

WESTERN TANAGER

Los Angeles Audubon Society

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Annual Members Photo Contest Winners

Chinstrap Penguin

Sharon Milder



Every year for the previous four years our January evening meeting has been set aside as a photo contest among our members. This year was no exception. Herb Clarke has been a judge for this contest since the first year. This has probably been done so he can't compete. Joining him this year as judges were Bob Pann and Bob VanMeter. The three winners for this year's contest are printed here for your enjoyment. You'll note that Sharon Milder took first and third prize this year. She's been a winner for the last few years. Someone suggested that we should have a woman judge next year. Do you suppose this is a plot to remove Sharon from the competition?



White-fronted Nunbird

SECOND PLACE

Harold Bond

Magellanic Oystercatcher

THIRD PLACE

Sharon Milder



European Starling



Fred Heath

Aside from a good picture of the bird itself, the judges look at the overall composition and difficulty of taking the particular species. Based on this, can you see any reason why these photos of a Starling and a Pigeon didn't even get honorable mention? Don't the judges realize how hard it is to get a close-up photo of either of these birds without a distracting crust of bread or piece of popcorn hanging from their beaks?

Rock Dove



Fred Heath

Through Southern Chile With Hipwaders and Binoculars

Article and photographs
by Andrew Starrett

Part 2

After the early part of the first day, the weather on the trip so far had been superb, with comfortable clear days and cool, crisp nights. The next nine days, however, during which time we sampled streams and rivers along the Austral Highway to the south, were overcast and cool/cold with drizzle or light rain and occasional hard downpours on almost every day (or at night). At the southern end of the "tour" mornings were sunny but it would be raining by about 11:00 a.m. Tomás' 14-year-old son, Smiljam, joined us in Puerto Montt and on January 20, the four of us headed south under overcast skies. Our route took us from Puerto Montt, the major southern Chilean seaport, to the nearby ferry terminal at Pargua from whence we crossed the Chacao Channel to Chiloé Island (20 minutes on the "Cai-Cai") where we spent the night in Castro. Early the next morning we caught a larger ferry ("Pincoya") from Chonchi for the 5½ hour trip across the Golfo de Corcovado to Chaitén on the mainland at the northern end the Austral Highway (Carretera Austral). This road, begun in 1976 and still under construction, provides access to towns and settlements many of which date back to the late 1800's and early 1900's and which have been accessible only by sea or by road from Argentina. It is a well-engineered, well-constructed and well-maintained two-lane gravel road which currently extends continuously for about 400 miles and may eventually reach from Puerto Montt to the ice fields south of Cochrane, a road distance of some 800 miles. For much of the first two-thirds of its current extent the Austral Highway follows valleys that pass between forested mountains and spectacular glaciers that sag out of the ends of hanging valleys and cirques. Three times we crossed small rivers on little ferry barges which were suspended from cables and ingeniously used the force of the current to move them back and forth between the banks of the rivers. Much of the vegetation along this stretch of the highway would satisfy anyone's definition of rainforest; tall trees carrying epiphytes and climbers with colorful flowers, several kinds of lianas (including a species of *Hydrangea*) sending large woody stems



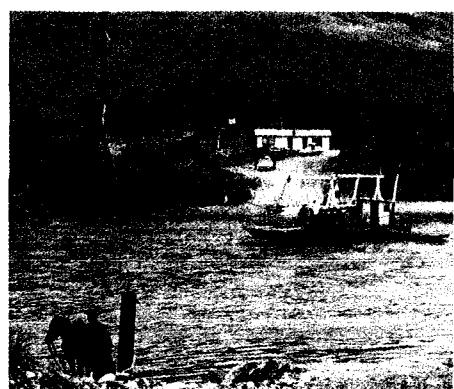
Andean foothills by Rio Gol Gol, 10 mi from border (40°30'S)

up into the higher branches of supporting trees, fuchsias and introduced foxglove providing color at ground level, and rain! This type of vegetation culminated, one could say, in Queulat National park where human encroachment was minimal and, for the first time on the trip, I knew I was seeing well-developed temperate rainforest. Almost immediately after leaving the national park we entered a landscape of extensively cleared terrain, much of it burned off without prior cutting, and this agricultural countryside continued for as far as we went on the Austral Highway. Around Coihaique the cleared look is in some areas due to naturally open country which represents westward extensions of Patagonian grasslands. This far south it is possible to traverse what remains of the Andes almost at sea level. We reached Coihaique ahead of schedule; sampling was often impossible in the rain-swollen watercourses and the rivers that could be worked contained no blephs, so we had moved right along. Consequently we spent three days exploring the area around Coihaique, reaching 46°S at Villa Cerro Castillo, at which point we were 11° beyond the southern tip of the African continent, almost a degree and a half south of Tasmania and about a degree north of the southern end of the South Island of New Zealand. While being more than half way from the equator to the pole in the Northern Hemisphere leaves a lot of populated real estate beyond that line, in the Southern Hemisphere, which is mostly covered by ocean, the remaining land to the south is populated by pioneers and other hardy souls and there is the feeling that the edge of the earth is not far away.

Rather than retrace our route back up the Austral Highway, we took a 20 hour overnight ferry ride back to Chiloé Island after

spending the night of January 26 in Puerto Aisén, about 35 miles from Coihaique. South of Chiloé Island, the western ridges and peaks of the Andes are partially submerged in the sea leaving the higher parts protruding as a complex of fiordlands and islands. Our ferry ("El Colono") departed from Puerto Chacabuco (near Puerto Aisén), at the head of a long fiord system, at 5:30 PM, and by the time it got dark (about 10:30 in a light rain) we had negotiated the fiords and were running northward in the Morleda Channel, all the while passing forested islands and hanging valleys and waterfalls with glaciers in a scene reminiscent of the inland passage along the coast of British Columbia. The next morning we left the channel and passed into the Gulf of Corcovado (= the Gulf); 20 hours after leaving Chacabuco we arrived at Quellón, near the southern end of Chiloé Island, and by late afternoon we were back in Puerto Montt in time for some shopping, a hot shower and relaxed, luxurious dinner at restaurant "Los Yates."

Balseo ("passive ferry" raft) approaching, current flowing l. to r.; Ri 'o Palena on Austral Hwy (43°55'S).





Spectacular mountain scenery along Austral Hwy, about 44°S.

Considering the opportunistic character of my observations, the list of birds encountered on the two legs of the trip so far differed only insignificantly, in my opinion. The rain had a depressing effect on the activity of both the birds and the birder (probably more so in the latter case), so, unfortunately, our exposure to good native forest provided little new in the way of birds. Some of the species not previously recorded included: Great Grebe and Southern Widgeon — on the same small lake. Andean Condor — a lone female riding a ridge wave near Coihaique was an exciting first for me, after five condorless trips to Peru! Crested Caracara — open country. Black-throated Huet-huet — a large, handsomely colored tapaculo, more secretive and shy and less common than the Chuaco, immediately identified by its distinctive call which gave rise to its name (whisper the word "whet" loudly and emphatically three or four times in rapid succession). White-tailed Shrike-tyrant — a drab, pale "kingbird" in tall second growth. Dark-faced Ground-tyrant — a drab, pale "kingbird" in tall second growth. Dark-faced Ground-tyrant — singly or in pairs along rocky streams, on ground and rocks, picking insects from surface and sallying into the air. Patagonian Tyrant — kinglet like, in second growth. I should add that Rock Doves and House Sparrows were encountered throughout the trip in every human settlement of consequence, but were seldom seen far afield. In addition to the terrestrial species mentioned so far, shorebirds were seen on tidal flats on Chiloé Island and at Chaitén, a few under conditions which permitted identification: a Hudsonian Godwit, several Whimbrels, a Willet and a few Sanderlings. But the most exciting and enjoyable birding of the trip was provided by the 26½ hours of ferry travel, since I enjoy watching the sea from the deck of a moving ship about as much as any other job-related recreation I can imagine. One never is quite sure what might show up and in areas like southern Chile, where distributions are poorly known, the possibilities are fun to contemplate. For this adventure, I packed my copy of Harrison's *Seabirds* (Peter Harrison, 1983, *Seabirds: An Identification Guide*, Houghton Mifflin) on the chance that such an opportunity might arise, and three of the four

ferry trips proved to be rewarding. To set the one, not 10 minutes out of Pargua on the "Cai-Cai" I saw my first diving petrel, No. 1 on my wish-list for the trip, a (new!) family of special interest because of their similarity to some of the smaller alcids, which they apparently replace ecologically in the alcidless southern oceans. These, and other goodies seen from ferries and docks included:

Magellanic Penguin — in small groups porpoising in the chop and whitecaps of the Gulf; species assignment based on geographic distribution although the outstanding feature of three juvenile/immature birds that I got to see briefly as they were swimming alongside the ferry was the large bill with obvious fleshy base which characterizes the congeneric Humboldt Penguin; in any case, a thrill to see penguins disporting in the open ocean, more so than watching the penguin parade of Little Penguins (from bleachers!) on Phillip Island, Australia. Albatrosses — three species positively identified: Black-browed, in a variety of plumages and bill colors, during most of the time in the Gulf, following for a time and then dropping away; Royal/Wandering, seen less frequently, crossing the wake at some distance; two turned and approached closely enough for



The ONLY "bad spot" on the Austral Hwy, in rainforest at pass, Queuleat N. P.

positive ID as one each Royal and Wandering! Giant petrels — the commonest and steadiest ship-followers in the Gulf, hanging off the stern, settling, picking up again to follow the ship like gulls, were Southern Giant Petrels, in immature and dark adult plumages; one immature Northern Giant Petrel kept drawing attention due to a subtly different look (jizz) compared with the others; bill color was distinctive and turned out to be the clincher (but see pp. 233-234 in Harrison, op. cit.). Gray Petrel — in the lower Gulf, at some distance. Pink-footed Shearwater — several in the Gulf. Sooty Shearwater — a familiar sight, flying in a northwest-bound long line in Chacao Channel and in smaller, less organized flocks in the Gulf near Chiloé Island. Wilson's Storm Petrel — one in the Gulf from "Pincoya." Diving petrels — assigned to Magellanic species on the basis of geography and previous sight records for the same area (Oyarzo, H. & T. Cekalovic, 1985, Bol. Soc. Biol. Concepción, 56:141-144; see also

Harrison, op. cit.) seen singly in the Chacao Channel and the Gulf (from "Pincoya"), brought to mind Xantus' or Cravieri's Murres rising from the water and flying away. Cormorants — at least three species near coastal islands in Gulf: Imperial Shag (including King and Blue-eyed Cormorants), Olivaceous and Red-legged Cormorants. Gulls — Kelp and Brown-hooded Gulls were widely distributed around docks, beaches and harbors; only one flock of Andean Gulls seen, on the mudflats at Chaitén, 50+ in good breeding color with rosy-tinted underparts. I have notes on at least a half-dozen other birds seen at a distance under poor conditions (overcast, light rain, choppy seas and unfamiliar fauna) such that comfortable IDs were not possible. I would love to do a round trip on "El Colono"!

The last portion of the trip was divided between accompanying Charlie to his rendezvous with the Argentine entomologists who would work with him on their side of the Andes and then visiting the family of a Chilean friend who lives in the Los Angeles area. So, after our evening at "Los Yates," Charlie and I set off together on the day-long bus and boat trip through the Andes to San Carlos de Bariloche, an Argentine resort town on the dry side of the mountains. This very striking scenic trip began early in the morning on January 29 by tour coach from Puerto Montt, along the south shore of Lago Llanquihue with the spectacular snow cone of Volcan Osorno in the background, then up the Río Petrohue to its source at Lago Todos los Santos where we transferred to a boat. An hour and three-quarters later, after having traversed the long axis of the lake and entered V. Perez Rosales National Park, we again boarded a bus for the ride to the next lake, Lago Frias on the Argentine side of the continental divide. This ride took us from 500 ft. elevation at Peulla (over two hanging bridges that rolled like water beds as the bus crossed them), up through some very interesting rainforest which received about three inches less than 16 feet of rain a year, and over the divide at about 3,000 ft. through Perez Rosales Pass. At the pass in a beautiful beech forest, we entered Argentina and Nahuelhuapi Argentine Park with only a sign on a wooden archway to indicate that

Glacier flowing from small ice field, near 44°S on Austral Hwy.



we were crossing from one country to another. Then we dropped rather rapidly to Puerto Frias, at 2600 ft., on a winding road which passed through progressively drier forest as the effects of the rainshadow became evident. After immigration/customs processing at Puerto Frias, we boarded a twin-hulled excursion boat for a 20-minute ride up the long axis of Lago Frias to Puerto Alegre where we took another short bus ride to Lago Nahuel Huapi, a rather extensive lake with an elevation slightly lower, I would guess, than that of Lago Frias. Another hour and a half on the water and we arrived at our last port at which we transferred to still another bus for the final 15 mile ride into Bariloche where we were met by Charlie's colleagues. It had been overcast and occasionally raining on this trip, but it gradually cleared as we approached Bariloche. The next day dawned sparkling clear, an ideal day for R & R in this clean hillside town on the lake. Bariloche, a ski resort town in the winter, has a sort of Swiss flavor and is known for its ceramics and "home-made" chocolates. On January 31, as I returned to Puerto Montt by the reverse route, the weather held and I was able to see the snow-covered peaks and other mountain vistas which had been covered by clouds on the Bariloche-bound leg of the trip. This side excursion to Argentina, in addition to providing such spectacles as Monte Tronador, 11,600 feet of snow-covered crags and slopes on a massive base that spreads into both countries, and *Fitzroya cupressoides* (my first "sightings"), an endemic cypress which used to be the tallest tree in the austral forest, reaching more than 180 feet from the ground, (although now most of the big trees have been felled to provide lumber and siding shingles), had its birding rewards as well. In particular, I recall my one brief glimpse of Des Murs Wiretail from the bus in the rainforest near Peulla, the unmistakeable call of the Magellanic Woodpecker (no sighting, regrettably) — the southern temperate relative of our Ivorybill — in the beech forest at the pass, and the sight of a pair of condors near a reputed nest site making repeated landings into the wind on a tiny tree projecting from the face of a cliff on Lago Frias and then chasing off a couple of Black Vultures which came soaring over the cliff. I also recall that my only experience with unfriendly natives on the trip occurred on Lago Nahuel Huapi when one of the Kelp Gulls which were hanging over the stern of the ship and catching food tossed by the tourists painted the front of my jacket, undoubtedly because I wasn't participating in the feeding.

My homeward-bound flight to Santiago was to leave Puerto Montt in the evening on February 2nd, so Tomás, Smiljam and I spent my February days visiting the ranch of the German Ludwig family (my friend's folks) in the rolling coastal cordilleran foothills west of Lago Llanquihue. We were warmly received and had a very pleasant and relaxing visit, spending the night before



Condor country, L. Frias, Argentina.

returning to Puerto Montt for last minute shopping and my departure. That experience with the Ludwigs, as well as with the Montesinos family of Puerto Montt, friends of Tomás' who had treated Charlie and me with equally enthusiastic friendliness on several occasions, served to reinforce our overall impression that the people of Chile and Argentina were courteous and friendly with a natural warmth and generosity once past the formalities. I have no doubt that should we return to Puerto Montt one day, we would be received in both households as if we were returning family.

