



WESTERN TANAGER

Los Angeles Audubon Society

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Not All, but A Lot, of What We All Want to Know About The Migration Pattern of The Western Raptor.

(NOTE: The following article, collated rather than written by the editor of *Western Tanager*, has been based entirely upon materials furnished by Steve Hoffman and the Western Foundation for Raptor Conservation.)

Photo by Rhawn Martin



Goshawk, Northern Goshute Mtns., NV.

Western raptors are far more migratory than many of us realize. Study of their migration patterns is not only fascinating, but it can help us learn important lessons and help preserve environmental health.

These are some of the basic concepts on which Steve Hoffman and the non-profit Western Foundation for Raptor Conservation operate in their observation and analysis of raptor migration in Nevada and elsewhere in western America. While California studies have not yet been part of the WFRS work, they may well be in the future. In any event, the foundation's work has important implications for Southern California ornithology.

In 1979 Steve Hoffman discovered a large, previously unknown fall migration of birds of prey along the crest of the Goshute Mountains in east-central Nevada. There, almost 5,000 feet above the Bonneville Salt Flats, Steve and his colleague Susan Werner counted over 3,000 hawks (an average of 27 hawks per hour!) in 14 days of observation in September and early October. (Hawk Mountain, New Jersey is certainly not the only United States raptor migration funnel.)

To date this autumn flight remains the largest known west of the Mississippi and east of the Pacific coast. This exceptional concentration of hawks is caused by the Great Salt Lake Desert, and Bonneville Salt Flats, which forms a formidable barrier to most migrating raptors, especially the forest dwelling accipiters (sharp-shinned hawk, Cooper's hawk, and northern goshawk).

The Goshute ridge borders the west edge of this desert. A combination of strong updrafts and forest habitat along this ridgeline attracts migrating hawks like a magnet.

This discovery has provided a wonderful opportunity to study the movements and population trends of our western raptors. The goal of the Goshute Project is the conservation of raptor populations throughout all of western North America, and ultimately the maintenance of a healthy, productive land for both wildlife and people.

Because raptors feed at the top of the food chain, they are excellent environmental barometers. Major declines in our raptor population signal vast damage to habitat which, left unchecked, would threaten not only the survival of many raptor species,

but the quality of human life as well. The Goshute research effort is designed to use raptor populations as an index to the ecological health of western North America, as well as to provide an early warning of environmental damage.

Trend information for most western raptor populations has not previously been available. Migration pathways and wintering areas for raptors inhabiting western North America are also poorly understood. The Goshute Project is beginning to fill these gaps in our knowledge. If we can detect the declines in raptor populations early, there may still be time to reverse them. As Rosalie Edge, an energetic conservationist and the founder of Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, has pointed out: "The time to save a species is when it's still common!" The wisdom of Mrs. Edge's statement can't be overemphasized, and this is one reason why the Goshute Project is important to all of us who have an interest in environmental conservation.

In addition to systematic counts since 1983, during the past seven years dozens of volunteers have conducted observational and banding studies at the Goshute research site. Thus far 5,010 raptors of 12

species have been captured, banded and released. We can expect a continuing increase of knowledge from this work, especially because raptors have a fairly long potential life span.

Already 33 of these banded birds have been recovered from many different areas of western North America (See accompanying map). These include Central Alberta, Canada, all the way to Oaxaca, Mexico (2,220 miles away); and two birds have been recovered from Southern California. One was a sharp-shinned hawk recovered near Twenty-Nine Palms, 440 miles SSW of the Goshutes. The other was a red-tailed hawk recovered near San Bernardino, some 490 miles SSW of the Goshutes.

Such recoveries have provided important information on the raptors' migration patterns, but much remains to be learned.

Standardized daily migration counts were begun in the Goshutes in 1983. To date over 32,000 hawks of 18 species have been recorded. If continued for several more years, these counts will provide us with critically valuable information on the status and trends of our western raptor populations. Similar counts from Hawk Mountain, PA, showed severe declines in several species in the 1950's and 1960's. These declines were soon linked to contamination by DDT, a persistent agricultural pesticide then widely used.

The Hawk Mountain information contributed significantly to a nation-wide ban on

Jim Zook removing a Sharp-shinned Hawk from a mist net, Goshute Mtns., NV.



Photo by Brian Flatin

| GOSHUTE (NEVADA) FALL HAWK MIGRATION COUNT (1983-1986) | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---------------|
| | 1983 | 1984 | 1985 | 1986 | TOTAL | PERCENT TOTAL |
| Obs. Hrs. | 568.1 | 639.8 | 654.3 | 483.8 | 2346 | |
| Total Hawks | 8646 | 7248 | 9330 | 6946 | 32170 | |
| Hawks/hr. | 15.2 | 11.3 | 14.3 | 14.4 | 13.7 | |
| SPECIES | | | | | | |
| 1. Sharp-shinned Hawk | 2069 | 2074 | 3178 | 2233 | 9554 | 29.72 |
| 2. Red-tailed Hawk | 2140 | 1765 | 2131 | 1666 | 7702 | 23.92 |
| 3. Cooper's Hawk | 1708 | 1387 | 1742 | 1150 | 5987 | 18.62 |
| 4. American Kestrel | 745 | 700 | 923 | 712 | 3080 | 9.62 |
| 5. Golden Eagle | 251 | 205 | 230 | 196 | 882 | 2.72 |
| 6. Turkey Vulture | 92 | 141 | 211 | 131 | 575 | 1.82 |
| 7. Swainson's Hawk | 118 | 34 | 77 | 256 | 485 | 1.52 |
| 8. Northern Harrier | 119 | 106 | 139 | 88 | 452 | 1.42 |
| 9. Northern Goshawk | 112 | 146 | 119 | 65 | 442 | 1.42 |
| 10. Osprey | 41 | 40 | 40 | 43 | 164 | 0.52 |
| 11. Prairie Falcon | 31 | 16 | 5 | 11 | 63 | |
| 12. Broad-winged Hawk | 6 | 14 | 15 | 8 | 43 | |
| 13. Rough-legged Hawk | - | 17 | 17 | 9 | 43 | |
| 14. Bald Eagle | 9 | 10 | 9 | 13 | 41 | |
| 15. Ferruginous Hawk | 3 | 6 | 17 | 5 | 31 | |
| 16. Merlin | 4 | 15 | 3 | 3 | 25 | |
| 17. Peregrine falcon | 1 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 11 | |
| 18. Red-shouldered Hawk | - | - | - | 1 | 1 | |
| Unidentified Accipiter | 565 | 363 | 311 | 251 | 1490 | |
| Unidentified Buteo | 189 | 81 | 65 | 41 | 376 | |
| Unidentified Raptor | 443 | 122 | 97 | 61 | 723 | |

the use of DDT in 1972. Western North America needs similar information on raptor population trends, and the WFRC work at Goshute and elsewhere is designed to meet this lack.

Regrettably, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which is supposed to conserve raptor populations and habitats through research and education, has done almost nothing in the West in this regard.

Thus, major declines in population may have already occurred. The Cooper's Hawk population has drastically declined in Arizona. This may well be due to the loss of forest habitat in Mexico with development of agriculture and urbanization. Sharp-shinned hawks can subsist in less thick forest habitat, or its edges, and may be less affected for this reason. WFRC believes that most Western raptors spend 4-6 months of the year in Mexico.

