



# WESTERN TANAGER

Los Angeles Audubon Society

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## Reestablishing the Socorro Dove:

### A Challenge for the Californias

Mexico's "little Galapagos," rich in unique plants and animals, is unknown to most people except scuba divers, deep-sea fishermen, and humpback-whale experts. Clarín, San Benedicto, and Socorro are volcanic islands some 250 to 360 miles south of Baja California in the deep eastern Pacific Ocean. Together with a tiny emergent cliff called Roca Partida they form a loose archipelago, the Islas Revillagigedos, the westernmost reach of Mexican territory.

The beautiful Socorro Dove (*Zenaida graysoni*) was last observed on Socorro, its native island, in 1957 and 1958. In 1978, when the next group of ornithologists surveyed Socorro, there was no trace of this once-common species. Since then no search party has detected it; this species is extinct in the wild. Did it follow its cousin, the Passenger Pigeon (*Ectopistes migratorius*), into oblivion?

Not yet, and if you and others will help, not at all! Some Socorro Doves were removed from the island in the 1940s and bred in captivity. However their numbers have been maintained only at minimal levels. Dove conservationist Helen Horbilit's survey of captive Socorro Doves estimates that barely 100 pairs survive in private aviaries.

Last year an exciting binational effort got under way to "reverse" the extinction of Socorro Island's endemic dove. In March 1988, the Commission of the Californias (California, Baja California, Baja California Sur) called on the people of the three Californias to support a repatriation of the Socorro Dove to its island.

The Socorro Dove Project has three jobs in re-establishing a self-sustaining population of wild doves. It must:

1. increase the captive population, and
2. study and restore the ecosystem of Socorro Island, and
3. gradually release acclimated birds as a viable population.

#### 1. Dove Propagation

Socorro Doves are dispersed among aviaries in the western U.S., in Canada, and in W. Germany. The bulk is in California and Arizona. It is essential to trace all birds, to test their health and genetics, and to breed suitable stock in specially equipped breeding centers. Several hundred doves will be needed for the return to Socorro Island.

*by Dr. Hartmut S. Walter*



The principal husbandry is in the hands of Dr. Luis F. Baptista and Helen Horblit, experienced dove breeders in San Francisco. A secondary breeding center in W. Germany will safeguard against catastrophe in the San Francisco center. The breeding effort should begin as soon as possible, since captive dove numbers have declined in recent years. Funding, to acquire doves and to provide expert care, is the principal obstacle to breeding large numbers of offspring.

## 2. Ecosystem Restoration

Socorro, the largest of the Revillagigedo Islands, is Mexican government property and supports a small naval garrison. Within Socorro's rugged 54 square miles, the island reaches an elevation of 3,411 feet. Its steep hills, rough lava flows, deep canyons, and basalt precipices make scientists work hard to explore its secrets.

It hardly makes sense to return Socorro Doves to the present island. In all probability, they would disappear again because of cats, lack of food and shelter, and other direct or indirect human impacts. Sheep, mice and cats have become established on Socorro. Before it can support Socorro Doves, Socorro Island must be restored closer to the conditions found by explorer Andrew Jackson Grayson in 1865 and 1867.

The island's vegetation consists of five major groups: shore and beach, grassland, scrub, forest, and summit grassland. Except for the lower zones on the southern side, Socorro looks surprisingly green even at the end of a long dry season. Before the introduction of sheep the whole island was covered by shrubby and arboreal vegetation. Fires are rare and there is a great deal of dead fuel beneath the few green-leaved upper branches of many shrubs. Twenty-six percent of Socorro's 117 vascular plant species are endemic. \*\*

The resident avifauna is quite diverse. Various seabirds breed on Socorro. Cats have been seen eating Townsend's Shearwater. There are twelve species of terrestrial birds: Socorro Mockingbird (*Mimodes*

graysoni, now in great danger of extinction), Elf Owl, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, Red-tailed Hawk, Green Parakeet, Common Ground-Dove, Rufous-sided Towhee, Socorro Wren, Tropical Parula, Mourning Dove, and Northern Mockingbird. The last two are recent colonizers, absent before 1960.

Sheep were introduced to Socorro in 1869. They are now feral, live in small groups, and have grown in number to about 2000-3000 animals. They are concentrated on the southern half of the island. An aerial view of the terrain shows large bare areas of brown soil and substrate. Ground surveys have confirmed that overgrazing has caused this damage. My 1988 survey showed that 80% of the forested areas was severely overgrazed. Ground vegetation eliminated and there was damage to selected shrubs and to the leaves, branches, and aerial roots of trees. Trees have not regenerated in the overgrazed areas, and many forests trees are old, decaying and heavy with deadwood.

The attractive groves of tropical fig trees (*Ficus cotinifolia*) are in desperate need of protection from sheep. Sheep shelter under these trees in the heat of the day, trampling ground vegetation, browsing, grazing, and apparently feeding on the once-abundant figs, which were a staple of the Socorro Dove.

Socorro's navy garrison was established in 1957. In the recent past, probably during the garrison's first years, humans appear to have trapped, shot, and harassed some of the endemic birds. Although the station has domestic pigs, a few horses, rabbits, chickens, and a dozen pigeons (free-flying), the current commander has imposed strict rules regarding the island's fauna. Pets of any kind are prohibited and the native island fauna is completely protected (from sailors).

Scientists do not have much experience in the restoration of tropical ecologies.

Much research and practical work needs to be done on Socorro. We must protect critical fig groves and other forested habitats with sheep-proof fences. All feral sheep and other exotic mammals should be removed from the island. An extensive ecological restoration program will regenerate damaged soil and vegetation on Socorro. Research on the biological diversity and seasonal productivity of Socorro will help define the ecological niche of the Socorro Dove.

## 3. Re-Establishment

The Socorro Dove Project will transfer captive-bred doves to the island and gradually release them into the wild. Mexican dove keepers will be trained at the breeding center. There will be small and large aviaries on Socorro containing native trees and shrubs. Doves will be maintained and bred in the aviaries, and habituated to the natural diet. Experimental releases will allow telemetric monitoring of the doves and their interactions with Mourning Doves, Red-tailed Hawks, and other influences. Large-scale releases will occur at suitable locations during optimal seasons. Continued release of captive-bred doves will create a self-sustaining population on the island.

The actual return to the wild will have been accomplished at this point. If the project receives the necessary backing and funding, the first batch of Socorro Doves may be released within the next four to seven years.