As for the less personal aspects of the adventure, I can find little to complain about there either. The climate is agreeable (during the austral summer, anyway), if a bit wet at times, and noxious critters are limited to a few members of the horsefly family and the odd mosquito; there are no poisonous snakes in austral Chile. The roads that we travelled were good (by California standards) though mostly gravel surfaced; paving tends to be limited to major connecting highways. Accommodations and meals varied in quality, but I can recommend both as being at least adequate, and often very good. We stayed in hotels and "hosterías" (country inns) and only one of these would I be reluctant to stay in again. Meals at these places and at restaurants generally offered plenty of food in some variety, but seafood, mostly unfamiliar, was the star attraction — outstanding and almost worth the trip itself. Charlie and I gained weight on this trip, which is unusual for both of us when in the field.

For me the trip was extremely rewarding and productive: I was able to see, do and learn more than I could have hoped for and, needless to say, my appreciation for Charlie's generosity is considerable. On the basis of my experiences, I can recommend southern Chile to anyone who enjoys spectacular scenery, friendly people, fantastic seafood and a touch of adventure. For a resourceful birder with no competing agenda, it should

be possible to see a good percentage of the species occurring there, even without the help of a local contact. Considering the limitations on my time and attention, I saw more than 80 species (identifiable), which included between a third and a half of the potential terrestrial bird fauna, and this with very poor representation of groups found in fresh water habitats. And, of course, the potential for southern hemisphere pelagic goodies is extensive.

I will leave you with some specific recommendations concerning your trip to southern Chile: 1) some familiarity with the Spanish language is helpful; few people speak English; 2) upon arriving, try to obtain a copy of the publication *Turistel, Guía Turística de Chile* (in Spanish), published jointly by Compañía de Teléfonos de Chile S.A. and Publiguías S.A. — it's full of all kinds of information including maps, accommodations and much more; 3) during the austral summer, get your sleeping accommodations by 6 or 7 p.m. — days are long and people don't eat dinner until 9 p.m. or so, but hotels and hosterías tend to fill up earlier; 4) book first class accommodations on ferries when available — trust me; 5) take the round trip to Bariloche (see Alden and Gooders, 1981, *Finding Birds Around the World*, Houghton Mifflin, pp. 204-208); 6) experience a "curanto," which best translates as "seafood orgy." Before you go, you might want to try and have a look at A.W. Johnson's out of print *The Birds of Chile* (1965, 1967, 1972. Parts I, II and supplement. Platt Establecimientos Gráficos S.A., Buenos Aires) and the article on "Chilean Bird Distribution" by Martin Cody (1970. *Ecology*, 51 (3):455-464), in addition to other references cited here and in the Clarke Checklist. Also, just received from Tomás: *Guía de Campo de las Aves de Chile*, by Braulio Araya M. and Guillermo Millie H., 1986, Editorial Universitaria, Santiago, Chile; 439 species illustrated with line drawings, "field guide" size, in Spanish. Enjoy!

Conservation Conversation

by Sandy Wohlgemuth



Years ago, my first encounter with a desert was hardly a happy one. After driving for hours with friends we arrived in Hesperia. I opened the car door and stepped blindly into the midst of *Yucca whipplei*. Not only did it hurt, but I was convinced that one of the needle-sharp spines had broken off in my tender tootsie. No one could see it, but I was sure I could feel it deeply under the skin of my instep. Visions of "blood poisoning" danced in my urbanized head and we found our way to a nearby medical office. After slicing his way through my quivering flesh, the physician confessed he could find no foreign body, that it was his opinion that yucca spines could be deceptively non-present, and that it might well be "all in your head." I limped off unconvinced and it was a long time before I ventured again into this dangerous environment.

Eventually the pursuit of birds changed all that. Tentative visits to the Antelope Valley, the Salton Sea and to magnificent Organpipe Cactus National Monument in Arizona overcame my irrational fears and turned me into a desert enthusiast. Perhaps it was the Curve-billed Thrasher female that awkwardly and hilariously tried to feed her young a bit of crumbling corn bread that did it, but ever since, the Dreadful Desert has become the Delightful Desert.

In the popular mythology (evolved in the eastern part of this country where the natives — poor things — are desert-less), "desert" conjures up a desolate Sahara of burning sands rolling over vast distances, devoid of plant or animal life. When the mirage trembles on the horizon, it may be possible to make out a ragged French Foreign Legion detachment, most of whom resemble Cary Grant and Gary Cooper. That may be true of Africa, but here in the West the deserts are more congenial. Though hot in summer and cold in winter, they are full of life. Strange exotic life, but interesting and intriguing. Great forests of Joshua trees, shaggy, with large spiny branches and white flowers that attract Scott's orioles, bees and Costa's hummingbirds. A variety of cacti of all shapes and sizes with startling red, pink and yellow blooms where ubiquitous Cactus Wrens build their impregnable nests. There are desert tortoises, lizards, rabbits, rattlesnakes, and even little fish in hot pools. And after the rains, thousands of wild flowers spring as if by magic from the seemingly barren sand. The real desert is a revelation, a surprising gift of nature.

But all is not sweetness and light. Our burgeoning population in southern California, the post-war creation of the off-road

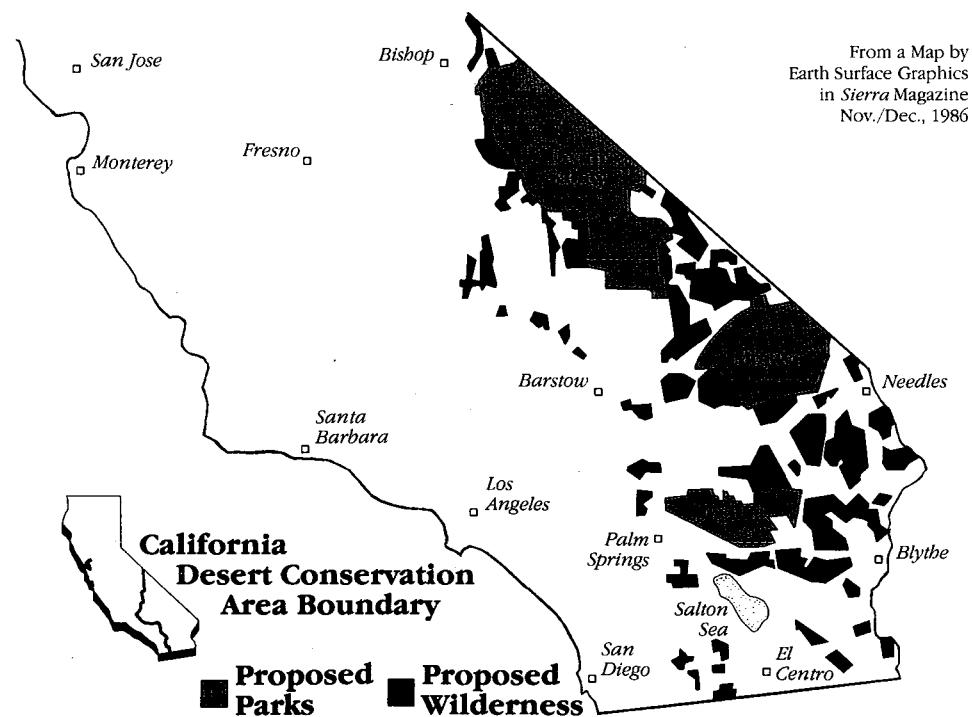
vehicle and air-conditioning has put unprecedented pressure on the great expanses of desert. Many of the 4-wheel drive ORVs, the motorcycles, the dune-buggies scorn the existing roads; their drivers itch to create their own private pathways through the tempting open space. The infamous Barstow to Las Vegas mass motorcycle race some years ago destroyed miles and miles of brittlebush, creosote bush and endangered desert tortoises. Like the well-known tank maneuvers of General Patton in the Mojave during World War II, the scars of that race will last for decades.

