



WESTERN TANAGER

The Los Angeles Chapter of
The National Audubon Society

Volume 56 Number 8 9 August 1990

BIRDING ABOVE THE ARCTIC CIRCLE

If you got cold on your last birding trip to the Sierra Mountains, you'll want to find a warm spot on the beach to read this exciting tale about wildlife North of the Arctic Circle. Dorothy Dimsdale writes of her bone-chilling experience in this wild land. This is the first of two parts.

Thump-per... Thump-per... Thump-per... The wooden sled pulled by a snowmobile driven by an Inuit, bumped and lurched across the uneven frozen waves and icy outcroppings on the frigid sea. This was not quite as I had envisioned it. Remembering that Santas sleigh seemed always to run smoothly, I had expected the same, with perhaps bells and a lot of Ho! Ho! - ing. Instead, I was faced with reality.

After travelling about five miles the going was smoother, with larger icebergs, easy to avoid, and only the cracks in the ice to manoeuvre. However, as the cracks were, more often than not, two

to four feet wide, this was no mean feat and was often cause for a gathering together of the five sleds while the drivers discussed the best method and place of crossing the crack. The general routine was to aim full speed in the snowmobile, leaving the sleds parked at the edge. When the snowmobiles were across, the sleds were re-attached, the snowmobile engines revved up again, and with a lurch, the sleds thumped across the crack. The cracks were, of course, filled with sea water as this was the sea we were travelling on.

We were 400 miles north of the Arctic Circle, leaving Pond Inlet at the

north end of Baffin Island and heading towards Baffin Bay. Our intention was to camp on the frozen sea, about 45 miles out at the floe-edge, where we hoped to see birds and mammals. We were fourteen birders and two excellent leaders, John Coons and Bret Whitney. My companion was Millie Newton, a fellow volunteer at Los Angeles Audubon Society, and both of us were probably out of our minds.

Millie's and my sled had a plastic orange cover at one end so, I moved under the cover and sat on a bed roll with my feet on the Polar Bear skin which carpeted the floor. I sat with my back to the driver where I was effectively cut off from the wind -- and the view. After we had been travelling for a while, I looked at Millie at the open end of the sled where the wind blew against her, and noted that she had apparently frozen, though I couldn't be sure, as her face was completely enveloped in various pieces of clothing. I also noticed that every time the sled hit a bump, my end got the worst of it, while Millie's seemed to glance off even the hardest ice. Tiring of looking at the orange plastic, between bumps I moved into the open next to Millie, who turned out not to be frozen, but merely frosted over. I soon joined her, becoming Nanook of the North number two, yet unaware of any discomfort as I looked in wonderment at the vast wilderness surrounding us.

continued on the next page

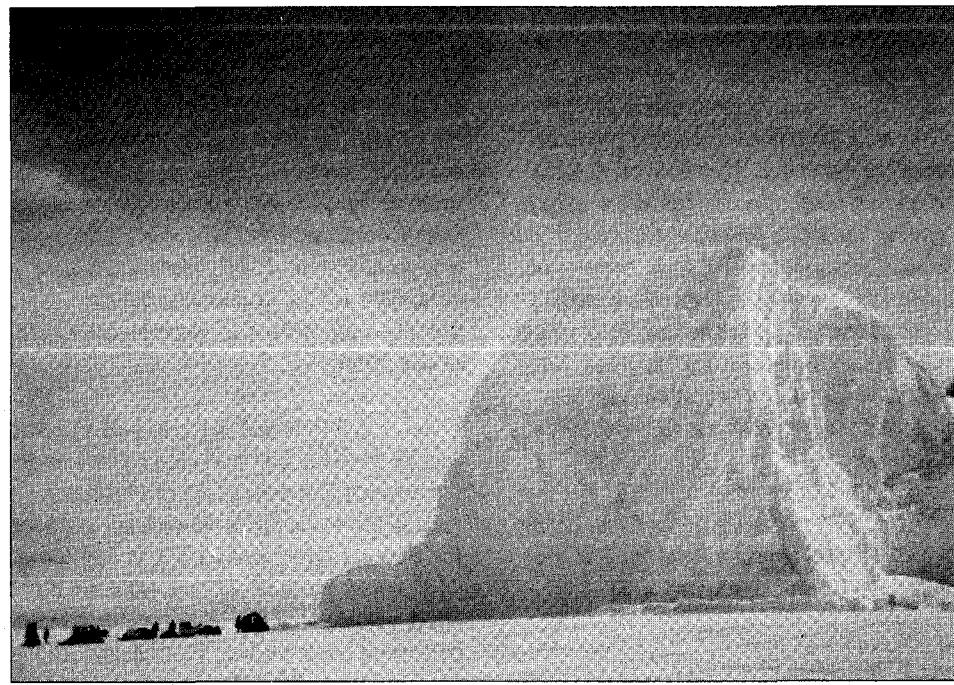


BIRDING NORTH OF THE ARCTIC

continued

Closer to us, parked on the ice were Ringed Seals which plopped into their holes at our approach. The occasional Glaucous Gull winged alongside.

We had come via Ottawa, then Iqaluit, where we disembarked to change to a plane built probably by the Wright brothers. There we saw through hail, rain, snow and an icy wind several Iceland Gulls along with Glaucous and Herring Gulls. We returned to the smaller plane



after not more than fifteen minutes, very wet -- but happy. Then the pilot wound up the elastic bands and we plane-hopped from small town to smaller town till we reached our destination. Pond Inlet was cold but clear, and the hotel was not fancy, but warm and comfortable. In June the sun never sets, but as we were to walk for miles everywhere, there would be no problem dropping off to sleep.

The Arctic is unlike any other birding area. The number of species is comparatively small -- but choice! The habitat and mammals are pretty much unique to the area.

We stayed the night at the hotel and the next morning walked down to the sleds at the ice edge in preparation for two days and nights camped on the sea. I had rather hoped for dogs instead of snowmobiles. In fact, the Inuits said they much prefer to use dogs as they dislike the noise and smell of the snowmobiles. However, as they were in charge of setting up and breaking camp, cooking our food and driving us, they had no time to care for dogs.

