

WESTERN TANAGER

Los Angeles Audubon Society

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A Speed We Can Live with - or Go Broke

by Dorothy Dimsdale

Why do I do it? I'm nearly always seasick — I guess it's the "nearly" which keeps me going. There I was all set for a Monterey pelagic with a new medicine for sea-sickness prevention stuck behind my ear. I had great hopes for a trouble-free trip.

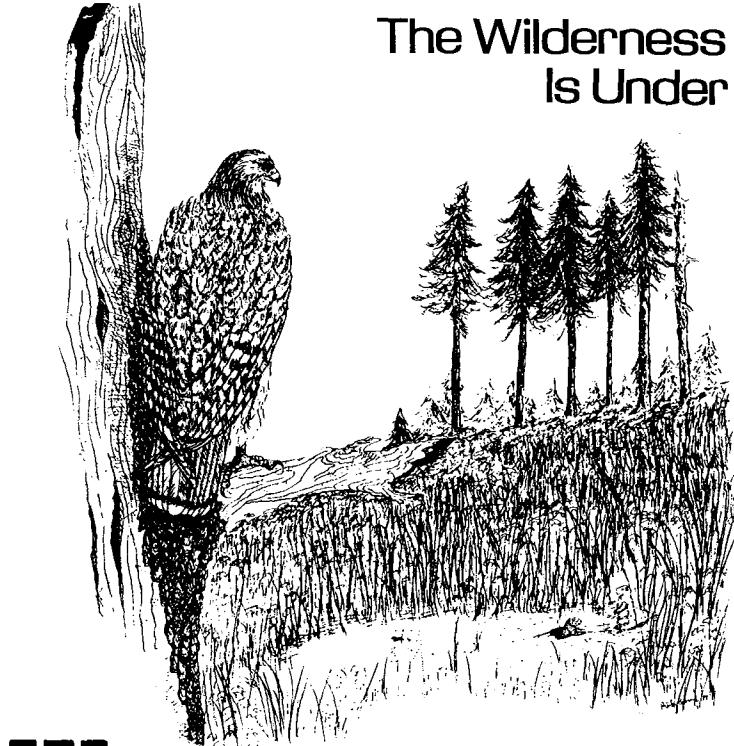
Fisherman's Wharf had a score of Fulmars swimming and diving around it. It was the best view and the most Fulmars I had ever seen in one place. I should've stayed there. After three hours out to sea, the old familiar sinking feeling came over me and another "cure" was over the side. I always manage to rally from the rail if a bird is sighted, and the Black-footed Albatross was too good to miss. It was a lovely day and while the rarer birds did not come our way, we had a goodly number of the more common ones. Sooty, Pink-footed and one Short-tailed Shearwater, a Cassin's Auklet and scores of Rhinoceros Auklets, and Pomarine and Parasitic Jaegers amongst others. The Gray Whales were blowing and we saw Pacific White-sided Dolphins and Dall's Porpoises. One of the Dolphins had a small calf leaping alongside.

With some sense of achievement at having survived yet another pelagic, Barbara Elliott and I headed home to LA. I should make it very clear that Barbara endures any kind of sea as though she's having tea at the vicarage. The problems were all mine!

Just after King City the road is a straight ribbon, like an airport runway where one feels that one could literally increase speed and take flight. My mental perambulations on this possibility were ground to a halt by the appearance of a police car with a flashing light immediately at my rear.

"You have just been clocked as driving in excess of 75 m.p.h. by our patrol aircraft, and it is my duty to give you a ticket." My heart sank. I apologized profusely and opened the

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When Interior Secretary Watt announced in February that he was going to ask Congress to "prohibit mining or drilling on the wilderness until the end of the century," conservationists suspected the announcement was too good to be true. They were right.

H.R. 5603, a bill incorporating Watt's proposals along with a few added twists, has been introduced in the House by Representative Manual Lujan of New Mexico. It is called the Wilderness Protection Act of 1982, and is probably the most inappropriately named measure that has been dropped in the Congressional hopper this year. It does nothing to protect wilderness.

In brief, the proposal Watt chose to make on a nationally televised show was a deliberate attempt to deceive the American people by wrapping sheep's clothing around the same old wolf. The Reagan administration remains committed to exploitation of whatever gas, oil, and mineral resources can be found beneath the National Wilderness Preservation System.

The Wilderness System Is Under Attack

Loopholes and Fine Print; What the Lujan Bill Does

The Lujan bill is co-sponsored by Representatives Don Young of Alaska, Ronald C. Marlenee of Montana, Richard B. Cheney of Wyoming, Charles Pashayen, Jr., of California, David O'B. Martin of New York, James V. Hansen of Utah, and William Emerson of Missouri. It proclaims its purpose is to protect existing and proposed federal wilderness areas, but the provisions which follow are full of loopholes, fine print, and exemptions.