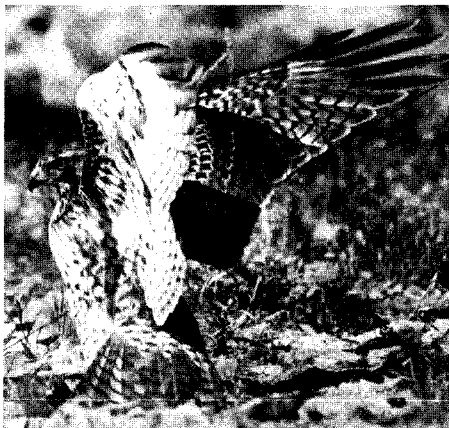
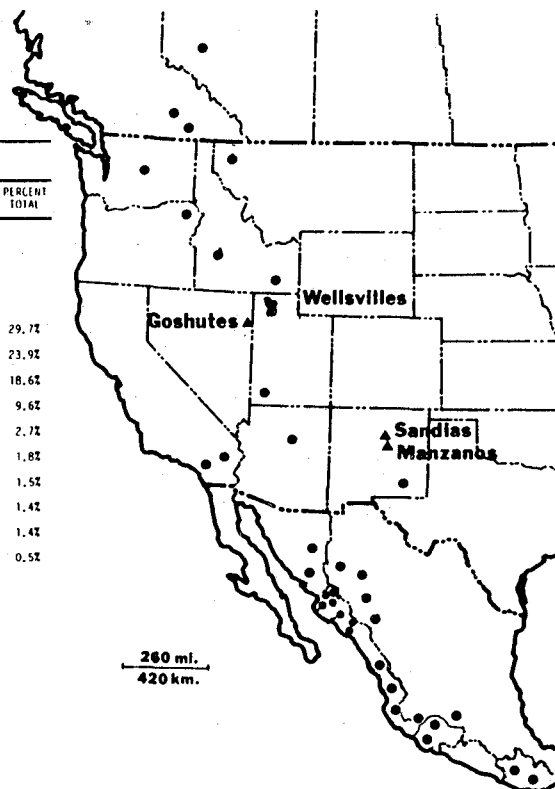


Photo by Brian Flatin



Steven Hoffman with an immature (left) and an adult Northern Goshawk, Goshute Mtns., NV.

Photo by Brian Flatin

It can be seen that birds and nature do not perceive or respect national boundaries. We must transcend these boundaries to be effective in conservation work.

Steven Hoffman will speak at our March 1988 program meeting, and much more information can be obtained by attending that meeting. You can also write to WFRC, Inc., P.O. Box 304, Albuquerque, New Mexico, for information and to make tax-free donations to this worthwhile work.

Immature Red-tailed Hawk being trapped by bow-net, Goshute Mtns., NV.

The Next Ten Birds For Los Angeles County

by Kimball L. Garrett

Speculating about future records of rarities would seem a foolish and unscientific practice, and indeed the exercise described here smacks of the sort of trivial amusement in which one engages on long, overnight drives to distant birding destinations. But the more we learn about our vagrants and rare migrants, the clearer the pattern of records of most species becomes. Most of these patterns were described in Garrett and Dunn's *Birds of Southern California, Status and Distribution* (1981), though many new or amended patterns have arisen since the publication of that book. We know, for example, that a couple (or more) Buff-breasted Sandpipers will turn up somewhere in coastal southern California every September, and we know that our chance for a Yellow Wagtail, albeit slim, is at its maximum during the first half of September at a coastal location. Rabid "year-listers" plan their lives (or at least their year) around a confidence in such patterns, and for all of us our birding itineraries are dictated in large part by our knowledge of seasonal and geographical patterns of bird distribution.

Some 448 native bird species have been recorded from Los Angeles County [although a couple of these species are pending the outcome of California Bird Records Committee deliberations]. Do we know enough about the broad patterns of distribution and vagrancy of birds to guess the next ten birds to be added to the Los Angeles County list? We'll get to that below,

but first I should acknowledge a similar exercise written by Dr. Joseph R. Jehl, Jr. ("Trends in the state list of California birds" *Western Birds* 11:103-110, 1980). Joe enlisted the expert opinions of five active birders (Binford, Dunn, Lehman, McCaskie, and Stallcup) whose "top ten" lists mentioned 26 species of birds. How predictable was the growth of our state list at that time? The species listed most frequently, Smith's Longspur, has yet to be reliably recorded from California (all five experts had predicted that one). Two species were mentioned by four of the five experts: Swainson's Warbler (still unrecorded) and Common Black-Hawk (finally recorded five years later). In all, 11 of the 26 species mentioned have since been recorded in the state. [The "winner" by the way, was Jon Dunn: six of the ten species he listed are now on the California state list -- Common Black-Hawk, Mongolian Plover, Gray-tailed Tattler, Brambling, Rustic Bunting, and Cook's Petrel.] Perhaps most interesting is the fact that the majority of the birds added to the state list in the interim were mentioned on nobody's list of predictions; I think we must conclude that the pool of "potential additions" to the state list is so large as to defy any attempt at ranked predictions.

Now what about Los Angeles County? I solicited the predictions for the "Next Ten" for Los Angeles County from six active county birders: Jonathan Alderfer, Jean Brandt, Bruce Broadbooks, Brian Daniels, Jon Dunn, and Arnold Small. Unlike Joe

Jehl, I couldn't resist taking part in my own exercise, so I included my predictions (written before I received those of the others). To avoid any potential embarrassment, I will not list who predicted what, but simply analyze the species listed. I have also elected to delete from the analysis all species mentioned by only one out of the seven panelists (even though some of these appear to be quite "reasonable").

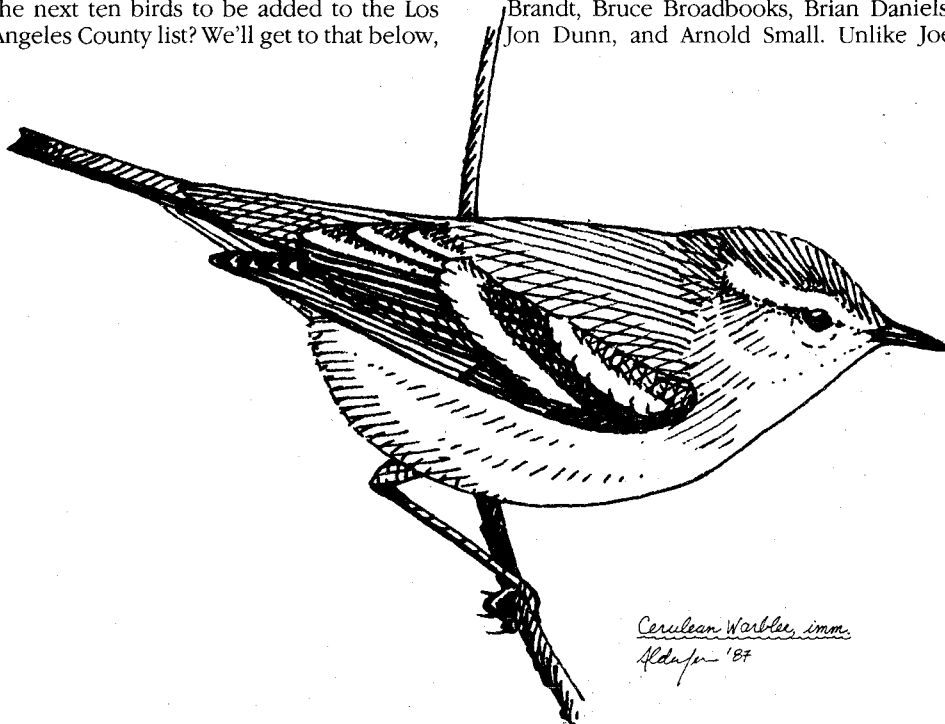
Below is a table of the species mentioned by two or more of the respondents, and their ranking (based on the number of respondents listing them). Tie-breaking was determined by how often the species was mentioned in the "top three" (each respondent was asked to single out the three most likely species).

| Rank | Species | # lists |
|---------|-------------------------|---------|
| 1 | Cerulean Warbler | 7 |
| 2 | Barrow's Goldeneye | 5 |
| 3 | Dusky-capped Flycatcher | 5 |
| 4 | Curlew Sandpiper | 5 |
| 5 | Cassin's Sparrow | 5 |
| 6 (tie) | Painted Bunting | 4 |
| 6 (tie) | Common Grackle | 1 |
| 8 | Connecticut Warbler | 4 |
| 9 | Yellow-green Vireo | 3 |
| 10 | Blue-winged Warbler | 3 |

The species mentioned on two lists only were: Emperor Goose, Upland Sandpiper, Black-billed Cuckoo, Blue Jay, and Black-billed Magpie.