Several miles out, far from any human habitation, we saw two solitary crosses standing tall and stark between the mountains as if straining to be seen. They

We arrived at the floe edge about tea time (tea time? -- old habits die hard!). As we drew in, an Ivory Gull flew by. Yoiks! We jumped out of the sled -- but the bird had disappeared. We scanned the water when suddenly, between the floating ice, we saw dark whale-like forms coming past us. One raised its head -- Narwhal! The tusk was about 3 1/2 feet long. Only the males have tusks, and they don't surface very often so you have to be quick to catch sight of them. They came in small pods, and there were about 18 in all. I saw three tusks, but the narwhals were very close, and the smooth marbled coloring of their bodies was easy to see. At the same time we had Black-legged Kittiwakes in large numbers calling and flying overhead.

The Inuits placed some seal blubber on the ice, and in less than a minute an Ivory Gull flew in, appearing suddenly from the vast expanse of sky, then another and another. We had maybe 20 of them calling raucously and tearing at the blubber. Red-throated Loons were everywhere, as were Common Eiders. We also had King Eiders and beautiful Red Phalaropes in full alternate plumage, plus Oldsquaws galore. Not bad for our first day.

We dozed off in our cozy sleeping bags, which rested on caribou hides, to the sound of the Black-legged Kittiwakes and Ivory Gulls calling -- a wonderful lullaby, followed by not so wonderful snoring sounds permeating from the other tents.

Next morning I awoke at 5.30 a.m., pulled on my boots and wandered to the edge of camp where the facilities were set up. A reasonably comfortable sitting-level toilet was placed behind a piece of plastic held by two sticks. If you saw a head appearing above the plastic, you knew the facility was occupied. The view when seated was so overwhelming I took a photograph - even Donald Trump doesn't have a bathroom vista like this! In fact, I was so enchanted by the landscape that only the impatient stamping of feet nearby shook me from my reverie.

The camp started to come alive, and while awaiting breakfast (eggs and

were the graves of two sailors from a whaling ship of years ago, who had died and were buried in this austere though splendid wilderness, far from home.

We stopped for lunch by the side of an enormous ice berg. By enormous I mean about a 100 feet tall sheer wall of ice from sea to peak, and perhaps 300 feet long. One or two icicles had formed near the peak and glistened in the sun. It was here that one of our group, a lady with an arthritic knee, made a memorable remark. She gazed at the snow-covered hills and frozen sea and said, amiably: "Doesn't it remind you of Hawaii?"

bacon) we wandered the few feet to the floe-edge. It had completely frozen over during the night, so the birds were few and the mammals absent except -- a call from one of our group brought us running. Then we saw them, enormous foot prints going towards and round the camp. Polar Bear! Excited, we tried to follow them and they seemed to go behind a group of small icebergs. Elijah, our head guide, asked us not to go further without a guide with a rifle as he suspected the bear was resting behind one of the icebergs. Not wishing to disturb the bear, both for his sake and ours, we contented ourselves with taking snapshots of the footprints.

An hour later the floe-edge was opening again. Already Kittiwakes were soaring, as were one or two Ivory gulls and many Glaucous Gulls. Myra and Bob Braden of Texas came running - quick a Bowhead Whale! What? This is a very rare member of the Right Whale family -- very few people have seen one; they were all but exterminated during the heyday of whaling. However here was a very healthy looking whale not 15 feet from the ice edge, wallowing in the water. Its breathing was very loud, and it appeared to be examining the area for food.

Bowheads are about 65 feet long and eat krill. Every eight minutes or so it would submerge and reappear a little while later 100 yards away, and off we would scramble to see it -- still very close to the ice. It seemed quite unconcerned with our presence. We finally had to leave as Elijah, and Moses (Millie's and my sled driver), and the three other Inuits had broken camp and were ready for us to continue our journey.

Moving through the overcast, we stopped a few miles further north on the floe edge to look at Thick-billed Murres

*Learn how to travel with respect for our earth.
Check out the Audubon Society's Travel Guidelines on page 6 and use them on your next trip.*

"STEP RIGHT UP, FOLKS"

We need your help with two volunteer positions--Editor of the Western Tanager and Subscriptions/Mailing Manager.

Editor

The Editor of the Western Tanager collects articles and information from the membership, plans issues of the newsletter and works with the desktop publisher and printer to produce it. It is an exciting and creative position. Publishing knowledge and computer experience is helpful, but not mandatory.

Time required: 10-15 hours per issue (10 a year).

Subscriptions Manager

The Subscriptions Manager receives subscriptions, manages the membership database on the Norcom Mailmaster(or subsequent computer) and notifies subscribers by postcard of impending renewal dates. In addition, this position is responsible for producing mailing labels for the monthly (10 a year) mailings of the Western Tanager and mailing the publication.

Time required: two hours, one day per week for maillist management, approximately four hours every other month to back up the database and eight hours per issue of the Western Tanager (10 a year). Some of these tasks can be done concurrently.

and Black Guillemots. Bret spotted a flock of Dovekies far out, and we all strained to see them. Then they came towards us and landed on the water just in front of us! Oh, joy! There were 16 or 18. They are very small, about 8 1/2 inches and fly with enormously rapid wing beats, so that to see them on the water was the only way to really examine their plumage.

We drove on, past Button Point at the S.E. tip of Bylot Island (which is an uninhabited bird sanctuary), till we came to a very wide crack in the ice -- it was filled with screaming Kittiwakes, their call is very distinctive, Kitti-waaake! There were hundreds of them, feeding on what looked like brine in the water.

Our approach sent scores of the birds flying. The sleds ker-thumped across, and we drove close to an enormous cliff on which even more Kittiwakes were nesting. We stopped almost directly below the cliff, where we had lunch

(caribou stew) and watched the birds flying to and fro with nesting material. Someone remarked that the ice would melt very soon, as the Kittiwake young would be launched from their nests directly into the sea below. At this point we were lunching on the sea below.

We retraced our route round Button Point and after spotting a pair of Peregrine Falcons on a cliff, and looking long and hard at the coloring of the male which is so much more vivid in the eastern bird, we camped on the sea edge near a Gyrfalcon eyrie.

* * * * *

In the next issue, we will conclude this delightful tale of adventure in the North.

Conservation Conversation

by Sandy Wohlgemuth

This column is reprinted from the October, 1986, edition of the Western Tanager.

