



WESTERN TANAGER

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The Hollywood Connection

by Chuck Bernstein

When it comes to birding, ask not what you can do for Hollywood, ask what Hollywood can do for you.

Fall birding at remote Thousand Palms Oasis, the ponderous mid-day sun, like molten gold, weighs heavily against the California fan palms, the scruffy sand cliffs,

the scrub desert brush and the partially shaded trails. The air is heavy and unmoving. The leaves are static. Each creature now is somnolent, having already sought out a cool retreat for siesta. The stench of stagnating water and decaying vegetation are all-pervasive.

There are no other visitors and few birds--a single MacGillivray's, a Black-throated Gray and five Orange-crowned Warblers, a Black-tailed Gnatcatcher, an Ash-throated Flycatcher, a few Mourning Doves and a handful of House Finches--all drowsy and only reluctantly responding to spishing.

We are leaving when I spy the head of a bird in the brush. White spectacles! That is what I *think* I see. Perhaps subconsciously eager to make the trip to this out-of-the-way place worthwhile (*or maybe it's the heat*) I impetuously call, "Solitary Vireo!"

At that very moment it comes to me that this is the 30th day of September, and as Jon Dunn sharply reminds me, a Solitary Vireo would have fled this arid low Colorado Desert long since. Just then the bird pops up and shows itself. And before I can utter a word, Bruce Hallett, visiting from Boston, mutters softly, "That's the gnatcatcher."

I say nothing. What can one say? But I wanted to do it all over again; I wanted to do the *scene* over again.



Had we been shooting a film, a voice would have shouted, "Cut! Chuck, look at the whole bird *before* you yell. We'll do a retake."

The gnatcatcher would return to the shrub. Make-up would powder its shiny bill a bit. A hairdresser would rush in to brush each barbule of each covert feather smoothly into place. I would return to my original mark, my face would be sprayed with an oily "sweat" and we would do the scene over again, and this time do it right. Whereupon the voice would yell, "That's a wrap!" and we'd go on to the next scene.

Rehearsals and retakes, that's what silver screen magic is made of and that is what the Hollywood lesson is, especially the need for rehearsals. And there really are times when, with cooperative and unflappable birds, retakes are quite possible.

Tell the truth and shame the devil; unlike the Hollywood actor each time you go out birding you are *on*. You have no script and anything can happen; you are working *live*.

And should you make a really good find, given today's communications, birders around the world could learn of it within hours. Of course, what is a rarity in one part of the globe is usually a trash bird somewhere else. Obviously a North American record here would not be so exciting in Europe, in most instances.

Nevertheless, a historic find for the Western Hemisphere, or even for North America, will not merely be heard of in far-off places; with proper authentication it will live in the birding literature possibly forever. Now, with that in mind, can you really afford to let yourself discover a spectacular bird *without a rehearsal or the possibility of a retake*?

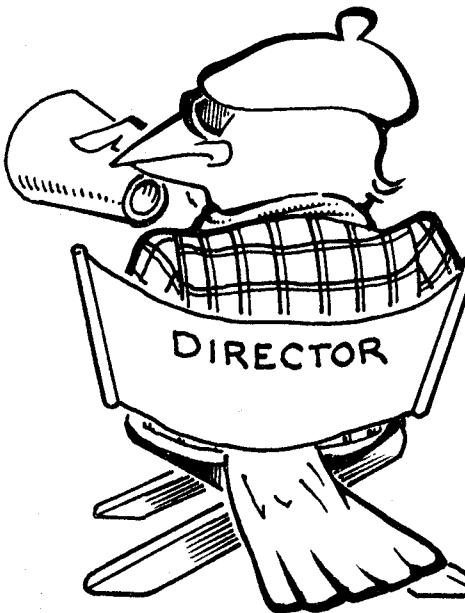
We've all gone after a reported bird only to be told, "Oh, you just missed it!" This is so common an occurrence that I hear *American Birds* will be adding a new species to be named the Jusmiss Tit. When that happens one is occasionally invited in for decaff or tea so that one may get the schedule of performances. "It'll be at the feeder again at three p.m." (*You'll have to hang around until the second show.*) Or, "It'll be in the pine tree next to the alley at six tomorrow morning." (*The bird gives two shows a day in this guy's backyard!*) Truth is, good troupers all, the birds usually do appear on time (*oh, unless they've missed a cue or left the show without notice*).