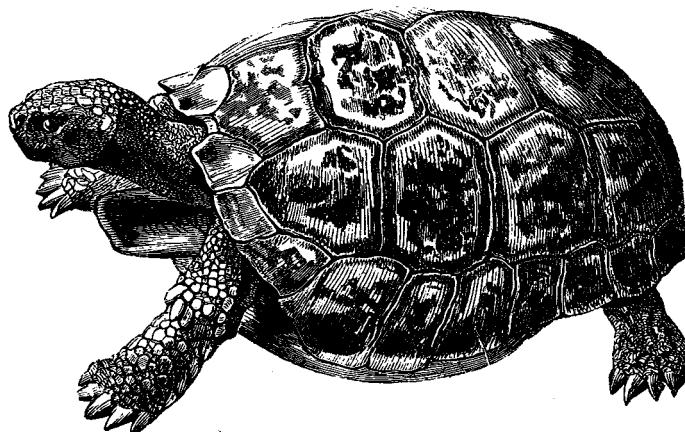
The desert, though it appears as inexhaustible as the ocean, is a fragile place and, if the current pattern of use continues, will surely die. To the rescue comes not Cary or Gary but Alan. Senator Cranston of California, the environmentalist's environmentalist, has introduced the California Desert Protection Act which would establish 81 separate wilderness areas and three new national parks, a total of 10 million acres. The Act would upgrade Death Valley and Joshua Tree National Monuments to national parks, expanding each park to include important new areas that would obtain National Park Service protection. The bill also seeks to transfer the East Mojave National Scenic Area, under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management, to a new Mojave National Park of 1.5 million acres. At present this vast desert area receives only impermanent administrative protection under the BLM; the Park Service is better equipped to manage it.

The 81 wilderness areas are unspoiled portions that would be scattered between and around all three of the proposed new parks. To those who feel that setting aside so much wilderness is locking up too much land from the public, Cranston says, "... wilderness designation means the land will be protected for the enjoyment of this and future generations. Rockhounds, hikers, nature photographers, hunters, archeologists, rock climbers and many other individuals will find room for their pursuits in this large, diverse system of wilderness areas."

Cranston's bill has not been greeted with unalloyed enthusiasm. Off-road vehicle and all-terrain vehicle groups and their publications have strongly opposed the bill and they have been joined by certain mining and grazing interests. They are concerned that "... most recreational and business activities in the desert, including hunting, camping, rockhounding, sight-seeing, photography, mining, grazing and back-country exploring" would be eliminated (Cycle News, June 1986). Since most commercial activity now going on would not be curtailed and the use of ORVs in the present restricted areas would continue, the opponents of Cranston's bill are way off base. While it is probably true that wilderness designation would not extend these activities appreciably, the more benign recreational pursuits they favor (camping, rockhounding, etc.) could be enjoyed unhampered.

Cranston's bill was never voted on in the last session of Congress. It will be introduced again early this year and, with Cranston as number two man in the Senate, it has an excellent chance of passage. It will not be easy. The opposition has hired a determined staff and has already written hundreds of letters to defeat the bill. A coalition of environmental organizations, including the





National Parks and Conservation Association, The Wilderness Society, The Sierra Club, Audubon and the California Native Plant Society has been working hard to support this admirable measure. When the bill is reintroduced, a powerful drive will be launched to move it through Congress. It is an idea whose time has come. Save *Yucca Whipplei*!

Nota bene: California Senator Pete Wilson has not yet endorsed the California Desert Protection Act. It would be a significant boost for the bill if *both* California Senators presented a bipartisan front to the Congress in favor of it. A letter to him asking for his co-sponsorship might work wonders.

Senator Pete Wilson
Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Reference: *Sierra* magazine, Nov./Dec., 1986.

Save the Mountain Lion

The amazing thing is that there are still mountain lions padding through the forest of California. How many of us have ever seen a lion footprint, much less caught a fleeting glimpse of the big cat? We are thousands of miles away from the Serengeti plains where the nature films show us African lions bringing down zebra and wildebeest, yet, almost in our backyard, there is a predator that can kill a full-grown deer. It is good to know that this cougar (puma, panther) — the very essence of wildness — hasn't vanished from the scene.

The mountain lion has been protected in California since 1972. The moratorium on trophy hunting expired on January 1, 1986 and would have been renewed, but Governor Deukmejian vetoed such a law passed by the legislature. An unprecedented wave of protest forced the Department of Fish and Game to postpone a hunting season for one year — and that year is nearly over. The Department will hold hearings in the next few months before it decides what to do about the matter.

The hunters will be out in force at the hearings, claiming that there are too many lions killing too many of their deer. The hunters are dead wrong; there is no evidence of over-population of the elusive and near-invisible mountain lion. If the deer population is slumping, perhaps there are too many "sportsmen" out there winging away at them from their pickup trucks in and out of season and with or without licenses. The two recent dreadful attacks on children in an Orange County park will be used as justification for an open season to ensure public safety. But the Department of Fish and Game has the authority to initiate predator control measures to protect the public when local problems occur. As with the bears that harass campers in Yosemite, mountain lions killing livestock may be trapped and moved to a different area, or even shot if necessary. (The Orange County attacks may well be laid to one aberrant animal that is old or sick. They are the first such attacks since 1909 and the Department and others are studying the area to find out why it happened.) In short, it makes no sense to handle a localized incident by declaring war on all the lions in the state.

What to do? Write to:

The Executive Secretary
California Fish and Game Com.
1416 Ninth St., Sacramento, CA 95814

Tell him how you feel about this potential assault on a magnificent animal. Letters made a difference a year ago. It is essential that the powers-that-be know that there are thousands of people who want full protection for the California mountain lion.

Tax Time

Jack Parnell, California's state director of the Fish and Game Department reminds tax payers that they have an opportunity to "help save endangered plants and animals" by using the Line 90 check-off on the California income tax form.

President's Corner

by E.H. "Ken" Kendig, Jr.

In the past, dues, spontaneous contributions and seminars provided sufficient monies to support and fund all the vital interests of LAAS; however, with increased overhead spearheaded by dramatically higher insurance costs, necessary to continue the field trips and public seminars, we are afraid we'll be unable to continue our current programs and effectively aid the vital projects so necessary to protect critical habitat and our severely shrinking wetlands without mounting a successful fund-raiser.

We will have such a fund raiser in September of 1987 called the Los Angeles Audubon Society Wildlife and Environmental Art Show.

This is the first major fund raising event ever mounted by LAAS!!!

We need your help! Volunteers will be needed for the week of the show; there will be two receptions Sept. 12th and 13th for the presentation of Awards. We need merchandise, dinners for two, anything we can raffle during the receptions, also, door prizes.

Perhaps, you would like to present a Merit Award or an Award in Memory of someone dear — the donor of such Awards would choose the artwork to receive it and present it to the artist at the reception. The Award would be listed in the program and in the Prospectus, i.e., *The John J. Doe Merit Award* and the amount.

We'll keep you posted on the progress of the event, and will be grateful for any and all assistance.

Our thanks to Peter Berle, Alan Sieroty, Frieda Factor Friedman for their support as sponsors.

They're Everywhere.

The following was found by Bob Marcus in the San Francisco Chronicle in late December:

A study by the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Census Bureau in 1980 put the number of bird-watchers in the country at 30 million, but nobody sees this as any more than a wild guess. The actual total could be double or triple.

"The real number of birders is hard to ascertain," said Ken Ketwig, assistant director of public affairs for the national society. [I assume they mean National Audubon Society —Ed] "They range from people who look at birds out their back window to people who go to the Arctic to see penguins."

