



WESTERN TANAGER

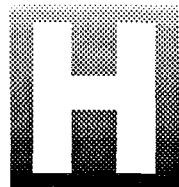
The Los Angeles Chapter of
The National Audubon Society

Volume 56 Number 7 May 1990

The Health Effects Of MALATHION

by Jesse Moorman

Nearly thirty years after Silent Spring, this year when Los Angeles gardens are tormented by aphids because the lady bugs are all dead, when nothing is pollinated because the bees are all poisoned, we might once again question the use of "safe" insecticides.



Helicopter spraying of malathion for the Mediterranean fruit fly is the most notorious use of insecticides now in Los Angeles. This spraying allegedly has eradicated the Medfly from southern California almost every year since 1980. If we "eradicate" it again this year, in the largest Medfly War ever, presumably we must do it again next year and every year thereafter. Although this is very bad for the environment, it may not be the worst pesticide habit in relation to human health. The countless applications of home, garden and agricultural insecticides may give greater personal exposures and be far more damaging to human populations than the Medfly spraying. Although the helicopter squadrons are definitely more frightening, the general use of pesticides raises similar issues — indiscriminate use of poisons exposing people against their will, or without their knowledge, and without recourse.

The main danger from malathion spray is from inhaled mists or vapors. Exposure of the skin to malathion can cause serious problems but is less dangerous than inhalation. The state argues that the Medfly malathion bait is in little blobs, which cannot be inhaled, so that people are not in danger. Worried citizens believe that they are getting significant doses from aerosol or vapor. They reject the state's standards, arguing that many people are sufficiently

sensitive to malathion to suffer adverse health effects from the helicopter spraying. There are experts to support either argument. The jury is still out on that particular issue, but much is known about malathion toxicity.

Malathion is one of many similar organophosphate ("OP") pesticides. Organophosphates are powerful and deadly nerve poisons. They react chemically with proteins, which are the body's metabolic machinery. They are called nerve poisons because their most conspicuous effect is to inactivate cholinesterase enzymes, which regulate the transmission of nerve impulses. These pesticides have been touted as being a safe replacement for DDT (which was one of the villains of *Silent Spring*) because they are less persistent in the environment, not passing along in the food chain from one species to another. They poison by combining permanently with proteins, losing their toxicity, but destroying the protein's functionality.

The chemical bonds between proteins and organophosphate pesticides are strong and irreversible. The damage persists at least until the corrupted proteins are replaced by new molecules, which may take months. Repeated exposure to malathion, before the body recuperates, may have cumulative effects on health.

Malathion spray enters the body mainly through the lungs, nose or skin. Poison from such exposures does not get

to the liver as fast as residues ingested with food. Thus malathion absorbed through the skin or lungs is liable to persist longer and to have more chances of making "hits" at critical sites in the body. Even after it gets to the liver, malathion might not be detoxified; newborns and some adults do not have the necessary enzymes. These people will suffer much greater toxicity.

Exposure of the skin to malathion creates damaged proteins in the skin. Sooner or later the immune system may attack these foreign substances. When the immune system develops a specific reaction to something like malathion on the skin, the

Continued on page 3

Much of the scientific information in this piece is from affidavits of experts who oppose aerial spraying of malathion against Mediterranean fruit flies. These are the January 24, 1990 declaration of Marc A. Lappé, Ph.D.; the 1981 affidavit of Stanford professor Sumner M. Kalman, M.D.; and the 1981 affidavit of Allen K. McGrath, Jr., M.D., a specialist in internal medicine. Professor Lappé formerly worked for California's Department of Health Services. In 1980 he and his staff evaluated the health risks of spraying malathion for Medfly eradication. He has continued studying the effects of toxic chemicals on the human body since then.

CATHOLIC OFFICIAL ENDORSES BOYCOTT

Washington, D.C. - Roman Catholic bishops' top spokesman on abortion endorsed a boycott of environmental groups that support changes in U.S. population-assistance and birth-control policies. Richard Doerflinger issued a statement in support of a boycott of the National Wildlife Federation, the National Audubon Society and the Sierra Club. . .

Los Angeles Times,
March 6, 1990, p. A-16

Well, I guess that puts environmentalists on the same shelf with the tuna fishermen who kill thousands of porpoises or the elephant poachers who hack off tusks and leave the miserable carcasses to rot in the African sun.

What is the proper, civilized answer to a boycott? A boycott says unequivocally that we not only disagree with you philosophically, but that you are so terribly wrong that we urge people to avoid you like the plague and not touch you with a ten-foot pole. What have we done to engender such a powerful reaction?

The great majority of environmentalists are convinced that the root cause of the world's environmental problems is simply too many people. Global warming, ozone depletion, smog, pollution of all varieties, rain forest demise, desertification: all these and many more are the result of overpopulation. Take a look at the graph of world population. The steep climb of exponential growth is astonishing. The population of the planet today is 5.3 billion. In the year 2000 there will be one billion more of us. As the Ehrlichs point out, "The population explosion will come to an end before very long. The only remaining question is whether it will be halted through the humane method of birth control, or by nature wiping out the surplus." They mean starvation, disease and war: effective, nasty, bloody and painful.

