

WESTERN TANAGER

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"This is your captain speaking. The lights to be seen on the left side of the plane are the lights of Moscow."

I had no idea that I'd ever fly over Russia, and survive! It was the first of many new and exciting experiences during my birding trip to India and Sri Lanka.

Some people are critical of the beauty of the Taj Mahal and there are those who don't like to go birding. I like both and took the opportunity to see the Asian subcontinent in January, 1986. Yes, it was expensive; yes, it was half way around the world; and yes, it was a wonderful trip.

Several G&T's, dinner and "Agnes of God" plus a little sleep put us in Delhi by mid-morning. House Crows, Common Mynas, Red-wattled Lapwings, Marsh Harriers and Black Drongos met us at the airport. The misconception that there wouldn't be many birds as a result of the dense human population was entirely wrong. Birds and people seem to get along together in close association in this part of the world.

At the Hyatt Regency, the group met our leader, Dr. Robert L. Fleming Jr., co-author of the "Birds of Nepal," and a neat guy with great ears, eyes and patience. As usual, with Victor Emmanuel Nature Tours (VENT) the group was small and consisted of 5 Californians, one Floridian and one Arkansan.

Comment on health: Prior to the trip several shots were necessary and malaria prevention started. No one got sick during the entire trip of 28 days. We followed the rule "If it wasn't cooked or you couldn't peel it, don't eat it!" Bottled water and beer, and an occasional spot of tea, provided the necessary fluids. Flies or mosquitos were never a problem. It didn't rain during the entire trip.

Serious birding didn't start until that afternoon but a few life birds like White Wagtail (two different races), Brown Rockchat, Lagggar Falcon, Tawny Prinia and the beautiful Coppersmith Barbet were ticked off around the hotel grounds!

Birding the jeels (a pond with its surrounding drainage) and the Sultanpur Bird Sanctuary to the southwest of the city in the afternoon found us getting acquainted with the more common roadside and marsh birds. Bank Mynas, Hoopoe, Common Sandpiper, White-breasted Kingfisher, dozens of Common Cranes, Black Ibis, Purple, Grey and

Pond Herons, Wryneck (a ground feeding woodpecker) and many more gave us a good start with over 60 species, many of them lifers, for the trip. A Spotted Owlet sat on a wire in a village on the way back to the hotel.

Next morning two cars took us to Bharatpur where we spent three days. It is justifiably one of the world's great birding localities.

Comment on driving and traffic: The first two days I was white knuckled the whole time but I finely got used to a crisis a minute. In the cities and on the main roads, the combination of taxis, cars, trucks, ox-carts, people and sacred cows, driving on the wrong side of the road, and no attention paid to the median stripe made me very glad that we had excellent drivers with absolutely no nerves!

The Keoladeo Sanctuary near Bharatpur was formally a maharaja's private hunting area. It has been, therefore, protected from the intensive cultivation and deforestation that has resulted from the over-population (750 million) that has denuded most of the country. Large dikes impound the rainfall of the monsoons and provide a major resting and feeding place for significant portions of the wintering waterfowl and waders that arrive from Russia to the north.

Forest Lodge, where we stayed, was not as plush as the Hyatt Regency. The showers were adequate, once you figured out how to use a bucket and got used to the cold water. Night-time temperatures required extra blankets. Food was typically Indian but it took a little getting used to. The curry was delicious but sometimes brought tears to your eyes!

Birding the Asian Subcontinent: India and Sri Lanka

Article and Photographs by Henry E. Childs, Jr.

Common Kingfisher at Sultampur





A proper birder near Agra

The list of birds seen is a long one so I will mention only a few: Painted and Open-billed Storks, Bar-headed Goose, 16 species of ducks (including the rare Falcated Teal, 3 pochards, and Cotton Pigmy Goose), 19 raptors including 8 species of eagles!, Saurus and 16 Siberian Cranes (rare & endangered), Painted Snipe, 8 waders plus the Stone and Great Curlews, River & Black-bellied Terns, Red Turtle Doves, Alexandrine & Rose-ringed Parakeets, Green Bee-eater, Indian Roller.

Passerines were: Ashy-crowned Finch-lark, Small Minivet (gorgeous bird in the cuckoo-shrike family), Common Iora (leaf-bird family), several bulbuls, Rufous Treepie, 4 babblers, Black & Plumbeous Redstarts, Isabelline & Desert Wheatears, several old-world warblers (a group as bad as Empidonax flycatchers), Common Tailorbird, Paradise Flycatcher (beautiful white males and spectacular brown & black females), Olive-tree Pipit, 5 wagtails, 3 shrikes, 5 starlings and mynas, Purple Sunbird (ecological equivalents of the hummingbirds and just as gaudy), and lastly, 4 species of weavers and one munia.

Enroute to Agra and the Taj, we visited Fatehpur Sikri, a deserted red sandstone city built by the Mongol emperor Akbar over 300 years ago. It was a source of amazement to me how much history occurred over here that I was not exposed to in school. Each red building block was hand-hewn, including large, intricate rock screens. Even the gravel used in road-making in Asia is hand-made!

At the Mogul Sheraton in Agra, a sumptuous hotel, we got our first look at the Taj Mahal, a thrill of a lifetime. The afternoon was spent "doing" the Red Fort and the Taj, both constructed before the compound microscope was invented (as a biologist, 1590 is a date I can relate to)! One can't help being

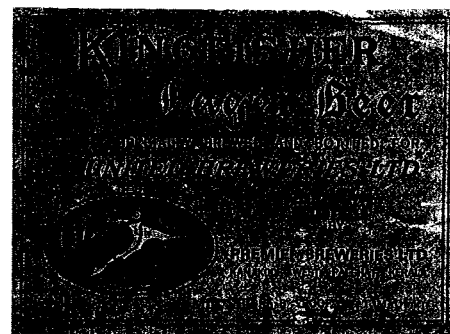
humbled by such awesome structures. Out back of the Taj on the Yamuna a Spur-winged Plover and other waders, swallows and swifts reminded us why we were there!

An overnight in Bombay on our way south gave us an opportunity to do some birding (Brown-headed Gull, Purple-rumped Sunbird, and both color phases of the Eastern Reef Heron), see the city and realize that smog is a way of life in this city. It is much worse that I've ever experienced in Upland. Incredible traffic wasn't helped by the occasional working elephant or oxcart ambling along on their equivalent of a freeway!

For the next several days we birded the Western Ghats, a range of mountains located along the coast of southwestern peninsula India. Here patches of undisturbed rainforest occur among many large tea plantations (tea belongs to the genus *Camelia*, a fact among many about tea growing we learned). Several south Indian and south Asian (including Sri Lanka) endemics were seen and the exotic list follows:

Grey Junglefowl, Malabar Parakeet, Blue-faced Malkoha (a cuckoo), Malabar Trogon, Malabar Grey and Pied Hornbills, Little-green and Crimson-throated Barbets, White-browed, Rufous, Black-headed, and Yellow-billed Babblers, Grey-breasted Laughingthrush, Malabar Whistlingthrush, White-bellied Flycatcher, Little, Purple-rumped and Loton's Sunbirds, Nilgiri Flycatcher and Nilgiri Pipit, and Black-throated Munia.