When the talk drifts around the environmental campfire, one of the chestnuts that is likely to be pulled out sooner or later is The Quality of Life. For perhaps 60 or 70% of the 5 billion inhabitants of this shrinking planet the quality of life is unspeakably low. The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse -- war, famine, disease and death -- are at full gallop. Poverty, war, drought and disease give these unfortunate world citizens a choice between a life of dismal quality or no life at all. The next meal is somewhat more important than the acid rain problem in Scandinavia. The rest of us, the lucky minority who have enough to eat and a reasonably decent place to live -- were the ones sitting around that campfire. We have the education and the leisure to examine the world around us, to chart the graph of the quality of our lives.

Most people live in cities. Years

and years ago, a city was fairly well-defined; there were city limits, with a sign that told you so. (If you go back far enough, the city boundary was a wall around the perimeter with fortifications to repel upstart invaders.) Beyond the city limits was a smattering of homes and then you were in the country where there were farms or undeveloped land: forests, prairies, mountains. The rich folks lived in their mansions in the center of town, close to the shops, the restaurants and theaters. The poor lived on the wrong side of the railroad tracks. The middle class, as ever, somewhere between.

With time and the influx of people, the distribution of classes underwent a great transformation. The once-elegant homes downtown wore out, were carved into minuscule flats and were taken over by the poor -- usually minorities of assorted colors. The rich found their own privileged enclaves elsewhere in what became the secure, exclusive part of town. The middle class reached out for

the country and -- voilà! -- the suburbs were born. Dozens of Golden Valley Estates materialized: tract homes with a bit of open space, a cluttered view and maybe a swimming pool. Important old-line business remained downtown surrounded by skid rows and slums of various degrees of repair, discomfort and despair.

As the suburbs began to fill up, the shopping mall was created, a born-again village green. Mom and Pop stores were replaced by chains, and downtown business sent out branches in all directions. Before we knew it, the branches coalesced into a newer entity: the Business and Industrial Park. Formerly limited to their downtown habitat, the skyscrapers (extending their range) slipped out of the central core of the city and turned up in the new Parks, but as brighter and shinier slabs of glass and stainless steel. The rationale for these vast developments is to bring the offices and light industries close to the employ-

Birds of The Season

by Hank Brodkin

*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**.*

August is upon us, and with it fall migration starts in earnest. The common western warblers and vireos drift south along the mountain ridges accompanying the hiker seeking to escape the heat and smog of the valleys below. Plovers and sandpipers begin to appear in numbers in the coastal estuaries and desert sewer ponds challenging the birder with identification and aging problems. Rarer waders such as Lesser Golden Plover, Bairds, Solitary, Stilt, and Semi-palmated Sandpipers and true vagrants such as Rufous-necked Stint and Curlew Sandpiper increase in probability over the month. The Salton Sea is at its most enigmatic in August with anything from Roseate Spoonbills to Laysan Albatrosses possible. Late August should see the first

Eastern Kingbirds, Red-eyed Vireos and American Redstarts showing up along the coast.

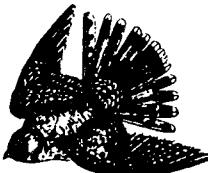
For the second summer in a row I have noticed a lack of Olive-sided Flycatchers in areas on Mt. Pinos where they once were a very visible and audible segment of the avifauna.

Whether this is because of deforestation in the neotropics (see Marshall, Joe T. (1988). Birds Lost From A Giant Sequoia Forest During Fifty Years. *The Condor*. 90: 359 - 372.), or because of the drought, is open to speculation. Our four year drought has an effect on our birds and may account for the Lazuli Bunting at John Thompson's feeder in the San Gabriel Valley on 23 May and the Lincoln Sparrow at Bill Principe's La Canada feeder on 30 June. Hank Childs reports (pers. comm. 5 June) no Green-tailed Towhees or Lincoln Sparrows at previously favored meadows in the San Bernardino Mountains.

Late Spring had its interesting moments. Here are reports of some of the birds seen.

A recently expired Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel, unusual in Southern California at any season, was found on the beach at Redondo on 16 May (Charles Walker) and the first San Joaquin Valley record of Brant was at Lost Hills in Kern County on 12 and 13 May (Dick Erickson).

A fulva Lesser Golden Plover was at the Lancaster Sewer Ponds on 12 and 13 May (Charles Harper, Wanda Conway), and an extremely rare Hudsonian Godwit was seen at Red Hill at the southern end of the Salton Sea (Roger Hickson). A Reeve was on the Los Angeles County section of Edwards Airforce Base on 12 May (Jon Dunn) while the Kern County section produced Southern California's first Spring record of Buff-breasted Sandpiper, 3 thru 9 June (Matt Heindel).



ees. But the employees can't afford to live near their jobs anymore so they find themselves moving out into the exurbs and again commuting long distances to work. On the freeways.

Ah, the freeways. Those billion-dollar, indispensable, maddening, ulcer-generating tributes to the automobile are primary factors when we consider the quality of life. If your horoscope is favorable today you can zip along at a normal ten-miles-per-hour-above-the-speed-limit and cover great distances in a remarkably short time. However, if Sagittarius has scored a Bull's-eye, beware. You are destined for the bumper-to-bumper condition, burning up gallons of gasoline, inhaling diesel exhaust from the truck ahead of you, fuming as you estimate how late you'll be, blood pressure rising with the temperature. In the old days, you knew about the rush hour and you learned to avoid the freeways (if you were lucky enough not to be a 9 to 5er) at the crucial times. No longer:

the rush hour has outgrown its former confines and has preempted all civilized travel time.

Drowning in this morass of freeways, the suburbanite, if he has time to really look around, might make a startling observation: he no longer lives in the suburbs! He may have moved out to escape the noise and smog and crowding of the city, but the city has slithered out to reclaim him. The quiet residential tract he moved into ten or twenty years ago is under siege. The once-narrow through streets have been widened, decked out in glaring floodlights, and transformed into busy arteries that pulse with traffic. Traffic has spilled over from the freeways and the major boulevards into the back streets. The freeway commuters, desperate to avoid gridlock, take small surface streets in an attempt to forge new, tortuous paths to and from work. City transportation planners frantically pursue the traffic dilemma with striped streets, manipulated signals,

additional lanes and ride-sharing programs. To no avail. Every new lane added to a busy street is more than cancelled out by a thousand apartments going up nearby.

