at the polls in 1972 when the voters decisively approved Proposition 20. This momentous event came fast on the heels of the infamous blowout of Union Oil's drilling platform — a shot heard round the world. News photos of oiled Western Grebes shocked even the ordinary, indifferent citizen into a realization that this was a hell of a way to run an energy program.

Authority from State by 1981

Proposition 20 — the California Coastal Initiative — generated the State Coastal Commission and six Regional Commissions whose mission was to create a workable plan for the 1100 miles of California's coastline. The principal objectives were to:

1. "protect the California coast as a great natural resource for the benefit of present and future generations."
2. "use the coast to meet human needs in a manner that protects the irreplaceable re-

sources of coastal lands and waters." complied with the protectionist policies of the Act, authority would be transferred from the state back to these local governments. This transfer was to be completed in five years, by July 1, 1981. By that date, however, only about 25 of the 69 local coastal jurisdictions were able to submit completed land-use plans.

Los Angeles County and the City of Los Angeles have still not finished their work, and it may be months, if not years, before their LCP's are ready. When the Local Coastal Program in a jurisdiction is accepted by the State Coastal Commission, the city or county is given the power to issue permits for development — if the protection provisions of the Act are followed. After July 1, the regional commissions were to be dissolved and all responsibility was to be vested in the State Commission.

Controlled Development Slows Progress

There have been numerous problems with the Coastal Act. A project of this magnitude could not be expected to be flawless. Many of the decisions of the commissions have been questionable and the media have not been reluctant to dramatize them. Of particu-

fact that, on balance, the will of the people for coastal protection — Proposition 20 — has been achieved. No wetlands have been lost since the act was passed. No Miami-type high-rises have grown like toadstools along the beaches. No new power plants have raised their stacks to emulate the infamous PG&E monstrosity at Morro Bay. Little can be done about what is already in place: the power plants, the cheek-to-cheek beach-front homes in Santa Monica and Malibu — you can drive for miles along the Pacific Coast Highway without so much as a glimpse of the waves. There has been controlled residential development along the coast under the Coastal Act, but "in a manner that protects the irreplaceable resource..." And the vast majority of permits for individual homeowners have been approved, despite the commissions' bad press.

In the matter of off-shore oil, Federal law requires consistency with California law. The Coastal Act gives the State the right to veto drilling even if ordered by Washington. The recent withdrawal of oil leases by Secretary of the Interior Watt was a victory for Governor Brown and thousands of outraged Californians unwilling to see their spectacular coast disfigured. Repeal of the Coastal Act would make it easier for Watt to succeed on the next try.



"... use the coast to meet human needs in a manner that protects the irreplaceable resources of coastal lands and waters."

sources of coastal lands and waters."

The commissions labored mightily and long with meetings and hearings and draft proposals: "... public participation in resource planning on a scale unmatched in California." The plan was delivered to the legislature exactly on schedule in 1975. The commissions, their job accomplished, went out of business and were replaced by new commissions when the Coastal Act of 1976 was passed. These commissions (again, one State and six Regional) were given a new function: to help cities and counties develop Local Coastal Programs, or LCP's. When the LCP

lar interest have been cases where individual homeowners have been denied permits to improve their property. Davis vs Goliath is usually juicy, front-page stuff. Of course, some of these horror stories have been true. And there have been well-publicized examples of corruption — regional commissioners taking bribes for favorable permits. The Coastal Act emphasizes affordable housing and beach access for the general public. These mandates have been more often honored in the breach than the observance.