SUNDAY, APRIL 19 — Whittier Narrows with **David White**. See March 21 trip for details.

FRIDAY, APRIL 24 — Join **Allan Keller** for prime migration birding at **Chatsworth Park South**. In addition to resident chaparral species we will seek warblers, orioles and grosbeaks. From Topanga Canyon Blvd. go west on Devonshire, continuing into parking lot near Rec. center. 8 a.m.

SATURDAY, APRIL 25 — Dan Guthrie will lead us through the **San Antonio Canyon** for a trip through varied and rich habitats from chaparral to pine forest as we work our way up canyon toward Mt. Baldy. If you love the song of the Canyon Wren or get a kick out of bobbing Dippers, come right along! (There should be plenty of migrants as well.) Take the 10 Fwy. east to Indian Hill Blvd. Exit. Take Indian Hill north 2 miles to Memorial Park between 8th & 10th streets in Clairmont. Park on the east side of Indian Hill Rd. 8 a.m. Pack a lunch.

SUNDAY, APRIL 26 — Meet Dr. Elton Morel at **Mojave Narrows**, a marvelous 800 acre desert oasis where spring migrants congregate. We will also look for Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Gambel's Quail and Yellow-headed Blackbird. Take Hwy. 15 toward Victorville exiting at Bear Valley Rd.; go east 3.9 miles to Ridge Crest Rd., turn left 2.6 miles to park entrance. (\$2 fee for day use or camping.) Meet at clubhouse at 8 a.m. Dr. Morel will also be at the clubhouse at about 3 p.m. Saturday for those who might be camping and interested in a late afternoon bird walk.

Trips to anticipate In May:

Placerita Canyon with **Jean Brown**, May 2.

Topanga Canyon with **Jerry Haigh**, May 3.

Ojai Valley with **Guy Commeau**, May 4.

Morongo Valley with **David Koeppl**, May 9.

Huntington Library with **Zus Haagen-Smit**, May 10.

Chilao bluebird nestbox trip with **Rusty Scalf**, May 23.

RESERVATION TRIPS

SUNDAY, MARCH 22 — Come participate in a docent tour of the **South Coast Botanic Gardens** in Palos Verdes. From open pit mine to land-fill operation to a beautiful botanical garden, this place has seen quite a transition. This garden is an excellent place to watch hummingbirds including the Channel Islands race of Allen's Hummingbird which is resident there. The gardens are a fine birding spot during migration as well. **Rusty Scalf** will provide some bird I.D. assistance prior to the docent tour. Fee \$1.50 (75¢ children & seniors). Let us know by the end of February.

WEEKEND, MARCH 28-29 — Spend a spring weekend enjoying nature in the unique **Anza-Borrego Desert State Park** with **Stephen Gustafson**. The wildflowers should be in bloom and some migrants are expected. We'll look for the typical desert birds; Phainopepla, Verdin, Gambel's Quail, Prairie Falcon, Black-tailed Gnatcatcher and migrating Rufous and nesting Costas Hummingbirds. We'll learn about owls, their habits and ecology, and we'll look for them Sat. evening. Gustafson is Asst. Curator of Mammals and Birds at the San Diego Natural History

Museum. For his Masters Degree he studied raptor ecology specializing in the owls of Anza-Borrego. \$25 per person.

SUNDAY, MAY 10 — Pelagic towards **Santa Barbara Island**. 6:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Expected birds: Shearwaters — Sooty, Pink-footed; Jaegers — Pomarine, Parasitic; Storm-petrels; Terns and Gulls — Arctic, Black-legged Kittiwake; Alcids — Common Murre, Pigeon Guillemont, Xantus Murrelet, Cassin's Auklet, Rhinoceros Auklet; Shorebirds — Black Oystercatcher, Surfbird, Red Phalarope, Wandering Tattler. Rarities (seen twice in 10 yrs): So. Polar Skua, Puffins, Sabine's Gull. Possible Mammals: Pacific Pilot Whale, Gray Whale, Dahl Porpoise, Risso's Dolphin, Pacific Bottlenose Dolphin, Pacific Common Dolphin.

WEEKEND, JUNE 27-28 — Join **Bob Barnes** on his annual extravaganza in the **Kern River/Greenhorn Mtn. Area**. Some possibilities: Summer Tanager, Indigo Bunting, Blue Grouse, Pinyon Jay, Gray Flycatcher, Williamson's Sapsucker. \$25 per person. A possible third day extension \$10 more.

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.

All refundable reservations contracted and then cancelled (except by LAAS) will be charged a \$5 handling fee.

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.

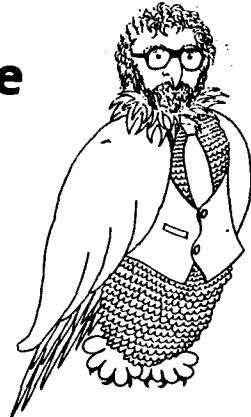
If you desire to carpool to an event, Ms. Lohr (usually in office on Tuesday) can provide information for you to make contact and possible arrangements.

Art Wanted

LA Audubon Society Wildlife and Environmental Art Show will be held September 11-18, 1987. Open to all U.S. artists, all fine arts media, except sculpture and photography. Show selections juried by slides. Awards juried from actual artworks in 4 categories: landscape, seascape, animals and birds. \$5,000.00 in Cash Awards, plus Merit and Special Awards. Entry fee \$5/slide, 3 minimum, no maximum. Slide deadline July 15, 1987. For information: send SASE to LAAS Art Show Prospectus, D.R. Kendig, 603 S. McCadden Pl., L.A., CA 90005.

From the Editor

by Fred
Heath



This month's editorial is really a trick. Usually I bemoan the typos in a past *Tanager* or beg for more articles, photos or drawings to be sent to:

Fred Heath
6218 Cynthia Street
Simi Valley, CA 93063

Not this time. I'm going to use my editorial space to talk about a subject that nobody seems to care about. I've been told that many people read my editorial, if for no other reason than to see how dumb I can really be. If I were to have used the subject matter as the title of a short article, no one would have read it. That's why I had to trick you by putting the subject under this column. Now that I've got your attention, I can tell you the subject is Breeding Birds. Please don't stop reading!

Specifically I'd like to discuss Breeding Birds in L.A. County. It is with great embarrassment that I have to announce that the San Bernardino Valley Audubon is launching a Breeding Bird Atlas in their county this year. Marin County has finished theirs and Orange County is into their third year. I'd really like to start one in L.A. County but we need a champion to get it going. This person has not stepped forward yet.

However, even though we will not be starting an Atlas this year, I'd like to make a suggestion which will hopefully get us all thinking about breeding birds. I want anyone that finds evidence of nesting in the county to send me a post card, with the species, location, date and evidence noted. Remember finding a nest is usually more difficult than simply finding fledged young being fed.

Kimball Garrett also reminds me to caution everyone when approaching nests to use good sense: Don't hang around the nest site too long, don't bend back and break foliage to get a better picture, take care so a predator can follow your scent to the nest, etc.

I will be starting a column which will give credit to those of you that provide this information. Also, in future *Tanners* I hope to be giving more information about breeding birds specifically in L.A. County: when and where to look, birds for which evidence is lacking, etc. Since we are starting late this year I've provided a couple of lists of birds which may have already started to breed or possibly will before the end of March. Good luck!



The following birds may have already started nesting in L.A. County:

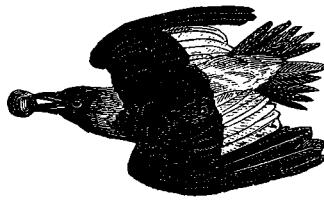
Clarke's Grebe
Red-tailed Hawk
Golden Eagle
Roadrunner
Barn Owl
Saw-whet Owl
Long-eared Owl
Great Horned Owl
Anna's Hummingbird
California Thrasher
Le Conte's Thrasher
Song Sparrow

The following birds could start to nest as early as March.