Where are the vacant lots of yesteryear? As scarce as antelope in the Antelope Valley. The weedy untidy lots may have been eyesores to some but they were evidence that there was still some space out there, still room to wiggle an elbow. Like the plow that broke the plains and doomed the buffalo and the plains Indians, the bulldozer blade is once and for all erasing the suburbs. And more. Follow any freeway outward bound from the metropolitan center and the hills and woodlands echo to the whine of the chainsaw and the rumble of the earthmover. Megalopolis is upon us: Gigantic supercities that extend from Boston to Washington, from San Francisco to San Diego.

continued on page 10 at "CITY"



At the Santa Ynez River mouth in Santa Barbara County an immature Little Gull was present 5 May to 16 June (Brad Hines), and an adult Gull-billed Tern, very rare anywhere away from the Salton Sea was seen there on 3 June (Paul Lehman). Edwards Airforce Base hosted Kern County's first Heerman's Gull on 16 June and an Arctic Tern on 16 June (Matt Heindel). A Black Skimmer was seen at Upper Newport Bay on 17 June (Art Day).

Chimney Swift reports come from the Fremont Valley, Kern County, on 11 May (Matt Heindel) and the Los Angeles River near Los Feliz on 20 May (Kimball Garrett).

Paul Lehman reports that some 45 pairs of Gray Flycatcher are nesting this season in the Lockwood Valley in Ventura County. An Eastern Phoebe was reported from Deep Springs, Inyo County, on 23 May (Daniel Cooper) and an unusual but not unprecedented spring sighting of a Tropical Kingbird comes



from Yucca Valley on 2 May (Sandy and Marge Wohglemuth). A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was in Afton Canyon on the Mojave River on 25 May, and a female Purple Martin was seen over Galileo Park, Kern County on 29 May (Hank Brodkin).

Ventura County's first Chestnut-backed Chickadee was on the Santa Clara River near Santa Paula 27 May through 6 June (Mark Holgren) and a Bendire's Thrasher was seen on 11 May near Butterbreyt Spring, Kern County (Matt Heindel) near where one was sighted last Spring.

Here are some of the more unusual warbler reports: Blue-winged at Huntington Beach Central Park on 28 May (Doug Willick); male and female Northern Parula at Fremont Valley on 16 June (Matt Heindel); female Magnolia at Butterbreyt Spring on 8 June (Matt Heindel); Black-and-White in Lancaster on 3 May (Rick Grove); Worm-eating in Mojave on 25 May (Jon Wilson), Oven-



bird in the Antelope Valley on 6 May (Jean Brandt and Phil Sayer); Louisiana Waterthrush in Mojave on 21 May (Curtis Marantz); Kentucky Warbler in Mojave on 9 June (Matt Heindel); Connecticut Warbler in Mojave on 20 May (Priscilla Brodkin); Mourning Warbler in Mojave on 25 May (Arnold Small); and 2 Hooded Warblers, one at Corn Springs, Riverside County; 24 April through 13 May (Arnold Small and Herb Clarke); and one in the Fremont Valley on 1 June (Dave Blue).

Two singing Summer Tanagers were along the Santa Clara River at Castaic with nesting a possibility on 2 June (Kimball Garrett). Also several Blue Grosbeaks were also in the area. Five Blue Grosbeaks were seen in the Sepulveda Basin on 6 May (Steve Ducatman). They undoubtedly nest here. A male Rose-breasted Grosbeak visited a feeder in Beverly Glen on 28 and 29 May (Chris Holobird).

continued on page 11 at "BIRDING"

THE NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY TRAVEL ETHIC FOR ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

Copyright 1989, National Audubon Society Inc., All rights reserved

Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the world today. In some countries, so far little-known to travelers, where there are huge problems of unemployment and weak national economies, tourism is being regarded as a new primary industry. It creates employment and often brings in foreign currency to economically marginal areas. Sightseers from more affluent nations are ever searching for new places to explore. The trend seems to be growing away from sun, sea, and sand holidays toward adventure, the outdoors, wildlife watching, and cultural interests.

Close encounters with members of the animal kingdom are at very high interest levels. This coincides with a rapidly developing public awareness of environmental matters. Such a combination of conditions could lead to an influx of excursionists into environmentally sensitive areas which, if not carefully managed, could exert pressure on and do possibly irrevocable damage to the natural resources it seeks.

The National Audubon Society realizes that the maintenance of these sensitive resources will ensure the continuation of tourism in such areas. The resource in question is the entire natural world, from coastal Alaska and the high Arctic and Greenland, to the wilderness of Antarctica and all that lies between.

The National Audubon Society has become increasingly aware of both the potential and actual conflict between tourism development and the natural environment. We are completely convinced that more can be done to create a positive balance between the two and to create an atmosphere where commercial operators and environmentalists can interact positively. We recognize that tourism can be a powerful tool favoring environmental conservation -- particularly through enhancement of public awareness

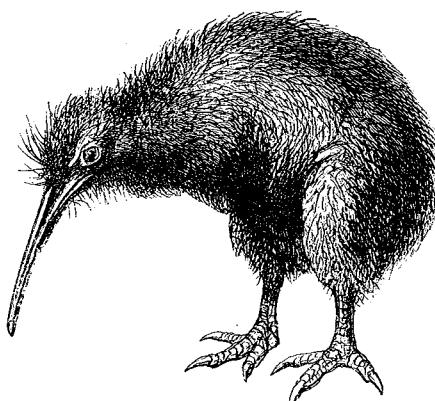
of environmentally sensitive areas and their resources and the stimulation of action and mobilization of support to prevent the erosion of such environments.

Toward these goals, the National Audubon Society urges all tour operators promoting exploration in wilderness areas to adopt the guidelines here stated.

1. WILDLIFE AND THEIR HABITATS MUST NOT BE DISTURBED.

Fragile habitats must not be stressed. Trails will be followed. Plants will be left to grow.

In delicate habitats, vegetation destruction and rock slides can easily be caused by the trampling of too many people. Mosses, lichens, and certain wildflowers and grasses, may take as much as 100 years or more to regenerate, and must not be walked upon. It is the obligation of the tour company and the naturalist leaders to promote a stay on the trail policy. No responsible tour operator or naturalist should allow the removal or picking of plant specimens or other ground cover. Introduction of exotic plant species must be avoided.



Coral reefs take anywhere from several years to several decades to regenerate. Therefore, the National Audubon Society insists that all of its tour operators provide the broadest protection

possible for this underwater life form. Destruction of any part of any coral reef calls for the greatest censure.

Animal behavior will not be inhibited. Because many of the most well-subscribed tours are operated during various animals breeding seasons, tour operators and leaders should establish and always maintain at least minimum distances from these animals.