Time will tell how accurate these predictions prove to be. One species has been added to the Los Angeles County list since these predictions were made, and (predictably?) it wasn't on anybody's list! This was the Red-footed Booby (off Santa Barbara Island, 11 October 1987). One must bear in mind the two things factored into these predictions: the likelihood that a given species reaches Los Angeles County, and the likelihood that it will be detected. Based on known patterns, we would almost certainly agree that a Connecticut Warbler has reached Los Angeles County (one was just over the county line at Big Sycamore Canyon this fall, for example); but this is a notoriously difficult species to detect. On the other hand, goldeneyes are scarce in county, so any one found will be scrutinized on the off chance it might prove to be a Barrow's; they occupy open water where they are easily spotted. An Emperor Goose in the county should be quite "findable" (although some did sneak past us into Orange County many years back!).

I would like to thank the guinea pigs who took part in this exercise, and once again urge readers to remain active in the field and to *fully document* any sightings of these predicted rarities, or any others. Here's your chance to show up (or vindicate) the "experts".



Cerulean Warbler, imm.
Alderfer '87

The Major Impact Of Scolopax Minor

By Dorothy Dimsdale

The most wonderful moment of my birding life was spent at Point Pelee in Ontario in May, 1984.

It wasn't the waves of warblers which land exhausted at your feet after flying the last lap across Lake Erie. This year the migration was spotty and feeble, though we managed to see over thirty species of warblers and innumerable other species. There were, at times, more birders than birds. It didn't matter. The sight of a Prothonotary Warbler (*Protonotaria citrea*) in the marsh and the Blue-winged (*Vermivora pinus*) and Golden-winged (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) as well as a rare Brewster's Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera x pinus*) at close range were really exciting, few in number though they were.

The bird which bowled me over was none of these delicate, lovely warblers. It was a moment I could not have discovered for myself and shows the skill and knowledge of our trip leader, Bret Whitney, who conjured up something so magical from an apparently still and empty field. It was the homely American Woodcock (*Scolopax minor*), engaged in its mating ritual.

We clomped across a boardwalk and into a field spotted with low bushes and stood in a huddle in the fast-fading daylight. We heard calls coming from several directions, exactly as the field guides describe, a nasal 'Peent' -- and quite loud. Suddenly Bret whispered 'Look up -- up!!'. We saw the bird climbing at great speed, climbing and circling over our heads, at maybe 75 feet. It hovered like a great moth making twittering noises, almost like short close-together whistles. It circled round and swooped down again, landing somewhere close by in the field. No one spoke. Maybe someone -- could have been I -- whispered 'Omigod'. Twice more we saw and heard this glorious evening performance and twice more our hearts almost stopped beating.

It was now quite dark and Bret turned on his flashlight and walked away from the group for about 25 feet. He directed the beam of light on the ground for a radius of about 15 feet. Next he whispered, 'It's here in the light. Come quietly.'

Fourteen of us tripped like fairy elephants across the field and looked into the grass at the end of the beam of light. One brown eye stood out, then, as we looked, we saw the pale, long bill, the bars on the head and the streaked back.

Bret moved in a few steps closer and the bird raised itself to see what was approaching. In doing so, it exposed the remainder of its body and we had a long, full look. Two steps closer still, caused the Woodcock to stand up completely and then it disappeared into the grass.

It was over. There were no more 'Peent' calls. The night was silent and would remain so until dawn when it would happen all over again. Our group barely spoke. There were smiles on our faces and our eyes were shining. It was as if we had been witnesses to a primeval ritual. I shall remember it always.

New Birding Magazines

By Henry E. Childs Jr.

Tired of pretty picture magazines with no content articles? Want less articles on how to tell female Empidonax flycatchers apart? Tired of predigested "ain't Nature grand" articles written while knitting? Want more "real birding" stuff? Well, then, I've got something for you!

This is not a review. It is not a complete coverage of each magazine's contents. It is not unbiased! In this article I hope to make you aware of some of the recent entries into the competition for the "Birder's Buck" by a couple of recently introduced magazines that may be of interest and informative to you. To be somewhat comparative I have used Summer, 1987 issues for my comments.

Birder's World. The Magazine for Bird Enthusiasts.

This is the 4th issue of a first quality magazine. Slick paper, excellent photos, broad and intelligent coverage of items of general interest to birders.

John Terres (of Audubon Encyclopedia fame) discusses Mockingbird song. Jim Clark has a wonderfully illustrated article on the waterfowl of the Yukon Flats, including a delightful picture of a pair of Barrow's Goldeneyes. John Dennis warns birds, "If you drink, don't fly" a problem some of my friends (and some birds) have. Lead articles are of high quality.

In the departments section: If, after reading "The Rio Grande of South Texas" you don't start planning your trip, take up stamp collecting! Birds in Art opened a new world to me in the quality of carved and painted birds. Bob Storer's article on the exotic Satin Bowerbird is a quickie with beautiful pictures of this unusual, polygamous Australian species. Rare Bird Report, Book Reviews, Essays, etc. along with advertising of books, tours, and equipment make for varied, interesting and informative reading.

Birder's World, Subscription Department, P.O. Box 1347, Elmhurst, IL 60126-8347. \$25/year.

WildBird. Your Guide to Birding at Its Best.

This is the first issue of an excellent magazine with a definite western emphasis. After all, it originates in San Juan Capistrano! Like *Birder's World*, it has a number of fine major articles. Tim Gallagher discusses "Last Chance for the California Condor". Editors Bob and Patti Carpenter describe "Seabirder's Heaven" . . . Monterey, with a profile of that fabulous gal, Debra Love Shearwater. Confused about selection of binoculars? Read "Are Budget Binoculars a Bargain?" These and many more are waiting to be savored.

Departments include: Pursuit of Happiness . . . the identification of Forster's and



Common Terns. Hummers at our Feeders. Bulletin Board: Nests are for Eating (read it and find out!). There is such a thing as a Wild Bird Feeding Institute! Book Reviews. All you wanted to know about the American Robin.

Readers are encouraged to submit material for publishing as "Every Birder Has a Story".

I would have trouble deciding which of these quality magazines to choose . . . so I subscribe to both as they are both informative, interesting, different and worth the time and effort.

WildBird, Subscription Department, P.O. Box 6040, Mission Viejo, Ca. 92690-9983. \$8.99/year.

I will not comment on *Birder's Digest* or *Bird Talk*.

Western Tanager's Two High National Audubon Awards - Congratulations!!