## Project Significance

The unusual significance of the Socorro Dove Project gives it top priority. It is unique. We have enough breeding stock, the doves breed easily and do not require enormous funding (they are much cheaper than condors). The project is a true binational effort. The collaboration of Mexican government agencies has been exemplary. Mexico sees the "Paloma de



Socorro" as a symbol for all efforts in ecological restoration. Socorro Island is protected from private development and exploitation. It provides a natural research laboratory for applied conservation. Two Mexican and two California scientists direct a group of researchers, managers, and students. Most of them will be from Baja California Sur. The recently established Centro de Investigaciones Biologicas (C.I.B.) in La Paz will provide most of the scientists needed for the ecosystem restoration of Socorro. UCLA and other UC campuses will assist wherever necessary with expertise in geology, ornithology, plant ecology, bird epidemiology, etc. All other unique animals and plants of Socorro will benefit from the restoration of the island.

The focus on a small dove has great media appeal and publicity value for biological conservation in general. We can learn a great deal from the experiences of this project for future conservation needs in other tropical areas.

The International Council for Bird Preservation (ICBP) and several U.S. and Mexican conservation organizations have endorsed the project. Enthusiasm has been high wherever I discuss the promise of this project. Funding of the necessary project tasks—beginning with the purchase of privately held Socorro Doves and of fence materials—is another matter. There are so many local, regional, and international



conservation needs—all competing for support—that it will be necessary to develop a separate Socorro Dove fund-raising campaign.

I am convinced that this project will succeed and thereby add a new dimension to the already existing special relationship between California and its two southern neighbors.

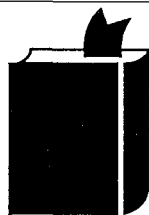
The Los Angeles Audubon Society is helping to fund the Socorro Dove Project. A donation of \$1.00 per member will meet our commitment to underwrite the project. You may send a donation to:

Socorro Dove Project, LAAS,  
7377 Santa Monica Blvd.,  
West Hollywood, CA 90046.

## Bookstore News

by Olga L. Clarke, sales chairman

Our bookstore continues to expand its services to members. In addition to the Zeiss nockies and Kowa scopes mentioned



last month, we are of course always adding new titles to our inventory. Added titles since our last catalogue include:

Compact Handbook to the Birds of India & Pakistan, *Ali & Ripley*  
Discovering Sierra Birds, *Beedy & Granholm*  
Guide to Madagascar, *Bradt*  
Birds of East Africa: Habitat, Status & Distribution, *Britton*  
Songs of Mexican Birds, (2 cassettes) *Coffey*  
Guia de las Aves Argentinas, Vol 5 Passeriformes (in part), *de la Pena*  
Field Guide to the Birds of Mexico, *Edwards*  
Bird Songs of Eastern Australian Forests and of Queensland (cassettes), *Hutchinson*  
Atlas of Wintering North American Birds, *Root*  
Field Checklist of Pt. Reyes National Seashore, *Stallcup*  
Checklist of the Birds of Southeast Asia, *Steffee*  
Eleanora's Falcon, *Walter*  
Birdfinding in New England, *Walton*  
Birdfinding in Kansas & Western Missouri, *Zimmerman*

In the near future, look for us to be stocking the National Audubon Society's VideoGuide to the Birds (5 cassettes) and

birdlisting software for you computer-philies.

## 1989 Conservation Project Funding

Spring lengthens the days. Energy is recharged and we who are one in our regard for birds and the environment make yet another effort. We are asking each member for ten or more dollars, at least \$1.00 of which will go to each of our three top priority projects as shown on the enclosed envelope. Kindly indicate your preference for distribution of the rest of your tax-deductible donation in the spaces provided.

## Volunteers Always Needed

For members who feel they would like to contribute a small amount of their time and talents to the Society: there is a continuing need for volunteers at Audubon House, for there are always things that need doing.

The most active day-to-day operation is bookstore sales, and extra hands are always a blessing in trying to keep up with the orders that come in. The atmosphere is informal and congenial, and the conversation witty and stimulating.

## News from NAS

# Challenges Abound for Authentic Activists

By Peter A. A. Berle  
President

**T**he drought and pollution of last summer—on top of continuing environmental problems—have made the environment a hot issue. Leaders of conservation groups agree that they are seeing a surge of public interest in environmental subjects. *National Geographic* and *Time* have devoted entire issues to the global environment. And our membership recruitment department reports a sudden increase in response to Audubon direct-mail appeals. Our challenge now is to encourage and harness this interest and put it to work defending the natural world.

Toward that end, we've made some terrific additions to our field staff, which will be noticed by those of you involved in chapter activities. Dana Kokubun is in place in Hawaii as the result of an earmarked grant. Tom Shoemaker, a former chapter leader, activist, and environmental consultant replaces Pam Crocker-Davis in the Washington State Office. David Miller, a talented organizer and former director of Great Lakes United, is the new vice-

president for the reopened Northeast regional office, based in the New York State capital. Finally, Brooks Yeager, formerly with the Sierra Club, now heads our Capitol Hill office. Brooks is especially knowledgeable in energy and public lands issues and comes to Audubon with tremendous political skills.

One of the first tasks facing Brooks will be to push for effective acid rain legislation. Last year's Congress adjourned before an acceptable package could make it to the Senate floor. The new Senate Majority leader, George Mitchell, has vowed to get a bill passed this year, but it will be up to our activists to make sure it meets environmentally sound standards.

On a related front, I recently met with Canada's new environmental minister and its new ambassador to the United States. They reaffirmed their government's commitment to fighting acid rain pollution on both sides of the border. Add to that the continued success of our Citizens' Acid Rain Monitoring Network in bringing the reality of acid rain to light and you can see why there is a little more hope for progress in 1989.

NAS has tough fundraising goals this year that we are working hard to achieve. We are staying within our budget on the expense side. But the cruel fact of accounting is that we must raise \$1.5 million more each year *just to stay even with inflation*. That is quite a challenge. Your continuing membership, along with whatever additional support you can give, are a big help. Together, we are making a real difference in the protection of our natural environment—from the wetland in your neighborhood to the ozone shield above us all.

## NAS Television

### TV Special Looks at Perishing Platte

**E**very year, in March, half a million sandhill cranes—80 percent of the world's entire sandhill population—stop over in the Platte River in Nebraska on their way from their wintering grounds in the south to their nesting grounds in northern Canada. Nowhere else is there such a gathering. Dean of birders Roger Tory Peterson has called it "one of the wonders of the world."

"Crane River," the newest Audubon Television Special, takes viewers to this rare and awesome happening. It also takes a hard look at the problems that threaten to make the crane spectacle a thing of the past.

The historic Platte River was described by early explorers as "a mile wide and a foot deep." It was a lifeline for settlers and wildlife alike. But today the river's flow has

been reduced by nearly 70 percent. Cranes and other waterfowl are crowded into increasingly tight stretches of river. If some of the dozens of proposed water projects in the river basin are built, the once great prairie river will virtually dry up.