Scientific studies predict that a specific animal behavioral function, such as courtship, nesting, or feeding young, demands a specific amount of energy on the part of the breeding animal. Approaching animals too closely causes them to expend energy needlessly in a fury of defensive territorial display. This can cause an energy deficit that reduces the animals productivity in the same way as does a food shortage. If disturbances are caused by visitors early enough in the breeding cycle, the parents may abandon the breeding site. Additionally, while the adults are warding off intruders, eggs and young are vulnerable to chilling and unguarded young are more susceptible to predation.

Animals will not be harassed or approached too closely. Our recommendation is that all tour participants keep a minimum distance of 20-to-30 feet from seals, walruses, otters, giant tortoises, lava lizards, sea turtles, koalas, all marsupials, and unwaried plains herd animals.

We recommend that all visitors stay on the periphery of animal assemblages (e.g., penguin colonies, seabird colonies, terneries, albatrosses on nest, courting groups). This means:

*Visitors should never be allowed to surround an animal or group of animals.

*Visitors and leaders must remain alert never to get between animal parents and their young.

OPINIONS

I happened to be shopping for binoculars... or at least, admiring binoculars... at Audubon House last week, when I overheard a disturbing telephone conversation. The gist of it was that a disgruntled member was severely disappointed in the offices not having at hand a list of the field trips currently offered by other local chapters, which it evidently did once maintain. As the clerk explained, it was indeed a good idea, if they only had someone to do it.

"Well, how did they do it before, then?"

"No doubt, some volunteer was interested in doing it, so it got done."

"Would you be interested in starting it up again yourself?", the clerk then asked the caller.

Predictably, the caller demurred. Quite ready to take advantage of the service and irritated that it was no longer provided, he was still not

clear on the concept that the whole modus operandi of a non-profit special interest society-- or whether it operates at all--does indeed depend on its members expending some energy to administer it.

At the next Society meeting I talked to some of the officers, a couple of whom may be leaving office, frustrated and just plain tired of putting in several years of their free time organizing and administering our activities-- trips, programs, newsletters, fundraisers, in addition to paying their dues and contributing their dollars to particular projects-- with a minimum of help and a maximum of obfuscation from the 99% of our membership that does nothing except sit on its receiving end-- that is you and me, Bub!

This is a familiar complaint, of course, one that is echoed throughout other Audubon chapters and other organizations: not enough help, not enough money, to do what needs doing. And yet so easily solved if we could just get around human nature a bit and learn to share the load more equitably. That 99% I

mentioned above is not hyperbole: we have about 40 board members and other volunteers, all told, out of a membership of 4000.

Good grief, when our Editor announces his resignation, there ought to be ten members coming forward to volunteer for that exciting job! It is an opportunity to learn editing techniques, have your public say, and really make your mark in an organ that is prestigious within its milieu. And with a couple of teams of two or three co-editors apiece sharing the work and rotating the job between teams every year or so, there would be plenty of member input, a broad range of member opinion expressed, a per-editor workload modest enough to prevent volunteer burn-out, and consequently a member service accomplished painlessly, effectively, and with a sense of satisfaction on several counts!

I would leap at it myself if I did not already have this column to write.

*Visitors must never be allowed to get between marine mammals and the water's edge.

*Nesting raptors should be viewed only through binoculars or telescopes at considerable distances from the nest.

*Crowd control ethics include keeping the decibel level as low as possible, thereby minimizing the potential threat to animals.

*The advent of sophisticated photographic technology means that even amateur photographers can get professional-looking photographs while keeping a respectable distance from the subject. Photography of birds and animals should never include the removal of nestlings or young from the nest or removal of foliage or camouflage from close to the breeding site. Removal of animals from burrows, dens, caves, or tree cavities must be prohibited at all times..

*Relentlessly following or harassing birds or animals for the sake of a photograph should never be allowed. Lingering obtrusively in close proximity to a nesting site, preventing the animal from returning to the site, should never be allowed.

*Touching animals must never be allowed.

Every effort will be made to minimize a visit's impact, and if that effort is inadequate, the visit will be curtailed.

2. AUDUBON TOURISM TO NATURAL AREAS WILL BE SUSTAINABLE.

Audubon will encourage local guides, landowners, and conservation representatives to develop and implement long-term visitor plans to ensure the

sustainable use of their wildlife habitats. Audubon also encourages patronage of locally benign concessionaires.

3. WASTE DISPOSAL MUST HAVE NEITHER ENVIRONMENTAL NOR AESTHETIC IMPACTS.

All tour operators must take into account the fragility of the areas visited with regard to proper waste disposal. All cruise ships, whether operating in the Arctic or sub-Arctic, the Great Barrier Reef of Australia, the islands of the Southern Ocean, along the Antarctic Peninsula, the Pacific shores of South American and Galapagos, or along the reaches of the Orinoco and Amazon rivers must commit to a shipboard anti-dumping/anti-garbage policy. This policy ensures that the shipboard crew and staff will not

continued on next page at "GUIDE"

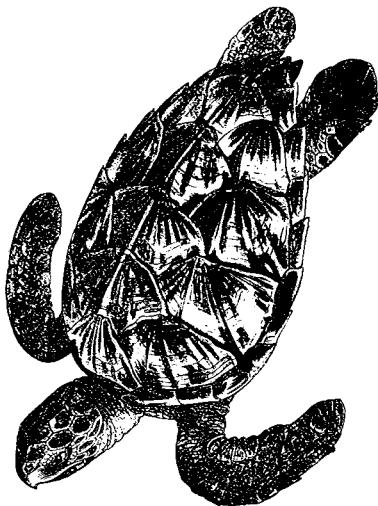
by Arthur Ui

GUIDE

continued

foul any waters, particularly with regard to non-biodegradable (plastic) materials.

If necessary, all trash must be contained and carried back to a part where proper disposal is available. Any tour operator offering the opportunity for visiting land wilderness areas overnight or for several days must make provision for carrying out all trash generated while there.



The tour operator and naturalists should promote an attitude of keeping every specific site as clean as possible. No littering of any kind should be tolerated.

The National Audubon Society will neither patronize nor approve any vendor that does not strictly adhere to this guideline.

4. THE EXPERIENCE A TOUR-IST GAINS IN TRAVELING WITH AUDUBON MUST ENRICH HIS OR HER APPRECIATION OF NATURE, CONSERVATION, AND THE ENVIRONMENT.