Cooper's Hawk
Red-shouldered Hawk
Kestrel
Band-tailed Pigeon
Screech Owl
Spotted Owl
Acorn Woodpecker
Black Phoebe
Say's Phoebe
Scrub Jay
Crow
Raven
Verdin
Bushtit
Canyon Wren
Bewick's Wren
Wrentit
Mockingbird
Phainopepla
Loggerhead Shrike
Starling
Hutton's Vireo
Savannah Sparrow
Lark Sparrow
Black-throated Sparrow
Sage Sparrow
Rufous-crowned Sparrow
Rufous-sided Towhee
Brown Towhee
House Finch
House Sparrow

Birds Of The Season

by Hal Baxter
and Kimball Garrett



Bird sightings reported in the "Birds of the Season" column have generally not yet been reviewed by the American Birds regional editors or by the California Bird Records Committee. All records of rarities should be considered tentative pending such review.

In the annual cycle of this column, the March installment constitutes the best opportunity to report on some of the results of the Christmas Bird Counts which took place in late December and early January. This reporting can't be very thorough, since we only receive a trickle of the tallies. And since the greatest scientific worth of the Christmas Bird Counts derives from large-scale analyses on a continent-wide or broadly regional basis, the limited information available to us on this year's counts can only give us insight into the "sporting" aspects of the counts: the species-total "competition" and the rarities that highlighted the counts.

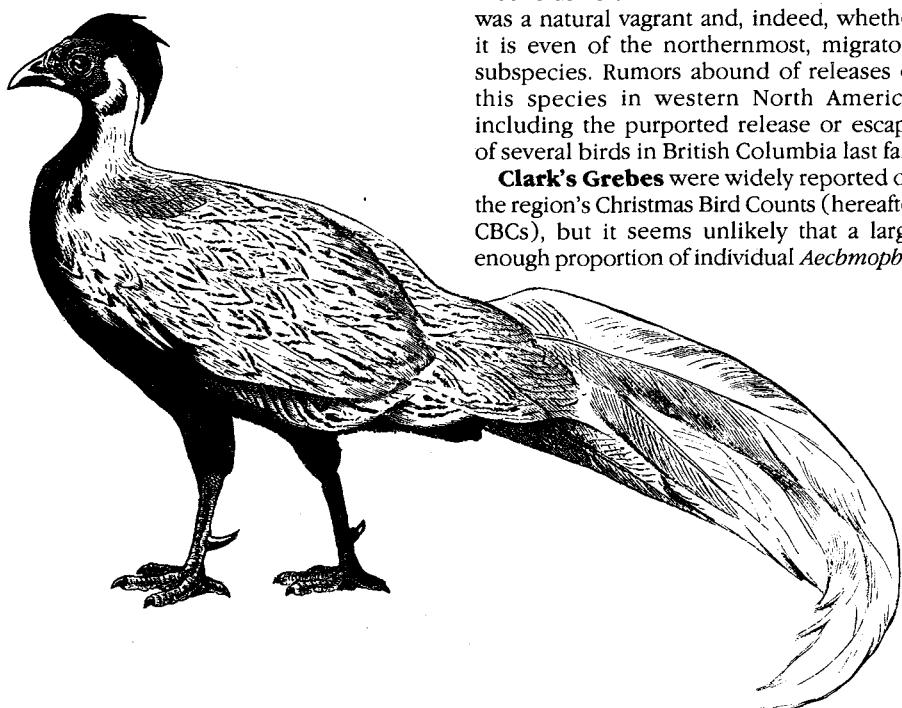
Before we look at some of the local counts, we should mention the most outstanding bird that appeared on a Christmas count within the state. California's second **Brown Shrike** (*Lanius cristatus*, a migratory Asiatic species) was found just outside the town of Point Reyes Station at the bottom end of Tomales Bay, Marin County. The only previous state record of this species (which has straggled to Alaska as well) was a bird captured and photographed on Southeast Farallon Island on 20 September 1984. Evidently the Pt. Reyes Station bird was discovered in late November by an out-of-

state birder who failed to contact anybody in California about the sighting; then, on the Pt. Reyes Christmas Bird Count, the bird was independently discovered but identified as a Northern Shrike! Somehow, two and two were put together in mid-January, and by 17 January the throngs of vagrant chasers were making their way to the site. The Brown Shrike is a geographically variable species, but always shows a rather rich brown tail, unlike the two North American species (even in their juvenal plumages). It is considerably smaller than a Northern Shrike. The most similar species are Eurasian, but these are far less likely to appear in North America.

Among the aspects of Christmas Bird Counts that generate keen interest among birders are the species totals. There is the competition among the "mega-counts" for the mythical national title (sounds like college football, except Florida and Pennsylvania take a back seat to Texas and California). Among the California counts Santa Barbara once again came out on top, with an unofficial total of 206 species. Morro Bay and Crystal Springs Reservoir (San Mateo County) both came in at 204, again unofficially. But the nationwide winner this year once again was apparently Freeport, Texas, rumored to have mustered 212 species.

One other note from northern California before we proceed with an account of recent southern California sightings . . . The **Oriental Greenfinch** in Arcata, Humboldt County, reappeared after 21 December and has been seen well into January. It is of course still inconclusive as to whether this individual was a natural vagrant and, indeed, whether it is even of the northernmost, migratory subspecies. Rumors abound of releases of this species in western North America, including the purported release or escape of several birds in British Columbia last fall.

Clark's Grebes were widely reported on the region's Christmas Bird Counts (hereafter CBCs), but it seems unlikely that a large enough proportion of individual *Aechmopho-*





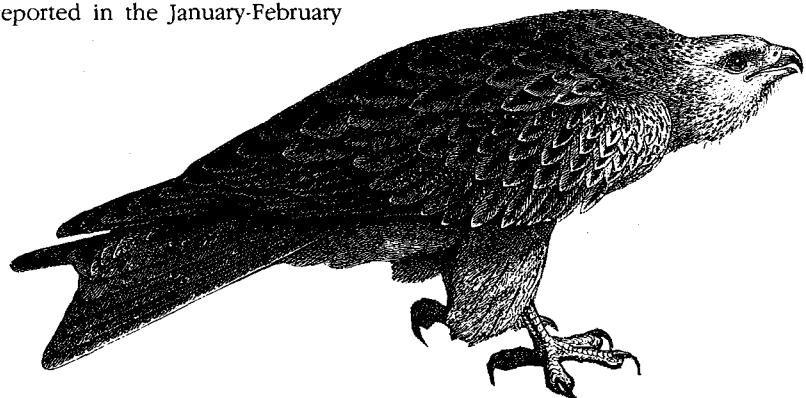
rus grebes are being "confidently" identified to species to paint a clear picture of the status and abundance of the two forms. Nine **Brown Pelicans** at Salton City on 29 December (Bob Neuwirth) was a large count for midwinter at the sea. Twenty **White-faced Ibis** were at the Prado Basin on 3 December (Hank Childs). Two male and one female **Wood Duck** were still at the Arboretum in Arcadia after 7 January (Barbara Cohen). A male **Eurasian Wigeon** was back at the Brookside Golf Course in Pasadena for the umpteenth year (Hal Baxter, 20 December). Larry Norris had a good count of **Greater Scaup** at Pt. Mugu on New Years' Day: nine birds near the firing range. Jerry Freedman reports that the **Harlequin Duck** at Bolsa Chica was still being seen into January, usually near the levee that separates the north and south portions. A couple of **Oldsquaws** were being seen in the Newport Areas of Orange County into January, at the Balboa Pier and the mouth of the Santa Ana River (Hal Baxter, Hank Childs, *et al.*); perhaps one of the above birds was the Oldsquaw at Bolsa Chica on Christmas Day (Rick Hallowell). **Common** are rather scarce in the greater Los Angeles area, so with interest we report a pair in a pond at 19th and Canyon Streets in Upland (Hank Childs, after 10 January), and two birds on Quail Lake (Wanda Conway, 11 January). Wanda also had up to 20 **Common Mergansers** on Quail Lake the same day. A number of **Hooded Mergansers** were

reported locally, including a group of five female-plumaged birds on a golf course pond in Northridge on 27 December (Barbara Elliot).