Saving the Platte River is one of National Audubon's high-priority campaigns. Don't miss Audubon Television's program on this vital issue. "Crane River" can be seen on SuperStation TBS on the following dates:

- Sunday, May 28 at 10:00 p.m. (Eastern)
- Saturday, June 3 at 10:05 a.m. (Eastern)
- Sunday, June 11 at 8:00 p.m. (Pacific)
- Saturday, June 17 at 8:05 a.m. (Eastern)

The special will air again in August on PBS stations. All dates and times are subject to change, so check your local listings.

## Audubon Adventures into Environmental Education

Pomona Valley Audubon Society has adopted community education as a fundamental goal, especially appealing to teachers and youth leaders. PVAS offers a series of workshops for local educators to acquire skills and teaching materials in environmental & science education. Upcoming Saturday workshops are scheduled as follows:

- April 22 9:00-4:30 "School Action Projects"
- May 13 9:00-3:00 "Predators"
- June 3 9:00-1:00 "Storytelling"

### Contact:

Jean Frederickson (714) 867-2047  
Kelly Hagen Jimenez (714) 985-5381  
Dan Guthrie (714) 621-4000 (eve.) or (714) 621-8000 ext. 2836

## Birding Adventures On New Mexico's Rivers

The Randall Davey Audubon Center, National Audubon's education center and state office in Santa Fe, is offering unique birding opportunities on rivers of northern New Mexico. The Center's education staff leads float trips on the serene Rio Chama and in the deep canyons of the Rio Grande. The rivers are both important corridors for migrating birds and ideal habitats for a great diversity of species. All trips will be guided by professional boaters and will include a birding expert.

### RIO CHAMA BIRDING

- Three days, **May 12, 13, 14 1989** - \$200
- Two days, **May 20, 21, 1989** - \$150
- Two days, **June 3, 4, 1989** - \$185

For further information and reservations, call or write:

Randall Davey Audubon Center,  
P.O. 9314,  
Santa Fe,  
NM, 87504  
(505) 983-4609.

Space is limited, so reserve early. In addition, a unique art history/birding tour is offered June 11-18. Contact:

Ellen Bradbury,  
Recursos de Santa Fe,  
826 Camino del Monte Rey,  
Santa Fe, NM 87501  
(505) 982-9301

## Help Protect Endangered Species

Line 45 of the California Form 540 allows for a direct tax-deductible donation for endangered species protection.

## Audubon TV Specials in Home Video

In April, three outstanding Audubon Television Specials will be released as home videos: "Wood Stork: Barometer of the Everglades," narrated by Richard Crenna; "Ducks Under Siege," narrated by John Heard, and "Galapagos: My Fragile World," narrated by Cliff Robertson. The videos are marketed by Vestron Video and retail for \$29.98.

"Wood Stork" and "Ducks Under Siege" touch on the issue of wetlands conservation, which is a National Audubon Society high-priority campaign. Both programs were nominated for the prestigious "ACE" awards, cable television's "Emmys."

"Galapagos: My Fragile World" is a breathtaking odyssey through the homeland of renowned wildlife photographer and writer Tui De Roy.

Also available on home video are the Audubon Specials "California Condor," "The Mysterious Black-Footed Ferret," and "On the Edge of Extinction: Panthers and Cheetahs." All six Audubon videos are available in video stores nationwide or can be ordered through:

Audubon Television,  
801 Pennsylvania Ave., SE,  
Suite 301,  
Washington, D.C. 20003

## The Shifting Delta Standards

David Fullerton, Chair of the Water Committee of the Northern California Sierra Club, informs us of trouble for San Francisco Bay and the Delta. In 1987 the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) was directed by the courts to allocate water for California so as to protect the most beneficial uses, including the ecology of the Bay & Delta. After hearings in 1987 SWRCB published a draft of standards in November 1988. The standards made one concession to the Delta and none to the Bay, namely more fresh water for fisheries in the springtime. On Jan. 19 this year the Board, under political pressure, removed the Delta standards.

David Fullerton says the fight is not over. He urges you to support adequate protections for the Bay & Delta by writing to the editor and calling your legislators. David can be reached at home for more information. Contact him at:

2017 Berkeley Way #7,  
Berkeley, CA 94704

## American Birds Gives Readers a Voice

A unique new column in American Birds, the birding journal of the National Audubon Society, is written by and for "AB" readers. "Retorts, Relections, and Thoughtful Refutations" invites birders and the magazine's faithful to respond in full to challenges posed by Audubon's senior vice-president for science and sanctuaries and esteemed ornithologist—Dr. J. P. Myers.

Myers fires the opening salvo in the Fall 1988 issue, in a column entitled "Facts, Inferences, and Shameless Speculations." He boldly contends that birders are in a perfect position to be on the front line of conservation activism—but perhaps don't try hard enough. He suggest new ways in which amateur bird watchers can add to our knowledge of both birds and the environment.

So sharpen your pens, birders and activists alike!

If you are not already an "AB" reader, a subscription to this top-notch journal is \$27.50, including the classic annual Christmas Bird Count issue. Sample copies and order forms are available from:

American Birds,  
950 Third Ave.,  
New York,  
N.Y. 10022.

## Clean Air Key Issue in '89

Activists are suiting up for one of the big battles of the coming year: getting a new and better Clean Air Act passed by the 101st Congress. In a seemingly endless effort, environmentalists have been working to amend the bill with provisions for controlling acid rain, airborne emissions of toxic chemicals, and urban smog.

The "tough birds"—Audubon activists—fought hard in 1988 and made significant gains, particularly in the House. More than 218 representatives—the magic majority of House members—signed the Vento-Green letter urging the House to move ahead on clean air legislation. Although House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman John Dingell, from the auto-producing state of Michigan, had refused to let a strong bill out of committee, it looked as if a compromise was still possible in late 1988. But the final agreement was too weak to protect the environment and public health, and environmentalists were unable to support it.

The work of Audubon activists in pushing forward this critical legislation cannot be underestimated, according to Audubon's grassroots coordinator Connie Mahan, and it will be even more so in the new term. She says, "We're very close to getting a clean air bill. If our clean air 'tough birds' can stick with it and not lose heart, I believe we can win this issue in 1989."