For example, proposing "protection to the end of the century" should be viewed, in the context of the Lujan bill, as a threat, not a promise. The Wilderness Act grants the wilderness system protection *forever*, whereas the Lujan bill would reopen it to mineral entry in 18 years. Technically — under the present act — wilderness areas are open to mining claims and drilling leases until the end of next year, and then will be closed forever. Realistically, however, the granting of

even a few such claims or leases between now and the '83 deadline has become unlikely since the run-in Watt had with the Congress over the issue last fall. Here are some highlights of H.R. 5603:

1. The bill would allow the President to open *any* wilderness area to drilling and mining before the year 2000 in case of "urgent national need," and there are no criteria defining such need. Congress could stop the President only by passing a law within 60 days — and, if necessary, overriding a veto.

2. The bill would allow the President at any time to withdraw protection from Bureau of Land Management wilderness study areas, without the consent of Congress, by declaring them unsuitable for wilderness designation. These are proposed wilderness lands that have been set aside by BLM for Congress to consider adding to the wilderness system; they are protected, pending final decision, because if any development were to take place in such an area before Congress could act, the area would no longer qualify as wilderness. Present law leaves the decisions on these study areas up to Congress, not the President alone.

3. All BLM study areas recommended for wilderness protection that have not been designated by Congress as wilderness by January 1985 would be permanently "released" from further consideration as wilderness; further, there would be a January 1988 cutoff for protection of proposed Forest Service wilderness recommended under the second Roadless Area Review and Evaluation (RARE II). This tight, now-or-never schedule would allow opponents to kill wilderness proposals simply by delaying them a few years by parliamentary tactics.

4. The bill would bar the Forest Service from ever proposing any additional wilderness areas after the current proposals have been acted upon. This provision, along with the permanent "release" of the BLM lands from further consideration, is like passing a law against further expansion of the National Park System.

How It All Started; The Wilderness Act

The Wilderness Act was passed in 1964 and established the National Wilderness Preservation System by designating nine million acres of National Forest lands to be preserved in their natural state forever. At the same time, the act directed the Forest Service to review its remaining suitable lands and the National Park Service and US Fish and Wildlife Service to review their holdings and to recommend

to Congress any further "untrammeled" roadless areas that might qualify for addition to the system. The Wilderness Act — along with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act that was passed in 1976 — spell out the ground rules under which Congress may add Forest Service and BLM lands to the wilderness system, and they provide for the protection of proposed wilderness areas while the areas are awaiting final decision by the Congress.

Under this process, the original wilderness system has grown to about 80 million acres. In addition, some 30 million acres of National Forest and BLM land are being protected as proposed wilderness.

The Wilderness Act allowed a 20-year period of grace — up to the 1983 deadline — during which time developers could be granted mining claims and drilling leases within wilderness areas. This provision has been found by a federal district court to be inconsistent with the law's primary purpose. Previous administrations have considered it only authority to make adjustments within the spirit of the act. The present administration, however, has actively encouraged industry to apply for oil and gas exploration and development leases in the wilderness system. Now the 1983 deadline is drawing close, and industry has been pressing for an extension. Until the time of the Watt announcement, the Reagan administration supported a 20-year extension of the 1983 deadline.

The Congress has been resisting these attacks on the wilderness system. Last fall's showdown with Watt occurred after it was learned the Interior Department had quietly issued a lease for oil and gas exploration on a tract partly within the Capitan Wilderness in southwestern New Mexico. The upshot was an agreement that Watt would issue no further leases before the November elections, and after that he would do so only with advance notice to Congress, environmental assessments, and public hearings.

Potential Wilderness Areas Are Carefully Screened

The present wilderness system amounts to less than three percent of the federal government's lands, including the big units in Alaska; it comes to only one percent in the lower 48 states. These lands were selected after lengthy hearings at which *all* potential uses of the land were considered. Commercial resources like timber, gas, oil, and minerals were weighed against such values as natural beauty, wildlife, and watershed stability.

Watt, in announcing his proposal, said no one knows "what minerals and energy potential" might be found under wilderness land. He is guilty of a gross exaggeration, if not deliberate misstatement. While no one can be absolutely sure of what lies underground in an unexplored area, geologists can make pretty knowledgeable estimates. Their assessments indicate that the lands already in the wilderness system contain only about one percent of the potentially producible oil and gas in the United States; about 3½ percent is believed to lie beneath the lands under consideration for wilderness designation.

Nor are great stands of timber denied to the economy. One of the principal reasons for the establishment of the National Forest system was watershed protection, to prevent floods and protect water quality. Much of this land is not suitable for commercial timbering operations. *All* Forest Service lands currently in the wilderness system *plus* all that are currently proposed for wilderness contain *less than one percent* of the nation's productive, commercial-quality timberlands.

In short, there is no indication the wilderness system is denying industry an unreasonable amount of exploitable resources. Rather, it is preserving a few irreplaceable fragments of the nation's natural heritage for the present and future generations.

Your Help Is Needed; Here's What To Do

Watt's change of strategy indicates the administration is experiencing at least some concern about the public's resistance to proposals to undo the Wilderness Act and open the wilderness system to exploitation. And when the public becomes concerned, the Congress becomes concerned.