Comment: If you managed to get through that list, you will have noted several groups not present in North America e.g. babblers, laughing and whistlingthrushs, sunbirds and the munia. One has to get used to this sort of thing. We had several field guides available but, frequently, the common names for the same bird differed. Thank God for scientific names or we would have had a larger and incorrectly inflated list. There is a



This label was found stuck to Mr. Child's manuscript. We wonder if this Kingfisher was counted on his list.

crying need for standardization of common names around the world.

Lastly, the first ornithologists in these areas had very little imagination. Instead of coming up with a new name for a group of birds, they forced them into hybridized names e.g. cuckoo shrike, laughingthrush, wren-babbler, wood swallow, finch-lark, flycatcher-shrike, names which may have no relationship to their systematic position.

At Periyar Tiger Sanctuary (no, we didn't see any but we did see our first wild Asian Elephants) in the southern Ghats, spectacular sightings of the Black Baza, a lovely hawk, both Rufous and White-bellied Treepies (very shy birds unlike their relatives, the magpies), Forest Wagtails, Golden Oriole (not an Icterid!), Grey and Yellow-cheeked tits (chickadees!), Blue-capped Rock-thrush, Stork-billed Kingfisher and many more completed most of our birding in India. The trip down the mountain through the tea, pepper (the shaker kind) and cardamon plantations was enjoyable as was the overnight near Trivandrum where we took the plane for Sri Lanka with 293 species on our list.

We continued our birding with VENT with a short flight from southwestern India

Painted Stork at Bharatpur





Saurus Crane at Bharatpur



Great Stone Plover — Yala National Park

to Colombo, the principal city of the country formerly known as Ceylon.

Historically, culturally and geographically Sri Lanka is closely related to India. The island is located off the southern tip of India and has not been separated from it for very long, long enough, however, for 21 endemic species to evolve. We tracked down 18 of them and a country list of 209 for a grand total for both countries of 364 species!

The Hotel Kilawathi near Ratnapura was a delightful country inn containing many artifacts of the country and the Buddhist religion. A statue of Siva graced the pool in front. Herbal baths and medicines were available but birding was a higher priority for all of us (maybe we were all too chicken).

From this point we ranged out to Kitulgala, the site of the filming of much of the "Bridge of the River Kwai," one of my all-time favorite movies and, therefore, a very exciting experience. Along the river and in the alluvial plains, natives were seen "gemming," the Sri Lanka equivalent for panning for gold. The whole area is rich in gem stones.

At a lower elevation the Sinharaja Forest Wildlife Sanctuary, one of many sanctuaries and reserves in Sri Lanka making up a very creditable 7 per cent of the country, was an undisturbed area of rain forest. Some of the birds seen here were the endemics, the Ceylon Hanging Parrot, a tiny bird that sleeps hanging upside down (!), Emerald-collared Parakeet, the very rare and shy Red-faced Malkoha (a cuckoo and one of Asia's most wanted birds), the Yellow-fronted Barbet, the Ceylon Magpie, Ceylon Rufous and Brown-capped Babblers, Ashy-headed Laughingthrush, Legges Flowerpecker (a tiny bird in new family for me). The extremely shy Ceylon Spurfowl was only heard.

Shorebirding along the southern coast at or near the Yala National Park was terrific. The lagoons were full of migrants from the north as they had no place farther south to go. Next stop, Antarctica! Plovers included Lesser Golden, Grey (Black-bellied), Little Ringed, Kentish (Snowy), Mongolian and Greater Sand. Pintail Snipe was new for our list. Little Stints and Curlew Sandpipers stood out from the long list of Eurasian waders seen in great numbers. Masses of Northern Shovelers and Garganey fed among the Spot-billed Pelicans, Greater Flamingos, herons, storks, ibis, and spoonbills.



Bah! — Sri Lanka

White-necked Stork Bharatpur





Flying Fox (Fruit Bat) — Sri Lanka

Near Nonagame I spotted 3 Sandmartins (Bank Swallow) among a flock of Barn Swallows. The others were looking at more exotic birds. When our guide said it was a life bird for him and the second record of the species for the country, out came the cameras and VENT made the first authenticated record of the species for Sri Lanka! (I have since learned of several other unpublished sight records.)

Yala National Park provided exciting birding with such lowland species as Ceylon Junglefowl, Blue-faced and Sirkeer Malkohas, Pied and Plaintive Cuckoos, Orange-breasted Pigeon, Rufous-winged Bushlark, Rose-colored Starling, Grey-breasted Prinia, White-browed Fantail and many more. Sightings of two species of crocodiles, a 6 foot long Monitor Lizard, langurs, Golden-mantled Jackals and a wild elephant that came to lunch varied our mania for birds.

Pheasant-tailed Jacana — Sri Lanka



Heading north into the high country around Nuwara Eliya provided some breathtaking scenery and some exciting driving. In the park in town a Spot-winged Thrush, Dusky-blue and Kashmir Red-breasted Flycatchers were found. At Horton's Plain, an area of grassland at 6500 ft., Ceylon Wood Pigeon, Ceylon White-eye and Yellow-eared Bulbul, all highland endemics, were found. We stayed at the Grand Hotel, a Victorian (but not Emmanuel) edifice of very British and classy operation.

At Kandy we visited the Temple of the Tooth where, it is said, there is an actual relic of Buddha. The temple was alongside one of the many "tanks" or reservoirs built over a thousand years ago and upon which much of the agriculture of the country depends. Exotic species of many kinds are grown in this region. The Ceylon Rufous Babbler, the Ceylon Hill Myna and the Shama Thrush were added to our list in the nearby forest.

Historic ruins dating back to 300 B.C. were visited at Sigiriya and at Anuradhapura. Buddas and deghobas (stupas) were seen in abundance. One Buddha carved out of solid rock in a cave was over 2000 years old. Nearby, two months earlier, Tamil terrorists from the north, had massacred over 100 people here. Our plan to visit the Wilpattu National Park was scrapped at Government direction. No one felt obliged to argue the point as the military presence was obvious.

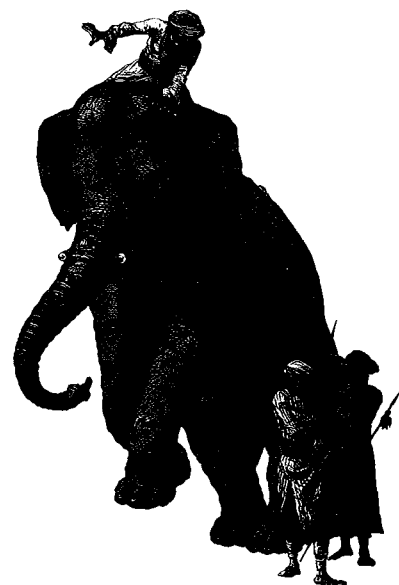
On the return trip to London, a stop at Dubai in the United Arab Emirates was interesting as there were absolutely no birds to be seen around the airport, not even starlings or Rock Doves, and Glenfiddich Scotch was \$2.20 a bottle (nearly \$20 in the U.S.) in the duty-free shop. This is, indeed, a dry country! A foot of snow awaited us at



Six foot long Monitor Lizard — Sri Lanka

Heathrow so we were pleased to find balmy spring weather at LAX upon our arrival home, tired, happy and ready to plan for the next trip to the Carribean . . . in search of Halley's Comet . . . and some Puerto Rican endemics!