But we must not let the obvious weaknesses of a gigantic undertaking obscure the

And repeal is very much in the wind. SB 260 calls for outright repeal. This is unthinkable, not just to Audubon people but to the great majority of citizens who voted for Proposition 20. Polls continue to reveal that most Americans want a clean, attractive America — and are willing to pay for it. The least we can do today is to oppose SB 260. All those in favor may write to:

Robert Presley, Chairman
Senate Committee
on Natural Resources and Wildlife
Room 2031, State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Birds of the Season

by Shum Suffel



Year's end finds us busy with Holidays and Christmas Counts. If the events of the holidays don't fill your time, the Christmas Counts surely will. October lived up to its reputation as the most exciting month for rare-bird watchers — not for quantity of migrants but for quality. Fortunately, the two most wanted birds stayed for several days and were widely seen. The **Baird's Sparrow** in the cemetery on Pt. Loma, San Diego (Doug Willick and Guy McCaskie) stayed from the 5th to the 10th of October; this was a first mainland record in California (one was on the Farallon Islands on 28 Sept. 1969). The **Wood Thrush** in the myoporum grove on Pt. Loma (Mitch Heindel and Brian Daniels, 24 Oct.) stayed at least a week for the fifth California record. Most previous sightings were very brief. Unfortunately, the **Golden-winged warbler** in Covington Park, Morongo Valley (Guy McCaskie, 24 Oct.) could not be found the next day. The 15 previous sightings were very brief or at remote locations. A **Great Crested Flycatcher** in Wardlow Park, Long Beach, on 30 Oct. — 1 Nov. (Brian Daniels) was very wide-ranging, but was seen by a patient few. This was the tenth record and the latest date for southern California. An earlier **Great Crested** in Goleta (Tom Wurster, 20 Oct.) was seen only once.

Those were the highlights but there was much, much more. Locally, numbers of **Blue-winged Teal** are increasing year by year along the coast, but more than 25 drakes in the L.A. River channel, Long Beach, on 23 Oct. (Hal Baxter) was unprecedented. The lagoon at the Arcadia Arboretum is the best local spot for **Wood Ducks**. The feral drake, which has been there for several years, was joined briefly by a female on 12 Oct., and a week later by a young male just moulting into adult plumage (Barbara Cohen). The first report of a **Mew Gull** was an immature at Hermosa Beach on 20 Oct. (Nancy Spear). **Lewis' Woodpeckers** were early and widespread; the earliest was one in West L.A. on 8 Oct. (Abigail King), and there was another at Pomona College the same day (Shantanu Pfulkan), but soon (17 Oct.) there were four at the Eaton Canyon Nature Center, Pasadena (Mickey Long). The **Tropical Kingbird** in Recreation Park, Long Beach (Brian Daniels, 18 Oct.) was the only L.A. County report this fall, as was the **Philadelphia Vireo** in the Antelope Valley (Greg Homel, 17 Oct.).

As expected, warblers were much sought after locally with: a **Black-and-White** along Bonsall Rd., Zuma Beach from 11 Oct. on (Arnold Small); a **Parula** in Wardlow Park, Long Beach (Brian Daniels, 18 Oct.); a