Every trip to a wilderness area must be led by experienced, well-trained, responsible naturalists and guides. These naturalists should have a solid background in the various habitats to be visited, the flora and fauna contained there, and the

sensitive nature of those habitats. These naturalists and guides must be able to provide proper supervision of the visitors, prevent disturbances to the area, answer questions of the visitors regarding the flora and fauna of the area, and present the conservation issues relevant to the area.

All tour operators should provide adequate space for these naturalists so that the leader-to-group size ratio will depend upon the fragility of the surroundings, in appropriate, to serve as local naturalist leaders and lecturers to accompany Audubon en route.

6. TRAFFIC IN PRODUCTS THAT THREATEN WILDLIFE AND PLANT POPULATION MUST NOT OCCUR.

The National Audubon Society cannot condone a laissez-faire attitude with regard to purchase of certain types of souvenirs or mementoes. Habitat loss remains the single largest threat to animal species; however, commerce and poaching have also depleted countless animal and plant populations. All our vendors must conscientiously educate travelers against buying the following items:

*All sea turtle products, including jewelry, sea turtle eggs, and skin cream made from turtle meat;

*Most reptile skins and leathers, particularly those from Latin America, the Caribbean, China, and Egypt (including all crocodilian products);

*Snakeskin products from Latin America and Asian countries, including India;

*Lizard skin products from Brazil, Paraguay, India, Nepal, and Pakistan;

*Leather products made of pangolin (anteater) from Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia;

*Ivory from any source, especially worked ivory from elephants and from marine mammals, such as whales, walruses, and narwhals;

*Birds, including large parrots from Australia, Brazil, Ecuador, Paraguay, Venezuela, and the Caribbean islands;

*Wild birds and their feathers and skins, used in or as artwork (including mounted birds);

*Coral from the Caribbean and Southeast Asia, Australia;

*Fur of spotted cats (e.g., snow leopard, jaguar, ocelot, etc.);

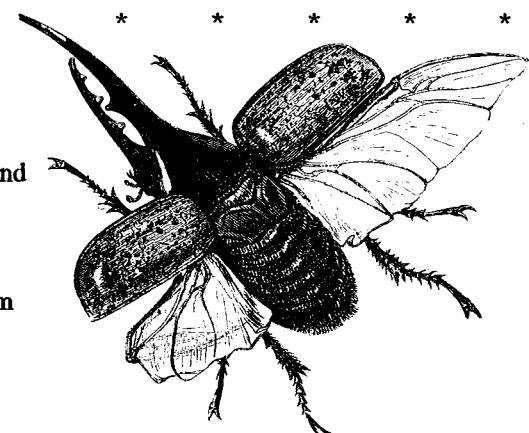
*Furs and fur products of seals and other marine mammals and polar bears;

*Any orchids and cacti.

7. THE SENSIBILITIES OF OTHER CULTURES MUST BE RESPECTED.

Audubon tours travel in areas of widely varying ethics and practices. On our trips we are the guests of these cultures and our opportunities are to learn and enrich our own understanding of human nature, not to intrude and criticize. In the long run, our abilities to advance conservation will be strengthened by the bridges that understanding will establish.

The effectiveness of the preceding guidelines rests on the performances and cooperation of the tour operator, the naturalist leaders, and the expedition travelers. Each of these parties must possess and promote a sense of propriety if the collective effort is to succeed. Harmless viewing of wildlife and habitats in which wildlife abounds can proliferate while preserving both the activity and the resource.



THE ENVIRONMENTAL FEDERATION OF AMERICA

Bringing the environment to work

Earth Day 1990 has come and gone. Environmental groups are left to capture the imagination, commitment and support of the primed public. Long-time environmentalists must lead the way to real environmental change -- personal and political. To this end, the 90% of the public that has never joined an environmental group must now get involved. The Environmental Federation of California, an 8-year-old, fast-growing coalition, is poised to help in this weighty and immediate task.

Twenty-eight environmental groups, including the Los Angeles Audubon Society, comprise the Environmental Federation of California. This umbrella organization enters workplaces to make presentations on environmental issues and solutions. Afterwards, the EFC requests payroll-deduction contributions for member groups.

In the 1989 campaign, EFC volunteers and staff reached out to 700,000+ people at work in cities and counties up and down state and in corporations like Apple, Tandem Computers, Kaiser Permenente, Safeway Stores, Esprit and The Gap.

Until the Federation began its work, California workers had no opportunities to support environmental causes through workplace payroll deduction plans. Now they do, and they like it. The Federation fields questions from the uninitiated and refers them to appropriate member groups. (One research study found that only four percent of those who participate through the EFC campaigns already belong to an environmental group.) In 1989, the EFC raised over \$700,000 to support the vital work of member groups. In 1990, the EFC hopes to reach over 1 million people and to top the \$1 million fundraising mark.

This is an exciting new and growing source of funds for environmental groups, explains Nancy Snow, Executive Director of the Environmental Federation of California. The potential

for growth in the 1990s is vast. We need volunteers for presentations and leads for new workplace campaigns.

Member groups that secure new workplace campaigns receive all general contributions from the site in the first year. Afterwards, participating member groups share equally all general funds. In every campaign, employees are given the option to target contributions to [an] individual group[s] or to give to the general pool of money divided among all the member groups.

The greatest benefit of all, however, is the access the campaigns have to new audiences. The EFC volunteers and staff bring news about local and global environmental concerns and recruit much-needed support. Our liaison to the Federation is our past-president, Ken Kendig. If you have contacts in any organizations that might consider allowing the Federation to conduct a campaign, perhaps in conjunction with a United Way campaign or otherwise, please contact Ken at (213) 921-6692.

We have received several hundred dollars in each of the last 2 years for EFC, and it could be thousands more if

we could bring in a few new organizations, public or private. You introduce us to the appropriate person, and we will do the rest of the work.

If you dont know anyone in your company and think our idea is a good one, we suggest you send a postcard as worded below and advice EFC as recommended.

If you would like more choice and the opportunity to contribute, through payroll deduction, to organizations working to protect the environment, you can help. Please send the attached postcard below to the person(s) at your company responsible for determining the solicitation policy for employee giving campaigns.

Then send your name and address and the name and address of the person to whom you sent the postcard to us at:

Environmental Federation of California
116 New Montgomery, Suite 231
San Francisco, CA 94105
(415) 882-9330

We will also contact that person and begin the process of opening the campaign.