Intriguing, but unconfirmed, is a report of a **Mississippi Kite** in the Sepulveda Basin on 14 January (Louis Tucker). Descriptions given over the telephone sounded good, but a record so unprecedented would require extremely detailed documentation for acceptance (the species winters in South America, and is at best casual in California even during "prime time" in late May and early June). Record high tides at the end of December brought on a surge of rail-watching, but the only interesting rail reported was a **Black Rail** at Upper Newport Bay on 28 December (Jerry Freedman). The winter flock of **Sandhill Cranes** in the Imperial Valley, south of Brawley, was tallied at 220 birds by Bob Neuwirth on 29 December. Bob also reported some interesting shorebirds on that same trip to the Salton Sea area: six **Red Knots** at Salton City, and a **Wilson's Phalarope** (quite rare in winter) at the south end of the Salton Sea. The first-winter **Franklin's Gull** at Malibu Lagoon (reported in the January-February

Lilac-crowned Parrots and one **Red-crowned Parrot** feeding on pine cones on Pt. Dume New Year's Day; also in the area were several **Rose-ringed Parakeets** and a small flock of *Aratinga* parakeets (conures). A **Northern Pygmy-Owl** was along the trail in Ice House Canyon, below Mt. Baldy, on 13 December (Rick and Marcy Clements). A **Long-eared Owl** was at Linda Mia Ranch east of Lancaster on 27 December (Jerry Freedman), and a **Short-eared Owl** was in the fields behind U.C. Irvine on 4 January (Wayne Gochenour). A flock of **Vaux's Swifts** was found on the ridge above Malibu on the 21 December CBC (Cathy and Bill Jacobs), and twenty Vaux's were just north of Chinatown on 19 January (Kimball Garrett).

A male **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** at Barrett Canyon and Baldy Village Road (Hank Childs, 15 November), if documented, would constitute one of the few Los Angeles County records of this species. The wintering **Gray Flycatcher** was still at the Arboretum in Arcadia after 7 January (Barbara Cohen); the wintering **Western Flycatcher** there was



Tanager, but apparently first found on 9 November by Mark Kincheloe), remained for the Malibu CBC (Joe Zell) and to at least 10 January. Another was at Laguna Lakes, Orange Co., on 7 December (Doug Willick). An extremely pale "**Thayer's/Iceland**" **Gull** on the Marina del Rey breakwater during the 4 January Los Angeles CBC (Bob Shanman, Jonathan Alderfer) was thought to look much like the controversial first-winter bird that was present last year at the Otay Dump below San Diego. Full species status of these two forms seems to be increasingly doubted, but much systematic study remains to be done.

A **White-winged Dove** frequented the open fields and manure piles just west of the Malibu Civic Center after 1 January (Kimball Garrett); it was with a group of several hundred Mourning Doves. A **Common Ground-Dove**, a species of very marginal occurrence in Los Angeles County, was at the Arboretum in Arcadia after 18 December (Barbara Cohen and Chuck Hamilton). Kimball Garrett, Tom Frillman and Mary Thompson studied a flock of ten

much harder to find. Another Western Flycatcher was wintering in Orange County's Mason Regional Park (Doug Hillick). An immature male **Vermilion Flycatcher** was in Mile Square Park, Fountain Valley, after 4 January (Rick Frost). Speaking of frost, one wonders whether January's extremely low temperatures, frequently below freezing, affected the survival of some of these wintering flycatchers in coastal southern California. Sallying is not a very effective foraging technique during cold winter spells (very few insects are flying), so flycatchers must forage at ground level (as do the phoebes, our only "normally" wintering flycatchers), glean from the foliage, or subsist on fruits.

The **Thick-billed Kingbird**, back again in Orange County's Peters Canyon, was present at least to mid-January. Quite rare in mid-winter was a **Barn Swallow** at Laguna Lakes, Orange Co., on 20 December (Doug Willick).

Christmas Bird Counts suggested that **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were widespread, but certainly not in numbers sufficient to warrant the term "invasion." The same could probably also be said of **Golden-crowned**

Kinglets, Pine Siskins, Lewis's Woodpeckers, and Varied Thrushes. Rather scarce in Orange Co., a **Winter Wren** was found on the San Clemente Golf Course on 6 December (Doug Willick). **Mountain Bluebirds** were present at the Santa Fe Dam on 15 December (Leo Best). A **Brown Thrasher** was at Morongo Valley on 27 November (Sally Pearce). **Solitary Vireo** reports (subspecies?) came from the Arboretum (Barbara Cohen and Chuck Hamilton, 17 December) and Lake Forest, Orange Co. (Doug Willick, 20 December).

A **Lucy's Warbler** was in a small park in Corona Del Mar after 3 January (Doug Willick). A **Tennessee Warbler** was extracted from the rain of the Los Angeles Country Club (Kimball Garrett, 4 January). Exceptional were two different wintering male **Black-throated Blue Warblers**; one was in the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden (originally found in early December by Art and Janet Cupples; present into January), and the other was in a yard in Placentia, Orange Co., where it frequented the hummingbird feeders! (Lois Jones, after 16 December). One of the rarest warblers of the season was a male **Pine Warbler** on Pt. Dume on the 21 December Malibu CBC (Kimball Garrett, Dick Veit and Bobbi Braun); it has not been seen since. A **Palm Warbler** was wintering at Mile Square Park, Fountain Valley (Loren Hays). Tanagers were much in evidence on several CBCs, but the prize goes to Rocky Nook Park in Santa Barbara where three species (**Western, Summer** and **Hepatic**) were in the same tree! A female **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** was along Charing Cross Drive, at the north end of the Los Angeles Country Club, on the Los Angeles CBC (Kimball Garrett and Ken Kendig, 4 January).

A **Green-tailed Towhee** was along the Newport Back Bay road on New Year's Day (Rick Clements). **Swamp Sparrows** were found at Mason Regional Park, Orange Co., on 3 January (Dick Veit), and in Franklin Canyon, Beverly Hills, on the 4 January Los

Angeles CBC (Fred Heath). A **White-throated Sparrow** was wintering at the Arboretum in Arcadia (Barbara Cohen), and another was at Mason Regional Park on 4 January (Doug Willick). A third White-throat was in the castor-bean and banana scrub west of the Malibu Civic Center in mid-December (Kimball Garrett, Jonathan Alderfer), but searching for it has been hampered by "War Games" activities — camouflage uniformed grown children racing through the brush with fake guns and loud footsteps. Large numbers of **Tricolored Blackbirds** were found along Potrero Road west of Lake Sherwood (which has water again!) and in the Sepulveda Basin. Male **Great-tailed Grackles** were at the Big Canyon Marsh at Newport Bay on 4 January (Lee Jones) and in Lancaster on 20 December (Tom Martin and Cal Yorke). The Malibu CBC had two unusual orioles, a **Scott's Oriole** in Ramirez Canyon (Bob Pann), and an **Orchard Oriole** on Pt. Dume (Kimball Garrett and Dick Veit). While no major push of **Evening Grosbeaks** into the lowlands occurred, there was one at Morongo Valley on 27 November (Sally Pearce). They were also noted in the Piute Mountains on 13 December (Arnold Small, Larry Sansone, and Clyde Bergman), and at the entrance to Table Mountain Campground in the San Gabriels (five on 16 November, Rick Clements).