The bishops are upset because of the criticism of our government's population policy. In 1974, the United Nations called an International Conference on Population. The United States responded generously with money for education on family planning and the distribution of birth control material. Ten years later delegates from

Conservation Conversation

by Sandy Wohlgemuth

149 nations met in Mexico City for the second conference. The U.S. delegate, James L. Buckley, astounded the meeting by announcing, "We reject the notion that we are caught up in a global population crisis," and "Population growth is, of itself, neither good nor bad." Federal law already forbids the use of our money for abortions in other countries. Though we would continue to support the U.N. Fund for Population Activities, Buckley said we want concrete assurances that U.S. money would not go for abortion. This policy was extended to private organizations. The largest and most effective is the International Planned Parenthood Federation. IPPF does not advocate abortion but condones it in countries that permit it. In 1984, IPPF reported that only 12 out of the 89 nations it helps include abortion as part of their program. Cutting back on funds, it said, would ultimately mean more abortions when conventional birth control methods could not be distributed.

Buckley's performance was the Reagan administration's extension of the "pro-life" agenda to the world. George Bush has continued the policy of his predecessor. It may be recalled that Bush vetoed Congress' renewal of full funding for international population control. His questionable reason was that some of the money might go to further China's harsh program mandating one child to a couple. Political observers believe that this uncompromising anti-abortion stance of Reagan and Bush has more than a little to do with pleasing the militant right-to-life battalions. For years the polls have shown that the majority of Americans believe that a woman should have the right to choose her own reproductive destiny. But the pro-life people must be reckoned with. They are determined, organized and vocal. And they vote. They also have friends in high places. The core of the movement is seen to be fundamentalist, predominately right-wing religious groups.

The Catholic bishops are following the leadership of Pope John Paul II who can tell the multitudes of the poor, in his indefatigable travels through the Third World, to follow the biblical injunction: multiply and replenish the earth. Many Catholics in

this country choose to ignore the ancient papal mandate and practice birth control. Many are deeply disturbed by the inability of the Vatican to change to meet the needs of the contemporary world. It is interesting that Catholic Italy now has legalized contraception and abortion and has the lowest family size in Europe.

We wonder how successful the United States will be in attempting to dictate reproductive practices to the world. Mr. Buckley's words in 1984 were greeted with considerable dismay and resentment by the delegates. It is difficult to believe that intelligent leaders in Washington do not understand the gravity of the overpopulation problem. Consider the inconsistencies of our policies. The government is worried about global warming and the ozone layer. These are intangible issues. We cannot see or feel the chemicals nibbling at the ozone in the stratosphere, nor can we palpably experience the greenhouse effect. Some scientists, in fact, disagree with the predictions of catastrophe. Yet we accept them as serious concerns and join other nations to explore solutions. But the reality of overpopulation is forced upon our leaders. Hundreds cross our borders illegally every day, thousands overflow Yosemite every summer, millions of autos in our teeming cities pollute the air, ever-growing billions in Social Security payments are made to the elderly and the disabled every year. *Et cetera, et cetera.* Politicians and bureaucrats can read the population graph as well as we can. Yet we do nothing of consequence to solve the problem. If the President, his anti-abortion friends and the bishops have a better idea than family planning we would like to hear it.

With all due respect to the learned bishops, they are dead wrong. They hold a minority opinion and they have a right to express it. But a boycott! A powerful step with a certain arrogance to it. It carries a threatening note somewhat akin to denying communion to a pro-choice California congresswoman or a Guam archbishop who intimidates elected officials with excommunication.

National Audubon, The National Wildlife Federation and the Sierra Club will probably not be greatly affected by a

boycott. But the ultimate price to the world, if these views continue to influence national policy, will be serious indeed. ➤

References:

- Ehrlich, Paul and Anne, "The Population Explosion" *The Amicus Journal*, Winter 1990
Time, August 20, 1984, p. 34

Correction-

Reference in the April conservation column to "Colorado State Senator Gary Hart" should have read simply "state Senator Gary Hart." Apologies to both Sandy Wohlgenuth and Senator Hart.

MALATHION

Continued from page 1

body has developed an allergy. A chemical with the ability to induce such an allergy is called a sensitizer. Malathion is a powerful sensitizer of the skin, causing allergic dermatitis, sometimes after a single exposure. A person sensitized to malathion will experience skin eruptions on subsequent exposures, even to minuscule amounts.