[Hank Childs didn't get to do much birding in the Carribean as this trip was mainly a cruise for his wife. (She deserved it — his life list must be scattered all over the house.) Anyway, we won't be seeing a list . . . I mean, article on the Puerto Rican birds. — Ed]



RESERVATION TRIPS: (Limited Participation)

RESERVATION POLICY AND PROCEDURE:

Reservations will be accepted ONLY if ALL the following information is supplied: (1) Trip desired (2) Names of people in your party, (3) Phone numbers (a) usual and (b) evening before event, in case of emergency cancellation; (4) Separate check (no cash please) to LAAS for exact amount for each trip; (5) Self-addressed stamped envelope for confirmation and associated trip information. Send to: Reservations Chairman Ruth Lohr, LAAS, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90046.

If there is insufficient response, the trip will be cancelled two weeks prior to the scheduled date (4 weeks for pelagics) and you will be so notified and your fee returned. Your cancellation during that time will bring a refund only if there is a paid replacement.

If you desire to carpool to an event, Ms. Lohr (usually in office on Tuesday) can provide information for you to make contact and possible arrangements.

WEEKEND, JUNE 28-29, JUNE 30 optional —

Join this perennially popular trip to see a great diversity of species in four distinctly different habitats of the **Kern River/Greenhorn Mt. Area** with local leader **Bob Barnes**. Some of the possibilities are: Summer Tanager, Indigo Bunting, Blue Grouse, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Pinyon Jay, Gray Flycatcher, Williamson's Sapsucker. Enthusiastic teacher Bob Barnes has birded this area over 13 years and probably knows the regions' birdlife and their secret haunts best. \$25/person. Monday, June 30 option for an additional \$10.

WEEKEND, JULY 19-20 — Southern San

Joaquin Valley/Southern Sierra Forest with **Rob Hansen**. From White Pelican to White-headed Woodpecker, and everything in between, is what you can expect on this birding adventure. One of the Valley's top birding-naturalists, Rob Hansen, will lead this special weekend birding

extravaganza. Hansen, manager of The Nature Conservancy's Creighton Ranch and Kaweah Oaks Preserves, and college bird identification instructor, will take you on a transect from Tulare Lake marshes and alkali desert to shady conifer forest and cool mountain meadows. He will also present a slide program on natural history of the Central Valley Saturday evening. \$22/person

SATURDAY, AUGUST 2 — Pelagic from San Pedro to Santa Barbara Island. Leader: **Herb Clarke**. Expected species: Sooty and Pink-footed Shearwaters, Black Storm-petrel, Pigeon Guillemot, Cassin's Auklet. Possible species — Black-vented Shearwater, Ashy and Least Storm-petrel, Red-billed Tropic bird, Pomarine, Parasitic and Long-tailed Jaegers, South Polar Skua, Sabine's Gull, Arctic Tern, Craveri's and Xantus' Murrelets. \$20/person.

FRIDAY EVENING/SATURDAY, AUGUST 29,

30 — Shorebird Workshop with **Jon Dunn**. A slide show lecture will be held in Studio City Friday evening to study all the western shorebirds, from the most common to the rarities. The location of the field study will be dependent upon water levels to maximize viewing opportunity. Plumages will be carefully studied to differentiate juveniles from adults and various differences in peeps and other shorebirds. The approach will be gradual with lots of time spent looking at individual birds. Both beginner and more advanced birders are encouraged. Dunn is an acknowledged expert of Shorebird Identification, also a member of California Rare Birds Committee, and a Director/Leader of Wings, Inc., a professional bird tour group. He was the major consultant of National Geographic's "Birds of No. America," and co-author of "Birds of So. Calif., Status & Distribution," and the forthcoming "Field Identification of Difficult Species." \$30/person; Slide show/lecture only \$12/person.

WEEKEND, SEPTEMBER 13-14 — Spend a fall weekend birding the Crane Flat/Tioga Road area of beautiful **Yosemite National Park** with **David Gaines**. Evening (Friday also) and early mornings

will be spent looking for the Great Gray Owl. Other specialties to be included in daytime searches: Black-backed Woodpecker, Red Crossbill, Pine Grosbeak and Williamson's Sapsucker. Gaines is a naturalist with a Masters Degree in Ecology. He founded the Save Mono Lake Committee, teaches ornithology classes and is author of "Birds of the Yosemite Sierra" (available at Audubon House). \$25/person

FRIDAY EVENING & SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 28 — Pelagic Workshop

with **Arnold Small**. Take advantage of this great opportunity to study, then actually view pelagic birds. A meeting in Studio City Friday evening will feature slides and discussion on the observation and identification of pelagic birds of California, followed by a full day pelagic trip to Santa Barbara Island Sunday. Dr. Small has extensive experience and knowledge in the birding world and is widely known for his marvelous collection of outstanding bird slides. Dr. Small has been President of both L.A. Audubon and the American Birding Association. He contributed many slides for the "Audubon Master Guide," authored "The Birds of California," co-authored "Birds of the West," and is a Biology Professor at L.A. College in addition to teaching three different UCLA extension classes on California birds each year. (Maximum 38 persons — boat limitations.) \$45/person. Lecture/Slide show only \$15/person.

CARPOOLING: IS encouraged to reduce gas consumption and air pollution whenever possible. While the IRS allows business to reimburse car expense at the rate of 20¢ per mile, a recent study shows that the average cost *per mile* to own and operate a new subcompact car was 34.6¢ and a standard car was 55.4¢. One suggestion has been for riders to at least share the 4-5¢ per mile gasoline expense.

Field Trip Chairman's Report

By Wanda Dameron (Conway)

In November '83 I was asked to become Field Trip Chairman. My personal life has gotten a bit complicated and I find it necessary to resign. It has been interesting, fun and sometimes challenging to expand and embellish the portfolio.

I particularly want to thank Jean Brandt, Kimball Garrett and Ruth Lohr for their extensive advice. My great appreciation also to other committee members: Sandy Wohlgemuth, Gerry Cuba, Gayle Benton, Bob Van Meter, and the Board of Directors for adopting the committee recommendations for special trips and workshops and for their encouragement, tips and advice.

Ruth Lohr, our Reservations Chairman, has been donating her efforts on Tuesdays since '67, and is a veritable jewel. She took on the greatly increased reservation chores

with patience, good humor and much endurance, especially in light of the numerous complications. Without those efforts, the special trips would not have been possible. Art Levine assisted for some months until ill health intervened. (Can anyone out there help her for a few hours on Tuesdays?)

Some of our goals these last 2½ years have been to: (1) increase the number and diversity of local birdwalks, (2) have special/weekend trips on a monthly basis, (3) have field identification workshops, (4) create a synopsis of guidelines for leaders of birdwalks (Was marvelously accomplished by Carole Horn) (5) Regular reports and lists in the *Western Tanager* consisting of (a) Updates of board decisions and policy changes regarding field trips, (b) So. Calif. listing of regular birdwalks, (c) Calif. listing of pelagic possibilities and participant tips, (d) So. Calif. listing of Christmas Bird Counts, (e) tips for field trip participants, and (f) appreciation to leaders. In addition, (6a) an information sheet for trip leaders and (b) updated So. Calif. bird lists were compiled, useful for the bird alert tape and filing for future reference. (7) Much has been done to (a) coordinate when possible with other

local Audubons and (b) special notes of appreciation to leaders.