Actually, with just a bit of imagination it is not too difficult to think of birds, too, as actors. There are indeed resemblances; both are constantly preening, usually hungry, highly sensitive and extremely territorial. I have no trouble at all thinking of the Yellow-breasted Chat as the original method actor. He and Marlon Brando, in fact, sound very much alike. Remember the swashbuckling Errol Flynn? A Peregrine Falcon could double for him easily. John

Wayne often reminded me of a cocky Greater Roadrunner, the buxom blonde Mae West of a female Western Meadowlark in spring. Geraldine Page always evoked for me a delicate but determined Anna's Hummingbird and Edna May Oliver a Brown Pelican.

* * * *

May 3, 1979. The reported Key West Quail Dove is big box office in the Everglades National Park. Jean Brandt, Phil Sayre, Larry Holland and I are on Snakebite Trail looking for it. But before we can look for the dove we have got to look at Jean. Her gasping and partially-stifled screams are stealing the scene and we will have to do a retake.



Phil and I are on down the trail when Jean first cries out. "She's being stalked by either a black panther or a field mouse!" I volunteer. Then we run back up the trail scanning peripherally for the dove. Her arms are covered, sleeve-like, from fingertip to shoulder, with very large hungry mosquitos. This is quickly taken care of by a long-sleeved shirt brought up from the car.

We finally do find the dove and have good looks at that pretty face with its oddly misplaced eyebrow line *under* the eye, but only on the retake. Had Jean done a dress rehearsal beforehand we could have saved reels of film!

Some good came from the experience, however. For her trip a few years later to Churchill, where in late spring/summer one wears a head net to keep swarms of gnats out of one's eyes, ears, nose and

mouth, she added Velcro pieces to the cuffs and ankles of her clothing, which, she says, was highly successful.

* * * *

April 16, 1977. 8:10 a.m. I am alone at Devereau Slough in Goleta, California and feeling quite satisfied as I fold my tripod after viewing a life bird, a Little Gull.

Striding through the chill fog slowly rising appear Kimball Garrett and Lee Jones. Lee says, "Did you see the gull?" "Yes. It just left." "Damn! How long ago did it leave?" Kimball asks. "About two minutes ago." Kimball looks at me and says disgustedly, "Ask *him* what he was doing while you were looking at the gull." Lee grins. "Having breakfast," he says, shamefacedly. "Now, I hear, it won't be back till noon!" Kimball says, "I told you we shouldn't stop to eat!"

I learn later that indeed the bird arrived on time for its noon performance on the little spit across the slough from the roadway, when they finally got their retake!

* * * *

January 21, 1987. At the Water Reclamation Grounds in Arcata, California. Following a very long drive, Jon Dunn and I are where the script calls for us to be. In fact, the spot is so well marked, an ornithologist is in a blind, camera at the ready, bird seed scattered out ahead of the blind. We await the arrival of the star of the show, the Oriental Greenfinch.

At or around that very spot Jon and I wait half of one day and almost all of the next before leaving in frustration. That bird was not well rehearsed. We saw no sign of it.

Two weeks later Jon, together with Rich Stallcup, made that long drive again and found the bird about a mile from where we had spent two days, in a line of trees—not where it was supposed to be at all! So that was a good retake, which left me on the cutting room floor. Well, that's show biz.

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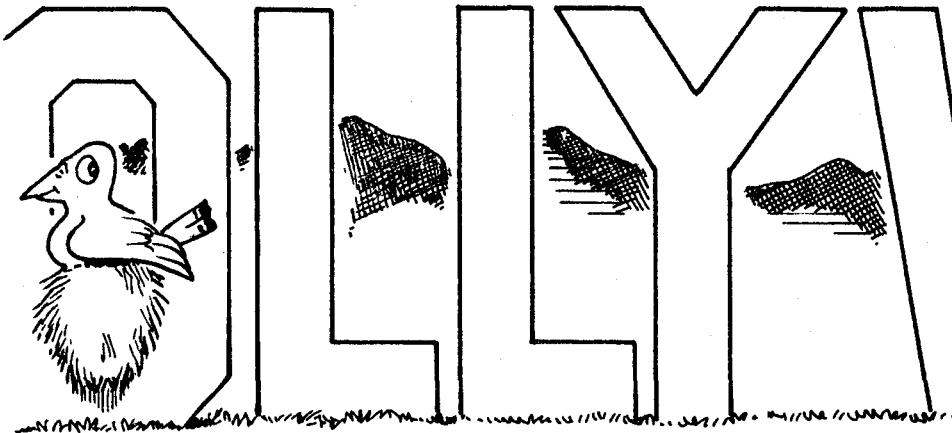
So the next time you chase after but miss a bird, don't fret, just do a retake.

Now if only I can get the *birds* to cooperate. The union? Oh, they can join a wing of the Screen Actors Guild.

And that's a wrap! No need to ruffle the feathers.

--30-30-30--

(Chuck Bernstein is the author of "The Joy of Birding," Capra Press, Santa Barbara, CA.)