For those who missed any earlier announcement, and to clarify and celebrate our two separate awards in the 1987 Audubon Chapter Newsletter Contest, we provide further detail as furnished by National Audubon.

Our *Western Tanager*, as edited by Fred Heath, and worked on by many editorial and non-editorial contributors, won *two* separate high awards. These were:

1. Second place/nationally in Category I/ newsletters (chapters with more than 900 members).
2. The *single* special award for coverage of conservation issues.

First, a brief comment on the significance of a chapter newsletter. National Audubon has told us, very correctly,:

"One of the most important things your chapter does is a newsletter. It is the only regular communication between chapter leaders and far-flung chapter members. The newsletter represents your chapter in the community, and many people will judge the chapter by it.

"The newsletter is your best vehicle to announce, inform, invite, entertain, educate, praise, induce and call to arms. It is the heartbeat of your chapter."

In all, 210 chapter newsletters were entered in the 1987 contest. There were three categories, covering large, medium, and small chapters. Since LAAS has over three thousand members, it was of course entered in the large category.

The *Tanager* won second place outright, behind only the first place winner, Seattle. Three newsletters were tied for third place in our category; they were Dallas County, New York City, and Fairfax, Virginia.

Our newsletter had to survive an exhaustive three-stage process of evaluation, and received 191 of a possible 200 points in the initial judging. Eight separate criteria were used, including quality of writing, identification, quality of production, use of art, content, design (we got perfect scores on this as well as some other categories), message, and cause.

We quote some of the judges' comments:

"This is a wonderful newsletter. The bird and natural history coverage is excellent... I especially enjoyed Sandy Wohlgenuth's column."

The other judge felt that our type size was a bit small, but went on to say: "This is a very important publication -- keep up the great work."

Our Western Tanager Special Conservation Coverage Award:

Twelve other newsletters were mentioned by the judges for some aspect of conservation coverage. Also, two other chapters were given the recognition of an honorable mention.

However, it was the *Western Tanager* alone which won the sole special award for such coverage. The judges said:

"While many of the newsletters contain a healthy mix of conservation, natural history, and birding, no other entrant had as comprehensive coverage of a single issue as Los Angeles Audubon Society's newsletter, the *Western Tanager*. The "Tanager" chronicles every development of the campaign to save the California condor from extinction. The coverage has facts, feelings, science, and politics. While this issue is the chapter's focus, the newsletter does not neglect other conservation issues. In particular, it carries a wonderful column, *Conservation Conversation*, by Sandy Wohlgenuth. [Hear, Hear! --Ed.] For these reasons, the judges award the special award for coverage of conservation issues to Los Angeles Audubon Society."

To say the least, we are all very proud of recognition represented by the awards, and proud too of the people who selflessly helped in the long-term work -- Fred Heath in particular, but all the others too. That means for instance all our regular department contributors Sandy Wohlgenuth, and of course Hal Baxter and Kimball Garrett for Birds of the Season. And *all* the contributors of items and articles, and makers of suggestions. And Anthony Thorne-Booth and Etc. Graphics for their beautiful design and typography. And John Parque and Beacon Litho for their splendid and efficient printing. And the labelers and mailers for their indispensable work.

And we pledge to do everything possible to keep up the quality of the newsletter in the future, and to justify the faith and expenditures of all you LAAS members in the continuing work. *Congratulations to every member of the Los Angeles Audubon Society!!!*



Book Review

An Audubon Handbook: Western Birds

by John Farrand

McGraw-Hill, New York, 1988.

488 pp., \$13.50.

Review by Charles Hood

Here's a quiz. What do Clapper Rails, South Polar Skuas, Red-billed Tropicbirds, Common Murres, Green Herons, Roadrunners, Pileated Woodpeckers, Ospreys, and Ross' Geese all have in common? Well, according to John Farrand, each of these is crow-sized. "Wait a minute," you say. "Crow-sized? Since when? Ospreys have six foot wingspans and crows have half that." I agreed with you and if I were telling beginners about Ospreys, I would compare them to eagles, not crows. There are many "wait a minutes" in this book, as you will see.

Western Birds is part of a three book set, the other two being a volume on Eastern species and a companion to both, introducing birding. Although titled a handbook, this book has a first sentence which reads "in the preparation of this field guide . . ." and field guide it is, in layout and intent. The size and weight of the *National Geographic Guide*, **Western Birds** follows the usual format. It opens with general comments about habitats and scapulars, has a core text with ID photographs, and closes with an index. (Which, by the way, is incorrectly labeled as an appendix.) At first glance it looks like a cross between the still in-print *Audubon Western Bird Guide* (red cover) and the *Audubon Society Master Guide*. It only includes breeding and wintering species west of the hundredth meridian and south of the 55th parallel. If you live in Alaska or if you like chasing what I call the ant birds—migrants, vagrants, and accidents—you're out of luck.

With the exceptions I'll discuss in a moment, there is one species per page, each with the same format. Top to bottom it goes like this: name, synopsis of size and habitat, inset, thermometer, pictures (50% of page), then main text. By thermometer I mean a thin rectangle whose tinted sections tell you how large a bird is, on a scale of one (very small), two (sparrow-sized), to seven (very large). The popular "crow-sized" category is indicated by five shaded sections. The round insets show either the head only or the bird in flight or some sketched detail like a tern's tail. The text describes plumage, call, habitat, and similar species. Range gets listed in general terms but there are no maps.



All in all, it makes an attractive page. In fact, anyone flipping through this guide would be struck by the tasteful symmetry of the layout. To give one example, on page 40/41, we have Royal Terns on the left and Elegants on the right. There are three shots of each bird; each set of pictures forms a square, with the tall half frame of the square being closest to the binding. The Royals look right while the Elegants face them, looking left; each group has a flying shot, a standing shot, and a closeup shot. It balances very well.

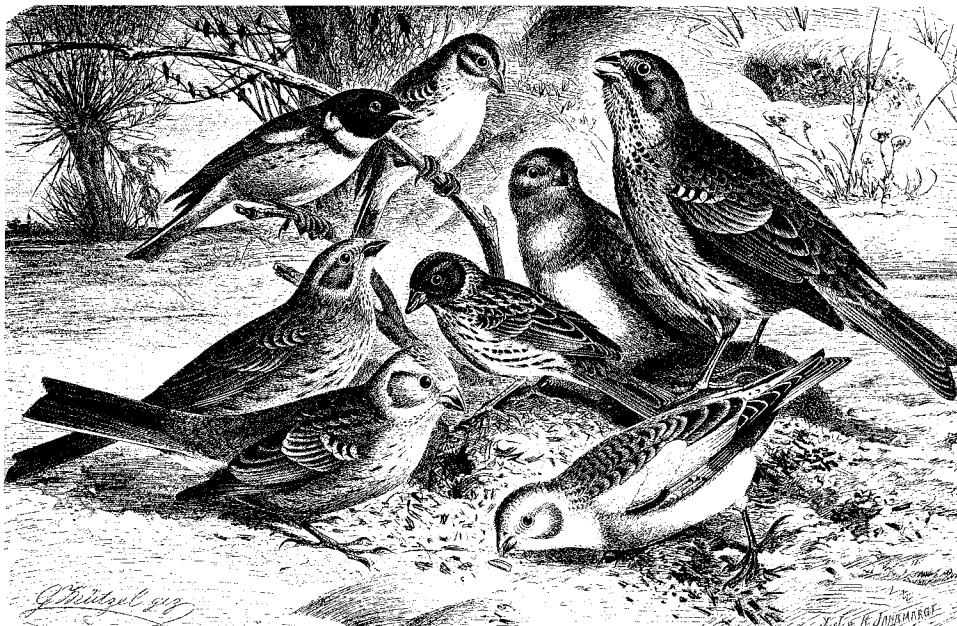
Yet there is more to bird identification than geometry. This guide, glossy as it is, has problems. Take the one critter/one page goal. This would have been a fine idea—if they had stuck to it. Turn, for example, to page 63, labeled Cassin's Auklet. Two alcids bob here, neither one in focus. Wait a minute, that top picture, that's not an auklet, that's a Craveri's Murrelet. Checking the text turns up a confirmation in tiny print—yup, Craveri's. (The plates themselves are not captioned.) It's okay by me if they want to save space, but to have the name of Y on the top of the page and below that the picture of X, well, that's just stupid. Sixteen plates do this . . . woodpeckers, jays, bluebirds, owls, and so on. One name, two birds. Even

something as common as a Golden-crowned Kinglet has to sit anonymously under the Ruby-crowned Kinglet's banner. Why? Beats the heck out of me.