My responsibilities end with the May trips and the special trips through the end of September. I leave with a good feeling and I'm very pleased that Liga Auzins, who was instrumental in coordinating the '85 Malibu Christmas Bird Count has agreed to take over. I understand Claudia Black (also Meeting Social Chairman) will be assisting her in setting up seminars. I hope you will give them the support to carry on and encourage them with their new and creative ideas.

Our field trip program hinges on the cooperation and participation of the bird leaders and LAAS is very lucky to have numerous outstanding people from which to draw. I want you to know that all my extensive files, calendaring, suggestions, etc. along with many other names whom I had not yet contacted or inveigled into the program have been passed on to Liga. I hope you'll continue your great cooperation.

Best wishes for a good life and lots of neat birds, and I'll look forward to seeing you either at monthly meetings or birding in the field!

From The Editor

by Fred
Heath



Each month when I sit down to write the editorial for the *Tanager*, I don't have the benefit of knowing what reaction the readers (all two or three of them) had to my last editorial. For instance, as I sit here about 20,000 feet above Lake Michigan writing this editorial, I am aware that earlier in the day some 2000 plus miles southwest of here in Los Angeles the May issue of the *Tanager* has been mailed. I haven't even seen the finished product. Thus I don't know if everyone or anyone has embraced my Save Our Ringed Turtle Dove (SORTDOVE... or is it sordid?) scheme. Earlier this week I was in St. Petersburg. Unfortunately, the crush of business engagements didn't allow me time to shuffle over to the famous shuffle board courts where the East Coast contingent of the endangered Ringed Turtle Dove is headquartered. For all I know someone may

have cut down some of their nest trees to make into more shuffleboard sticks and park benches.

I didn't mention it in the last *Tanager* but the Ringed Turtle Dove has special significance in my daughter Holly's life. After "finding" a Ringed Turtle Dove who was trying to get on the Malibu Christmas Count list by walking (I told you they don't like to fly that much) into the noon time compilation at Tapia Park, I took the bird home to become a family pet. The bird's incessant calling (wu-whoo, wu-whoo, wu-whoo, etc.) made a lasting impression on Holly's mind as she was learning to talk. The word she used for birds for several years was then "wu-whoos." Thus her interest in birds was sparked by a Ringed Turtle Dove.

At seven years old her interest seems to be waning slightly. When I ask her to identify some bird or the other from a speeding car, her answer runs something like this, "I'm sick of identifying all these birds. I'll do this last one, but don't ask me anymore..." It's a Red-tailed Wu-whoo. Now turn up my Tina Turner tape." She is also showing other disturbing anti-bird signs, such as recently becoming the owner of a kitten.

Even without the feedback from my faithful readers (I hope you both are still reading) on the Ringed Turtle Dove, I have come up with a great fund raising idea: A Benefit Dinner! How about squab at a nearby El Pollo Carbon. We could really bite into this burning issue (or is it burnt issue?). At any rate, in the next *Tanager* I hope to publish some of the millions of letters my SORTDOVE editorials have produced.

My plea for material for future *TANAGERS* has not been well heeded except by the irrepressible Henry Childs. Hank is one of the very few of my readers who takes nothing I write seriously. It's a good thing too. No matter what I write about him or his articles he continues to send me material at a regular rate. How about the rest of you? My address as always: Fred Heath, P.O. Box 5036, Chatsworth, CA 91313.

One last piece of business. It was called to my attention that the speaker for the June 10th evening meeting was listed in the last *Tanager* as Bob Bonds, instead of the correct Bob Barnes. I could give as an excuse that my normally perfect secretary didn't get it right over the phone from the Program Chairman. But I won't. Instead, I'll take full blame. I kept looking at the name, Bob Bonds, and asking myself, who the heck is that? Instead of talking to myself I should have been asking someone halfway intelligent.

At any rate I want to apologize to Bob. But more importantly, I wanted to tell you all that if you've never heard or met Bob Barnes you are missing quite a treat. However, if you can make it to our June 10th meeting, I guarantee you an interesting and fun-filled evening. You'll also wonder why you've never been birding in the Kern River Watershed, the area Bob Barnes will be describing to us at that meeting.

If anybody knows a Bob Bonds, tell him to relax. He won't have to give that talk after all. A pro will handle it.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Freditor:

Brian Keelan's detailed and thoughtful account of birdwatching around Bluff Lake in the San Bernardino Mountains was just the sort of informative writing I like to see in *The Western Tanager*. I take exception only with his reference to this spot as "new" from an ornithological standpoint. Bluff Lake is a classic study and collecting locality from early in this century, perhaps treated most thoroughly in Joseph Grinnell's "The Biota of the San Bernardino Mountains" (U.C. Publications in Zoology, Vol. 5, pp. 1-170, 1908). In a discussion of Bluff Lake, Grinnell (surely the "father" of California ornithology) waxes most enthusiastic: "The Bluff Lake region is so nearly level, and therefore easy to traverse, that I cannot recommend a more attractive spot in the mountains for the naturalist. The student of bird ecology or life histories will find here an excellent field for work."



It says much of Bluff Lake's attractiveness that no lesser figures than Joseph Grinnell and Brian Keelan have independently concluded that it is the place to be. Careful and thorough field ornithologists like Brian are contributing a great deal to present day California ornithology. Let's not forget our history, however.

Sincerely,
Kimball L. Garrett

Book Review

By Fred Heath

Birds for Real

Authored and Published
by Rich Stallcup

In 1966, *The Guide to Field Identification of Birds of North America* — a Golden Guide by Robbins, Bruun and Zim, illustrated by Singer was published. This book was the first real competition to Peterson's field guides. The facing page text, range maps and fact that it covered all of North America north of Mexico made it extremely popular.

In 1983 a revised edition was published with better text (especially the addition of western input), many new illustrations and new range maps. However, as with every field guide this one is not perfect.

I've read a number of reviews of the various field guides and I always get the feeling the review author is trying to show how much he knows about bird identification by pointing out the most insignificant minutiae such as "the tertials of the male Scarlet Tanager were shown a bit too black to my expert eye."

The main portion of *Birds for Real*, what author Rich Stallcup titles "The Stuff," is a page by page, species by species account of the misleading, missing or just down right wrong information in the Golden Guide. *Birds for Real* is not a critique, although Stallcup is certainly one of the best birders in the West, if not in North America. In his own words his aim is to "provide the birder with more accurate and complete information." He has not "weighted" it with picky details, but has intercepted real points of concern. Throughout the text he does just that — mentioning only those things that will make identification a little easier and surer. He leaves out many species and even whole pages if he has no comments to make. For many species he highlights new information and will say how good or helpful those additions are.