Tucked away in the Hollywood Hills is an unexpected paradise for those fond of the feathered creatures of our planet. A soothing lake surrounded by green-colored pine trees, delicately dotted in butterscotch tones of pampas grass, makes the Hollywood Reservoir a unique environment for bird watching. At selected times of the year, many species can be viewed floating peacefully on the calm waters, on the shoreline, as well as an abundance of species on land.

Upon entering the Hollywood Reservoir, one can often see the acrobat of the sky, "Audubon's" Yellow-rumped Warbler performing its avian cartwheels for clouds of flying insects. Similarly, the Black Phoebe sporadically throws its handsome black and white body in the air in pursuit of daily insect delicacies. The male Phainopepla, with polished ebony body and dazzling red eyes, also exhibits expertise in catching insects on the wing. Even the Mockingbird can be observed taking time out from being the perpetual mimic by diving down and snatching an unfortunate insect off the ground. The California Thrasher, providing stiff competition for the Mockingbird is also skilled in the art of mimicry and can be heard throughout the area. It has a long curved, noble-looking beak which it uses to push away soil and dried leaves in search of food. Similar to the California Thrasher, the Rufous-sided Towhee and the Brown Towhee can be seen foraging on the ground though using their feet in a back and forth motion to scratch for food.

Another inhabitant of the Hollywood Reservoir is Anna's Hummingbird. The male has a brilliant rose-red head and throat and can be observed speeding through the sky as it defends its feeding territories. The sociable ones of the areas, the Bushtits, can be seen following each other from shrub to shrub as they feed, like a well rehearsed drill team. The Wrentit is not usually visible, but to catch a glimpse of its delicately streaked breast and white eyes is indeed something to see. Like the

Wrentit, Bewick's Wren is not always seen but can definitely be heard as it seems to "buzz" its way through the underbrush. Another rather secretive bird is the Hermit Thrush. When observed, it gives the appearance of being skittish as it nervously flicks its wings and tail. Contrary to the secretive habits of the Hermit Thrush, the spirited House Finch, the charming Oregon Junco, and the stylish White-crowned Sparrow can be seen in open woodland areas.

Some larger species of birds also frequent the Reservoir. The chattering Common Raven can be heard overhead as it flies in and out of the pine trees. One can watch in awe as the Red-tailed Hawk effortlessly glides its powerful body through the air. The Great Horned Owl seems to stare as it sits motionless in the eucalyptus tree.

Among the other types of birds to enjoy are the assorted brightly colored woodpeckers. One can hear the loud call of the Common ("Red-shafted") Flicker, and when in flight observe the salmon color of its wing and tail linings. Or see the Hairy Woodpecker with its distinctive white back as it chips out bits of bark in search of grubs. Nuttall's Woodpecker can also be viewed searching the cracks and crevices of a tree trunk for its nourishment, as well as the Red-breasted Sapsucker as it probes its pre-drilled holes in search of insects and sap.

Along with the variety of birds to see on land, there are those captivating avian creatures to be viewed on or near the water. The Western Grebe with its gem-like ruby eyes and attractive black and white body, can be seen floating in the serene waters. The Ruddy Duck, Ring-necked Duck, and Bufflehead also enjoy the tranquility that the lake has to offer. The perky Pied-billed Grebe and the energetic Eared Grebe can be observed swimming speedily underwater as they probe the rocks of the shoreline for small fish and crustaceans. And the Double-crested Cormorant can be spotted tossing a fish in the air with the accuracy of a circus juggler,

Hollywood is for the Birds

by Cathy Mish

until its meal is just right for swallowing. The Mallard and the American Coot can be seen feeding in the turquoise-blue waters of secluded coves. The Great Blue Heron stands statue-like on the shoreline with eyes fixed upon the water, awaiting the perfect fish. Similarly, the Belted Kingfisher can be seen near the water's edge. With one quick dive, he may come up with the catch of the day.

The harmonious atmosphere created by these enchanting feathered inhabitants makes a visit to the Hollywood Reservoir an extraordinary experience. In the presence of towering pine trees one can forget being in the city, only to be reminded by the renowned Hollywood sign which overlooks the lake. So come to this hidden treasure of the Hollywood Hills.



Conservation Conversation

by Sandy Wohlgemuth



The Condor Rides Again!