1. Write your representative (House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515) and senators (U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510). Tell them you were not fooled by Secretary Watt's double talk and that you want no part of H.R. 5603 or any similar legislation. If your representative is one of Lujan's seven co-sponsors, urge him to remove his name from the bill.

2. Help spread the truth about Watt's attempt to mislead the public. Write a letter to the editor, talk to your friends.

3. Help National Audubon's Washington office by sending them copies of replies your letters may bring from members of Congress. Please send them to Alison Horton, National Audubon Society, 645 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20003. For further information, write Horton or call her at (202) 547-9009. 

A Speed We Can Live With

trunk to retrieve my driver's license, thereby exposing my birding paraphernalia.

"Are you a photographer?" asked the officer. "No, I watch birds," I replied, waiting for the usual glazed look of indifference. Instead, he smiled. "So do I," he volunteered. "Got a good long life list. You'd be amazed what can be spotted from the freeway, apart from speeding cars. Have you seen the Bald Eagles near the Lake Nacimiento turnoff?"

"No," I said in some surprise at these revelations. "I'll give you directions for the best spotting area," he went on. "Just let me write your ticket. Look! There's the aircraft that caught you. It's coming over now. You didn't see it, huh?" This is some kind of officer, I thought glumly.

"No, I didn't," I replied. "But I did so want to see the Black-throated Blue Warbler in Santa Barbara before dark." There was a glimmer of hope in my heart — but he went on writing.

"Never mind," he said, handing me the ticket. "Most of us exceed the speed limit at one time or another." He then spent about ten minutes or so chatting about birds and pointed us in the direction of the Bald Eagles.

We did as we had been directed and stopped, and within five minutes saw an immature Bald Eagle fly over and then a beautiful adult soared past us and on towards the lake area.

That was pretty terrific, but I'm still wondering whether it was worth \$85. Suddenly 55 m.p.h. seems such a *reasonable* speed — think I'll stick to it.



Join Letter Brigade

Your opinions matter! All political insiders agree that letters to public officials are far more influential than the average person thinks. If we accept this judgment of the experts, why not take advantage of it? LA Audubon has started a letter-writing program to help produce a flurry of letters when we feel strongly about important environmental issues.

Over 75 people have signed up for this project and have already begun writing. A good start, but the more the merrier. You will be notified by telephone, given a succinct statement of the issue and told where to write. We ask for one or two letters a month — short, to the point, and in your own words. If you want to join up, call Sandy Wohlgemuth at 344-8531 or write him at 19354 Calvert St., Reseda 91335.

Peregrines to Fly from Boney Ridge

Great news! On the suggestion of the LA Audubon Society, the California Community Foundation, through its Ora L. Leeper Fund, has granted \$7500 to LA Audubon for the release of three immature Peregrine Falcons



from the Boney Ridge Wilderness Area in the Santa Monica Mountains.

Brian Walton, of the Santa Cruz Predatory Bird Research Group, will direct the project. Brian organized the spectacularly successful release of the three young peregrines last July from the roof of the 21-story Westwood Center building in Westwood. This was done under the auspices of the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology. Those who were lucky enough to attend the September meeting of LAAS will remember vividly the excellent talk given by Lloyd Kiff of the Western Foundation, illustrating and explaining this exciting event. Brian Walton also spoke, giving details of the special techniques his group has developed to raise these magnificent birds from egg to chick. All three of the birds are still being seen locally. Here's to success at Boney Ridge!

— S.W.

Lansdowne Bird Paintings at Natural History Museum

Twenty original gouache paintings from J. Fenwick Lansdowne's *Birds of the West Coast* Volume Two, are on exhibit at the Natural History Museum in Exposition Park. Appropriately displayed in the Changing Gallery outside the Museum's permanent Bird Hall, the paintings combine an artist's vision with a scientist's devotion to detail.

Like Audubon before him, Lansdowne is a painter of consummate skill, and his goal is the accurate representation of a specific bird in an aesthetically pleasing manner. Focusing on the birds that inhabit the Pacific Coast between Canada and Baja California, the gouaches capture the plumage, structure and characteristic motion of such species as the Common Merganser, the Western Sandpiper, the Black-necked Stilt and the Brown Pelican.

The Natural History Museum in Exposition Park is open Tuesday through Sunday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Closed Monday. Adults \$1.00; students and senior citizens over 62 (with ID) and children 5-17, 50¢. Free admission the first Tuesday of each month. Parking available.

Third Annual Wildlife Festival

Friday 21 May through Sunday 23 May, the Third Annual Wildlife Festival will be held at the Arnaz Program Center (half way between Ojai and Ventura). The festival will feature conservation groups, nature slide shows and movies, wildlife and energy-saving exhibits, conservation workshops, musical groups, magic shows, sports events, and food. Proceeds will go to the J.J. Audubon Wildlife Fund, for promotion of wildlife and conservation education, and for promotion of the Fourth Annual Wildlife Festival.