A book like this, even packed with interesting information could be quite boring to read. (Just like a field guide.) Because of Stallcup's style however, this book is thoroughly enjoyable just to read through. From the art credits where he takes credit (or is it blame) for the "swan which may look more like a boobie," to the acknowledgements where he mentions "without the help of Willow Martin Stallcup (his kid) this project might have been completed six months earlier than it was," to the Introduction through "The Stuff" itself, this book contains enough low key humor to fill hundreds of *Western Tanager* editorials.



Cassins, Purple and House Finches —
the cover of *Birds For Real*

Even his choice of words is fun. He describes a Red-necked Grebe's posture as *scrunched* down, an Eared Grebe as having a *fluffed butt*, a Red-footed Booby as having a *bubble-gum pink* bill base (he attributes the naming of this color to Davis Finch), a Lesser Yellowlegs as having an *underwhelming* voice and a Violet-green Swallow as having a *Robin Hood green* crown.

Stallcup has an excellent ear and one very valuable feature of the book is that he gives many very descriptive phrases and words which not only describe the songs and calls, but are helpful in remembering many of these sounds. This is especially helpful when you remember that the Golden Guide depends heavily on sonograms of which Stallcup says "are indecipherable for most people." Examples abound. The Barred Owl says "who-cooks, who-cooks, who-cooks-for-you." The Inca Dove, which seems to call endlessly, says "no-hope, no-hope." No hope that it will ever shut up. My favorite was the American Goldfinch that supposedly sounds like "po-ta-to-chip" which Stallcup notes is especially easy to remember since the bird flies with a dip (this he credits to Kenn Kaufman).

Although the bird voices are among the most helpful features of this book, I found that my one criticism concerns some of the voice descriptions. He chides the Golden Guide for its description of the Western Bluebird song that reads, "A simple and clear call," which he understates is "not too helpful." But then he has a number of pairs of birds which I find amusing and probably useless for the fairly new birder. For instance he notes that the call of the Dusky-capped Flycatcher "is like Say's Phoebe but even

clearer." The Say's Phoebe's call, he notes, "is much like that of the dusky-capped flycatcher, but slightly windier." For Black Phoebe he says, "the usual call note is very similar to that of a Swamp Sparrow." While he notes that the Swamp Sparrow "call note is very much like the simple call of the Black Phoebe." Call notes of Dipper and Canyon Wren are likewise used to describe each other. Obviously, once one becomes familiar with one of the pairs, the voice information will be helpful for finding and identifying the other. Besides, I had to have something negative to write or people might think Stallcup bribed me to write a good review.

I'm not an expert in field identification, but I'm sure the experts could find a few corrections to the corrections in this book. Stallcup himself admits to having a "Western bias." Like anything done by human beings, this book is not perfect, but it sure is entertaining while being highly informative. I personally prefer the National Geographic Field Guide for my everyday use. However, *Birds for Real* makes the Golden Guide a much more valuable book than it was. Whichever guide you prefer, I highly recommend buying *Birds for Real* and then following Stallcup's advice to go through the book page by page and marking up your Golden Guide as you go. It will provide hours of fun and will be a tremendous learning experience.

Birds for Real is available through the Los Angeles Audubon Book Store at \$6.00. The Golden Guide costs \$7.95 compare this with the National Geographic Guide at \$16.95.



Illustration by Keith Hansen

Conservation Conversation

by Sandy Wohlgenuth



DEBATE

What follows is an entirely imaginary dialogue. No one has stormed the gates of Audubon House, charging the Board with malfeasance, self-aggrandizement or even incompetence. Though some of the questions raised may have occurred to a tiny handful of members at times, it is hoped that this educational article will answer them.

CHALLENGER: The board of Directors of the Los Angeles Audubon Society is nominated every year by a committee appointed by the President and rubber-stamped by the members attending the May evening meeting. For a whole year after, this tight little group and the committee chairmen it appoints, meet once a month and do their thing with very little contact with the wishes of the membership. What has the Board done for *you* in the last few years? If you ask me, not a heck of a lot. One thing they're good at is throwing your money around like a bunch of drunken sailors. For instance, in the last three years they've released nine Peregrine Falcons at \$2500 a throw. Two thousand five hundred dollars a bird!!! So what happened? Two of them got snuffed out practically before they got off the ground. Where are the rest of them? Who knows? Okay, okay, one female made it to Big Sur. But even that bird lays eggs with thin shells that would break if she sat on them. So rock climbers have to grab the eggs and stash a couple of handhatched babies in the nest when she isn't looking. What kind of a way is that to raise a family? Seems like money down the drain to me.

BOARD: Our worthy opponent hasn't got all his facts straight. The first two releases were funded entirely by the California Community Foundation. Last year we put up \$5000 and ARCO made up the difference. We must admit he's right about the peregrine's plight. DDT and other pesticides that are *banned* for use in this country are still thinning eggshells because the United States is still making the poisons. They're shipped to Latin America where migrating shorebirds pick them up in their invertebrate food. The birds fly north and are caught and eaten by "our" peregrines; ergo — thin shells. However, some captive-raised peregrines have successfully bred in the wild, so all is not lost. The national effort to reintroduce them is a noble cause and must not be abandoned.

About Mr. Challenger's fundamental complaint: If the Board is an inbred group, then it's up to the membership to get off their duffs, turn off the TV, and get involved. We need new ideas, new blood. If Mr. Challenger

— or anyone else — wants to make suggestions to improve our performance or correct whatever he thinks is wrong, let us know. Come to a Board meeting and tell us about it. (Meetings are at 7:30, the first Thursday of each month.) Every volunteer organization suffers from the "Let George Do It" syndrome. Leadership falls to a small group that is willing to give time and energy for a cause it believes in. If you believe in it, come help out.

CHALLENGER: Okay, what about the money you spread around so generously to the Nature Conservancy and the World Wildlife Fund this past year? These are big outfits with a lot of corporations and millionaire do-gooders getting their tax write-offs. Why is LA Audubon getting so deeply into the act with members' money?

BOARD: Because we care, and so should you. It takes more than a handful of wealthy people and corporations to support worthy causes. Each of us — and that included LA Audubon — has to decide what's important and how much to give. If you feel strongly enough, you put your money where your heart is. Five bucks or a thousand, "or whatever you can afford," as the pitch goes. It all adds up. (If you can't spare the five dollars, you volunteer to mail the *Tanager*, or serve punch at an evening meeting, or write a letter to your supervisor opposing changing Angeles National Forest to the Ronald Reagan National Forest. (As someone said, with one tree.)

We give money to Nature Conservancy and the World Wildlife fund because they don't fool around, they *BUY* the threatened wetland or rare plant habitat or even a whole island if necessary. You can't conserve any better than that. Though we helped with the Coachella Valley and the Carrizo, most of our donations last year were earmarked to preserve tropical rain forests from development. Destruction of these magnificent habitats is a world-wide tragedy; hundreds of species of plants and animals are disappearing from the earth — forever. If Mr. Challenger is a birder, self-interest alone should make him concerned about the threat to the migrants he enjoys every spring and fall and who winter in tropical America. Their numbers are already declining.

CHALLENGER: The next item isn't so bad. At least it didn't cost the membership any money. But why did you have to impose on our generosity and ask for donations of binoculars for some group no one ever heard of?