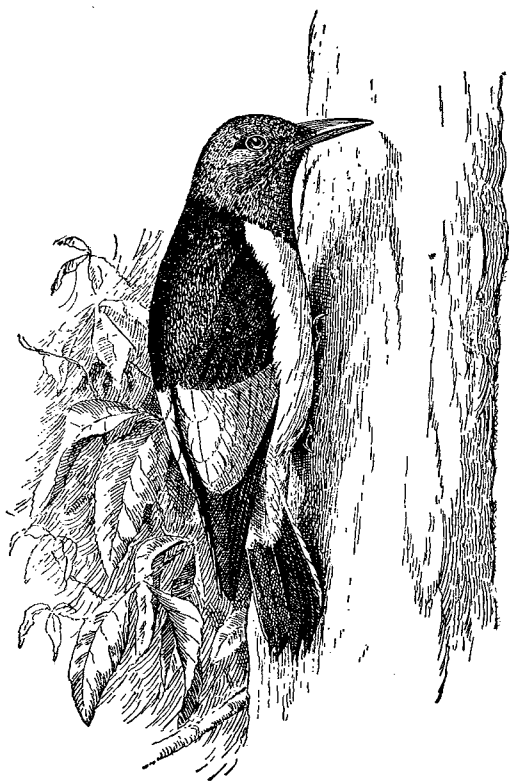
Blackburnian at Harbor Lake, San Pedro (Mitch Heindel, 9 Oct.); two **Chestnut-sideds** at Harbor Lake on 27 Oct. (Brian Daniels); four **Blackpolls** at three different parks in San Pedro on 18 Oct. (Mitch Heindel and Brian Daniels); **Palms** at Harbor Lake (Mitch Heindel, 8 Oct.), at Malibu Lagoon (Nancy Spear, 25 Oct.), at Zuma Beach (L.A.A.S. field trip, 24 Oct.) and in the Arcadia Arboretum (Barbara Cohen, 31 Oct.); **Canadas** in Brentwood (Joan Mills, mid-September), and in Northridge (Ted Kinche-loe, 10 Oct.); and an immature male **American Redstart** in Pasadena (Zus Hagen-Smit, 2 to 4 Oct.). A stunning male "**Baltimore**" **Oriole** was in the Arcadia Arboretum after 24 Oct. (Barbara Cohen). An immature male **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** without a tail stopped at the South Coast Botanic Gardens, Palos Verdes, on 25 Oct. (Bill and Barbara McIntyre). A **Dickcissel** on the golf course adjoining Harbor Lake (Mitch Heindel, 9 Oct.) was one of the few L.A. County records. During most recent winters, there has been a **Green-tailed Towhee** in the Arcadia Arboretum, and true to form one showed up on 9 Oct. along with a **Clay-colored Sparrow** (Barbara Cohen). Another **Clay-colored Sparrow** stayed near Sue Stout's home in Agoura from 30 Sept. to 5 Oct. A **Sage Sparrow** at Harbor Lake (John Ivanov, 18 Oct.) was out of habitat.

To the south of us, there was activity in Orange County, particularly in the tiny Newport Beach H.S. "Ecology Park" where a **Virginia's Warbler** wintered last year. This fall, there were at least two "Virginia's" there during Sept. (Sylvia Ranney). In addition, there was a female **Black-and-White Warbler** on 15 Sept., an **Ovenbird** on 18 Oct. (Doug Willick), a female **American Redstart** on 22 Sept., an immature male "**Bullock's**" **Oriole** on 18 Oct., and an **Orchard Oriole**, probably a young male as it showed a rusty wash on the flanks and undertail (Hal Baxter and Jim Halferty, 17 Oct.). Elsewhere, there were nine **White-fronted Geese** (rather rare along our coast) at the San Joaquin Marsh, Irvine, on 2 Oct. (Steve Ganley), and the next day there was a **Northern Waterthrush** there (Doug Willick). At Doheny Beach, below Dana Point, Brad Schram found a **Tropical Kingbird** on 17 Oct. Later, there was a **Prothonotary Warbler**,

a **Bay-breasted Warbler**, two **Blackpolls** and a **Green-tailed Towhee** on 27 Oct.; and a **Magnolia Warbler** on 28 Oct. (Fred Baker). Another **Green-tailed Towhee** was near Upper Newport Bay (Bruce Diggs, 20 Oct.) where a **Prairie Falcon** and about 40 **Red Knots** were seen on 17 Oct. (Henry Childs). A **Sabine's Gull** was at Doheny Beach on 11 Oct. (Jerry Oldenettle). One to three **Black Skimmers** stayed at Bolsa Chica through Oct.

Further south in San Diego County because of saturation coverage and that super-birding spot Pt. Loma, noteworthy birds were too numerous to itemize fully. Richard Webster's listing — three pages, single spaced — tells of: 25 **Northern Fulmars** just offshore (Dave Povey, *et al.*); an immature **Little Blue Heron** from 9 to 11 Oct.; a **Yellow-crowned Night Heron** and a **Eurasian Wigeon** at San Elijo Lagoon after 25 Oct. (Dave King); a **Swainson's Hawk** on 3 Oct. (Henry Childs); a late **Least Tern** (25 Oct.), a full month later than previous records (Claude Edwards); three **Chimney Swifts** with migrating **Vaux's Swifts** on Pt. Loma (Richard Webster, 6 Oct.); a **Broad-billed Hummingbird** from 8 to 12 Oct. (Lee Jones); an **Eastern Phoebe** on 26 Oct.; an early **Winter Wren** on 30 Sept.; two **Red-throated Pipits** below San Diego from 21 to 25 Oct. (Jerry Tolman, *et al.*); and another on Pt. Loma after 25 Oct. (David Row-lars); and a **Sprague's Pipit** on 22 Oct. (Guy McCaskie).