## Coming Soon: National Audubon's Biennial Convention

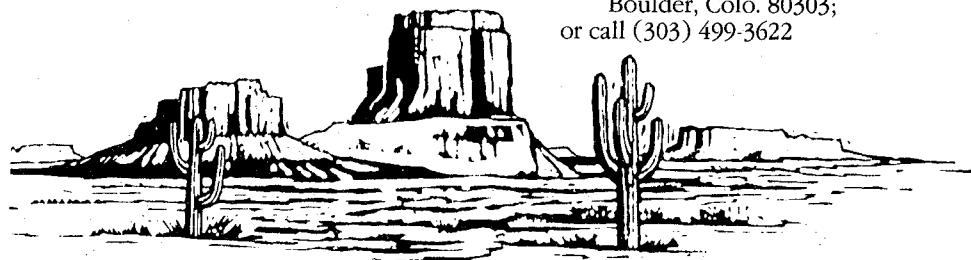
"Our Southwest—Challenged by Growth" is the theme of the upcoming Biennial Convention of the National Audubon Society, to be held September 12 to 16 at the Doubletree Hotel in Tucson, Arizona. The convention program will highlight the unique characteristics of the natural world in the Southwest. There's a full menu planned for participants, with pre- and post-convention tours and diverse field trips to areas such as Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge, Madera Canyon, and Patagonia Sanctuary, as well as to mission

churches and the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum. In addition to the fun and entertainment, there will also be sessions discussing Audubon's high-priority issues: the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Clean Air Act, Platte River, wetlands, and ancient forests. And if that isn't enough, a variety of workshops will feature education, fundraising, citizen involvement, energy conservation, sanctuary and nature center outreach, and many more topics.

Registration for field trips and tours is limited, so be sure to sign up in advance.

For complete information on Audubon's Biennial Convention, including registration and hotel reservation information, write to:

Audubon Convention Office,  
4150 Darley Ave., #5  
Boulder, Colo. 80303;  
or call (303) 499-3622



**Los Angeles Times**

**ACT QUICKLY ON  
GLOBAL WARMING,  
BAKER SAYS**

**Washington Post**

**Acid Rain, Clean Air  
Action Vowed**  
New EPA Head Reilly Speaks Out

**Chagrin Sun-Moon**

**LUJAN RULES OUT MINING,  
OIL DRILLING IN U.S. PARKS**

**T**hese were welcome headlines in the first weeks of the new Bush administration, a breath of fresh air after eight years of what amounted to a vendetta against the environment.

Secretary of State James Baker's surprising remarks were particularly eloquent and informed. Addressing the new Intergovernmental Panel of Climatic Change sponsored by the United Nations, Baker quoted a Bush campaign speech:

"We face the prospect of being trapped on a boat that we have irreparably damaged, not by the cataclysm of war, but by the slow neglect of a vessel we believed to be impervious to our abuse." Baker said all governments must act immediately on energy conservation, reforestation and global warming. "We can probably not afford to wait until all the uncertainties have been resolved before we do act. Time will not make the problem go away."

Recalling Ronald Reagan's stalling tactic of "more research" on acid rain when Canada was screaming about her dead and dying lakes, this is a momentous change in attitude.

This approach is reinforced by William K. Reilly's statement at his confirmation hearing before the Senate, where he called for quick action on acid rain and clean air. Reilly was the president of the World Wildlife Fund and is the first environmental leader to become administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. "I firmly believe we must usher in a new era in the history of environmental policy, an era marked by reconciliation of interests, by imaginative solutions arrived at through cooperation and consensus, and by the resolve to listen and work out our differences."



## Conservation Conversation

by Sandy Wohlgermuth



And then on February 9th, President Bush himself in his budget address to the Congress made some additional comments on the environment. He promised "legislation for a new, more effective Clean Air Act. It will include a plan to reduce by a certain date the emissions which cause acid rain - because the time for study alone has passed, and the time for action is now."

He asked for money for new park acquisitions, including urban parks like the Santa Monica Mountain National Recreation Area, which were anathema to James Watt and have been starved for funds since 1981.

He called for penalties against those who pollute the oceans and other offshore waters. He said he is ordering an accelerated clean-up of toxic-waste dumps and tougher enforcement of laws against illegal dumping. Leases for oil drilling in two of three areas off the California coast and in one area that might threaten the Everglades were "indefinitely postponed" - although a special task force would be created to "measure the potential for environmental damage" by offshore drilling.

The day after his budget address Bush visited the Canadian prime minister to begin discussions on acid rain: an excellent symbolic gesture.

But all is not sweetness and light in these honeymoon days. The most ominous cloud on the horizon is our new Secretary of the Interior, Manuel Lujan Jr. This successor to Donald Hodel and James Watt is a New Mexico congressman with a dismal background for the job of overlord for the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Fish & Wildlife Service.

As a House member he voted against renewal of the Clean Air Act and acid rain legislation. He opposed creation of an American Conservation Corps and voted to cut billions from water pollution control programs. The League of Conservation Voters gave him an abysmal 15% rating on environmental issues. At his confirmation hearing, Lujan said, "We are committed to protecting and enhancing the nation's valuable resources, as well as proceeding with their environmentally sound development . . . We can do both. We do not have to choose between them."

When he told the Senate he supported Bush's approval of "prudent development" of the Alaska Arctic Wildlife Refuge, Senator Timothy Wirth of Colorado said, "I think Bush is going to run into the meat grinder on this one."

Mr Lujan seems to be talking about compromises between preservation and development. Compromise with the environment has a rather dubious track record: the natural areas seem to end up in last place most of the time. As has been said, once you put a road through a wilderness, it is no longer wilderness.

We wonder about Mr. Bush's compromises. Before his inauguration he had a cordial meeting with leaders of the foremost environmental organizations, who gave him a long list of suggestions for enhancement of the environment. They made a special point of asking him to rule out oil exploration in the Alaska refuge. Shortly afterward he made his remark about "prudent development."

This is a heavy blow. That one of the last great unspoiled ecosystems on earth might be surrendered to the bulldozers and pipelines of the oil industry is inconceivable. This sanctuary for endangered wolves, grizzlies, arctic foxes, millions of breeding birds, and exotic boreal plants must be preserved for its own sake forever. Thousands of Americans have worked with great dedication to establish this refuge and keep it inviolable.

Mr. Bush must be made to understand that "prudent development" is like being a little bit pregnant. Many of us would welcome his advocacy of conservation of oil, the development of alternative fuels, and increased gas mileage requirements for automobiles. So far these methods of reducing the insatiable demand for oil have not surfaced in his speeches.

The brightest light for us in this new era is William Reilly. We all treasure the World Wildlife Fund for its magnificent work in saving endangered species and tropical rainforests around the world. It is impossible to feel that its former president is capable of any act that would harm the environment. But he is sitting on a very hot seat. What will happen when the forces that fought acid rain controls and the Clean Air Act—the coal producers, the auto manufacturers and the electric utilities—gang up on Reilly's EPA? While his nomination was widely acclaimed—and especially his talk of building consensus—Senator Max Baucus of Montana asked, "Will you conciliate, mediate, negotiate away our environmental laws?"

We have sad memories of "Mr. Clean" William D. Ruckelshaus, who took over the EPA when Anne Gorsuch Burford left office under a cloud about five years ago. This man of integrity, a hero who resigned rather than fire the Special Prosecutor during Watergate, eventually knuckled under to the pressure of polluters and took his orders from the Reagan White House.