BOARD: You're talking about the Topanga-Las Virgenes Resource Conservation District. You're right, hardly anyone knows who they are. It's an elected agency that is supposed to further conservation goals in its local area. It has very little funding and, like hundreds of other districts throughout the country, can do only a minimal job with its limited resources. But this district has a bunch of idealists with fresh ideas. Flying by the seat of their pants, they have set up an estuarine study program for elementary school children at Malibu Lagoon. They take fifty different kids there twice a week, where the kids look through microscopes at worms and snails and other mudflat creatures, see razor clams and anemones, and learn how to watch birds. It's a terrific program staffed by smart, enthusiastic volunteers. Binoculars came from us and from Bushnell through our Jean Brandt, and they are working now on spotting scopes at cost. They finally got a grant from the state personalized license plate fund. The director says a letter from LA Audubon endorsing the program helped get the money.

While we're on kids, Mr. C, your money has been paying for National Audubon's "Audubon Adventures" program for elementary schools. This is a course designed to get children involved with nature, taught by their own teachers using vivid study materials provided by Audubon. It costs us \$20 a year for each class, and so far our educational activist, Vicki Lee, has installed it in 45 classrooms in the city, with more to come. We think that's a bargain. Even you will admit that if we don't raise a new generation sensitive to the value of wildlife and habitat, the future will be cloudy indeed.

CHALLENGER: I haven't even mentioned the biggest boondoggle of them all — Mono Lake. Some fast-talking dudes came down from Lee Vining and Sacramento and conned you people into chucking big money into an endless lawsuit. Haven't you learned that you can't fight City Hall? So suppose, after throwing fifty grand into this bottomless well, you luck out and WIN? Now, with Arizona taking a big piece of the Colorado River and the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power has to give up its water rights, what'll you use for drinking water?

BOARD: Wow, you sound like a Water and Power PR man! First of all, we're not asking the city to give up Mono Lake and Owens Valley water. We're asking for enough water to keep Mono Lake from dying. We're asking the city to try some real conservation with lots of publicity, shower restrictors, limiting watering of lawns to before 10 a.m. and after 4 p.m., forbidding hosing down of sidewalks, charging higher rates for big users rather than the other way around. That's what Tucson did. And any new homes there must plant desert-type vegetation and not water-loving lawns. It works. During our last

drought we had mandatory controls and we saved a lot of water — painlessly. So set ideas can be changed if the populace is properly informed of the choices. Why not in LA?

One important point. The Board agreed to become part of the lawsuit — and pay our way — because, as the bumper-sticker says, "Mono Lake — It's Worth Saving." It's not in our back yard but it is a unique natural phenomenon and supports a million birds. We felt it was appropriate for *Los Angeles Audubon* to be a litigant, demonstrating that there are local people who are willing to change their lifestyles a bit to conserve water. Perhaps most important of all, the struggle for Mono Lake may well become a landmark case that will establish a precedent that guarantees the right of *all* our scenic treasures to exist along with the needs of an urban society. The Board is proud of its participation in the suit.

CHALLENGER: You talk a good fight, but I still think you're spending too much money. And the membership doesn't have anything to say about how you spend it and whether it keeps going to pet projects of a couple of dominant board members.

BOARD: Now just a minute, my friend. Remember we're all amateurs and we're all volunteers; no pay, no perks. We do the best we can. Rubberstamped or not, we're your elected representatives. We think we know what the membership wants, even though they seem content to leave all the hard decisions to us. As we said before, speak to us, if you're not happy with what we do.

Mr. Challenger, let's get down to basics. Sure we spend money. We aren't in business to *make* money, we're here to *spend* it! We're a non-profit organization and our non-profit status with the IRS *obligates* us to put our major efforts into education and conservation. We consider ourselves very lucky to be able to afford all our educational work. We're particularly proud of Kimball Garrett and Jon Dunn's classic "Birds of Southern California, Status and Distribution." And we're publishing their work-in-progress on bird identifications, an expanded and updated version of their memorable *Tanager* articles. (If we break even on the Dunn and Garrett books, we're 'way ahead.) We have established a scholarship fund for independent, original research and have already made grants from it. "Audubon Adventures" is going full bore, and remember that the "Western Tanager" is an educational vehicle in its own right. Our latest daring adventure in education is our promise to provide \$5000 a year for three years to the exciting new Bird Hall that will be built at the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History.

In addition to all the conservation activities you worry about, Mr. Challenger, there are lots more. And some of them don't cost an

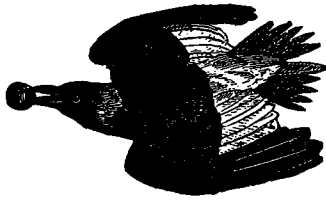
arm and a leg. We've been closely involved with the creation of new habitats at Malibu Lagoon and the Sepulveda Basin. We've supported an anti-litter Bottle Bill for several years. We've written countless letters to congressmen, senators, federal state and local agencies concerning issues on the Audubon agenda. We have contributed to the Environmental Defense Fund and the National Resources Defense Council — two of the most effective environmental organizations in the country. Their lawyers and

scientists lead the way in fighting acid rain, toxic dumps, air and water pollution and much more. They are more than confrontational, they suggest positive, innovative solutions to environmental problems.

Last, but not least, our most substantial achievement: the lawsuit ten years ago that brought about the creation of the New Lakes at Whittier Narrows. The first Great Blue Heron chick hatcher there this spring, a real and symbolic vindication of all our conservation efforts.



Birds Of The Season



by Hal Baxter
and Kimball Garrett

One could be forgiven during April for not being completely occupied by birds, for the displays of wildflowers on our high deserts and coastal burns were among the best in recent memory. In particular, the western Antelope Valley from the Lancaster Road poppy preserves west to Gorman was an explosion of poppy orange, lupine blue, owl's-clover purple and composite yellow. These botanical displays were undoubtedly a consequence, at least in part, of our first good series of late winter and early spring rains in several years. The effects that these rains and their resulting profusion of annuals might have on our birdlife are, at best, confusing. It is frequently suggested that migration is less spectacular during these "lush" springs because the concentrating effects of well-watered oases are less pronounced (migrants can find good stopovers just about anywhere). While this notion makes a good deal of intuitive sense, it is far more difficult to test (in part because the magnitude of migration at a given site is affected by so many other variables). If nothing else, we can wield the "wet year = dull migration" hypothesis as a quasi-scientific justification of the unproductive days spent afield in the spring.

It is likely that we will experience lingering effects of the wet winter even into next fall and winter. One might predict that breeding success will be high this year for species which require a good growth of annuals for cover and foraging. Good breeding success generally translates to higher populations during the seasons following breeding, and to more widespread dispersal. One might also guess that weed seed accumulations on our deserts and other open lowland regions will promote large wintering populations of granivorous birds... let's see how many Horned Larks Editor Fred and his Lancaster Christmas Count participants come up with this December!

The "Big News" during April concerned the presence of *Pterodroma* petrels off the central and northern California coast. Larry Spear and Terry Wahl, aboard a research vessel, recorded a **Mottled Petrel** off Trinidad Head, Humboldt Co., on 10 April, for one of the few sightings of this species in California waters (a few additional birds have been picked up on beaches). They also had a **Murphy's Petrel** southwest of Trinidad Head the same day, and 4-5 more Murphy's some forty miles northwest of Pt. Conception, Santa Barbara Co., on 11 April.