Trees will be planted in the Arnaz Program Center. For a list of acceptable trees to donate, or for any other information regarding the festival, contact R.C. Griffin Productions, PO Box 3513, Ventura, CA 93006 (805) 654-8877. To get to the Arnaz Program Center, enter via Old Sulpher Mountain Rd. just below the apple cider store on Highway 33.

Topics of Conservation

by Sandy Wohlgemuth

An old public relations bromide goes, "Never mind what you say about me, just keep mentioning my name." James Watt behaves as if he invented this slogan, along with, "Every knock's a boost." If this is so, the Interior Department never had it so good. In his relatively short time in office this darling of the Radical Right has managed to outrage not only every environmentalist in the land but a vast host of uncommitted citizens who ordinarily pay slight attention to the behavior of cabinet officers. If Mr. Reagan can quote FDR, Mr. Watt might well borrow Mort Sahl's tag line, "Is there anyone here I haven't insulted?"

These "insults" have been extended to outright fabrications. It is one thing to brand environmental leaders as "hit men — a charge with underworld and terrorist connotations, though in politics this kind of florid hyperbole is tolerated, if not applauded. It is quite another kettle of fish to say, "They are political activists, a left-wing cult which seeks to bring down the type of government I believe in." The National Audubon Society, he says, wants "a government that believes in centralized socialistic planning." (LOS ANGELES TIMES, 3/8/82) Pretty strong stuff, which would be a cosmic joke if it weren't so down-right frightening.

What's the answer to this kind of paranoia? Do you take a defensive stand and announce that Audubon President Russ Peterson was a former *Republican* governor of Delaware? Or that most of the 4.5 million members of the National Wildlife Foundation voted for Reagan? Do you beat your breast and recite, "I am not now nor have I ever been a member of the Garden Club of America"? No, I think you try to set the record straight. Concern for wildlife, wilderness and open space is not the property of any political party or esoteric "cult". For hundreds of years, Americans of all persuasions have loved and appreciated our magnificent mountains, our mighty rivers, our grand canyons. We have been the envy of smaller, older, more crowded lands. We have been the first great nation to establish a national park system. Our first conservationist president was a Republican, Theodore Roosevelt. Conservation is part of the American mainstream. The classic conservative wants to *conserve*, not squander our national wealth. The contemporary "environmental extremists" are Mr. Watt's cheering section. Hiding behind the smokescreen of National Emergency they see a golden opportunity to plunder our remaining off-limits wildernesses, our uncluttered shores. Their hearts leap up at the prospect of clear-



cut forests, of thousands of strip-mined acres of the western states, of enormous power plants pumping out smog and acid rain alongside our national parks.

Mr. Watt is their Lochinvar riding out of the West in his photogenic ten-gallon hat — a phony cowboy who is bored with the Grand Canyon and is not reluctant to admit that he is less than ecstatic about the joys of nature. His legs ain't bowed and his cheeks ain't tanned, but he sure knows the right lingo: greed, pardner. The "special interests" — the cattle grazers, the mining companies, the oil drillers, the timber merchants — see this administration as opening the door for the first time in decades, and they're itching to get in. They'd like to take the money and run before the electorate gets wise.

Mr. Watt says he's taking the rap, that he's Mr. Reagan's lightning rod. When he is attacked, he says, the president is not. In the euphoric period of grace, when all presidents are given a chance to show their stuff without severe criticism, this was probably true. After 15 months, the real Mr. Reagan has to stand up and take the heat himself. He appointed James Watt, who is still riding high, so he must be satisfied with him. Last June, Watt said, "No other Secretary of the Interior ... has had a president who understands my department like Ronald Reagan does ... When I said, 'I want to do this, I want to do that' he replied, 'Sic 'em!'" Is it unreasonable to assume, then, that Mr. Reagan looks at Interior like no other president has: not as the guardian, but the distributor of our natural resources? He plucked Mr. Watt from his post as organizer and chief of the Mountain States Legal Foundation where his formidable energy was concentrated on

fighting laws and regulations that protect the environment. The head of the Forest Service is John Crowell, former timber lobbyist and general counsel of the giant Louisiana-Pacific lumber company.

And then we have Anne McGill Gorsuch, head of the Environmental Protection Agency, who is apparently dedicated to the destruction of her own organization. The EPA was created to be the staunch advocate of environmental values and the sheriff that made polluters tremble. Ms. Gorsuch is a worthy handmaiden of James Watt. In the name of efficiency she is cutting out waste by abolishing the enforcement arm of EPA, cutting her budget and staff by a third. She is asking that emission levels for auto exhaust be doubled and making it impossible to implement laws like the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act. She is in favor of pouring toxic wastes into landfills. She wants to return the Superfund money to the Treasury, funds appropriated by Congress to clean up Love Canals all over the country.