So how do things look on the environmental front for the next four years? We want desperately to believe that they will be better. We appreciate the good things that have been said. We applaud them. And the apparent departure of the confrontational atmosphere of the previous administration is sincerely welcomed. But it all boils down to the nature of the man in charge.

James Watt had the enthusiastic support of Ronald Reagan and dispensed his simplistic and ruinous environmental

philosophy. Interior secretary Lujan, who gives little encouragement that he will be a genuine steward of our natural bounty in the manner of Cecil Andrus or Stewart Udall, may at least become the servant of George Bush, who said he will be a hands-on president and an environmentalist.

William Reilly gives promise of consensus without conciliation. And so far Bush has been agreeing with him on clean air and acid rain. In fact, Reilly has insisted that the EPA be represented on the new task force to study the environmental effects of offshore drilling. And though it is very early in the game, the Interior Department is said (LA Times, Feb 17, 1989) to be complaining that Reilly is too aggressive and might want to be the environmental spokesman for the administration.

On balance, there are grounds for considerable hope. Baker and Bush show that they are aware of the global problems. Never before has the environment—national and planetary—been so widely splashed across the media, and there seems to be a greater awareness on the part of the general public. It is up to the people who are concerned about the mounting threats to our health and our very existence to wish Mr. Bush well but keep our attention on what he does as well as what he says.

## Why Dick and Jane Write Letters

*Sandy Wohlgenuth*

Three years ago a letter came out of the blue from Byron Stone of the Texas Audubon society in San Antonio, Texas. It told the sad story of a ranch on the outskirts of Austin that was one of the few places in the U.S. where the endangered Black-capped Vireo nested. It was also a good place to find the elusive Golden-cheeked warbler. As you've already guessed, the ranch was slated for development and local birders were crying the blues.

Fortunately, they did more than cry. They asked the city council to buy some of the land and try to swap for more. And they wrote a lot of letters like the one we got. Their letter concluded by asking us to write to the Mayor of Austin.

After Fred Heath printed it in the Tanager, the Mayor must have received a fine clutch of letters from southern California. A letter was also sent on our fancy stationery in the name of our whole chapter.

Well, around Christmas we got a triumphant note from the redoubtable Byron Stone with a clipping from an Austin newspaper saying that 215 acres have been set aside for the birds! Letters came in from all over the country and, along with ours, helped the local people demonstrate that this was more than a local issue. *Hip, hip, burray!!*



## Birdathon '89

Last year L.A. Audubon members raised over \$5000 for the Mono Lake Committee simply by going birdwatching on a fine day in May. This year our goal is \$10,000, to be used to place the Audubon Adventures nature conservation program into 400 Los Angeles public school classrooms. We feel that this is one of the most critical goals we can reach—educating the young in order to create responsible stewards of the future.

What makes the Birdathon unique is that it is fundraising that is fun! With a savour of friendly competition, it offers a variety of experiences to suit your interests.

For those looking for an enjoyable day of birding, we are offering special field trips with special leaders. It will be your chance to go to L.A.'s hottest birding spots

with L.A.'s best birders. All you need to do as a **Field Trip Participant** is to obtain pledges from friends, relatives, and co-workers to sponsor you at a few cents a species, and sign up for the field trip of your choice.

If you are a heavy birder, you will want to form your own team for the **Big Day Challenge Competition**, sign up sponsors, and go for as many species as you can find in 24 hours. There are some fine prizes for most species seen and for most money raised, but most of all it's a great challenge for yourself!

If you are too laid back to get excited about all this competing, however, you can just open a cool one and count the birds at your own feeder—pledge a dollar or more per species and register as a **Backyard Birder** for more prizes.

And if you really just like to see the other fellow work, become a **Sponsor** and pledge your support to the team or birder of your choice.

There will be Birdathon T-shirts for high-rolling sponsors and all participants, as well as the fine prizes supplied by the National Audubon Society—binoculars, outdoor gear, books and many other items. The Birdathon count period runs from April 30 through May 20.

Members should already have received a special mailing which details Birdathon '89. For further information and registration, phone Audubon House at (213) 876-0202.

### NAS Education

TEACHER

### Send a Kid to Camp This Summer!

For over fifty years the Audubon Camp Program has provided an exceptional training opportunity for school teachers across the continent.

At our camps in Maine, Wyoming, and especially at the Educator's Ecology Workshops in Connecticut, thousands of teachers have experienced the benefits of our programs focusing on natural history and environmental issues.

The in-depth training sends teachers back to their communities with a greater array of teaching skills and an enthusiasm that quickly transmits to their students and fellow teachers.

If you are a teacher, consider investing some time this summer at an Audubon Camp. It is an experience that will enrich the rest of your career.

University credit is available for most camp programs, and many Audubon chapters, garden clubs, and other community organizations provide scholarship support for teachers.

Write today for free camps brochure:

Registrar, Audubon Camps and Workshops,  
613 Riversville Road,  
Greenwich, Conn. 06831

## pro Esteros!

In the November 1988 Tanager, Barbara Massey announced the formation of a new environmental group called pro Esteros. Barbara is a biologist and professor at Cal State Long Beach and for years has done outstanding field work on the Least Tern. She also has become deeply involved with the estuaries in northern Baja California,

working closely with Silvia Ibarra, an esteemed Mexican biologist. The estuaries and marshes harbor much wildlife. Each marsh alone has more endangered light-footed clapper rails than the entire U.S.

The impetus for pro Esteros was the imminent development of a vacation resort—complete with hotel and marina—in one of the prime estuaries.

In February, Volume 1 No. 1 of their newsletter came out, and we find that the infant organization already has 200

members and \$6,000! They have been busy organizing scientific seminars, talking to government people and getting media attention in Mexico and San Diego. Those who would like to help this brave group of activists can become members by sending \$10 (or more) to:

**pro Esteros**  
c/o Barbara Massey  
1825 Knoxville Ave.  
Long Beach, CA 90815

## Environmental Symposium: 'Our Common Future: Healing the Planet'

### Human Health Issues of Environmental Degradation.

**Saturday, May 13, 1989**  
**Westin Bonaventure Hotel,**  
**Los Angeles**

**PRESENTED BY:**  
**UCLA Extension, UCLA Medical**  
**School and Department of**  
**Continuing Education in**  
**Health and Sciences.**

**ORGANIZED BY:**  
**Physicians for Social Responsibility**  
**and Beyond War Foundation**

Distinguished scholars will speak on topics such as Greenhouse Effect, Deforestation, Species Extinction, Ozone Depletion.

Speakers include:

**Jessica Tuchman Matthews, Ph.D.,**  
Vice-President of the World Resources  
Institute, Washington, D.C.

**Sr. Samuel S. Epstein,** author and professor at U. of Illinois Medical Ctr.

**Amory Lovins,** physicist.

*Information from Symposium offices:*  
(213) 458-2694, 451-2081.

Symposium fee: \$15.00

Luncheon with noted speaker: \$25

CME credit: \$25.