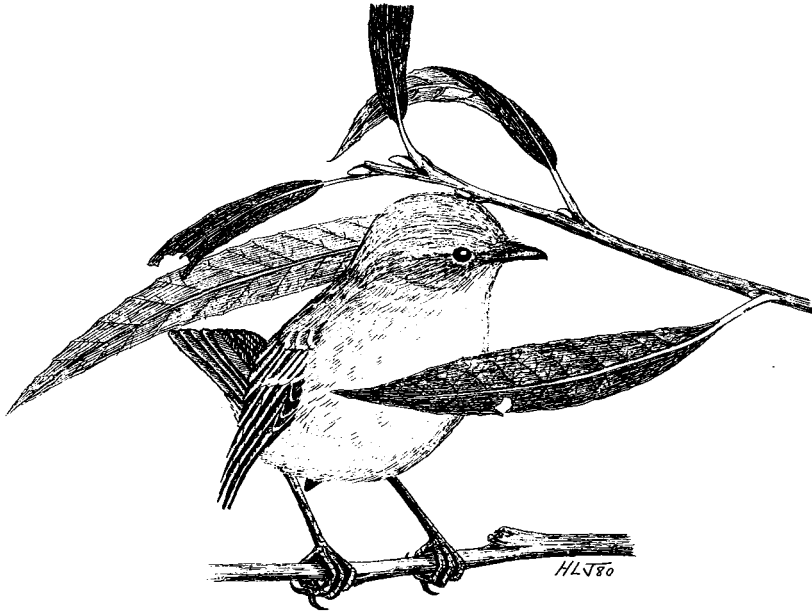
Additionally, they recorded at least two **Cook's Petrels** off Cape Mendocino, Humboldt Co., on 10 April. Then, on 21 April, David Ainley of the Point Reyes Bird Observatory found three Murphy's Petrels and some twenty **Solander's Petrels** 15 miles southwest of Cordell Banks, off Sonoma Co. Are we being invaded by gadfly petrels? Most likely not. These highly pelagic seabirds are generally restricted to very deep water, an oceanic realm difficult to reach during standard one-day pelagic bird-watching trips (but keep your eye on the schedule of pelagic trips offered by Kurt Campbell out of Bodega Bay, and the long-distance trips run by Debi Shearwater). Therefore most sightings have come on extended research cruises where considerable time is spent over deep water. It now appears that there are several *Pterodroma* species which regularly move into the northeastern Pacific Ocean: Cook's (in the narrow sense, excluding the "DeFilippi's" or "Mas Atierra" Petrel), Stejneger's, Mottled, Murphy's, and Solanders' Petrels. All of these come from breeding grounds in the southern temperate (or southern subtropical in the case of Murphy's) oceans. Several other species are "waiting in the wings," having been recorded rather far northeast in the Pacific but generally restricted to warmer waters and not yet found off California (for example, Tahiti, Kermadec, Herald, White-winged and Black-winged Petrels). The possibilities for the enthusiastic seabird watcher who can spend time well offshore are exciting and varied. Identification of these species at sea is made difficult by the close similarity of many species and, especially, by their habit of hurtling past with a wild, arcing flight while remaining utterly uninterested in ships.

One of the most exciting events on a local scale was the nesting of two pairs of **Great Blue Herons** at Legg Lake in the Whittier Narrows area. These two nests had young on 10 April (Ralph Shankland). This species has been restricted to very few nesting localities in southern California in recent years (the best known being at Morro Bay, the Salton Sea, and the Salinas River along Highway 101). Again an **Olivaceous Cormorant** was found in the Whitewater River Delta at the north end of the Salton Sea (Brian Daniels and Doug Willick, 23 March); there are now several records for this area, possibly involving the same individual. A male **White-winged Scoter** was on Quail Lake, southeast of Gorman, on 19

April (Kimball Garrett). Russ and Marion Wilson had a female **Oldsquaw** at the Huntington Beach pier on 7 April. As **Swainson's Hawks** continue to decline records of migrants become more interesting. An immature flew over an Easter picnic at El Capitan State Beach near Santa Barbara on 30 March (Jon Dunn, Paul Lehman and Kimball Garrett). A **Peregrine Falcon** was at the north end of the Salton Sea on 9 April (Arnold Small and Bruce Broadbooks). The **Sage Grouse** lek at Crowley Lake drew rave reviews this year, though snow cover was extensive at times. Candy Dean counted 135 birds on 5 April.

Migrant **Solitary Sandpipers** were along the Santa Ana River in Anaheim on 6 April (Doug Willick) and at Upper Newport Bay on 19 April (Jonathan Alderfer). Unusual were several sightings of **Elegant Terns** along the Malibu coastline in April (this species usually occurs in this area after late June, when birds disperse northward from breeding colonies); Jonathan Alderfer counted twenty at Upper Newport Bay on 19 April, with courtship activity and mating observed (is the breeding range continuing to expand?). Exceptional was a **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** observed a couple of times over a two week period in early April at Corn Spring (Arnold Small, the Clarkes); our few remaining breeding cuckoos do not arrive until late May (though earlier this century birds on the coastal slope arrived in April). **Long-eared Owls** were reported nesting at Morongo Valley (Bruce Broadbooks, 21 March). The first **Vaux's Swifts** were reported right on schedule at Whittier Narrows (Jean Brandt, Phil Sayre and Bert Mull, 12 April). These observers also had their first **Olive-sided Flycatcher** at Whittier Narrows on the same date. Of interest was an Olive-sided Flycatcher, perhaps the island's first record, on Santa Catalina Island on 14 April (Charlie Collins and Terry Martin). Three migrant **Dusky Flycatchers** were at Linda Mia Ranch in the Antelope Valley on 19 April (Kimball Garrett). Both male and female **Vermilion Flycatchers** were at Morongo Valley on 21 March (Wanda Conway). The first **Ash-throated Flycatchers** were found at the Arboretum in Arcadia on 6 April (Barbara Cohen). **Western Kingbirds** were noted on 27 March at Descanso Gardens (Gayle Benton) and Placerita Canyon (Bob Pann).