Richard also lists five species of vireos including **Red-eyed** (David Row-lars), **Yellow-green** (Dave Povey) and a **Solitary**, of the eastern race *solitarius* (Elizabeth Copper); and the best of some 33 species of warblers seen there including: a **Worm-eating** on 4 Oct.; the **Cape May** after 20 Oct.; three **Black-throated Blues**; two **Black-throated Greens**; a **Grace's** on 10 Oct. (Mitch Heindel and Brian Daniels); two **Bay-breasted** (both Elizabeth Copper); a **Prairie** from 8 to 10 Oct. (Dave Povey); and a **Canada** on 21 Sept. (Pat Cameron). In addition, there was an **Orchard Oriole** on 8 Oct.; an **Hepatic Tanager** on 12 Oct.; a **Cassin's Finch**, rare away from the mountains (Lee Jones, 25 Oct.); about eight **Clay-colored Sparrows**; and both **Lapland** and **Chestnut-collared Longspurs**. Obviously, San Diego was the place to be in October.



News from Paul Lehman indicates that Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties ran San Diego a close second. An immature **Broad-winged Hawk** was in Goleta on 14 Oct., and an early **Merlin** was in Carpinteria on 23 Sept. (Onik Arian). Onik also gives us the first report this fall of a **Black-legged Kittiwake** at McGrath on 3 Oct. The only coastal reports of **Least Flycatchers** come from Santa Barbara County: at Santa Maria on 14-16 Oct. (Paul Lehman), at Santa Barbara on 15 Oct. (Larry Ballard), and at McGrath the same day (Steve Summers). A **Bell's Vireo** returned to Goleta for the second winter, and the **Grace's Warbler** was back in Montecito for the third year. Here too, good habitat and blanket coverage produced many warblers: six **Magnolias**, a **Cape May** (Larry Ballard), two **Black-throated Blues** (Louis Bevier), six **Blackburnians** (mostly by Paul Lehman), three **Chestnut-sideds**, and a **Prairie** in Hope Ranch on 21 Oct. (Lee Jones and Starr Saphir). The only coastal report of a **Rusty Blackbird** was along the stream at McGrath on 18 Oct. (Ed Arbelian). And to top it off, a **Scarlet Tanager** in Goleta (Jim Greaves, 17 Oct.).

The deserts, too, despite minimal coverage were very productive. At Morongo Valley, there was: a **Kentucky Warbler** along the stream where one was last May (Doug Willick, 4 Oct.); a **Least Flycatcher** and two **American Redstarts** on 7 Oct. (Donna Dittmann and Starr Saphir); an **Ovenbird** and a **Gray-headed Junco** on 11 Oct.; and the **Golden-winged Warbler** and a female **Scarlet Tanager** on 24 Oct. (Gene Cardiff, *et al.*). At nearby Yucca Valley, there was a **Gray Flycatcher**, two **Dickcissels** and a **Clay-colored Sparrow** (Starr Saphir and Donna Dittmann, 7 Oct.). Further east on the Mojave Desert at the railroad station oasis of Kelso there were three eastern warblers on 4 Oct. — a bright **Cape May**, a male **Black-throated Blue** and a female **Hooded** (Doug Willick and Steve Ganley), plus a **Brown Thrasher** (Gene Cardiff). At "Hole in the Wall" spring in the Providence Mountains, Jerry Tolman found a male **Black-throated Blue Warbler** on 23 Oct. Furnace Creek Ranch in Death Valley hosted a **Flammulated Owl** from 19 to 24 Oct. (Nancy Foley and Larry Norris); a **Crissal Thrasher** on 12 Oct. (Larry Norris) at Triangle Springs, 25 miles north of the previous northerly record; a **Brown Thrasher** (Brian Daniels, 21 Oct.); two **Rusty Blackbirds** (Dan Guthrie and Jerry Oldenette, 17 Oct.); two **Clay-colored Sparrows** on the golf course (Larry Norris, 20 Oct.); and a **Harris Sparrow** at the Inn (Dan Guthrie, 17 Oct.).