Would you believe that condors will be flying in the Sespe Condor Sanctuary this year? Yes, boys and girls, with any luck at all we may see half a dozen condors spreading their mighty wings and riding the thermals a few paltry miles from Los Angeles! Impossible, you say? Wrong! The California Fish and Game Commission in mid-May approved the project that practically guarantees a new exotic species in our skies: *Vultur gryphus* the Andean Condor. In the next two years, as many as 20 Andean condors will be released into the wild to test operational techniques and the environment for the eventual release of our native *Gymnogyps californianus*. All 27 of our remaining native condors, as we know, are in the San Diego Wild Animal Park and the Los Angeles Zoo. (The recent momentous hatching of the first captive-bred condor chick will increase the total to 28. And there is the promise of more to come.)

This is a daring scheme, an exciting gamble that may just work. The South American bird, as the closest relative of the California condor, is the best surrogate available. Since some techniques in handling condors have been developed using the turkey vulture, it might

reasonably be asked, "Why not use the common and plentiful turkey vulture as the surrogate species?"

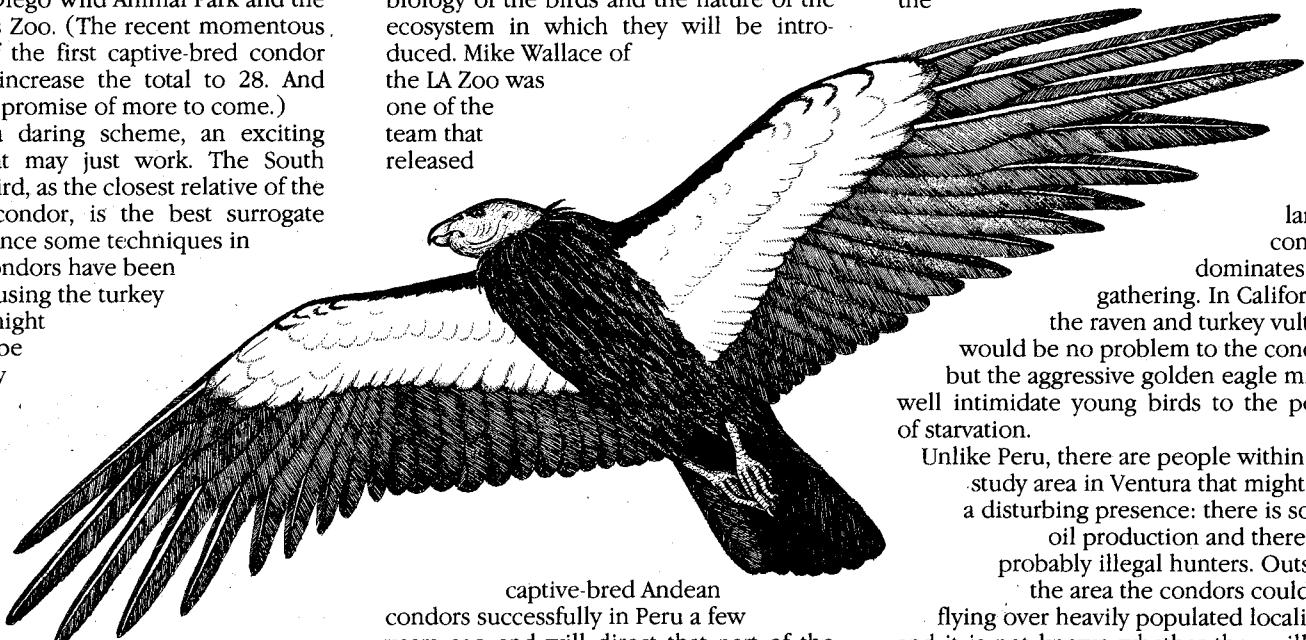
The US Fish and Wildlife

Service, in its proposal says the vulture "was eliminated from further consideration because of its light wing-loading and olfactory ability. It feeds mostly on small carrion items at sites not available to the larger condor. The condor locates its food by sight, not by smell." Since all the Andean condors to be released will be the products of captive breeding, the wild stock in South America will not be affected. The Andean condor, by the way, is itself

an endangered species (officially listed in the United States), and after this two-year project is completed, the birds will be caught and released in Venezuela and Columbia. Though it is estimated that there are about 1000 birds left in all of South America, they have been extinct in Venezuela since the turn of the century and are in serious decline in Columbia.

The reasoning behind this unprecedented idea, of course, is something like a pre-season baseball training camp: get some practice and get some experience. And get the errors out of your system before the real games start. But the scientists are not treating the Andean condors like minor league substitutes. They are going to handle them with exquisite care, from transporting them from zoos around the country to monitoring pesticides in their blood. Every step in the release has been studied and re-studied by experts in every phase of the biology of the birds and the nature of the ecosystem in which they will be introduced. Mike Wallace of the LA Zoo was

one of the team that released



captive-bred Andean condors successfully in Peru a few years ago and will direct that part of the project here.