Over 3,000 are expected at this event in the hotel's main ballroom.





# "If I See Another Immature Gull, I'm Going to Throw Up"

Such was the response from one enthusiastic participant in LA Audubon's Gull Mini-Workshop last February 11. Attendees were treated to a one-hour lecture on the fine points of gull color variations, head and bill shapes, plumages and moult sequences, given by the renowned hellraiser and bon vivant, Larry Allen. The party then repaired to the quietude of Malibu Lagoon for a morning of gull-watching. Subsequent stops were made at the Oxnard Wastewater Treatment Plant and the Santa Clara River estuary.

After much diligent searching, Mr. Allen finally located a first-year gull with such an unusual complement of features that it could not be reasonably classified as any species known to science. Mysteriously, other members of the field trip were more interested in the first-winter Thayer's Gull found mid-afternoon, which had all of the "book" field marks.

The nine participants on the Morro Bay extension February 12 studiously ignored the many gulls present, except for one chase after a suspicious-looking first-year bird. The group observed Brant, Oldsquaw and other wintering waterbirds, and searched for some of the area's specialties and rarities.



© 1985 by Cheryl Sweeney / Illustrator

One of the latter was a male Pine Warbler which had been reported in the town of Morro Bay. The leader, after assuring the group that he had never seen Pine Warblers in any habitat other than pine trees, promptly located the bird perched atop a power pole! Further embarrassment was avoided when one of the party charitably observed that the pole was probably of pine. At the end of the day, remnants of the group were treated to the view of a subadult Ferruginous Hawk circling very close overhead.

In addition to fond memories of gulls, participants in the workshop carried home an eight-page handout and a field-mark key to the gulls of North America.

## Ralph W. Schreiber Ornithology Research Award

### Los Angeles Audubon Society

The Los Angeles Audubon Society's Ralph W. Schreiber Ornithology Research Award was given this year to Adrian L. O'Loughlen of the University of California at Santa Barbara for his work on the "Vocal Ontogeny and the Maintenance of Dialects in the Brown-headed Cowbird". The \$2000 award will aid Mr. O'Loughlen's investigations of calls of eastern Sierra Nevada cowbirds. His research promises to yield important information about the

behavior of cowbirds, a brood-parasitic species which has seriously impacted populations of many California songbird species.

Juvenile males apparently have little opportunity to learn cowbird songs until they return to their breeding ranges in spring. In the eastern Sierra Nevada study area there are several cowbird dialects that are localized and stable through successive generations. Mr. O'Loughlen will capture adult and juvenile males and will test them over a period of time to see how much they know and what they are able to learn. We look forward to hearing more about Mr. O'Loughlen's research.

## NAS Science

### Cowbirds Invade Sunshine State

By Drs. Thomas Bancroft and Wayne Hoffman

Audubon Research Biologists

Cowbirds, already sporting a bad reputation, are invading Florida, and scientists are concerned about the impact of these aliens on long-time resident songbirds.

Brown-headed cowbirds (*Molothrus ater*) were first found breeding in the panhandle of Florida in 1956. Since then they have spread through the panhandle and across north Florida. In 1985, a fledgling cowbird was first found in Pinellas County, halfway down the peninsula. We now regularly see brown-headed cowbirds in south Florida during the summer, although no confirmed breeding has been recorded south of Sarasota County.

Shiny cowbirds (*Molothrus bonariensis*) were first recorded in Florida in 1985, when a male was found in the Florida Keys. Over the past 80 years, this species has expanded its range from South America by island hopping through the Caribbean. Although breeding has not been confirmed in Florida, shiny cowbirds have been seen in Florida during every spring and summer since 1985. We suspect they have laid eggs there.

Both species are brood parasites. They lay their eggs in the nests of other species, and the unwilling hosts raise the cowbirds' young. Often, when a cowbird lays her egg she will remove an egg of the host. Generally the cowbird egg hatches with or before the host's eggs and the young cowbird often grows faster than the host's young. Consequently the host raises fewer young of its own. Cowbird parasitism has been implicated in the decline of several threatened or endangered species. Kirtland's warbler, the black-capped vireo, and the least Bell's vireo have been hurt by brown-headed cowbird parasitism. Yellow-shouldered blackbirds in Puerto Rico have suffered from shiny cowbird parasitism.

Species with small, isolated populations are especially vulnerable to the recent expansion of the cowbirds' range. In Florida, that includes the Caribbean races of the yellow warbler and black-whiskered vireo, and the Florida races of the grasshopper sparrow and prairie warbler. Populations of all three species are believed to be in jeopardy. Already, Rich Paul, manager of Audubon's Tampa Bay Sanctuary, reports that populations of black-whiskered vireos have decreased there, and this coincides with the expansion of brown-headed cowbirds into these areas.

# Birds of the Season

by Hank Brodtkin

*Records of rare and unusual bird sightings reported in this column should be considered tentative pending review by the American Birds regional editors or, if appropriate, by the California Bird Records Committee.*

**A**pril may have been the cruelest month for T.S. Eliot, but for those of us who bird the Southern California coastal slope it is the kindest. Ceanothus perfumes the chaparral and numerous other flowers brighten the canyon floors. And around the middle of the month are those few magic days when our migrating warblers daub the canyon live oaks with color—sometimes as many as five species in the same tree.

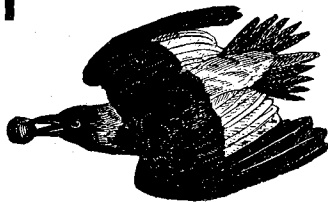
This is as close as we get to the spectacular migrant waves of the east—but these few special, song-filled, sun-warmed, flower-scented mornings are something to look forward to all winter.

And speaking of bird song, April is the perfect month to sharpen your bird identification skills for our breeding birds. If you feel comfortable with your ability to tell a Bewick's Wren from a Song Sparrow or a California Thrasher from a Northern Mockingbird by song, you might consider the challenge of spending a morning or two participating in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Breeding Bird Survey.

This consists of driving a designated 25-mile route and stopping every half mile for three minutes in order to identify every bird you see and hear. Each route takes less than four hours. Those of you who are interested in adding a little science to your hobby can get more information and a route by contacting Lee Jones, 9 Eastshore, Irvine, CA 92714, (714) 641-8042.

This past month's most intriguing sighting was of a seemingly wild, male **Common Pochard** found at Silver Lake development near Victorville by Robert Potvliege on 11 February. The only accepted U.S. records of this bird are from the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands of Alaska—mostly in the spring.

A flock of 30 **White Pelicans** at Prado Park, Chino, and 34 **White-faced Ibises** near Norco were seen by Hank Childs on 2 February. What may be the first San Fernando Valley record of **White-faced Ibis** was a single bird found by Sandy Wohlgemuth at the Sepulveda Basin on 19 January, where Jean Brandt saw 1,000 **Canada Geese** with one **Snow Goose** on 4 February.