Several raptor reports were of special interest. A noteworthy movement of raptors over Topanga Canyon occurred on 18 Oct. when **35 Redtails**, **20 Accipiters**, and a **Bald Eagle** were observed overhead (Kimball Garrett and Lee Jones). An immature **Peregrine Falcon** was seen at Marina del Rey on 13 Sept. (Arthur Howe), and another rode the updraft from the coastal cliffs at Pt. Fermin on 9 Oct. (Hal Baxter). Whether these immatures are Lloyd Kiff's "Peregrines of Westwood" (TANAGER, Oct. 1981) or just migrants is unknown. The previous report of a **Goshawk** on Mt. Pinos makes Nancy Spear's sighting there on 10 Oct. doubly interesting. **Red-tailed Hawks** seldom take flying birds, thus it was noteworthy that one of a soaring pair in Eaton Canyon, Altadena on 27 Sept. stooped on a Band-tailed Pigeon and carried it to a nearby perch.



Late October furnished further indications that this will be an "invasion winter": at least six pairs of **Eurasian Wigeons** were on Rodeo Lagoon, north of San Francisco on 20 Oct. (Helen Dickinson); **Lewis' Woodpeckers** were widely reported from Death Valley to the coastal lowlands; a **White-headed Woodpecker** and two **Varied Thrushes** were on the high desert at Yucca Valley on 24 Oct.; **Mountain Chickadees** occurred in larger than normal numbers in the lowlands; two **Golden-crowned Kinglets** were in Yucca Valley (the Brodskins, 25 Oct.), two more were in Long Beach (Brian Daniels, 18 Oct.), and at least four occurred in Tapia Park, Malibu, on 2 Nov. (Sandy Wohlgemuth); 40 **Evening Grosbeaks** were seen in the Piute Mountains, east of Bakersfield; and, most intriguing, there were unconfirmed reports of two **Rosy Finches** on Mt. Pinos in mid-October (they are not known west of the Sierra).

With winter well entrenched, we cannot expect the excitement of mid-fall, but a few suggestions may fill your birding days until Christmas Count time. The highest tides of the year (exceeding seven feet) on 10 to 12 Dec. should bring secretive marsh birds such as Rails of four species and Sharp-tailed Sparrows into view at Upper Newport Bay. Flowering eucalyptus trees attract and hold wintering orioles and warblers, mostly Yellow-rumped but possibly Tennessees and others. Then, of course, there are the invasion species; we can hope for Bohemian Waxwings, Northern Shrikes, Evening Grosbeaks and Crossbills. Send all current observations to Kimball Garrett, 604 Topanga Canyon Blvd., Topanga, CA 90290, by the end of the year. ♡



CALENDAR

Christmas Counts

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19 — The Lancaster Count. See Fred Heath's invitation to join this second Antelope Valley Count, inside. To sign up, call Fred at 828-6524.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20 — The Malibu Count once again in the able hands of Jean Brandt (788-5188) and Kimball Garrett (455-2903).

SUNDAY, JANUARY 3, 1982 — The Los Angeles Count is being organized by Ian Austin and Coie Lakin. To participate, call Coie at 645-5512, or leave a message on her answering machine. Or call Ian at 879-9700 (days) or 398-9391 (evenings).