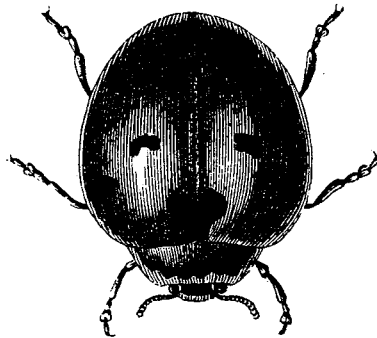
The various OP poisons differ in potency more than in effect. They cause a wide variety of mental and nervous-system problems, even at doses which do not cause symptoms of acute poisoning. Persons who are taking medicines that are cholinesterase inhibitors are more likely to suffer symptoms, or more severe symptoms, of poisoning after malathion exposure.

Lethal doses of malathion cause respiratory arrest. In sub-lethal or pre-lethal acute poisoning there may be mental confusion, headache, coma, convulsions, giddiness, constricted pupils, watery eyes, blurred vision, salivation, sweating, fluid in the lungs, chest constriction, hypertension, rapid heartbeat, elevated blood pressure, menstrual irregularity, abdominal cramps, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, tremors, cyanosis (blue color from unoxygenated blood) in the extremities, motor weakness, an unsteady gait, muscle fatigue and muscular fibrillation (rapid twitching). Quick treatment may counteract some of the effects, but the treatment may have to be continued for many days or weeks. Some of the effects of poisoning may be irreversible.

Malathion poisoning may mimic such things as pneumonia or other severe respiratory infections, asthma, brain hemorrhage, heat exhaustion, heat stroke, hypo-

glycemia, carbon monoxide poisoning and gastroenteritis. The most common symptoms of mild exposure — headache, nausea, etc. — are general symptoms, identical to common body reactions to stress, anxiety, fatigue, low blood sugar, insufficient sleep and eye strain. This makes it difficult to connect the symptoms to malathion or other OP poison. Long-term effects in human victims include loss or slowing of sensation, partial paralysis, slow thinking and calculation, faulty memory, sleep disturbances, and drowsiness.

In one study of human victims, organophosphate poisoning created disorders of emotion and memory lasting more than six months. Exposure insufficient to produce any symptoms of acute poisoning can affect the EEG (electroencephalogram, or brain wave record) of rats. The abnormal EEG patterns persist for 90 days. The



EEG of rhesus monkeys is profoundly affected by the organophosphates Sarin and Dieldrin. Workers subjected to OP poisoning also have abnormal EEGs for long periods. Workers exposed to Sarin **more than one year before testing** showed the characteristic EEG disturbances. The researchers believe that the OP chemicals produce long-lasting changes in the structure of nerve cells. Long-term exposure to OP compounds may induce irreversible brain dysfunction.

The technical grade malathion being used in aerial spraying is less pure and more toxic than higher grades. Technical grade is 95% malathion and 5% "inert" ingredients. These "inert" ingredients are mainly contaminants, and actually are much more toxic than malathion; they include isomalathion and malaoxin.

The chemical industry measures toxicity of a substance by the LD₅₀, the amount that will be a Lethal Dose for 50% of the laboratory animals on which it is used. Toxicity is tested on animals such as rats, which have enzymes in both liver and blood to detoxify malathion. People don't have the enzymes in their blood; therefore, the test on rats may not be reliable indications of human toxicity. Moreover, about half of the Caucasian population and an unknown percentage of other populations produce little or none of those enzymes in the liver.

Isomalathion is 95 times as toxic as malathion. It makes up only 0.2 percent of tech grade malathion, but it contributes 20% extra toxicity to the pure malathion. Malaoxin, the main breakdown product of malathion, accumulates in malathion when it is stored and is 68 times more toxic. Several variations of the organophosphate molecule make up about half of the "inert" ingredients; they vary in toxicity from 17 to 412 times that of malathion. The acute toxicity of "inert" ingredients is thus several times that of the malathion in which they are mixed. Some of the "inert" ingredients substantially increase the toxicity to laboratory animals but not to target insects. Some of malathion's contaminants potentiate malathion, so that the mixture is more toxic than its constituents. Because some of these impurities are produced spontaneously in storage, malathion's toxicity actually increases with age.

Malathion damages chromosomes, causing mutations in the cells; it causes a wide variety of birth defects in chickens, rats and fish; any dose might cause birth defects, though, of course, the risk is lower at lower doses. Since malathion forms strong chemical bonds with proteins, it probably bonds with parts of the DNA or with the proteins that replicate DNA. It appears to cause cancer in rats and mice. Malaoxin, a breakdown product, is also carcinogenic in mice and rats. Oscar Singer, author of a current ballot initiative to control pesticide use, cites an article from *Science* magazine, December 15, 1989 (vol. 246 p. 1386): "Making a cancer cell it seems is not all that easy. Researchers have found that as many as ten distinct mutations may have to accumulate in a cell before it becomes cancerous." Since cancer probably does not result from a single environmental insult, he questions the validity of laboratory tests for carcinogenicity. Every molecule of poison in the body damages something and, although it may not be apparent, the damage may ultimately be significant. ➤

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.