What are we to make of this topsy-turvy world, this environmental Looking-Glass land? I'm afraid we must point the accusing finger at our "nice guy" president and his hard-line advisers. They are deliberately reversing *traditional* Republican concern for the environment that fostered the EPA, the Council on Environmental Quality, the national park system and the Endangered Species Act. And they are defying the gut-feelings of millions of Americans who have said in unequivocal terms in poll after poll that, dammit, they want to breathe clean air and drink clean water. They want elbow room. They don't want leaky oil platforms decorating the ocean every couple of miles. They want wildlife protected and wilderness to be forever. Election Day 1980 was a mandate for a national change for the better, not the unfeeling abuse of a still lovely land. ☩



Kimball Garrett Joins Staff of Natural History Museum

Dr. Ralph Schreiber, curator of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County has announced the addition of Kimball Garrett to its curatorial staff. Kimball Garrett, co-author (with John Dunn) of the definitive guide, *Birds of Southern California*, will serve as Collections Manager of the Museum's Ornithology Section.

Kimball will administer the Museum's

extensive bird collection, more than 100,000 specimens of study skins, alcohol-preserved carcasses and skeletons, which is among the ten largest such collections in the United States. The Natural History Museum holds the most comprehensive worldwide representation of birds of any museum in the western United States. Kimball will be responsible for handling the many loan requests for birds

that come from other institutions around the world. He also will be responsible for providing information on birds, as related to the collection, for the general public of Los Angeles County.

Kimball has served as vice-president of the LAAS and teaches biology in the UCLA Extension program. He is a noted field ornithologist, specializing in distribution of western North American birds, bird vocalizations and woodpecker ecology.



Explore the Amazon with Portland Audubon

The Portland Audubon Society is sponsoring a Summer '82 Amazon Excursion — departing 17 June 1982. The group will spend nine days in jungle lodges, exploring over 200 miles of the Amazon and its tributaries, walking along pristine tropical forest trails and identifying and photographing as much of the plant and wildlife as possible. The bird list alone for the area totals 430 species! Two extensions are being offered as well: to the Andean Region/ Machu Picchu/Cuzco, and the Paracas Coast/ Guana Island/ Lima areas.

You'll see everything from Humboldt Penguins and Andean Condors to Torrent Ducks and Hoatzins. The total 18-day package, including an overnight in Miami and a day's guided tour of the Everglades National Park, is \$2118.00 from Miami. Expert bilingual guides will be available in all areas visited.

Audubon tour leader will be Diane Lowrie who recently led a successful tour to Peru. She has ten years' experience living South America where she explored and led field trips for Audubon. (Her husband is a past

president of the Venezuelan Audubon Society.) She is dedicated to furthering research in South America and is very excited about establishment of a Peruvian Research Grant Fund as a result of these trips. Diane is the author of the poster "Wading Birds of South America" and has presented numerous slide shows on South American flora and fauna. Do not hesitate to contact her for further information on this trip at (503) 232-3495, or c/o Audubon Society of Portland, 5151 Northwest Cornell Rd., Portland, OR 97210.

Birds of the Season

by Shum Suffel



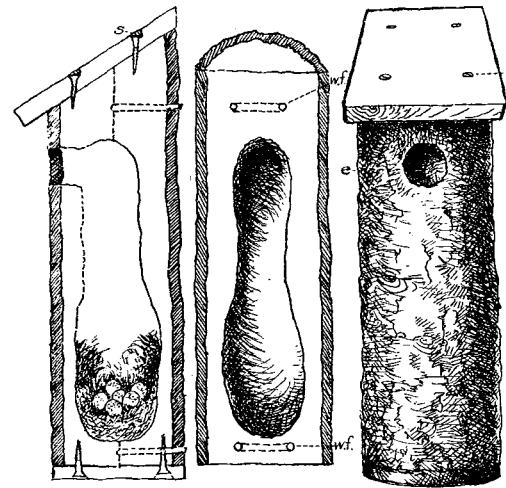
This is the peak of migration, the time we waited for so impatiently during March and early April. Let's take advantage of it to the fullest. Almost any place is good for birding now: the ocean, with two LAAS pelagic trips planned; the coastal and inland marshes for shorebirds in colorful breeding plumage; the coastal canyons and promontories for migrant passerines; and, of course, those wonderful bird traps, the desert oases. Even the mountains, still too cold for small birds to nest, are at their best for owls.

March birding was predictably dull, but there were some highlights. Most exciting was a new bird for California, a **Barred Owl**, near Crescent City in the northwest corner of the state (Dick and Linda Erickson, 12 March). It drew groups from as far away as San Diego, most of whom found it easy to hear, but difficult to see. Other Northern California specialties were located by one or more of the groups there for the owl: Ruffed Grouse, Pileated Woodpecker, Gray Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, Northern Shrike and Rock Sandpiper. Most amazing was a **Little Blue Heron** at Lake Earl (Del Norte County), far north of any previous record. Apparently both the Smew and Gyrfalcon were last seen in February. The **Yellow-billed Loon** (Jon Dunn, 23 Feb.) continued to be seen from the Goleta Pier, as was the summer plumaged **Common Loon** there. A **Horned Grebe** in Death Valley on 18 March (Dan Guthrie) was a rarity on the desert, particularly in winter.