Since lead poisoning by lead shot in their food has been determined as one of the main causes of the precipitate die-off of the California condor, the condition of the study area is of prime importance. The area in Ventura county, a contiguous wilderness that includes the Los Padres National Forest's Sespe Condor Sanctuary, the Hopper Mountain National Wildlife Refuge of the US Fish and Wildlife Service and a section of land owned by the Nature Conservancy. The southern border of the

area is only three miles north of Fillmore. About half of the study area is open grassland, the balance is dense chaparral and oak woodland. There are flowing streams with good riparian vegetation. Big-cone spruce in the higher ridges provide adequate snags for roosting raptors. California condors have foraged and nested there in the past. The Sespe has been closed to hunting for 40 years and the Hopper Mt Refuge since 1974, so there is probably little likelihood of a lead-shot hazard in animal tissue there.

However similar these condor cousins may be, southern California is not Peru. In the Peruvian study, the Andean birds were released into a wild population of condors from which the young birds learned their foraging skills. The first year's released birds here will be the crucial lot. They will have to be taught to feed themselves. There are other differences that will have to be considered with Andean condors. In Peru, there are no predators of any consequence. Here, bears and mountain lions could be a distinct threat to condors feeding on the ground. Elevated feeding platforms may be the answer. In Peru, there are five species of avian scavengers that could lead condors to food. Once at a carcass,

the

larger condor dominates the gathering.

In California, the raven and turkey vulture would be no problem to the condor, but the aggressive golden eagle might well intimidate young birds to the point of starvation.

Unlike Peru, there are people within the study area in Ventura that might be a disturbing presence: there is some oil production and there are probably illegal hunters. Outside

the area the condors could be flying over heavily populated localities and it is not known whether they will be lured back easily with the offer of fresh carcasses. Another unknown question is how they will take freezing winter temperatures, hardly a problem in Peru.

Where are all the Andean condors to come from? They breed readily in captivity and many zoos have breeding pairs. In fact, in anticipation of this project, zoos have been asked to encourage more reproduction than they normally would. Eggs from these zoos are to be flown to the San Diego Wild Animal Park and the L.A. Zoo where they will be incubated and hatched. As

with the California condors, the Andean birds will be raised using condor-like puppets for feeding to avoid imprinting on humans. There will also be some breeding at the US Fish and Wildlife's Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in Maryland where the chicks will be reared by their parents. Any differences in future behavior of the two groups will be part of the data recorded by the staff. All the birds to be released will be females, not only because the female Andean condor is smaller than the male and about the size of our native bird, but, of course, to eliminate any possibility of establishing a new introduced species. Though hardly in the nuisance class of the starling and the house sparrow, introducing new species--even an exciting one like the Andean condor--is a biological no-no.

When the chicks are 3 to 5 months old they will be put in pens in the study area. At first the birds will be separated from each other. They will be able to view the outside world through the open but barred side of their cage. Feeding will continue without contact with people and they will be given a variety of carcasses. Bait will be set out near the pens so they might see ravens, turkey vultures and golden eagles they will encounter when they are freed. A short time before they are released, the internal partitions of the pen are to be removed so that the birds can acquaint themselves with their own kind. Before all this is done, the condors will be carefully examined. (Exotic disease organisms are of special concern for transmission to native fauna.) Blood samples will be taken to measure levels of heavy metals and pesticides and to determine their general health. About a week before release they will be fitted with a radio on each wing.

The big day arrives when the youngest bird is ready to fly. The barrier to the earth and sky is removed. At first, food will be placed in the open pen and the birds will learn to return to the pen to be fed. Prior to placing the birds in the pen, predator-resistant feeding areas were set up relatively close to the pen. Carcasses will be put out at random in these areas and feeding in the pen will be discontinued. Some platforms at varying heights will be built to hold food. The observers can check their effectiveness in discouraging predators and determine which platforms are most acceptable to the birds. Gradually the feeding areas are changed and moved to greater distances from the release pen. If all goes well the condors will eventually learn to forage for themselves.

A blind will be set up near the pen and will be occupied for 24 hours. In fact, security of the entire area will be quite heavy; with law enforcement agents from the US Fish and Wildlife service, the US Forest Service, and California Fish and Game patrolling and in contact by radio with researchers at all hours. Illegal access

by anyone--hunters or birders--should be minimal. Field headquarters will be built in the vicinity of the pen where the staff can live and collect data on the birds.

Every six months the condors will be captured, blood drawn to monitor any changes in contaminants, and given general physical exams. Radios will be checked and replaced if necessary. Pit traps and cannon nets, which have been used successfully with the California condor will be used for capture.