Maybe the kinglets should be happy. They at least got in. Here is a list of western species whose pictures you will not find anywhere in **Western Birds**: Berylline Hummingbird, Black Swift, Black-bellied Whistling Duck, Black-capped Gnatcatcher, Cave Swallow, Clark's Grebe, Colima Warbler, Eared Trogon, Five-striped Sparrow, Grace's Warbler, Magnificent Frigatebird, Pacific Gnatcatcher, Ruff, Rufous-winged Sparrow, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Sharp-tailed Sparrow, Tri-colored Blackbird, Vaux's Swift, and Xantus' Murrelet.

While all of the layouts are very artful, once again—as in the other Audubon guides—we get some poor photos. That includes hard-to-shoots like storm petrels and common things like Hermit Warbler. Come on, Hermit Warbler? Can't we get clear shots even of it? Also, every page has a round inset the size of a quarter, yet 115 of those insets merely repeat the picture already on that page. The inset might be reversed or rotated, but even so, that provides no new information. And in cases where the original plate is fuzzy, say with the Tropical Kingbird (whose tail notch is over-emphasized anyway), blowing the face up larger only exaggerates the blur. Another two dozen insets recycle shots that have appeared on earlier pages.

How are the text descriptions? For things like Chestnut-sided Chickadees, fine. For the trickier ones it varies from so-so to nicely done. The arrangement of pages is a different matter. The introduction says that "no knowledge of taxonomy is required to find a species." That's because this ignores taxonomy. What you do need is a vivid imagination and a crystal ball. Progression is by association; warblers (like a mixed feeding flock) are interspersed



among kinglets, gnatcatchers, and vireos. And the range descriptions are a Chinese fire drill. Listen to this for Ruby-crowned Kinglet: "Breeds from nw. Alaska across Canada to Newfoundland, south to Baja and New Mexico, Great Lakes region, and n. New England. Winters from British Columbia, n. Texas, and Maryland south." That's tough going. Maybe a metaphor would help . . . "breeding range, a half moon across the top of the US, wintering in a reverse moon in the south." Or just jump to a map; why not?

Since I have been going at this with both fists, I may as well continue. Here is a sample list of further "wait a minutes." In the introduction Farrand states that warblers are seen alone because they are insect eaters . . . in winter at least, I've found the opposite to be true, for just that reason. For Glaucous-winged Gull (first entry in the book), the third picture is almost certainly a hybrid. None of the shots of Thayer's, Mew, or Ring-billed Gull give a clear profile of the relative differences in their bills. The Black Tern plates present only clean breeding adults, with no mention of how mottled the transition birds get. There is no picture of the Bonaparte's Gull in winter dress; storm petrels could definitely be handled better, and even the Pied-billed Grebe is handled misleadingly, by being separated from the other grebes and paired instead with Oldsquaw. (Kudos to the art director though for tracking down an Oldsquaw picture that makes it look like a Pied-billed Grebe.) For the flight plates, with ducks we usually only get breeding males, and in the raptor flight plates Grey Hawk and Broad-winged Hawk are shown, but not Cooper's or Red-shouldered. Both dowitchers are only shown in breeding plumage; Zone-tailed Hawks are indicated to breed in California (which they have, but only a few times in total); no female Townsend's Warbler is shown; the pictures of Blue Grosbeak are so badly out of focus you can barely tell that they are birds. I could go on, but you get the idea.

Why do I fuss so over a few dozen minor points? Because I think that the Audubon Society as a whole needs to rethink its strategies on field guides. It has yet to produce a portable bird book as good as the eight buck Golden Guide. And look at the gorgeous international guides coming out of Princeton. Sure, those are expensive, but so is this handbook set . . . forty bucks for the package of three. Even the National Geographic Guide costs less than half that, and it at least covers Alaska and South Texas. I am glad that Farrand put together an attractive book. But why not keep the glossies yet include better species coverage . . . in sum, why not blend science and art? Aududon himself did so brilliantly. Given the resources at Farrand's disposal, it sure seems that a better book-better in concept and better in execution-could have resulted.

ANNUAL BANQUET

Tuesday, February 9, 1988

at the

FISH SHANTY

8500 Burton Way

at La Cienega

Cocktails 6:00 p.m., Dinner 7:30 p.m.

Cost: \$20.00 per person

Speaker: Dr. Jared Diamond,

Professor of Physiology, UCLA

will speak on.

THE ORIGIN OF RACES OF BIRDS - AND PEOPLE

an enlightening and entertaining look

at some aspects of bird and human evolution.

ADVANCE RESERVATIONS REQUIRED!

NO TICKETS SOLD AT DOOR

*Send check with stamped self-addressed envelope to
LAAS no later than January 28.*

Specify Fin or Hoof

(Fish or Beef)

Researcher Could Use Help With Sightings of Tagged American Crows

As part of my dissertation research, I have been marking crows in the Sepulveda Dam Recreation Area with patagial wing tags. My study population resides on the Balboa Golf Course, but individuals regularly leave to forage and socialize elsewhere. I would greatly appreciate the reporting of sightings of marked crows anywhere off the golf course. Each individual is named by two letters painted on identical tags on both wings. I need to know both letters or I will not know who it is. Please call 213 823 8748 with any information.

Thanks so much,
Carolee Caffrey
Department of Biology
University of California
Los Angeles, CA 90024

Bird Art in L.A.

"Birds In Art" is the title of a worthwhile and imposing new exhibition of dozens of bird paintings coming to Los Angeles in January, 1988. The subject is decidedly calculated to interest LAAS members.

The paintings are by such well-known and eminent painters as our universally known Roger Tory Peterson, Robert Bateman, Guy Coheleach, Sir Peter Scott, and featured artist Kent Ullberg.

The exhibition is at the Director's Gallery of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, and the dates are January 24 to March 6. The exhibit will be opened daily everyday but Monday; there is an admission charge of \$3.00 for adults, and \$1.50 for students and seniors.

The exhibit is from the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum of Wausau, Wisconsin. This exhibit and its annual predecessors have been shown nationally, and even internationally as far off as Beijing, China.