Although most geese were going or gone, except for Brant, most ducks including the **Oldsquaws** at Marina del Rey (2), San Diego (1) and the Salton Sea (2) stayed on into March. All **Black Ducks** in California are suspected of being escapees, even those that appear "oiled" and do not associate with the resident mallards; this was the case with the one at Harbor Lake (Mitch Heindel, 1 April). It did, however, join up with a newly arrived **Wood Duck** there. The second male Wood Duck at the Arcadia Arboretum that arrived last fall was not seen on 30 March, but the feral male stayed on, as did the **Fulvous Whistling Duck** at Legg Lake. If it does not migrate this would reinforce its status as an escapee. A **Zone-tailed Hawk**, photographed on Mt. Palomar (Roger Higson, 28 Feb. and 1 March), was of particular interest, as this is less than 30 miles from Santa Rosa Mt. where Zone-tails have been present in summer since 1978 (nesting attempted).

Three observations of migrating *buteos* are of interest: a light-phase **Swainson's Hawk**,

soaring high over Claremont (David Koeppl and Shum Suffel, 15 March) and gliding away towards the west, was one of the very few recent coastal records; and a **Ferruginous Hawk** circling in a thermal updraft over Pasadena to over 1000 feet, set its wings and disappeared to the northwest (Don Sterba and Shum Suffel, 26 March). Thirteen Swainson's were seen on 17 March coming to roost in a eucalyptus grove in Reseda (Ron Beck). An immature **Bald Eagle** was photographed at the Edmonston Pumping Plant, Kern County, by Jean Brant, *et al.* (11 Jan.) who were looking unsuccessfully for Condors. A **Peregrine Falcon** seen near UC Irvine (Dough Willick, 27 Feb.) may be the one that has been in the area since last fall. There was another Peregrine in La Jolla Valley, Malibu State Park, on 21 March (Bob Pann). Brian Keelin chose a Saturday (20 March) to look for **Sage Grouse** above Bishop; this is the day Fish & Game leads the group. The Grouse have deserted their traditional lek (dancing area) and moved to one accessible only by four-wheel drive, because of the snow. Brian saw 12 males and seven females.



The previously reported **Ruff** at the Salton Sea, on 20 Feb., was later identified as a **Pectoral Sandpiper** (Guy McCaskie, *fide Richard Webster*), a second winter record for our region. While **Stilt Sandpipers** winter in small numbers at the Salton Sea, there is only one previous winter record along the coast. So two birds, one at Bolsa Chica through Feb. (Lee Jones *et al.*) and another at San Elijo Lagoon, San Diego County, on 21 Feb. (David King) are of exceptional interest. An immature **Glaucous Gull** at Upper Newport Bay on 16 March (Dough Willick) may have been the one found there on the Orange County Christmas Count. Three **Elegant Terns** below San Diego on 3 March represented the first arrivals at the nesting colony there (Richard Webster).

Hummingbirds received major attention with Rufous and Allen's widely reported along the coastal slope. The earliest **Rufous** was found near Morro Bay by Don Sterba on 30 Jan. Henry Childs' **Ash-throated Flycatcher** in Walnut Creek Park, San Dimas on 6 March, may have been a wintering bird, as migrants are not expected until April. The **Least Flycatcher** in Huntington Beach was not reported after Feb.

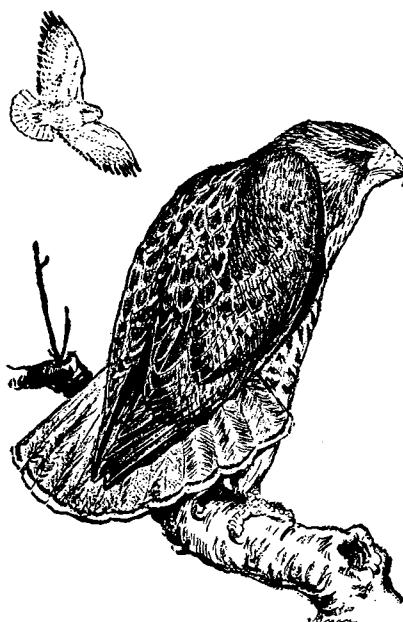
A puzzling *Empidonax* in Wardlow Park, Long Beach (John Ivanov and Jerry Johnson, 15 March) was later identified as a **Hammond's Flycatcher**. (Jon remarked that he identified it even before he saw it by its distinctive call — a piercing "peek" note.) **Western Flycatchers**, as expected, were the earliest Empids; there were several reports: one in Altadena on 4 March (David Bell), four near Santa Barbara before 7 March (Paul Lehman), and one in Long Beach

Recreation Park, on 28 March (David Koepel). The **Olive-sided Flycatcher** that wintered in Griffith Park last year (reported again last fall, but not since) was seen again on the hillside above the LA Zoo on 15, 17 & 25 March, by Sally Pearce.