* * * * *

Dear _____,

I would like to have more choice in where I can direct my contributions through payroll giving. Please give strong consideration to including the Environmental Federation of California in our annual drive.

Thank you,

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ [] Please call me, Id like to help.

CITY

continued

As we watch the overgrowth of people and condos and business parks and mini-malls we mourn the decline of the amenities that make up the quality of life. More automobiles, more air pollution. More people, more water shortages. More people, more over-flowing landfills and sewage plants. (Do we dump the stuff in the bay or incinerate it into the atmosphere?) More noise to jangle our nerves while the soothing open spaces are disappearing. Parks offer a respite, places to re-create the spirit, but they are so few and becoming so crowded that a measure of quiet solitude is almost impossible to achieve. (More people, too many people. Old stuff, maybe, but over-population remains the root cause of our troubles, the whole world's troubles. Do we wait for the Chinese solution: one child or else?) Perhaps the most subtle and devastating effect of urbanization is the feeling of being trapped in a stone and steel and glass cage with no escape. We haven't reached that nightmare yet but we can see the signs and portents along the way. Our view of the mountains invaded by the sharp edges of an office building. Worn but comfortable, one-of-a-kind old homes on acre-sized lots, with a horse and a handful of chickens, torn down to make room for a cluster of soulless condominiums. An incomparable valley, deep into the country, with gentle hills, oak savanna and winding stream, chewed up

by construction equipment and spat out as sites for industry, business and houses.

What to do about it? Ah, if only there were a magic formula for salvation. Enlightened planning may be the answer, limiting density and building heights, protecting open space, preserving farmland and wetlands, making it tough and expensive for developers to do as they please. Is it too late, have things gone too far? Perhaps. In the large metropolitan areas there is precious little room left for improvement. The tall buildings, the business parks, the commercial strips are for the most part already in place. If the city and county lawmakers and planning boards were by some overnight miracle changed into incorruptible environmentalists, there isn't much they could do to reverse the momentum of development. Can you tear down Wall Street or Century City and build urban wilderness areas? In smaller communities that are just beginning to feel the pressure of big is better, there have been some hopeful signs of revolt. Yet every ordinance attempting to control inordinate growth faces powerful opposition. Developers call on the Constitution and the sacred right to make a buck. Their opponents are labeled no-growth doomsters, selfish elitists whose private motto is, ---- you, I've got mine!

Men and women of good will are faced with a question of freedom in America. In the popular mythology

15
cent
stamp

TO:

Name _____

Title _____

Company _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Reservations

For LAAS trips that require reservations, supply ALL the following information:

- (1) Trip desired
- (2) Names of people in your party,
- (3) Phone Numbers - (a) usual and (b) evening before the event, in case of emergency cancellation or changes;
- (4) Separate Check (no cash please) to LAAS for exact amount for each trip;
- (5) Self-addressed stamped envelope for confirmation and additional trip information.

If a trip is not filling up, it will be cancelled two Wednesdays before the scheduled date (four weeks for pelagic trips); you will be so notified, and your fee will be refunded. If you cancel a reservation after those times, you will get a refund only if someone takes your place.

Send to: Reservations, Los Angeles Audubon Society, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, CA 90046

freedom is equated with free enterprise. This may become a license to be as greedy as you can get away with. It sounds terrible but it makes our world go round. It's the American Way. We tell ourselves "This land is your land, This land is my land," yet we permit someone to own a mountain and do with it as he pleases -- as long as he gets a zone change. If we put our minds to it we can keep him from getting his zone change, deciding that the best use for the mountain is to be there, to be loved rather than as a shaven platform for a hundred homes.

The American Way also includes the right to oppose tyrants who would make our cities unlivable, debase our natural wonders and jeopardize our health. Up the Quality of Life!

Bring the environment to your workplace and you will have a place to work tomorrow. Complete the postcard and send it to your employer.

Bookstore News

by Charles Harper

If you are thinking of getting a spotting scope, or of upgrading from that old, sand-pitted Balscope, now is a good time. Bausch and Lomb has added a fine new medium-priced scope to the market. The Elite Spotting Scope is available with either a 22x wide angle fixed lens or a 15x-45x zoom lens and is remarkable for its lightness and compactness in addition to the quality of its optics. Although it is not a match for the Kowa TSN 3/4 series in brightness, it presents an excellent image at half the price, weight and size. And because the lens is fixed into the scope body, it is rated as waterproof, a claim other scopes do not make.

Still the first love of many birders, though, is the Bushnell Spacemaster 60 mm, which continues to offer excellent value for dollar as a good, basic spotting scope. Its 22x wide angle lens gives the broadest field

of any scope at that power, although more people opt for the versatility of the 15x-45x zoom lens... or purchase several lenses.

The finest spotting scope we carry is the Kowa TSN-3/TSN-4. Its fluorite lens technology for chromatic aberration and its massive 77 mm objective lens make it nonpareil for light-gathering ability and crisp image. It is available with a choice of fixed lenses (25x and 20x WA being the most popular) and with a 20x-60x zoom.

Audubon House is a good place to try out these scopes and other optical equipment, as we are eager to give you the opportunity of looking through and discussing all of our stock items. And while you're at it, try out the new Bausch & Lomb Elite 10x42 nockies!

Included in the following table are some of the salient characteristics of the scopes we carry at the bookstore:

Scope	Bushnell Spacemaster	B&L Discoverer	B&L Elite	Kowa TSN-3/4
Power	Zoom/22xWA	Zoom	Zoom/22xWA	Zoom/25x
Weight(oz)	38.4	48.5	22	45.5
Length(in)	11.6	17.5	12.5	14.4
Field @1000 yds (ft)	110-65/63	156-40	119-62/120	98-62/102
Exit pupil (mm)	4-1.3/2.7	4-1	4-1.3/2.7	3.9-1.3/3.1

BIRDING

continued

The most interesting bird this spring was the Yellow Grosbeak found near Westmoreland on 9 June by Roger Hickson. Whether this Mexican species which is commonly kept as a cage bird south of the border will be accepted as wild will be decided by the California Bird Records Committee.

Indigo Bunting reports include one at Holiday Lake in the Antelope Valley on 12 May (Charles Harper) and

one near Mentone in Riverside County on 9 June (Hank Childs).

Two Sharp-tailed Sparrow reports come from the Kern County desert area - one from Mojave on 13 May (Jim Danzenbaker and Matt Heindel), and one from Galileo Park on 20 through 24 May (Priscilla Brodkin).