Steve Royer found a female **Tufted Duck** at the Freeman Diversion Area near Ventura on 11 February and Doug Willick reported an **Oldsquaw** on Newport Back Bay on 25 January. Two female **Hooded Mergansers** were on Hollywood Reser-

voir on 30 January (Cathy Mish) and two pair were on Chatsworth Reservoir on the same day (Wanda Conway).

Six **Ferruginous Hawks** were at Chino Men's Institute on 2 February (Hank Childs). Three **Merlins** were reported at the end of January, one at Toluca Lake on the 24th (Hank Brodtkin), one at Arcadia on the 27th (Jeffrey Tufts), and one at the L.A. Zoo on the 29th (Kimball Garrett). A **Peregrine Falcon** was seen over the San Fernando Valley on 4 February (Jean Brandt).

An **American Coot** with a fully white frontal shield was found by Kimball Garrett on 28 January at Westlake Village. For a

Brown Thrashers  
under attack—  
19th century  
woodcut.



discussion of frontal shields of American and Caribbean Coots the reader is referred to White-shielded Coots in North America: A Critical Evaluation by Don Roberson and Luis F. Baptista in the Winter 1988 issue of American Birds.

A **Lesser Golden-Plover**, race *fulva*, was found at Anaheim Bay by Barbara Elliot on 8 February. A first-winter **Franklin's Gull** was at Craig Park, Fullerton, on 25 January and a **Black-legged Kittiwake** was on the San Gabriel River at the unusual inland location of Pico Rivera on 6 January (John Schmidt). A **Black Skimmer** was at Shoreline Park, Long Beach, on 4 February (Jerry Johnson).

**Band-tailed Pigeons** were in the pines around St. Joseph's Hospital, Burbank, on 20 January (Hank Brodtkin) and an **Inca Dove** and two **Ruddy Ground-Doves** were still at Furnace Creek on 4 February.

Single **Western Flycatchers** were at El Dorado Nature Center, Long Beach, on 30 January (Betty Jo Stephenson) and at Huntington Gardens on 4 February (Kimball Garrett). A male **Vermilion Flycatcher** was at Mason Regional Park, Irvine, on 25 January (Doug Willick) and an **Ash-throated Flycatcher** was at El Dorado Nature Center on 30 January (Betty Jo Stephenson).

Early in such numbers were the 30 plus **Cliff Swallows** at Lake Serrano, Chino, on 2 February (Hank Childs). Two **Varied Thrushes** were seen, one at El Dorado Nature Center on 3 February (Betty Jo Stephenson) and the other at Orcutt Ranch on 11 February (Roger Radd). A **Brown Thrasher** was at Mason Regional Park on 25 January (Doug Willick).

A **Virginia's Warbler** was at Finney Lake near the Salton Sea on 17 February (Gayle Benton) and a **Black-throated Blue Warbler** was found in Manhattan Beach on 30 January (Ray Lombard). Two **Western Tanagers**, a female at Huntington Gardens on 4 February (Daniel Cooper) and a male at Orcutt Ranch on 11 February (Roger Radd) were reported.

A **Green-tailed Towhee** was found at Whittier Narrows on 5 February by Steve Melanoff and a **Brewer's Sparrow** was at Marineland on 16 January (Kimball Garrett). A **Swamp Sparrow** and a **White-throated Sparrow** were both found at Huntington Gardens on 5 February by Daniel Cooper, who leads field trips there for the Pasadena Audubon Society.

I was fortunate to have been able to return for a week to Costa Rica for the first time in 12 years. It was interesting to find Chestnut-sided Warblers in many areas, Prothonotary Warblers in Carara Biological Reserve, and a Black-throated Green Warbler on top of Volcn Poas.

This beautiful, friendly country now has 13% of its territory preserved for natural parkland and is trying for 25% by the year 2000. The burgeoning tourist industry seems mostly geared to enjoying the parks

and reserves, the rivers and beaches. Short guided tours to natural areas are generally booked to capacity. Inflation in January was down to 1.5%. There are of course grave ecological problems here as elsewhere, but it is heartening to see the progress Costa Rica is making, and how proud her people are of this progress. Thanks must also go to your Society, the Nature Conservancy, the World Wildlife Fund and Conservation International for the work they have done. And when that "junk mail" from these organizations comes in, look it over before you toss it in the trash—maybe you too can help.

Good birding!

Send your bird observations with as many details as possible to:

Hank Brodtkin  
27-1/2 Mast Street  
Marina del Rey, CA 90292  
Phone: (213) 827-0407

OR

call Jean Brandt at (818) 788-5188

*Field Trips cont'd. from back page*

**Sat. & Sun., May 20 & 21 - Death Valley.** Spend a late spring weekend birding this desert oasis for local specialties and eastern migrants with **Steve Gustafson**. More info next month. Meet early Saturday in Death Valley. Fee \$25.00.

#### UPCOMING TRIPS

**Sat. & Sun., June 24, 25 (26th optional) — Southern Sierras Weekend with Bob Barnes.** This very popular (almost) annual trip covers widely varying terrain from desert to riverine to montane habitats, and usually nets over 120 species with the Monday extension. Hopeful to likely birds include Wood Duck, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Willow and Grey Flycatchers, Evening Grosbeak and Red Crossbill. Fee \$22 plus \$10 for optional Monday extension. More info to follow.

#### Reservation Policy and Procedures:

Reservations for LAAS trips 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 Chair, LAAS, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90046.

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

If you desire to carpool to an event, the reservations chair can provide information for you to make contact and possible arrangements.

## Membership Note

Membership in The National Audubon Society is computerized, so it is no longer advisable to renew through the Los Angeles Audubon Society. However, if your membership has lapsed, you will receive the next Western Tanager sooner if you renew through IAAS.

The national computer system sends multiple notices commencing four months before your membership lapses. Please excuse notices that may have crossed your check in the mail.

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

If you move out of the IAAS membership area, you are **automatically** changed to the chapter in whose area you moved. If you wish to remain in IAAS and receive the Western Tanager please indicate this to the National Audubon Society. You may also subscribe to the Western Tanager separately (see below.)



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**ORNITHOLOGY CONSULTANT** Kimball Garrett

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Audubon membership (local and national) is \$30 per year, Senior citizen \$21, and at present new members are being offered an introductory membership for \$20 for the first year, 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.

Los Angeles Audubon Headquarters, Library, and Bookstore are located at:  
Audubon House, Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, CA 90046.  
(213) 876-0202. Hours: 10-3 Tues. through Sat.