May is spring vagrant time. Many of you will be trooping out to the desert oases to search for these "lost" individuals which rarely reach our state. And of course there is always the chance that you may acquire that crown jewel of birding—a state record (or even a bird never seen in the U.S. before). It happens practically every year! Please document your sightings of any rare species by writing a complete description in the field and mailing it to Guy McCaskie, *American Birds* Regional Editor, 954 Grove Street, Imperial Beach, CA 92032. If your rare bird is in L.A. County, send your documentation to Kimball Garrett, Section of Ornithology, Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History, 900 Exposition Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90007. Most important is to call Jean Brandt or me at the numbers listed at the end of this column. The more observers who can verify your sighting, the better.

It is also time for birders with a working knowledge of southern California bird songs and distribution to consider "putting something back" by joining some 2,000 other skilled birders in running the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's North American Breeding Bird Survey routes. Each route is 25 miles. Every mile the surveyor stops for three minutes and lists all birds seen and heard during that time. It's a lot of fun and the basis for some serious research that is desperately needed in these ecologically sensitive times. Please contact the southern California coordinator, Bob McKernan, 40 Sherril Lane, Redlands, CA 92373, phone (714) 793-7897, for more information.

March saw spring migration building toward the peak that comes in mid-April. Here are some of the very few reports received:

A dark-phase **Swainson's Hawk** was reported from Malibu by Jean Brandt and

Irwin Wolman on 17 March. A **Clapper Rail** has been present at Bolsa Chica from at least 11 March to the present (5 April) (Janet Cupples, Jerry Friedman and Bruce Broadbooks). We hope that, as the habitat at Bolsa Chica improves, this endangered bird becomes established.

An uncommon-in-spring **Solitary Sandpiper** was at the Edwards Air Force Base Paiute Marsh on 31 March (Jon Dunn) and a **Reeve** was at Batequitos Lagoon near Leucadia on the same day (Doug Willick).

A **South Polar Skua** was seen on a whale-watching trip off Dana Point on 14 March (Don Hoecklin) and a first-winter **Glaucous Gull** was spotted in the Santa Ana River in Anaheim on 13 March (Jim Pike). **Elegant Terns** arrived at Bolsa Chica (where they have been nesting in recent years) at least by 17 March (Jim Halferty). By 31 March about 30 were seen in Malibu Lagoon (Kimball Garrett). Were there suitable nesting areas here, Kimball feels that they would certainly breed.

A singing **Varied Thrush** was found at Chantry Flats in the San Gabriels on 20 March (Jeff Tufts) and a **Sage Thrasher** was reported from Upper Newport Bay on 24 March (Larry Allen).

Some first of spring reports: **Solitary Vireo** on 1 April at Huntington Beach Central Park (Brian Daniels), **Warbling Vireo** on 14 March at Hansen Dam (Dustin Alcalá), **MacGillivray's Warbler** on 1 April at Yaqui Well in Anza-Borrego State Park (Priscilla Brodtkin) and **Black-headed Grosbeak** on 1 April, Huntington Beach Central Park.

A **Clay-colored Sparrow** was on Catalina Island on 14 March (Dexter Kelly) and our only report of a **Grasshopper Sparrow** was one singing in the San Jose Hills near Pomona (apparently for the last year, as the area is being subdivided) on 23 March (Doug Willick).

The Western Flycatcher, as most of you know, has been split by the AOU into the Pacific-slope and Cordilleran Flycatchers. Pacific-slope Flycatchers breed commonly in riparian habitats below 5,000 feet east of the Sierra crest. Known breeding populations of Cordilleran Flycatchers in California exist only in coniferous forests of the Siskiyou and Warner Mountains in the northeast portion of the state. An interesting and scientifically valuable exercise would be to seek out breeding populations of Cordilleran Flycatchers in central and southern California east of the Sierra crest. This search will be complicated by the fact that there are migrant "Westerns" well into June.

These birds are reliably separable in


the field only by the male's call note. Bret Whitner and Kenn Kaufman's excellent series on *empidonax* identification in *Birding* describes these calls thus: "Coastal (i.e., Pacific-slope) males give a single, strongly up-slurred note: *peweeap'* or *pseeeyet'*. Interior (i.e., Cordilleran) males give this call at about the same range of pitch, but make it sharply two-syllabled, with the second note higher: *pit-peet'*." (B. Whitner and K. Kaufman, *The Empidonax Challenge*, *Birding*, Volume XVIII (6): 325).

David Gaines in past years had found birds, presumably on territory, that were identified by calls as the Cordilleran type on the east slope of the Sierras near Mammoth Lakes, in Lee Vining Canyon, Lundy Canyon and near Green Lake. Elevations were between 8,000 and 9,000 feet. David also mentioned reports of suspected resting **Western Flycatchers** (call notes not mentioned) in Sequoia-Kings Canyon area "in dense pine and fir forests to elevations of 8,500." (D. Gaines, 1988, *Birds of Yosemite and the East Slope*, Artemisia Press, Lee Vining, California, p. 196-197).