Conservation Conversation

by Sandy Wohlgemuth



Tropical birding in the Americas has become an irresistible attraction for the birder -- who can afford it. A glance through a field guide to Mexico or Panama with page after page of brilliant hummingbirds and tanagers (that will never cross into southeastern Arizona) blows the mind. Whole new families of birds beckon from beyond our southern border like gaily wrapped presents under the tree on Christmas morning. There are

many commercial tour groups eager to lead small parties of birders to Latin America, arranging for travel, food, sleeping accommodations and expert leaders. Universities and museums -- and even Audubon societies -- offer similar opportunities. Some intrepid travellers prefer to go it on their own, seeking out the birds themselves -- and saving a lot of money. There is usually a trade-off here with the amateurs enjoying the pleasure of discovery but missing birds

that the experienced professional is likely to find. Costa Rica, Mexico, Ecuador and Peru seem to be the most popular destinations. And in Mexico, Guatemala and Peru fascinating ancient ruins may be thrown in for good measure. Until recently, the political situation in Guatemala made a bird tour next to impossible. Even today, internal turmoil in Venezuela and Peru may preclude travel in certain areas of those countries.

And Nicaragua? Many varied groups have visited Nicaragua -- including a hostile handful of U.S. congressmen. Most visitors have been sympathetic to the regime and have come to help in the civilian area; others simply to find out for themselves what's going on in this controversial hot spot. To my knowledge, no nature tours have been in the country since hostilities with the *contras* began. Which is a pity, because Nicaragua has much to offer the wildlife aficionado. It has about 750 birds and 200 mammal species and, according to one expert, the greatest total area of intact ecosystems in Central America.

During the long years of the Somoza dynasty there was very little concern for environmental protection. As in other countries in the region, cotton and beef production was encouraged for export, pushing the peasant farmers into the coastal rain forest. That now sadly familiar development eliminated 30% of Nicaragua's tropical rain forests. A U.S.-owned timber company was allowed to clear-cut 3000 square kilometers of coastal pines and then leave without even an attempt at reforestation. That's 2 percent of the total area of a country only a little larger than Pennsylvania. Hundreds of rare and endangered otters, jaguars, crocodiles, ocelots and parrots were exported, resulting in severe depletion of many species and the extermination of some. Nicaragua has an agreement with Costa Rica and Panama to stop the exploitation of the endangered green sea turtle. For six years after the agreement was signed Somoza, who owned two processing plants, exported great quantities of turtle meat. International pressure from environmentalists eventually forced him to close the plants.

Soon after the Sandinista revolution in 1979 the new regime created the Institute of Natural Resources and the Environment, and then the National Park Service. As in



its peaceful neighbor to the south, Costa Rica, there is a strong feeling for the environment in upper echelon of the government. Export of endangered species has been banned, a reforestation program is under way, and arable land has been given to the peasants to discourage the invasion of the rain forests. Foreign timber companies are no longer at work but there is still some slash-and-burn agriculture and considerable domestic use of wood as fuel. The National Park Service has tripled park area in the last six years with the ambitious goal of setting aside 18 percent of the country's territory as parkland. A new refuge was created on the Pacific coast recently to protect the nesting beaches of the olive Riddley sea turtle. The World Wildlife Fund calls it "one of the best examples of integrated natural resource management in South America." U.S. scientists are joining Nicaraguan biologists in a research project there on the turtles.

In 1985, Costa Rica and Nicaragua decided to form an international "peace park" to include the tropical rain forests of the Atlantic coast that is shared by both countries. This is the wettest area in Central America and is one of the largest and most unspoiled rain forests in the region. It is so undisturbed and unexplored that great numbers of species of plants and animals have not yet been identified. With the support of local biologists, the National University and the government, the 4500 square kilometer Tropical Rainforest Biosphere Reserve was created. Costa Rica and Panama are working on a similar International Park on their mutual border. The three countries believe that these shared

projects will help reduce tensions and establish a climate of peaceful relations.

Needless to say, Nicaragua's most devastating environmental problem is the war. Guerrillas strike and run away and hide and a forest makes an excellent hiding place. (We recall that the herbicide, Agent Orange, was used in Vietnam to eliminate the vegetation that made the Vietcong hard to find.) The forests have been badly shot up. Simply building roads and bridges and housing for soldiers can be destructive. Honduras, where U.S. and Honduran troops have had joint maneuvers the last year or so, has suffered as well. An official of the Honduras State Forestry Corporation says that the war games and the effect of thousands of fleeing refugees from the fighting in Nicaragua have destroyed 1000 square kilometers of rain forests in 1986. Maneuvers alone, he adds, have resulted in the loss of 10 percent of Honduras' pine forests. The contras have kidnapped and killed many Nicaraguan Park staff, wrecking reforestation programs, burning research stations and tree nurseries.

The war, of course, demands greater priorities than environmental protection; 40 percent of the national budget goes to defense. With the wartime trade embargo and the wartime problems of inflation, increased foreign debt and lowered exports, the country is in bad shape. World Wildlife Fund has said, "the drain on the economy from the continued conflict has had a far-reaching negative impact. Government conservation programs are severely reduced and local people are increasingly tempted to exploit natural resources..." Funds for the environment have been cut

back drastically and the Biosphere Reserve with Costa Rica is on hold.

The amazing thing is that this small Third World country with only three million people, burdened with war and a world-class opponent to the north, still has the enlightenment and the will to take vigorous steps to ensure its environmental future. A conference was held recently in Managua, where 150 delegates from Central and South America, Europe and the United States met to consider Central American environmental problems. There was overwhelming agreement that peace was the essential factor for maintaining the integrity of the rain forest ecosystem. One of the U.S. delegates was Hazel Wolf, National Audubon's Outstanding Conservationist of 1985. It is not known whether she was speaking officially for National Audubon or as an individual, but she is quoted as saying, "the most important thing that U.S. environmentalists can do for conservation in Nicaragua is demand that the government end aid to the contras and lift the economic embargo."

Source: *The Amicus Journal*, Fall 1987, Vol 9 Number 4. A publication of the Natural Resources Defense Council.

Bifocals and Binoculars

by Bob Manns

EDITORIAL NOTE: This piece is by an Atlanta optician, and ran in the Atlanta Wingbars newsletter, November, 1987. Ordinarily we try not to run pieces already printed. But there are exceptions, and this is one. That is because the redoubtable Hank Childs regards it as of general interest to what he calls "elderly birders", and because your editor agrees with him. Our sincere thanks to Atlanta Wingbars and Bob Manns.

Tired of cutting birds in half? Weary of trying to remember to use only the top half of your eyeglasses to view through binocs? Ready ditch your bi or trifocals altogether? If you're even considering any of the above, it means one thing. Your eyeglasses are divided into two or more prescriptions, usually for close-up and distance reinforcement. The line between the two (or more)

continually gets into the exit pupil of your binocular and either cuts the bird in half or fuzzes half of him or otherwise intrudes on the picture. Sometimes to the extent of identification. Well, the last can't be abided by. No.

What to do? Well, the author had the problem for a few weeks after acquiring bifocals and, being the easily vexed type, solved the problem so quickly it gave him whiplash. What'd he do? Well, I'll tell you. In a word.

He grabbed an old sunglass that had become useless, took it to his favorite optometrist and requested the man to put only the *top* of his prescription (that for distance) in the ugly sunglass frame! Sure, the optomy told him he wouldn't be able to read, but he replied he'd always had a difficult time reading anyway while using binoculars. He got the point. Made up the glasses. L'il ol' author bounced into the field next day and the joy, I bet, could be heard for miles around. No line! Whole birds! No truncated trees! A new lease on his wildlife! Maybe the joy could be heard for two miles!

But a warning. Yes, a warning.