The second year may show interesting differences as young birds will be released in to wild with an existing population of Andean condors. How will 5-month-olds react to the old-timers? Will they learn to forage more readily? Will the older birds intimidate the new arrivals?

A more general question must have occurred to everyone: "How ya gonna keep 'em down on the farm...?" If some birds begin to wander off the study site, then what? No one knows. If there is no food supply in Thousand Oaks or the Ridge Route, they may turn those big wings back to Fillmore. If not, they may soar out to the Tejon Ranch and make it on their own. Or they might get lost and starve to death. Radio telemetry will tell where they've gone and an airplane may follow them. They could be baited and trapped and returned for study. In any event it is probable that all the Andean condors will not survive, that some will be sacrificed. But that's the point of the whole expensive experiment. If there are losses, they will be to a more expendable species. The reasons for the failures will be intensively examined so that methods and techniques can be improved to minimize the losses to the tiny remnant of California condors. There may be hazards that could not be foreseen, techniques that can be sharpened, understanding of unique condor behavior we were unaware of before. After two years, all surviving birds will be captured and released in South America; thus fulfilling our obligation to another endangered species.

Assuming that the first captive-bred California condor chick will be the beginning of many successful hatchings, the native birds to be released will all be captive bred. The condors now alive (says US Fish and Wildlife) "are considered to be a necessary part of a condor captive breeding program and for this reason, would not be among the initially released birds." Thus the basic gene pool of wild birds will be preserved in captivity so that the maximum diversity of genes will be available to the offspring. No fledglings will be released unless at least three birds are physically and behaviorally ready. Also, none will be released unless there are at least three pairs successfully reproducing in captivity. If there are no serious hitches in the Andean condor program the release of the California condors may begin in five

years.

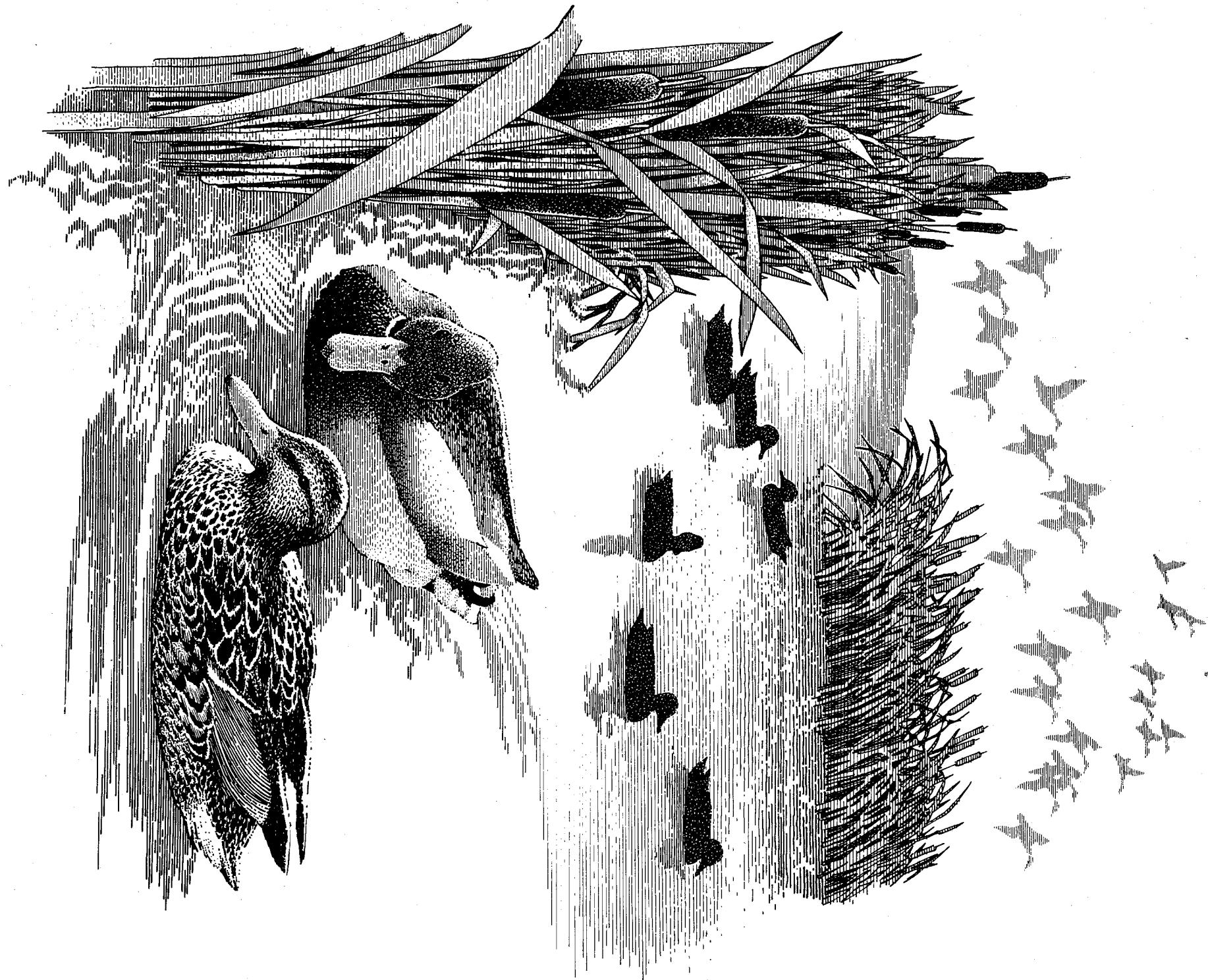
The Andean condor release could well begin as early as August of this year. And the eyes of the international ornithological world will be on this exhilarating, unprecedented event. To those of us in southern California it will be a very special occasion. We've gone through the agony of watching condors dwindle in number year after year. We've supported the Recovery Program with our prayers and our dollars. We've have the bittersweet experience of breathing a silent farewell the last time we saw a wild free bird. This is the Home Team, folks. And we'll all be in the stands rooting like mad.