Shop Audubon Bookstore for Christmas

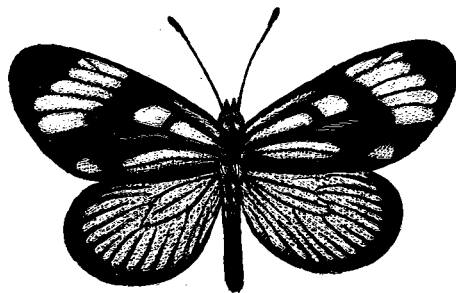
Don't forget Christmas books for all your friends and relatives. Audubon Bookstore is a good place to shop for one and all. Now available: Kimball Garrett and Jon Dunn's **Birds of Southern California, Status and Distribution**. Also available, some of the illustrations from this book in limited-edition prints by Lee Jones. Prints feature the Roadrunner, Nuttall's Woodpecker, Lawrence's Goldfinch and Poorwill. See the November **TANAGER** for other new bookstore listings.

Audubon Camp in the West Scholarships Offered

The Los Angeles Audubon Society is pleased to announce that scholarships to the Audubon Camp in the West are to be awarded again this year. We received glowing reports from our 1981 campers and we hope to have equally enthusiastic scholarship recipients in 1982.

If a two-week ecology workshop in the Wind River Mountains of Wyoming would be of significant value to you in your work or schooling, write to the Scholarship Committee, Audubon House, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90046, for a camp folder and an application blank, or call 876-0202. A member of the Committee is at Audubon House on Tuesdays and Fridays, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

All applicants must be 18 or over by July of 1982; applications must be received by January 15.



Audubon Bird Reports:

Los Angeles (213) 874-1318

Santa Barbara (805) 964-8240

Los Angeles Audubon Headquarters, Library, Bookstore and Nature Museum are located at Audubon House, Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90046. Telephone: (213) 876-0202. Hours: 10-3, Tuesday through Saturday.

WESTERN TANAGER

EDITOR Mary Lawrence Test
LAY-OUT CONSULTANT Dana Gardner

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Audubon membership (local and national) is \$25 per year (individual), \$32 (family), \$15.00 (student) or \$17 (senior citizen), including **AUDUBON Magazine** and **THE WESTERN TANAGER**. To join, make checks payable to the National Audubon Society, and send them to Audubon House. Subscriptions to **THE WESTERN TANAGER** separately are \$8.00 per year (Bulk Rate) or \$12.00 (First Class, mailed in an envelope). To subscribe, make checks payable to Los Angeles Audubon Society.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1 — Join **Sandy Wohlge-muth** to bird **Tapia Park** and **Malibu Lagoon**. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the entrance to Tapia Park. Bring lunch and prepare for a great day.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8 — **Carl Benz** from the Sacramento Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will speak at this evening meeting on "The Sea Otter and California Coastal Resources Management." 8 p.m. at Plummer Park.



SATURDAY, JANUARY 9 — Bird the **Ballona Wetlands** with **Bob and Roberta Shanman** (545-2867 after 6). Meet at 8 a.m. at the Pacific Ave. bridge. Take 90 West (Marina Fwy) to its end at Culver Blvd. Continue west on Culver; turn north onto Pacific Ave. and continue to bridge.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 12, 1982 — Evening meeting at Plummer Park, 8 p.m. **Larry Norris** from the National Park Service at Death Valley National Monument will give a program on "Rare Plants of Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Parks."

SATURDAY, JANUARY 16 — Bird **Malibu Lagoon** and **Tapia Park** with **Bob Pann**. Meet at the Malibu Market Basket at 8 a.m. and be prepared for a full day.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 30 — Check out the birds wintering at the **Salton Sea**. Meet **Shum Suffel** (797-2965) and **Hal Baxter** (355-6300) at the Wister turnoff, on Highway 111 36 miles south of Mecca, at 8:30 a.m.



SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6 — Beginners are urged to come along with **Ian Austin** (679-9700 or 398-9391) on a birding morning at **Upper Newport Bay**. The group will meet at the upper end of the Bay at 8 a.m. and will finish up at the Newporter Hotel.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 13 — Bird the **Ballona Wetlands** with **Bob and Roberta Shanman**. A repeat of the January 9th trip.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1982 — The **Annual Banquet** will be held at the Sportsman's Lodge. Cost will be \$13.75 per person and the speaker will be **Warren Thomas** of the Los Angeles Zoo. See further details in the January-February issue of the **TANAGER**.

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