Last year Richard Webster identified a Cordilleran in Cottonwood Basin in the White Mountains. It is also possible that these birds have bred on Clark Mountain east of Baker.

The call notes of both forms (listed under Western Flycatcher) are available on the *National Geographic Society Guide to Bird Songs* cassette, available at the LAAS bookstore. Naturally, a recording of any Cordilleran you find would certainly help substantiate the sighting.

So get out there this June amongst some of the most sublime mountains in the west and see what you can find.

Good Birding! 

Correction-

The 10,000 White-faced Ibises and 279 Sandhill Cranes reported in the April column were seen at Brawley, not in the Perris Valley.

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

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

or

Jean Brandt at (818) 788-5188

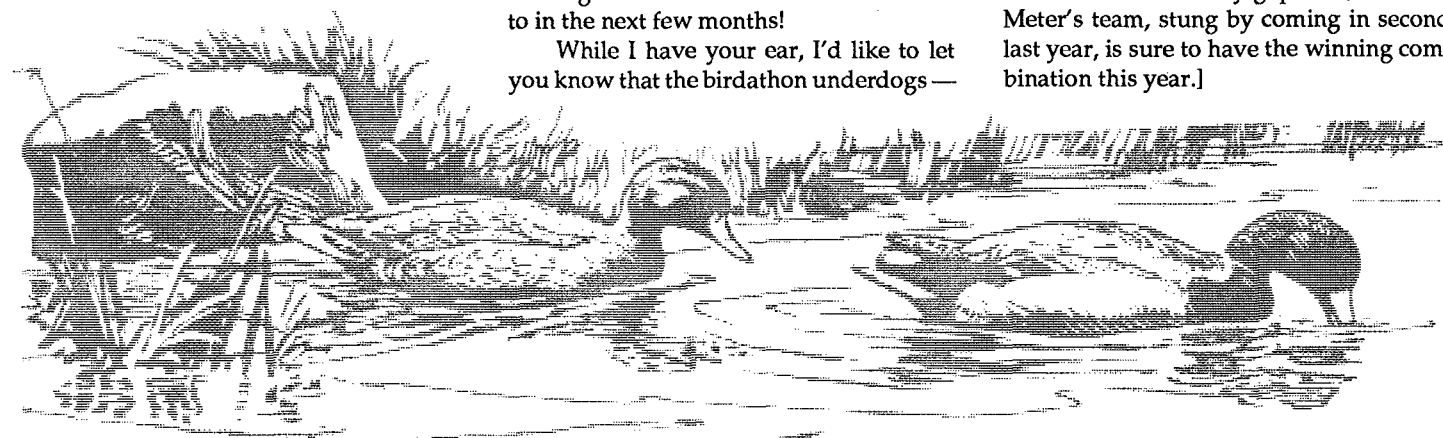
Tanager Needs Help

The *Tanager* needs a new editor. Does anyone out there want to be an editor? Please let someone know soon.

Does anyone have some knowledge or experience to share with our readers? You can submit finished articles or just send in some interesting facts that we can pass on to our members. Photos or drawings are also wanted.

Deadline for submissions is the beginning of the month before the publication date, but we cannot publish all items immediately.

Send your ideas to the *Western Tanager*, LAAS, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, CA 90046. 🐦



O'PINIONS

by Al Leopold

The *Tanager* often bores me to death. Over and over again I read the same cautionary verses about what the government is doing to the environment, what we as a society are doing to the environment, what I should be doing to save the environment — as if I didn't know already.

I have seen wildlands disappear before my eyes, as rank on row of tract houses march north and east over the hills. I have seen fewer butterflies in the past ten years than I saw in a single summer of my youth. The sun burns too easily. My eyes sting. I can't breathe.

Hot off the press, at long last, is Roger Tory Peterson's *Field Guide to Western Birds*, third edition. While some plates come from the 1980 edition of his Eastern guide, new ones cover the western species, recent additions to the ABA area list (Asian and Mexican rarities), juvenal plumages and other aids to identification discovered or popularized since the 1961 second edition. Text and range mapping are at least as current as the latest (July 1989) AOU Checklist supplement (which split off our Pacific-slope Flycatcher, California Gnatcatcher and California Towhee, among other things). The bookstore has this book in stock in softcover (\$12.95) and clothbound (\$19.95). We can order the deluxe leather-bound and autographed volume (\$125!).

Stay tuned for several other publications in the Peterson series. Revised sound recordings to match Peterson's Eastern and Western guides are due soon (the Eastern sooner) on cassette and compact disc. Kenn Kaufmann's *Field Guide to Advanced Birding* and the Western rendition of Walton and Lawson's excellent training guide, *Birding By Ear*, are also coming. So we have a lot of exciting new information to look forward to in the next few months!