Source:

Proposed Experimental Release of Andean Condors in Ventura County, California. Draft Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Report.

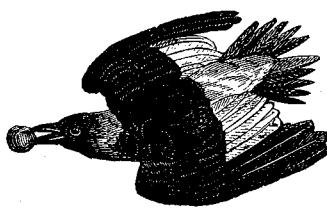
US Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Game, April 1988.



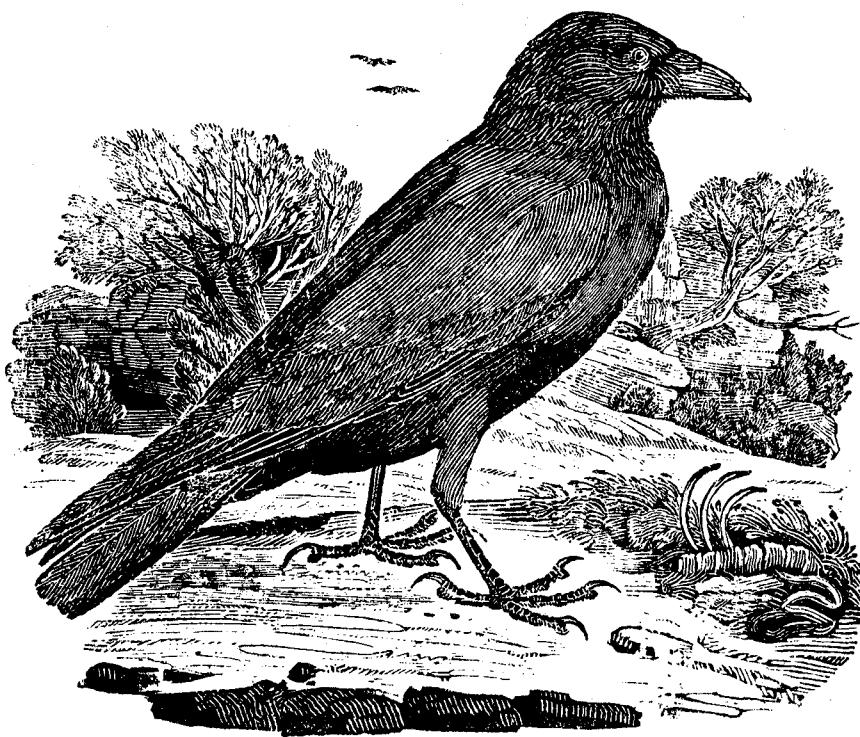


Birds of the Season

by Kimball Garrett



Due to schedule restrictions, Kimball Garrett's Birds of the Season column will not appear this month. Look for a return of the article in the July/August issue.



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

Membership Memo

A recent letter from National Audubon advises of a new policy that has been enforced since September, 1987. Chapter memberships have been changed automatically, when a person moves into the area of another chapter.

It is suggested that if you move, and wish to remain affiliated with Los Angeles Audubon, you request that your chapter not be changed when you send in your address change.



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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.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

June 1988

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

No Meeting in July— The next regular meeting will be in September.



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, July 10 — Topanga State Park. Meet leader **Gerry Haigh** at 8:00 a.m. for a pleasant morning birding in one of the first of our Santa Monica Mountains parks. Chaparral, grassy meadow, and oak woodland habitats will be covered. Late spring wildflowers may still persist, too. Grasshopper Sparrow is a possibility in grassy fields and hillsides. From Topanga Canyon Blvd. take a very sharp turn east uphill on Entrada Dr. (7 miles So. of Ventura Blvd., 1 mile No. of Topanga Village.) Follow the signs to Topanga State Park and meet in the parking lot of Trippet Ranch. \$3 parking fee.