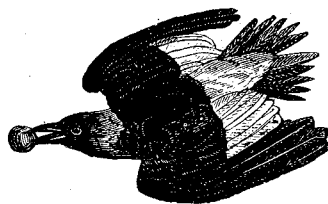
Unless your binoculars have high eye-point or relief, it doesn't much matter if you wear bifocals or not. You're simply not seeing enough of the picture anyway for it to make any difference. How to tell if your binocs have enough relief for you to make the change? Simple. Take off your eyeglasses. Look into the binocs at a distance and note the size of the picture. Then, put on said eyeglasses and look again at the distance. The picture should be the same size! If the picture is smaller, you've got a low eye relief bino and I would counsel you not to take the trouble.

But, if you've got a yen to see like gangbusters again (which most of us did at one time), then go seek out the proper binocular and start at the front of the matter. Then...

Imagine it. Not only the big picture you once had before those confounded eyeglasses but, now, no line in the picture! It's enough to give you a Scarlet Tanager and a Golden-winged Warbler in the same look!

Birds of the Season

by Kimball L. Garrett



The frenzy of searching for unusual migrants and vagrants through the late fall period merges imperceptibly into the equally frenzied hunt for unusual wintering species prior to and through the Christmas Bird Count period. We've always had a hard time distinguishing between late fall vagrants that are still on the move, and those that have settled in for the winter. There is no magical cut-off date that separates fall vagrants from wintering vagrants. Certain birds appear to be on the move even into late November or early December, while others have settled onto wintering grounds as early as August. In other words, the several week period preceding and encompassing the Christmas Count period is an exciting and complex time to be afield, and to keep careful counts and records at favored birding locales. With this preface, let's see what kinds of sightings were made through November this year.

A three wagtail year in southern California is not something most birders would have predicted as a likely scenario. And yet,

following the August Black-backed Wagtail in Port Hueneme and the September Yellow Wagtail at Malibu Lagoon, we are now able to report the sighting of a **White Wagtail** at a set of water district ponds off Rose Avenue in Oxnard. The bird was initially found by Jim Royer and Randy Moore on 22 November, and played hide and seek with numerous birders into early December. An adult, it showed essentially no white in the primaries (unlike the adult Black-backed Wagtail at Port Hueneme, which had mostly white wings). It also had a frustrating habit of flying off over the horizon, only to return an hour (or several hours) later. A great deal remains to be learned about the field identification (and species status) of the birds of the White Wagtail group, and this year's Oxnard record obviously awaits review by the California Bird Records Committee.

A two booby year in southern California isn't so unexpected, until one considers which two boobies we're talking about. There have been years in the past when Blue-footed and Brown Boobies have appeared together at the Salton Sea. Neither species has been seen this year in California, but the two booby year was salvaged by the brief appearance of an adult **Masked Booby** at San Elijo Lagoon north of San Diego in mid-November (Louis Santaella).

There is only one previous record of this species for California (a bird far off San Diego County). Amazingly, a **Red-footed Booby** was seen on a Los Angeles Audubon pelagic trip for the second consecutive month. On 15 November an immature was seen and extensively photographed between Santa Catalina and Santa Barbara Islands (Jon Dunn, Jonathan Alderfer, Herb Clarke, Arthur Howe, et al.). This appears to have been a different individual than the one observed on the 11 October pelagic trip closer to Santa Barbara Island. The 15 November trip also recorded a **Butler's Shearwater** near Osborn Bank; this is a difficult species to come by in our southern waters.

Winter invasions of many species continued in a herky-jerky fashion. **Mountain Chickadees** continued to be very widespread and numerous, e.g., at the Los Angeles Country Club on 23 November (Ken Kendig and Kimball Garrett) and 7 on Pt. Dume the previous day (Kimball Garrett). **Pygmy Nuthatches** also continued a major invasion; Kendig and Garrett found 15 at the Los Angeles Country Club, and there was one at Jane Reynolds Park in Lancaster on 27 November (KG). Among the many **White-headed Woodpeckers** outside the species breeding range was one in the Santa Ana Mountains of Orange County, one at the Los Angeles Country Club (*vide* Ken Kendig), and one in Shake Canyon west of Lake Hughes (Jonathan Alderfer). Many observers commented on the abundance of **Pine Siskins** in the lowlands, and flocks of **Red Crossbills**



were noted in Arcadia (Mike San Miguel)—and Hansen Dam (Dustin Alcalá); a single crossbill was at Charmlee County Park in the Santa Monica Mountains on 12 November (Mickey Long).

Three **Tundra Swans** made a brief stop at Hansen Dam on 10 November (Dustin Alcalá), and a single bird was on Quail Lake on 27 November (Kimball Garrett). The perennial male **Tufted Duck** returned to Quail Lake in mid-November, sporting brownish sides and a rather short tuft (one might argue that more than one individual had been involved over the last ten years, a difficult issue to resolve). Two **Red-breasted Mergansers** (scarce inland) and two **Common Goldeneyes** were also on Quail Lake on 27 November (Kimball Garrett). Local **Merlins** included one on Pt. Dume (22 November, KG), and one at the Los Angeles Country Club the next day (KG and Ken Kendig).

Both **Mew** and **Glaucous-winged Gulls** were observed by Hank Childs at Santa Fe Dam (Irwindale) on 18 November; both species are scarce inland. Another Glaucous-winged was in Castaic on 27 November (KG). Observers should be on the lookout for color-banded **Sanderlings** (and marked birds in general); a Sanderling sporting green, orange and white color bands at Malibu Lagoon on 29 November was likely one of the birds marked in Oceanside by Barbara Kus of San Diego University.

The **Rudy Ground-Dove** at Furnace Creek Ranch was present till at least 28 November. Single **Broad-billed Hummingbirds** were found in Ventura and in Orange County in late November and early December. Three **Lewis' Woodpeckers** were in the valley oaks in Cheeseboro Canyon, Agoura, on 8 November (Anna Marie Bovill Lea), and at least four were there a week later. Up to three **Winter Wrens** were at Furnace Creek Ranch in Death Valley; one, found on 8 November and still present at the end of the month, showed characters (including distinctive calls) of the eastern *biemalis* race (unrecorded west of New Mexico).

A **Bell's Vireo** was reported from Harbor Lake on 29 November (Jerry Friedman). A **Solitary Vireo** at the Arboretum in Arcadia on 14 November was thought to show characters of the nominate "Blue-headed" race (Mark Kincheloe). A **Yellow-throated Vireo** put in a brief stay along San Pedro Creek in Goleta in mid-November. Exceptionally late was a **Warbling Vireo** in Exposition Park from 20 November to at least 1 December (KG). The **Worm-eating Warbler** in Huntington Beach Central Park was still present on 28 November (Mark Kincheloe); also present was a **Black-and-White Warbler** and a **Varied Thrush**. A **Summer Tanager** was in Long Beach Recreation Park at the end of November (Rich Bradley). An immature male **Painted Bunting** was found by Jon Dunn at

Devereaux Slough in Goleta on 19 November.

Scott's Orioles generally depart southern California in the winter, but small numbers occur in canyons at the western edge of the southern desert and in the interior portions of the southern coastal slope. Supporting this pattern were three birds, including two adult males, in Palm Canyon, near Palm Springs, on 28 November (Sharon Milder). Another adult male was at the St. Andrew's Priory, Valyermo, on 21 November (Dick Smith).



A female **Rusty Blackbird** was found at Malibu Lagoon on 29 November (KG); it was readily seen after that date along the creek north of the highway and, especially, around the market garbage bins (not the most fitting setting for a bird with few county records in recent years).

The southern California winter, such as it is, is settling in as I write this. So once again it seems odd to be reminding readers that our very earliest spring migrants are just around the corner. Enjoy the transition from "winter" to "spring", and keep track of those birds!