Two female Bobolinks were reported from Furnace Creek on 23 May (Daniel Cooper) and a Great-tailed Grackle was seen at Legg Lake on 11 May

continued on last page at "BIRDING"

WESTERN TANGER

Published 10 time a year by Los Angeles Audubon Society, 7377 Santa Monica Boulevard (Plummer Park), West Hollywood, CA 90046

EDITOR: vacant

ASSOCIATE EDITOR: Hank Brodkin

CONSERVATION EDITOR

Sandy Wohlgemuth

ORNITHOLOGY CONSULTANT

Kimball Garrett

FIELD TRIPS: Nick Freeman

DESKTOP PUBLISHING

SANDS Associates

PRINTING: Marcotte Printing

Los Angeles Audubon Society is a chapter of National Audubon Society. Opinions expressed in articles or letters herein do not necessarily express the position of this publication or of LAAS.

PRESIDENT: Robert Van Meter

1ST VICE PRESIDENT

Melanie Ingalls

2ND VICE PRESIDENT

Thomas Van Huss

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Mildred Newton

Annual membership in both societies is \$35 per year, \$21 for seniors, and presently \$20 for new members for their first year. Members receive the Western Tanager newsletter and *Audubon* magazine, a national publication. Renewals of membership are computerized by National Audubon and should not normally be sent to LAAS. New memberships and renewal of lapsed memberships may be sent to Los Angeles Audubon House at the above address. Make checks payable to the order of National Audubon Society.

Non-members may subscribe to the Western Tanager for \$12 per year. The newsletter is sent by first class mail to subscribers and members who pay an additional \$5. Make checks payable to Los Angeles Audubon Society.

National Headquarters, New York
(212)832-3200

Los Angeles Audubon Headquarters,
Library and Bookstore are open
Tuesday - Saturday, 10:00 am - 3:00 pm

(213) 876-0202 - office

(213) 874-1318 - bird tape
(updated Thursdays)

To report bird sightings,
before 9:00pm

(818) 788-5188 - Jean Brandt
(213) 827-0407 - Hank Brodkin

ANNOUNCEMENTS

EVENING MEETINGS

Tuesday, September 11 - Robert Dickson: The Remarkable Willow Grouse. This film documents the research of Geir Gabrielson on the biology, winter survival, spring displays, and breeding techniques of the Norwegian willow grouse. Radio telemetry reveals the wild birds' breathing and heart rates while they feed, fly, incubate eggs, or tend their young. A film by Chris Mylne.

ID Workshop: Johnathon Alderfer

Tuesday, October 9 - Dr. Hartmut Walter: Ecology of Socorro Islands.

ID Workshop: To be announced

Tuesday, November 13 - Arnold Small: Subject to be Announced.

ID Workshop: Lee Jones

FIELD TRIPS

Saturday, August 18 - Mt. Pinos Vicinity. Shirley Rubin will lead this years mountain birding trip to the Mt. Pinos area looking for, among other things, White-headed Woodpeckers, Mountain Bluebirds, Clarks Nutcrackers (unhappily, no condors). Bring a knapsack lunch, water, windbreaker, sunscreen and sturdy shoes. Be prepared for heat, cold or wind. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Y formed by the junction of Cuddy Valley Rd. and Mil Potrero Hwy. Take Hwy. 5 north just past Tejon Pass to the Frazier Park offramp, turn left and follow Frazier Mountain Park Rd. for 7.5 miles bearing right onto Cuddy Valley Rd. for 5.4 miles to the Y, and park in the clearing. Rain cancels.

Saturday, August 18 - Whittier Narrows Regional Park. Join David White on this regular morning walk as he welcomes migrant and wintering birds still decked out in their summer finery. Meet at 8 a.m. at the Nature Center, 1000 N. Durfee Avenue in South El Monte, off Fwy. 60 between the Santa Anita and Peck Drive exists, west of Fwy. 605. [LA, p. 47, D-5]

Sunday, August 19 - Bolsa Chica. Marge Pamias will lead this morning bird walk at one of the Basins better

known birding locations. Likely birds include peeps, dowitchers, yellow-legs, phalaropes and other shorebirds as well as possibilities for skimmers and a number of tern species. Brush up on your shorebirds before Jon Dunn's seminar (see below, a don't miss!). Meet at 7:00 a.m. in the Bolsa Chica estuary parking lot on the east side of PCH. Take the 405 Fwy. south past the 605 and 22 Fwys. to Goldenwest St. Take this south until it deadends into PCH and turn right. As you drive between the lagoon and the ocean, don't miss the small parking lot for the Bolsa Chica estuary on your right. Turn in here and park. A large turnout may require some paid parking across the street at the beach. Bring water and scopes. [OC, p. 25, D-2]

Friday & Sunday, August 24 & 26 - Shorebird Seminar. Don't miss this in-depth discourse by Jon Dunn, senior consultant of the National Geographic Field Guide and co-author of the locally definitive Birds of Southern California. Detailed treatment will be given to topics including migration patterns, species I.D., molts and plumages--making considerable use of Jon's fine slide collection. Excellent coverage of Alaskan rarities as well. Sunday morning will be a field trip at a fairly nearby locale (possibly McGrath). Details will be announced at the 7:30 p.m. lecture, depending on scouting reports. For lecture location, reserve with SASE per field trip policy. Fee: \$19 for lecture and field trip, \$8 for lecture only. Field trip limited to 25. [LA, p. 34, A-4]

Sunday, August 26 - Malibu Lagoon. 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 Santa Monica Audubon Society. [LA, p. 114, B-5]

* * * * *

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

*Hank Brodkin
27-1/2 Mast Street
Marina Del Rey, CA 90292
(213) 827-0407*

OR

call Jean Brandt at (818) 788-5188

BIRDING

continued

(Phil Sayer). The unwelcome news of a Bronzed Cowbird at Morongo Valley 29 April through at least 12 May (Mike Patton) signals a further expansion of this parasitic species.

Small flocks of Red Crossbills are being seen in our local mountains with reports coming from Dawson Saddle in the San Gabriels on 30 June (John Lewis) and Mt. Pinos on 3 July (Barbara Elliot).

Good Birding!

* * * * *

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 26974
Los Angeles, CA

DATED MATERIAL
Please Expedite

Los Angeles Audubon Society
7377 Santa Monica Boulevard
West Hollywood, CA 90046