Saturday, July 16 — Mt. Pinos. Join former LAAS President **Jean Brandt** for a day of montane birding at the top of this beautiful mountain. Known for years as the traditional Condor Lookout, this area has many other fine birding possibilities. Bluebirds, Calliope Hummers, Green-tailed Towhees and regular montane species will be seen. And someday again . . . California Condor! Meet the leader at 8:00 a.m. at the "triangle" formed by the junction of Cuddy Valley Rd. and Mil Portrero Rd. Take Hwy 5 to the summit of Tejon Pass and get off at the Frazier Park offramp. Turn left (East) and drive up the scenic Cuddy Valley. This trip will be repeated August 13.

Saturday, July 30 — Chilao Flats. Meet the leader, **Sandy Wohlgemuth** for a day of birding in this popular montane area. Meet at 8:00 a.m. in the Visitor Center parking lot. Bring lunch and liquids and expect to see the expected and, hopefully, a surprise or two! Take the Angeles Crest Highway into the mountains past Charleton Flats to Chilao.

Sunday, August 7 — Topanga State Park. Meet the leader **Gerry Haigh** at 8:00 a.m. in the parking lot of Trippet Ranch for a pleasant (if warm) morning birding the chaparral, meadows, woodlands, and riparian communities of a most accessible state park. Early (early!) fall migrants and summer breeders will

be investigated. From Topanga Canyon Blvd. take a very sharp turn east uphill on Entrada Dr. (7 miles So. of Ventura Blvd., 1 mile No. of Topanga Village.) Follow the signs to Topanga State Park. Bring drinking water and be prepared for warm weather. There is a \$3 parking fee.

Saturday, August 13 — Bellona Wetlands. Leader **Bob Shanman** resumes his series of monthly walks at our closest wetland. Bob has been doing these very popular walks for EIGHT(!) years now and has accumulated an incredible data base on this sensitive area. Come along and join the fun. The group will pay special attention to returning shorebirds and waterfowl. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Pacific Avenue Bridge. Take the Marina Fwy (90 West) to Culver Blvd., turn left to Pacific Ave., then right to the footbridge at the end. Normally street parking is plentiful.

Saturday, August 13 — Mt. Pinos. Enjoy a beautiful day of montane birding with leader **Jean Brandt**, "The Voice of Audubon." This will be the last trip of the summer to this mountain area known for its fine birding and as the traditional Condor Lookout. If plans have progressed on the experimental Andean Condor release, there MAY be a chance of a sighting. (Don't hold your breath!) Bring a picnic lunch and expect good birding for montane species

and gorgeous scenery. Meet Jean at 8:00 a.m. at the triangle formed by the junction of Cuddy Valley and Mil Portrero Roads. take Highway 5 to the summit of Tejon Pass and get off at the Frazier Park offramp. Turn left (East) and drive up the scenic Cuddy Valley.

Sunday, August 14 — McGrath State Beach. Join new leader **Kenny Youngleib** for a daylong trip to this popular shorebird and waterfowl area. We will spend the morning at McGrath proper, find a nice area to have lunch, and go exploring in the afternoon. Who knows where we'll end up or what we might find? Get into the spirit of adventure and come along. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the bridge on Harbor Blvd. Take the Pacific Coast Highway to Oxnard and turn west on Gonzalez Rd. to Harbor Blvd. and turn right (North) on Harbor to the bridge.

Sunday, September 4 — Topanga State Park. leader **Gerry Haigh** will continue his monthly walks in this beautiful and nearby area. The group will look for fall migrants and resident species. This is an ideal trip for a beginning birder or for someone new to the area. Again, be prepared for WARM weather. Meet at 8:00 a.m. in the parking lot of Trippet Ranch. From Topanga Canyon Blvd. take a very sharp turn east uphill on Entrada Dr. (7 miles So. of Ventura Blvd., 1 mile No. of Topanga Village.) Follow the signs to the state park and meet in the parking lot of Trippet Ranch \$3 parking fee.

Saturday, September 10 — Ballona Wetlands. Join leader **Bob Shanman** or new alternate leader **Ian Austin** for a pleasant morning of shorebirds and waterfowl. Black Oystercatcher is usually seen. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Pacific Ave. Bridge. Take the Marina Fwy (90 West) to Culver Blvd., turn left to Pacific Ave., then right to the footbridge at the end. Street parking is usually available.

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