While I have your ear, I'd like to let you know that the birdathon underdogs —

Bookstore News

by Charles Harper

Nick Freeman, Millie Newton and I — will again be taking on last year's winners for Most Donations (Ken Kendig's team) and Most Species (Jon Alderfer's team). We have blood in our eyes this time and will be unveiling a Mystery Route for our 24-hour marathon that is bound to inundate the competition; so if you have the urge to pledge and want to put it on the winning team, please write in "The Peripathetics" on your pledge form. The money all goes to the Audubon Adventures program in our L.A. area elementary schools, and we'll be contacting all of our pledgers to let you know exactly where we went and what we saw. Wish us luck! 🐦

[The Editor has done a quick survey and has found a credibility gap here; Bob Van Meter's team, stung by coming in second last year, is sure to have the winning combination this year.]

I try my best to recycle the resources I use, to consume modestly and minimize wastage in my life, to let the politicians know what I want by trying to vote the right ones in and the wrong ones out. And I try to treat the natural world around me as a precious place.

I am sure that you do, too. You would not have joined Audubon if you were not already aware of the danger we are in.

So why do we keep talking to ourselves? What does it accomplish to keep telling each other things we already know?

What you need to do is get to everyone who is *not* involved, not even by some passive membership subscription. You have to open your mouth and confront the guy next door busily cutting down that

tree, the Exxon station franchiser on the corner, the Albertson's bagger inquiring, "...paper or plastic?". Peer pressure has done a lot to decrease the numbers of smokers: it works the same for despoilers.

So quit moaning to each other, and get to your neighbors — moan at *them* for awhile, give them your copy of the *Tanager*, make a real pest of yourself. Hassle them, antagonize them, belittle them — we haven't got *time* to coddle egos, no *room* for the belligerent democracy conceived two centuries ago by a few tiny colonies on a continent still unmoved by their presence.

Because if you don't, they will parch you, starve you, asphyxiate you as inevitably as our sickly sun sets in a smog-soaked sea. 🐦

PROTECTING ECOLOGICAL LANDSCAPES — AUDUBON LEADERS MEET IN CALIFORNIA

Leaders of National Audubon Society chapters gathered at the Asilomar Conference Center on California's Monterey Peninsula from April 7-10 for the biennial conference of Audubon's Western region.

Millie Newton, Nancy Cummings, Charles Schoettlin and Steve Hirsh of the Los Angeles chapter were among the environmental activists who met with National Audubon President Peter A.A. Berle and other members of Audubon's staff of scientists, lobbyists, educators and sanctuary managers.

New strategies for managing wildlife habitats into the next century and protecting ecological landscapes highlighted the 1990 conference.

Workshops and field trips provided numerous opportunities for conference attendees to focus on a variety of conservation topics. 🐦

Left to right are Millie Newton, Peter A.A. Berle and Steve Hirsh



THRASHING AROUND IN THE OUTBACK

by Nick Freeman

In April, for the first time in many moons, LAAS trekked out to the far reaches of the Mojave Desert around the Providence and New York Mountain ranges. In addition to its stark beauty, this area is known for supporting Bendire's, Crissal, migrating Sage and occasional Le Conte's Thrashers; and these (especially the Bendire's)

were our goal. Our trip got off to a rough start for some, with rain and heavy winds confounding campers the night before, and continued cold and cloudy weather keeping the birding cool well into the morning. Chet McGaugh proved his familiarity with the area as we meandered through the hills, taking unmarked turn-offs and sampling various habitats. Despite the extreme drought, we managed to find a Cactus Wren, a Ladder-backed Woodpecker and a Scott's Oriole before long, followed by Black-throated Sparrows, Hammond's Flycatchers and assorted other birds as the morning began to warm; but the thrashers were elusive. As afternoon began to set in, we finally located some Bendire's Thrashers at one of our last and best spots for the

bird. They kept their distance, but we chased them around until everyone seemed moderately satisfied with the looks through the scope. The moderately small bill, buffy tail tips and lack of wing bars were useful in the i.d. Alas, the Crissal Thrashers eluded our effort. However, there was a hot tip for Sage Thrashers seen the day before by a few people in the group, and another hour of driving and some more thrashing around added this bird to the list, too. The breast streaking was much darker, heavier and more extensive than on the similar Bendire's Thrasher, and the bill was even shorter on this overall grayer bird. We picked up a few more passerines at a migrant trap before following the afternoon sun back to the Big City. 🐦

American Trader (Traitor) Spilled

by Leslie Levy © 1990

Some Somnambulistic Tanker
Rammed into its anchor
Off the California shore.

Hull split, outpour, gush, grime and gore
We siphon Mother's marrow to the core.
Exhausted, Fuming, Wasted, Spilled
Still we cry for more.

South Bay, the papers say,
"Slick Creeps North"

Brave Young Men in Yellow Space Suits
Do Terrestrial Battle
With the ephemeral petrol rainbow
Their high-tech equipment
And good intentions don't know how to clean
A goo that fuels economies, short-sighted
and mean.

Booms, Scoopers, Scanners
Somnambulistic Urban Planners
Are Befuddled in the Quagmire

Pipe fitters, Drillmen, Divers, Welders,
Shipmen, Chemists, Advertisers
Analysts, Consultants, Insurers
Financial Advisers
And a Toxic clean-up crew for hire.