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

April 1989

## EVENING MEETINGS

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

**Tuesday, April 11 - Paul Lehman** will present **Migrant and Vagrant Traps of North America**. Warbler fallouts, shorebird concentrations, Siberian overshoots, Eastern vagrants... phrases that get any birder's juices flowing. What causes fallout of migrants? Why do rarities show up when and where they do? Paul Lehman, who teaches in the geography department at UC Santa Barbara and is the new editor of *Birding* magazine, will present information on why migrating birds occur where they do. We will get a primer on weather to help forecast potential fallouts of migrants and occurrences of rarities, and learn what effect topography and climate have. This is a real opportunity to learn from one of America's top birders. Please join us.

## IDENTIFICATION WORKSHOPS

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

Everyone is invited to attend these workshops dealing with various aspects of bird identification. **Richard Webster** will present this evening's workshop in the format of a photo quiz. This is non-competitive and will be an opportunity to briefly review some difficult i.d. problems. Don't miss our April program! With both Paul Lehman and Richard Webster on hand we will have a wealth of expertise. In May: Kimball Garrett.

## FIELD TRIPS

CALL THE TAPE!

Before setting out on 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, April 2 - Topanga State Park.** Leader **Gerry Haigh** will show us around this nearby scrub oak / chaparral habitat. Migrants should be migrating and local breeders should be singing. This is a good trip for beginning birders and those new to the area. Meet at 8 a.m. in the parking lot of Trippet Ranch. From Topanga Canyon Blvd. in the Valley, take a very sharp turn east uphill on Entrada Dr. (7 miles so. of Ventura Blvd. or 1 mile no. of Topanga Village.) Follow the signs to the state park, and meet in the parking lot. \$3 parking fee.

**Sunday, April 8 - Ballona Wetlands.** Join leader **Bob Shanman** or **Ian Austin** for a pleasant morning of birding. Shorebirds and waterbirds should be plentiful as they head north. Meet at 8 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. **NOTE: There will be no field trips to Ballona in May, June or July.**

**Sat. & Sun., April 8 and 9 - Owens Valley Blue/Sage Grouse Trip.** Resident leader **Earl Gann** will show us around his favorite spots including Glacier Lodge and Dias Lake. Sunday morning we will meet Sage Grouse biologist **Robert Gibson** for an informative field chat out on the Crowley lek. Both grouse should be seen on the trip, and hopeful birds include Pinyon

Jay, Long-eared Owl, Sage Thrasher and winnowing Snipe (quite a spectacle!). Reserve with Audubon House with \$10 check, as per policy. Meeting time is 7:30 a.m. Location and possible accommodations disclosed upon receipt of reservation.

**Saturday, April 15 - Spring Seabird Watch.** Come out to Pt. Dume with leader **Kimball Garrett** or a surrogate to scan rafts of seabirds and migrating fly-bys. Loons and scoters should be abundant, Brant being hopeful. Take the PCH north to the south end of Zuma Beach, turn left on Westward Beach Road. Meet at 1 p.m. at the parking lot at the end of the road. Latecomers meet at the top of the bluff (up the trail; veer right at the T). Bring scopes if you have them.

**Sunday, April 16 - Whittier Narrows Regional Park.** **David White** will lead a morning walk looking for a variety of birds. Meet at 8 a.m. at the Nature Center, 1000 Durfee Ave. in south El Monte, off Fwy 60 between Santa Anita and Peck Drive exits, west of Fwy 605.

**Sunday, April 16 - Starr Ranch Sanctuary.** We will meet Park Ranger **Pete DeSimone** at adjacent Casper Park at 8:30 a.m., carpool in park vehicles, and head north thru Bell Canyon into Starr Ranch. We should glimpse Grasshopper Sparrows while driving up Fox Canyon. From here, we will continue downhill on foot for an easy 1.5 miles through fairly untouched oak. Birding for passerines and young raptors should be very good. Take Fwy 5 south to Ortega Hwy (74). Go east about 8 miles to the Casper Park entrance on your left. Sign in at gate and park in lot immediately left of gate house. Reserve by phone with Audubon House. \$5 donation to Starr Ranch, to be given at the gate. Do not send money to Audubon.

**Friday, April 21 - Chatsworth Park South.** Join leader **Allan Keller** for a morning of prime-migration birding. We will seek warblers, orioles, grosbeaks and others in this chaparral/oak woodland habitat. From Topanga Cyn. Blvd., go west on Devonshire and continue into the parking lot by the Rec. Center. Meet at 8 a.m.

**Sunday, April 22 - Malibu Lagoon Walk.** Fourth Sunday of each month. Meet at 8:30 a.m. in the lagoon parking lot. The lot is on the ocean side of PCH, just west of the lagoon bridge, but you can turn right into town for street parking. The lot has a daily fee. This walk is under the leadership of a member of Santa Monica Audubon Society.

**Friday, April 28 - Huntington Beach Central Park.** Park Ranger **David Winkler** will guide his covey through this migrant island in the suburban sea of Orange County. This well-birded area frequently hosts an unusual bird or two. Arrive early if you like, then meet David at 9 a.m. at the Park Bench Snack Bar on the east side of Golden West St. about 2.5 miles south of the fwy 405 intersection. There should be ample free parking here.

**Saturday, April 29 - Antelope Valley Reptile Trip.** L.A. Zoo Curator of Herpetology **Harvey Fischer** will be our guide to the reptiles of our nearest desert environs. Hopeful sightings include Side-blotched, Whiptail, Zebra-tailed and Spiny Lizards, with Horned and Collared Lizards, Desert Iguanas and others possible. We will meet

at Placerita Nature Center, and depart promptly at 8 a.m. sharp to the Antelope Valley and points east towards Lake Los Angeles. Bring a lunch, plenty to drink, and good shoes. Tennis shoes are not advised for the sandy areas. Peterson's *Field Guide to Western Reptiles and Amphibians* by Stebbins may be helpful.

**Sunday, April 30 - Anacapa Island.** Call **Dan Guthrie** of Pomona Valley Audubon at (714) area (h) 621-4000 or (w) 621-8000 ext 2836 for info. Cost \$30.

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Los Angeles, CA 90046

**Sunday, May 7 - San Antonio Canyon.** Leader **Dan Guthrie**. A good locale at a good time with a good leader. Migrating passerines in riparian habitat will be the emphasis. Take Fwy 10 east to Indian Hill Blvd., to Memorial Park parking lot between 8th and 10th Streets. Bring a lunch. Scopes probably not necessary.

**Sunday, May 7 - Topanga State Park.** Leader **Gerry Haigh**. See April 2 trip for details.

**Saturday, May 13 - Santa Anita Canyon.** Leader **Mary Carmona** will lead us on a 1.5 or 2 mile moderately strenuous walk through the chaparral and oak woodland habitats of the canyon looking for migrating passerines and chaparral birds.

**Saturday, May 20 - Whittier Narrows.** Leader **David White**. See April 16 trip for details.

*Continued on page 11*