Send any interesting bird observations to:
Kimball L. Garrett
Section of Birds and Mammals
Natural History Museum of
Los Angeles County
900 Exposition Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90007
or phone (213) 820-8170

Membership Note

The National Audubon Society is computerized through the Neodata Company in Boulder, Colorado, so it is no longer advisable to renew through the Los Angeles Audubon Society. The only advantage in renewing through the Los Angeles Audubon Society is if your membership has lapsed. At that time it would expedite receiving the next *Western Tanager*.

Neodata has a system of sending multiple notices commencing four months prior to your membership lapses. Frequently, there is an overlap from the time you mailed your dues and the next scheduled renewal reminder. Many people have received notices after they have remitted their dues because of this.

Subscribers who are members of another Audubon Chapter should not send their renewals to the Los Angeles Audubon Society.

Last Call for LAAS Shirts

The Los Angeles Audubon Society sweat-shirts and T-shirts are almost gone.

The price of sweatshirts is being reduced to \$10.00, and the T-shirts are being reduced to \$5.00. Buy them now at our bookstore. There are only a few left.

EDITOR Larry Steinberg

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CONSERVATION EDITOR Sandy Wohlgenuth

ORNITHOLOGY consultant Kimball Garrett

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PRESIDENT Ellsworth Kendig

1st VICE PRESIDENT Bob Van Meter

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY Andrea Kaufman

Audubon membership (local and national) is \$30 per year (individual), \$38 (Family), \$18 (student), \$21 (senior citizen) or \$23 (senior citizen family) including AUDUBON Magazine and THE WESTERN TANAGER. To join, make checks payable to the National Audubon Society, and send them to Audubon House at the above address. Members wishing to receive the TANAGER by first class must send checks for \$5 to Los Angeles Audubon Society.

THE WESTERN TANAGER received the 1987 Special Conservation Award and 2nd place honors for Newsletter, Chapter with more than 900 members from the National Audubon Society.

Subscriptions to the THE WESTERN TANAGER separately are \$12 per year (Bulk Rate) or \$17 (First Class, mailed in an envelope). To subscribe, make checks payable to Los Angeles Audubon Society.

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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.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

January-February 1988

EVENING MEETINGS

Meet at 8:00 p.m. in Plummer Park

Tuesday, January 12, - Annual Members' Photo Contest. Bring your three best bird slides to be judged by the experts(?). First three winners will receive bookstore prizes and their photographs will be published in the *Western Tanager*. Bring your slides in by 7:30 p.m. to give us time to set up. Slides must be of wild birds (no captive or zoo birds) and you must be present to enter. This annual event has proven to be one of the most popular programs of the year. Cheer your favorites, boo the judges.

Tuesday, February 9 - Annual Banquet - Have dinner and drinks with your birding friends at the LAAS Annual Banquet at the Fish Shanty. After dinner **Dr. Jared Diamond**, Professor of Physiology at UCLA, will speak on **The Origin of Races of Birds - and People**. Dr. Diamond is one of UCLA's most celebrated scientists; he was recently awarded a prestigious MacArthur Fellowship. His wide-ranging talk will center around why subspecies of birds evolve and will make some illuminating comparisons with human evolution. If you heard Dr. Diamond speak last year about how birds and people select their mates, you'll be looking forward to this entertaining and insightful talk. Make your reservations soon! See page 7 for the details.

IDENTIFICATION WORKSHOPS

Precede the regular evening meetings,
7:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Tuesday, January 12 - No Identification Workshop. If you plan to enter slides in the January Photo Contest please arrive by 7:45 p.m. to give us time to set up.

Tuesday, February 9 - No Identification Workshop. Take the evening off and join us for cockatiels (?) at the annual banquet. Doors open at 6:00 p.m., Dinner at 7:30 p.m. Details above and on page 7.

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.

Saturday, January 9 - Join **Bob Shanman** for a morning at the unique **Ballona Wetland**. This is an excellent marshland site, practically in our own backyard. Take Marina 90 west to Culver Blvd., turn left to Pacific Ave. then right to footbridge at end. 8 a.m. (More info: call (213) 545 2867 after 6 p.m.)

Sunday, January 10 - In cooperation with the Santa Monica Mountain Task Force, meet leader **Gerry Haigh** for his monthly morning walk through **Topanga State Park**. Spend the morning birding in lovely oak woodlands, meadows and chaparral. From Topanga Canyon Blvd. take a very sharp turn east on Entrada Dr. (7 miles south of Ventura Blvd., 1 mile north of Topanga Village). Keep bearing left on Entrada Dr. at various road forks to parking lot at end. 8 a.m. \$3 fee.

Sunday, January 16 - David White will lead his monthly walk through a good diversity of habitats at the Whittier Narrows Regional Park in search of a wide variety of land and water birds. Meet at 8 a.m. at the Nature Center, 1000 Durfee Ave., So. El Monte, off Frwy 60 between Santa Anita and Peck Drive Exits, west of Frwy 605.

Saturday, January 23 - Spend a morning birding **Pt. Mugu Naval Base**. Shorebirds and other waterfowl will be the highlight with White-faced Ibis a possibility and a chance for rarities

in this coastal location. Carpooling on the base required. As the base desires ensured participation, a \$5.00 reservation fee is being charged and will be refunded at the beginning of the trip. (Please . . . no children or cameras. If not a U.S. citizen, give date and place of birth with your reservation.) More info to come . . . call the tape!

Saturday, February 6 - Salton Sea. Join **Norm Hogg** of Santa Monica College for a full day of birding on this most popular of annual trips. The enormous variety of waterfowl is the highlight but other possibilities include Sandhill Crane, Mountain Plover, Abert's Towhee and Black-tailed Gnatcatcher. Mr. Hogg has done extensive ornithological research at the Salton Sea and has had many birding trips to this area. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Wister Unit turnoff from Hwy 111. Camping is available at Finney-Ramer Lakes for those who wish to spend the night in order to bird on Sunday. Participation is limited to the first 30. Send names and number in part, along with SASE to Reservations Chairperson, c/o Audubon House.

Sunday, February 14 - David White at **Whittier Narrows Regional Park**. See January 16 for details.

Sunday, February 14 - Topanga State Park with **Gerry Haigh**. See January 10 for details.

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Los Angeles, CA 90046

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Saturday, March 12 - Bolsa Chica. "Expect the unexpected" while viewing shorebirds, ducks, gulls, terns, raptors during a morning walk. Leader **Loren Hays** says even Peregrine Falcon and No. Fulmar have been seen there. Take the Seal Beach Blvd. exit from the Hwy 405 to Coast Hwy, then South to marked parking lot across from State Beach, between Golden West and Warner. Meet at 8:00 a.m. Bring scopes and lunch.

Saturday, March 12 - Ballona Wetlands with **Bob Shanman**. See January 9 for details.

Sunday, March 13 - Topanga State Park with **Gerry Haigh**. See January 10 for details.

Saturday, March 10 - David White at **Whittier Narrows Regional Park**. See January 16 for details.

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, 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 notified and your fee returned. Your cancellation during that time will bring a refund only if there is a paid replacement.

PELAGIC TRIPS

Sunday, February 21 - Join **Herb and Olga Clarke** for a pelagic trip to Santa Barbara Island and Osborne Banks, on the Vantuna out of San Pedro. Depart at 6:30 a.m., returning at 5:00 p.m. Fee is \$24. Look for a substantial array of birds including Shearwaters, Murrelets, and various Alcid. This is also a good time for the Grey Whale.