Brave Young Men in Yellow Space Suits
Do Terrestrial Battle
With Toxic Beach Tar
From Seal Beach to Corona del Mar
All our hands are dirty
As we somnambulistic'ly consume
More of the marrow of the Mother they
exhume.

FISHING FOR THE FUTURE

Reprinted from the Audubon Science Quarterly

Because of the increasing pressure on marine ecosystems and the woeful lack of protection for fish populations, Audubon is expanding its environmental policy analysis program to include fisheries management issues.

Many will agree, marine fishery conservation is decades behind on land conservation policies. "We still think of most fish as only being a commodity of some economic value or a commodity of some recreational value," says Dr. Carl Safina, Audubon research and policy ecologist. "And we don't think of fish in the ocean as the wild animal populations that they are. Fish need to be managed as wildlife populations, not as commodities." Currently there is virtually no biologically based management in effect for ocean systems. There has not been a great deal of detailed research conducted on population dynamics of ocean-going fish, but it is clear that many fish populations are declining. "What we know is enough to make management better than what it is."

"The Atlantic coast-wide emergency management plan for striped bass is a good example," says Safina, "of how investing in research and management can turn a problem around." Similar to other species of fish that are declining, many striped bass were being killed before they had a chance to reach reproductive age, thus robbing the population of spawning adults. Biological research on striped bass helped determine at a critical time why the fish were becoming scarcer and what could be done about it. The federal government acted by imposing size limits on catches, applied to commercial fishermen as well as sportfishermen. Federal biologists also worked to protect the last strong year-class of spawning stripers so as to ensure their survival to reproductive age. "Striped bass management," says Safina, "serves as a good model for the kinds of programs that we need for other species."

Currently, fisheries management is administered by the Dept. of Commerce. However, the Commerce Dept. is not well-oriented to deal with the uniqueness of fisheries: It is our only major food source whose supply is dependent on natural reproduction in a wild environment. The fact that fish are wild animals makes their management needs fundamentally differ-

ent from agriculture or domestic animal production, which are more appropriate concerns for the Commerce Dept. Since over-fishing can induce collapse of the resource — as has happened or is happening with cod, swordfish, redfish, bluefin tuna, and others — fishery management, unlike agriculture and livestock raising, demands that factors beyond mere market forces be considered.

To remedy some of the inequities inherent with the current system, Safina recommends that: 1) Fishery management plans be developed for all recreationally and economically important fish; and 2) Administration of fishery management be transferred from the Commerce Dept. to the Dept. of Interior, within the Fish and Wildlife Service so that management decisions can be directed by biologists. Safina believes that the fundamental criteria used for management of fish populations must change. Only by de-emphasizing politics and economics, and by focusing primarily on the biological capability of fish populations to withstand fishing pressure, can healthy fish populations (and the commerce and recreation that they support) be maintained into the long term. 🐟

Dr. Carl Safina is a research and policy ecologist based at Audubon's Scully Science Center, 306 South Bay Avenue, Islip, NY 11751; (516) 277-4289

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- (2) Names of people in your party
- (3) Phone numbers: (a) usual and (b) evening before event, in case of emergency cancellation or changes
- (4) Separate check (no cash please) to LAAS for exact amount for each trip
- (5) SASE for confirmation and associated trip information.

Send to: Reservations, LAAS, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, CA 90046

If there is insufficient response, the trip will be cancelled *two Wednesdays* prior to the scheduled date and you will be so notified and your fee refunded. Your cancellation within that time will bring a refund only if there is a paid replacement available.

WESTERN TANAGER

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(updated Thursdays)

To report bird sightings,

before 9:00 p.m.

(818) 788-5188 - Jean Brandt

(213) 827-0407 - Hank Brodtkin

ANNOUNCEMENTS

EVENING MEETING

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

Tuesday, May 8 - Richard Veit will present *The Identification and Winter Ecology of Jaegers*. Dick, an ornithologist at U.C. Irvine has studied jaegers from Alaska to Antarctica. Identifying the three species of jaegers is a real challenge and Dick, who is preparing a paper on this subject for *American Birds*, will cover the topic thoroughly. The complex winter ecology and long migrations of some jaegers will also be covered. This should be a very helpful program for birders of all levels as well as a fascinating program for the general audience. Please join us.

IDENTIFICATION WORKSHOP

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

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 cancellations that may have occurred by the Thursday before the trip.

Notations in parentheses after trip listings refer to Thomas Bros. map page and grid coordinates (county, page number, grid coordinates).