American Dippers were nesting at the bridge in Mt. Baldy Village on 14 April (Phil Sayre and Bert Mull). A rather early **Swainson's Thrush** was at Turtle Rock Nature Center on 9 April (Doug Willick). A **California Thrasher** at Thousand Palms on 23 March (Brian Daniels and Doug Willick) was at the edge of the species' range (it occurs at Morongo Valley and in small numbers in the more wooded portions of Joshua Tree National Monument). The wintering **Bell's Vireo** was still at Huntington Beach Central Park on 22 March (Brian Daniels). A singing bird was back at Whittier Narrows after 5 April (John Parmeter), and a



Bell's Vireo — Illustration by Lee Jones from *Birds of Southern California*

migrant was at Corn Springs on 9 April (Arnold Small and Bruce Broadbooks). At least one pair of **Gray Vireos** had returned to Bob's Gap, near Valyermo, by 19 April (Kimball Garrett). **Nashville** and **Black-throated Gray Warblers** were both considered unusually numerous at Descanso Gardens during April (Gayle Benton, Hal Baxter). **Yellow Warblers** arrived along Cold Creek off Malibu Canyon by the first of April (Kimball Garrett); the species breeds at this locality. The **Chestnut-sided Warbler** present in March at the Arboretum in Arcadia (which perhaps had wintered) was present through mid-April (Barbara Cohen). Unexpected and stunning was singing male **Black-throated Green Warbler** at Descanso Gardens from 7 April through mid-month (Gayle Benton); we traditionally expect vagrants such as these toward the end of the migration period (late May and early June). One is tempted to speculate that the bird wintered locally (but not at the well-worked Descanso Gardens), and merely shifted sites in early spring, perhaps to exploit the insect-laden spring live oaks at Descanso. However, Black-throated Green Warblers winter alongside Townsend's and Hermit Warblers in the mountains of southern Mexico, and it is possible that this male was "caught up" in the northward movement of these other species (with which it associated at Descanso). The Doheny Beach wintering **Palm Warbler** was refound on 9 April (Rob Hamilton). Another exceptional early vagrant was an **Ovenbird** at Morongo Valley on 21 March (Wanda Conway). Six **Lazuli Buntings** were in Placerita Canyon on 23 March (Bob Pann), and the species was numerous in the Decker Canyon burn in the Santa Monica Mountains in mid-April (Kimball Garrett). An immature **Harris's Sparrow** wintered in a Simi Valley yard

(Diane Page, late November through late March). At least one of the two Harris's which wintered at Linda Mia Ranch was still present on 19 April (Kimball Garrett). A male **Scott's Oriole** had arrived in Joshua Tree National Monument on 16 March (Roger Lindfield), and many pairs were present in Joshua Trees around Pearblossom and Valyermo by early April.

Birders in June will begin their annual altitudinal migration, as breeding activity in montane birds peaks through the middle of summer. As we frequently point out in this June column, mysteries still abound regarding the patchwork montane distribution of our birds. Even within the well-worked San Gabriel and San Bernardino Mountains we have much to learn. The smaller and less accessible mountain ranges offer even more challenges. Also, the early days of June have the potential of producing outstanding vagrants — try coastal points and canyons on overcast mornings.

Send any interesting bird observations to:

Hal Baxter
1821 Highland Oaks Drive
Arcadia, CA 91006
Phone (818) 355-6300

Renew Your Membership Through LAAS

When you receive your annual renewal notice from National Audubon, we strongly urge that you complete the form and send it along with your dues check to Audubon House rather than directly to National Audubon. National has been having difficulties with the data processing firm handling membership; this has led to many errors in chapter records across the country, including ours. It has also resulted in some of our members missing issues of the *WESTERN Tanager*. By sending your renewal directly to us, many of the problems should be avoided.



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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.

CALENDAR

June '86

EVENING MEETINGS

Meet at 8:00 P.M. in Plummer Park



Summer Tanager — Photograph by Herb Clarke

TUESDAY, JUNE 10 — Bob Barnes — The Kern River Watershed. Summer Tanagers, Indigo Buntings, Willow Flycatchers and Yellow-billed Cuckoos are just some of the 80 species known to breed in California's largest contiguous cottonwood willow forest. These rare breeding birds are an indication of how special this area is to all of California. Bob Barnes, known for his popular field trips (see Reservation Trips for his upcoming weekend trip in June), is a teacher in Porterville and past president of the Tulare Audubon Society. Don't miss this intimate look at the exciting natural history and preservation of the Kern River Watershed.

Indigo Bunting — Photograph by Herb Clarke



CALL THE TAPE!

Before setting out for any field trip, call the Audubon Bird Tape, (213) 874-1318 for special instructions or possible emergency cancellations

that may have occurred by the Thursday before the trip.

FIELD TRIPS

SUNDAY, JUNE 1 — In cooperation with the Santa Monica Mountain Task Force, meet leader **Gerry Haigh** for his monthly morning walk through **Topanga State Park** at 8 a.m. These oak woodlands and meadows, overlook the canyons and sea. In addition to chaparral residents, warblers and other migrants are expected. From Topanga Cyn. Blvd., take a very sharp east turn uphill on Entrada Drive (7 miles so. Ventura Blvd., 1 mile no. Topanga Village.) Keep bearing left on Entrada Dr. at various roadforks to parking lot at end. \$3 fee.

SATURDAY, JUNE 14 — Join **Rusty Scalf** for a full day of general mountain birding in the **Chilao area** of the San Gabriels. The highlight will be to observe the results of his **Western Bluebird nest box project**. We'll also be looking for Ash-throated Flycatchers, Mountain Chickadees, nuthatches, Mountain Quail, Violet-green Swallows, Red-breasted Sapsuckers and other mountain birds. Bring lunch and meet at the Chilao Visitors Center at 9 a.m. or preferably carpool location, off the 210 Fwy. on the east side of Angeles Crest Highway, just north of the exit by 8:10 a.m.

SUNDAY, JUNE 22 — Join **Kimball Garrett** for a full day in the **Big Bear area, San Bernardino Mountains**. Meet at 7:00 a.m. along the Stanfield Cutoff at the east end of Big Bear Lake. The Stanfield Cutoff runs between Highway 18 and Highway 38, just east of the major shopping center in the town of Big Bear Lake. Those wishing to arrive later will find the group at the southeast corner of Baldwin Lake from 7:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. We will search for scarce breeding species in sagebrush, pinyon-juniper and mixed coniferous forest habitat. Bring lunch, wear sturdy shoes, and prepare for cool weather in the early morning and hot sun at mid-day.

SUNDAY, JUNE 22 — Meet **David White** at **Whittier Narrows Regional Park** for his monthly morning walk through a good diversity of habitats. Look for waterbirds, chaparral birds, and probable migrants — warblers, vireos, flycatchers and orioles. Meet at the Nature Center, 1000 Durfee Ave., So. El Monte, off Fwy. 60 between Santa Anita and Peck Dr. exits, west of Fwy. 605 at 8 a.m.

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Los Angeles, CA 90046

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FUTURE FIELD TRIPS AND RESERVATION TRIPS

See Page 5 for detailed information

WEEKEND, JUNE 28-30 — Kern River/Greenhorn Mt. Area — Bob Barnes

WEEKEND, JULY 19-20 — So. San Joaquin Valley/So. Sierra Forest — Rob Hansen

JULY 28-AUGUST 4 — American Birding Association Convention in Tucson, Arizona.

This is a program packed with field trips for local bird specialties, identification workshops, evening programs with the exciting daily specie count-down, meetings, and optional pre- and post-convention trips. Contact ABA, P.O. Box 4335, Austin, Texas 78765 for detailed information

SATURDAY, AUGUST 2 — Pelagic from San Pedro to Santa Barbara — Herb Clarke

FRIDAY EVENING/SATURDAY, AUGUST 29/30 — Shorebird Workshop — Jon Dunn

WEEKEND, SEPTEMBER 13-14 — Yosemite National Park — David Gaines

SEPTEMBER 26, 28 — Pelagic Workshop — Arnold Small

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11 — Pelagic — (Leaders TBA)