A **Purple Martin**, thought to be an immature male, returned in late March to O'Neill Park in Orange County, where adults nested last year. A probable Purple Martin was seen briefly at the Arcadia Arboretum on 30 March (Shum Sufel). An early, but delayed, report of five **Rough-winged Swallows** in Tujunga Wash on 23 Feb. comes from Mickey Long. **Varied Thrushes** stayed into March at the Claremont Botanic Gardens (Hal Baxter), and at both Oak Canyon and the Turtle Rock Nature Centers in Orange County (Doug Willick). Although Cedar Waxwings were here in huge flocks, the only previous report of **Bohemian Waxwings** were the two cited last month, and now a delayed report of four near Hearst Castle, San Luis Obispo County, in Feb. (Greg Smith). There were a few in Northern California, and Mitch Heindel saw more than 50 in Reno in mid-March.

A **Bell's Vireo** in Goleta from Oct. to at least Feb. constituted the only winter record north of San Diego County (Paul Lehman). The wintering **Warbling Vireos** mentioned last month were supplemented by migrants arriving in March: the earliest at Bolsa Chica on 1 March (Kimball Garrett), one in Marshall Canyon, La Verne, on 20 March (Sally Pearce), another at Morongo Valley the same day (Dan Guthrie), and on the 21st there were two and a **Nashville Warbler** near Upper Newport Bay (Natasha Antonovich). A week later there were two and a **Solitary Vireo** in Whaley Park, Long Beach (David Koepel). Natasha also found two Solitary Vireos in the Claremont Botanic Gardens on 20 March.

Our rare wintering warblers stayed through, or at least well into, March: the **Bay-breasted** and the **Worm-eating** in Long Beach; the **Cape May** at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo (Curtis Marantz); the two **Grace's** and the **Black-throated Blue**, plus eight **Black and Whites**, ten **Tennessees**, four **Palms**, and a **MacGillivray's** near Santa Barbara. It is obvious that this productive area receives blanket coverage from Paul Lehman, Jon Dunn and other thorough birders. The **American Redstart** at Harbor Lake was



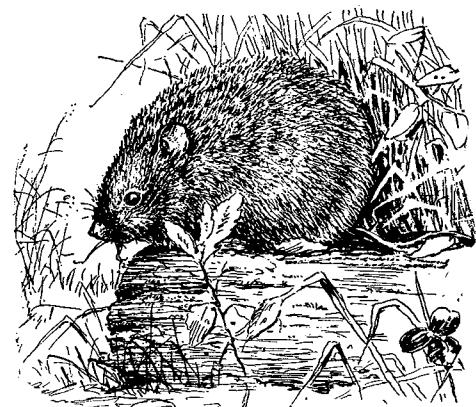
seen again on 30 March (Mitch Heindel). There was one delayed report of a wintering **Hermit Warbler** behind the Santa Barbara Mission in Feb. (Greg Sater).

Those of us with oriole feeders anxiously await the return of "our" **Hooded Orioles** — males first and a week or so later the females. Jean Brant's male was a week late this spring, arriving on 21 March; the female came ten days later. Meanwhile, numbers of **"Bullock's" Orioles**, which winter here in small numbers, increased, particularly in the nonurban areas. The Santa Barbara area had five **"Baltimore" Orioles** and many more "Bullock's" wintering there. Strangely, **Rose-breasted Grosbeaks** are reported more often in winter than are our common summer resident **Black-headed Grosbeaks**. A male Black-headed at Santiago Oaks Park, Orange County, on 22 March was an early migrant (Doug Willick). An **Evening Grosbeak** at Big Bear Lake on 9 March was the first report since November (July Sugden). **Pine Siskins**, unusually abundant this winter, were still present in late March. **Grasshopper Sparrows** were singing in La Jolla Valley, Ventura County, on 21 March (Bob Pann), and on the grassy hillsides of Orange County on 25 March (Doug Willick). But where can we find them in Los Angeles County, now that they have been crowded out by urbanization? A note from Paul Lehman details some birds not found this winter, except in Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties, including two **Orchard Orioles** in Ventura, three **Harris' Sparrows** in Goleta, and two **McCown's Longspurs** at Pt. Mugu, Ventura County.

As we look back on the winter, it is interesting to review the "no-shows", birds sometimes — maybe even usually — seen here in winter. There were no reports of Tufted Ducks, Broad-winged Hawks, Ruffs, Black-headed or Little Gulls, White-winged Doves, Northern Shrikes or Lark Buntings. There were relatively few Chickadees, Creepers or Nuthatches in the lowlands.

But why look back? The best is yet to come. May is the month when over 200 species can be found in one 24-hour day (see *WESTERN TANAGER*, July-August 1976). Early May provides the largest number of migrants both in terms of species and numbers; as the month matures, numbers are superceded by quality. For this is the time when vagrant passerines, lost, late and ever-fascinating, are found. (For a discussion of vagrancy, see "Mirror-image navigational errors in migrating birds, *NATURE MAGAZINE*, 28 Jan. 1982.) Compulsive vagrant chasing reaches a climax in the annual hegira to Death Valley and the Inyo/Mono region over Memorial Day weekend. However, May is more than vagrant chasing; it is the nesting season, a time to enjoy one's own bird families at home or in the field, a time to take a picnic supper to the top of the falls in Santa Anita Canyon with Dippers on the way up, Black Swifts at evening and, hopefully, owls on the return journey. And a time to picnic at Morongo Valley with Lucy's Warblers, Wied's Crested Flycatchers and Summer Tanagers to whet your appetite.