Saturday, May 5 - Santa Anita Canyon. Leader Mary Carmona. Take the 210 Fwy toward Arcadia and take Santa Anita Avenue north to the very end of the road. Meet at the trailhead at the bottom of the parking lot. A moderately strenuous 3-mile round trip through oak and chaparral canyons. Good selection of breeding and migrant passerines as well as Nuttall's Woodpecker, Band-tailed Pigeon and three hummers. Bring a lunch. May be cool. Meeting time 7 a.m. [LA, p.20A, F-1]

Sunday, May 6 - Topanga State Park. Leader Gerry Haigh will guide participants through this beautiful nearby area. The group will look at resident and migrant species in the sycamores, grassland, scrub oak and chaparral. This is an ideal trip for a beginning birder or for someone new to the area. Meet at 8 a.m. in the parking lot of Trippet Ranch. From Topanga Canyon Blvd., take a very sharp turn east (left if heading south from the San Fernando Valley) uphill onto Entrada Drive (7 miles south of Ventura Blvd. and 1 mile north of Topanga Village). Follow the signs to the state park. \$3 parking fee. [LA, p.109, D-4]

Saturday, May 19 - Big Morongo Wildlife Reserve. Leader Daniel Cooper. Birding this renowned desert oasis and adjacent area, we should

see numerous breeding desert birds such as Brown-crested and Vermilion Flycatchers, Summer Tanagers, Gambel's Quail, White-winged Doves and Scott's Orioles, as well as Blue Grosbeaks, Lazuli Buntings, Yellow-breasted Chats and a number of possible migrating flycatchers of the *Empidonax* genus. Meet at 8 a.m. in the parking lot. Bring lunch and old shoes. Take Fwy 10 past Banning and then Hwy 111, to Hwy 62 north. After passing through the town of Morongo Valley, take a right on East Drive, then a left into the preserve.

Sunday, May 20 - Whittier Narrows Regional Park. David White will lead a morning walk. Migrants, residents and summer visitors should all be in evidence. Meet at 8 a.m. at the Nature Center, 1000N. Durfee Avenue in South El Monte, off Fwy 60 between the Santa Anita and Peck Drive exits, west of Fwy 605. [LA, p.47, D-5]

Saturday, May 26 - McDonald Creek. Leader Dustin Alcalá. This evening hike will begin as a passerine walk looking for Swainson's Thrushes as well as other late migrants and breeding birds. As evening takes hold, attentions will shift to the local birds of the night. The group will hopefully see or hear Great Horned Owls, Poorwills and Lesser Nighthawks. The walk is an easy half mile each way. We will meet at 4:30 p.m., wait until 5:00 for stragglers, and revel in the darkness until 8:00 or 8:30. Bring a snack, something to drink, a flashlight and sweater, and a carrot for the Clydesdale (if you like horses). Limited to 15 participants. Reserve with Audubon House. [LA, p.10, A-5]

Sunday, May 27 - Malibu Lagoon. Fourth Sunday of each month. Meet at 8:30 a.m. in the lagoon parking lot (daily fee) on the ocean side of PCH, just north of the lagoon bridge. You can also turn into town for street parking. This walk is led by a member of the Santa Monica Audubon Society. [LA, p.114, B-5]

Saturday, June 2 - San Gabriel Mountains. Leader David Koeppel will be looking for mountain birds such as Mountain Quail, MacGillivray's Warblers, Western Wood-Pewees and Boreal Pewee. Meet at the entrance to Charlton Flats Campground at 7:30 a.m. Bring lunch and insect repellent. Take Angeles Crest Highway (Hwy 2) into the hills north of La Canada for about 24 miles.

Sunday, June 3 - Topanga State Park. See May 6 for details.

Saturday and Sunday, June 16 and 17 (Monday the 18th optional) Southern Sierras Weekend with Bob Barnes. This very popular trip covers widely varying terrain on both sides of the Sierras from desert to riverine to montane habitats, and should net over 120 species with the Monday extension. Possible species include Evening Grosbeaks, Red Crossbills, Calliope Hummers, Wood Ducks, Yellow-billed Cuckoos and Willow, Gray and Brown-crested Flycatchers. Limited participation. Fee \$22 plus \$10 for optional Monday extension. For more info on the trip and

lodging, reserve with SASE per field trip policy. A bird report of the trip will be provided to those attending.

Sunday, June 24 - Malibu Lagoon. See May 27 for details.

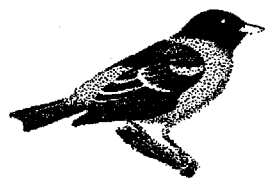
Saturday, June 30 - Big Bear Lake and Vicinity. Co-leaders Louis Tucker and Nick Freeman will meet interested parties outside Coldbrook Campground in Big Bear at 8 a.m. Take Hwy 18 or 38 to Big Bear Lake, then proceed about halfway along the south side of the lake on Hwy 18; turn south on Tulip Road. The campground will be on the south side as the road curves. Target birds with good probability include Williamson's Sapsuckers, Calliope and Rufous Hummingbirds, Lincoln's and Brewer's Sparrows, Cassin's and Purple Finches and White-headed Woodpeckers. It should be warm and there may be bugs, so come prepared. We plan to eat a picnic lunch along the way. 🐦

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