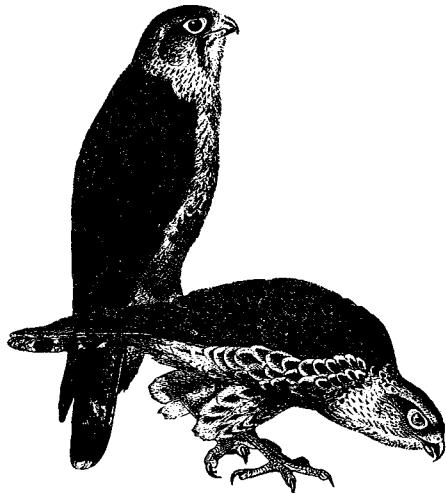
As we have pointed out the last few years, March not only represents the beginning of the spring migration crescendo, but the peak of nesting behavior of many of our resident bird species on the coastal slope and on the deserts. It's never too early to start thinking about the Breeding Bird Atlas blocks you may someday be responsible for.

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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ANNOUNCEMENTS

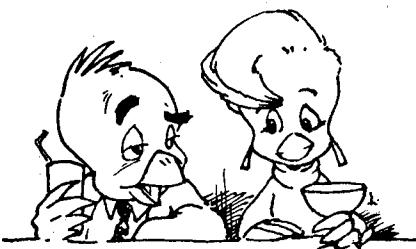
March 1987

EVENING MEETINGS

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

Bird Identification Workshops — Workshops will be held one-half hour before the regular monthly program, from **7:30 to 8:00 p.m.** A variety of topics are planned and we intend to continue the workshops as long as members are interested. Because of time constraints each workshop will focus on a single species, a small group of species or some other aspect of birding. The workshops will be geared for the beginning to intermediate birder, but should be of interest to just about everyone. The programs will be led by some of our best local birders, many of whom are familiar as field trip leaders. So come a little early to the regular monthly meeting and catch-up on some of the finer points of bird study.

TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 7:30 p.m. — Workshop: **Jonathan Alderfer: Cormorants**. Identification of Double-crested, Brandt's and Pelagic Cormorants will be discussed.



TUESDAY, MARCH 10 — Jared Diamond, Professor of Physiology at the UCLA School of Medicine will present an intriguing program entitled **How Birds And Humans Pick Their Mates**. He suggests that experiments on how birds select mates is relevant to how human husbands and wives pick each other. Bring your spouse. This will be a fun filled and interesting talk.

TUESDAY, APRIL 14, 7:30 p.m. — Workshop: **Kimball Garrett: Shearwaters**. Learn to identify some of these difficult species with your feet on solid ground.

TUESDAY, APRIL 14 — Dr. John Heyning, Assistant Curator of Mammals at the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History will present a program on **Whales and Dolphins of Southern California**. Dr. Heyning will discuss both the natural history and identification of these fascinating mammals.

FIELD TRIPS 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.

SUNDAY, MARCH 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. Spend the morning birding in lovely oak woodlands, meadows and chaparral. From Topanga Canyon Blvd. take a very sharp east turn uphill on Entrada Dr. (7 miles So. of Ventura Blvd., 1 mile No. of Topanga Village.) Keep bearing left on Entrada Dr. at various roadforks to parking lot at end. \$3 fee.

SATURDAY, MARCH 14 — Join **Bob Shanman** for a morning at the unique **Ballona Wetlands**. This is an excellent marshland site practically in our backyard. Take Marina 90 west to Culver Blvd., turn left to Pacific Ave. then right to footbridge at end. Meet at 8 a.m. \$3 parking. (More info: call (213) 545-2867 after 6 p.m.)

TUESDAY, MARCH 17 — L.A. State and County Arboretum. Join **Barbara Cohen** for a morning walk through varied habitat looking for

quail, owls, herons, raptors and early migrants. Admission is free on this third Tuesday of the month. On Baldwin Ave., Arcadia just South of Frwy. 210, on the West side of the street. Meet in front of the gatehouse in the parking lot at 8 a.m.

SATURDAY, MARCH 21 — Take advantage of a unique opportunity of **free bird sketching instruction** with **Jonathan Alderfer** (213-828-6568). Alderfer is the talented artist and illustrator of the forthcoming Dunn & Garrett Field Identification Manual. Bring pencils, erasers and sketchbook or drawing pad along with your usual birding equipment (bring your scope if you have one). This outing is designed for birders with no previous drawing experience. Emphasis will be on basic drawing skills and the recording of field marks through drawings. Come participate in an educational and entertaining experience. Meet at 8 a.m. at the kiosk at **Malibu Lagoon**.

SATURDAY, MARCH 21 — Meet **David White** at **Whittier Narrows Regional Park** for his monthly morning walk through a good diversity of habitats in search for a variety of residents, water fowl, and migrants. Meet at 8 a.m. at the Nature Center, 1000 Durfee Ave., So El Monte, off Fwy. 60 between Santa Anita and Peck Dr. exits, west of Fwy. 605

SUNDAY, APRIL 5 — Jerry Haigh at Topanga State Park. See March 1 trip for details.

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SATURDAY, APRIL 11 — Ballona Wetlands with **Bob Shanman**. See March 14 trip for details.

SUNDAY, APRIL 12 — Join Kimball Garrett for an informative afternoon of migratory seabird viewing at **Pt. Dume**. This promontory provides an excellent vantage from which to view loons, Brant, scoters, gulls, terns and occasional shearwaters. Unless you're an expert in gull I.D. (sure!) you might find this a profitable outing. Meet at the end of Westward Beach parking lot. Take Pacific Coast Hwy. to Westward Beach Rd. (at south end of Zuma Beach). Take Westward Beach Rd. downcoast to the end of the parking lot. Latecomers will find group on top of the bluff. 1 p.m.

SUNDAY, APRIL 12 — Antelope Valley. Plan to join **Fred and Carolyn Heath** as he attempts (for the third year) to find her a life Le Conte's Thrasher. Even if he blows that, there will be lots of other desert specialties to look at. A visit will be made to the famous Piute Pond and Marsh on Edwards Air Force Base. This should be the peak time for wildflowers, so bring your cameras. Meet at the Lamont Odett Overlook (of Lake Palmdale) on Highway 14 just south of Palmdale at 7:30 a.m.

SATURDAY, APRIL 18 — Join Marge Pamias for a morning of birding in the varied habitats of **Santiago Oaks Regional Park**. This area offers chaparral, riparian and oak woodland habitats along with various introduced plantings around an old citrus farm. A great place for nesting and migratory birds. Take Interstate 5 south to the 22 east to the 55 north and get off at Chapman Ave. Go east (R) on Chapman to Santiago Canyon Rd. Turn left on Santiago Cyn. Rd. and drive about 2½ miles past a small residential area. At the sign for the Regional Park turn right and go for about a mile. (On a map of Orange County one can find Santiago Oaks just NW of Irvine Park.) Meet at 8 a.m.

SATURDAY, APRIL 18 — Paul Fox will lead a morning bird walk for beginners in the **Santa Ynez Wilderness Park**. This beautiful chaparral site will be "in full swing" with birds and flowers. From L.A. take Sunset Blvd. to Palisades Blvd. (the last traffic light before Pacific Coast Hwy.) and turn Right. Go two miles to just past the Palisades Highland entrance. Park on either side of the road. You will be treated to a two hour walk through Santa Ynez Canyon. 8 a.m.

continued on page 8