ERRATA: Charlie Collin's record of a **Blue-phase Ross' Goose** at the south end of the Salton Sea on 13 Feb. mysteriously disappeared from my April column. It was the first sighting of this very rare morph for our area and possibly for the west coast. (EDITOR'S NOTE: Sorry Charlie. Sorry Shum.)



Send any interesting bird sightings to Shum Sufel, 1105 No. Holliston, Pasadena, California 91104.



CALENDAR

LAAS Pelagic Trips



SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, MAY 22-23

— **Oxnard Marina to San Miguel Island** and Cortez Ridge. 9:00 pm Sat. to 4:00 pm Sun. Sail at 1 am Sun. 48 spaces plus 2 leaders: Fred Heath and Larry Norris. Take the *Ranger 85* (galley) approximately 50 miles out to sea up the coast. Among the birds to be seen this time of year: Black-footed Albatross; Shearwaters; South Polar Skua; Jaegers; Black and Ashy Storm-Petrels; Xanthus Murres; Puffins; Sabine's Gulls; Arctic Terns. Cost: \$49.

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, AUG. 28-29

— **Oxnard to Cortiz Ridge.** Departure and details the same as the 22-23 May trip. Leaders: Herb and Olga Clarke. Among the birds to be seen this time of year: South Polar Skua; Long-tailed Jaeger; Shearwaters; Red-billed Tropicbird; Least and Black Storm-Petrels; Craveri's Murrelet. Cost: \$49.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19 — San Pedro to San Clemente Island.

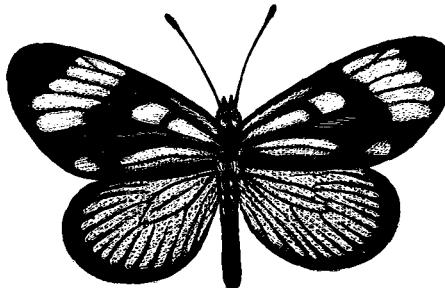
5:30 am to 6:30 pm. 44 spaces and 2 leaders: Phil Sayre and Olga Clarke. Take the *Vantuna* (coffee and tea available, no galley) approximately 30 miles out to sea along the southern coast. Birds to be seen this time of year include: Long-tailed Jaeger; Shearwaters; Least and White-rumped Leach's Storm-Petrels; Red-billed Tropicbird; Craveri's Murrelet. Cost: \$25.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 21 — San Pedro to Santa Barbara Isl.

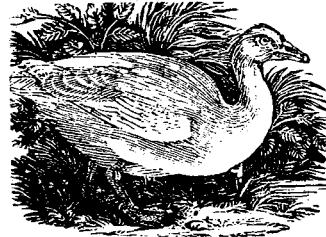
6 am to 5 pm. Take the *Vantuna* approximately 45 miles along the Coast. Leaders to be announced. Birds to be expected include: Albatross, Black-vented Shearwater; Alcids. Price: \$20.

All prices are tentative and subject to fuel cost increases. Reserve spaces early. To take part in these pelagic trips, send your reservations with the names and telephone numbers of all members of your party along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:

Reservations c/o Ruth Lohr
Los Angeles Audubon Society
7377 Santa Monica Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90046
(213) 876-0202 (Tues-Sat, 10-3)



NOTICE: Starting 1 June 1982, the first class mailing rates for LAAS members wishing to receive the *TANNER* via first class mail will be raised to \$5.00.



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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 TANNER

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SUNDAY, MAY 9 — **Jacob Szabo** will lead a day-trip to **Placerita Canyon**. Meet at 8 a.m. at the entrance to the Nature Center off Placerita Canyon Road, which is off Highway 14.

MONDAY, MAY 10 — **Jean Brant** will lead a trip to **Little Rock Dam**. Call the tape for details.

TUESDAY, MAY 11 — Evening program at 8 p.m. at Plummer Park. LA Audubon's own **Herb Clarke** will give a slide show on "The Birds of the San Gabriel Mountains."

SUNDAY, MAY 16 — **Dave Koepel** will lead a day-trip to **Morongo Valley**. Meet at 8:15 a.m. at Conington Park in Morongo.

SATURDAY, MAY 22 — Day-trip to **Starr Ranch**. You must sign up to participate. Meet at 8 a.m. at the entrance to the Casper Wilderness Park off Ortego, 8 miles south of San Juan Capistrano. Bring lunch.

TUESDAY, JUNE 8 — **Dr. Jared Diamond** of the UCLA School of Medicine, Department of Physiology, will speak at the evening program on "The Rediscovery of New Guinea's Long-Lost Bowerbird." Audubon House at 8 p.m.

Call the tape the Thursday before all scheduled trips for changes or verification.

If you would like to lead a field trip to your favorite birding locale, call Ian Austin to make arrangements (879-9700 or 398-9390).