



WESTERN TANAGER

The Los Angeles Chapter of
The National Audubon Society

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MISGUIDED PASSION?

by Sandy Wohlgemuth

On July 24, 1992, a newscast on Channel 2 featured a demonstration by an animal rights group at the Ballona Wetlands in Playa del Rey over the trapping and euthanasia of several red foxes. Pickets carrying signs and shouting slogans for the camera were shown; the least inflammatory message asking why our tax dollars are being used to kill animals. Interviews with two leaders of the

pickets were presented and a fox was seen being fed like a park pigeon. Less than 10 seconds were allotted to Ruth Lansford, leader of the Friends of Ballona Wetlands, who was permitted to say only, "But they don't belong here!" The bias of Channel 2 in this controversial matter was obvious. The television critic of a Los Angeles newspaper — himself an animal rights person — agreed that the media is obligated to

be evenhanded in its treatment of the news and must not become an advocate.

The emotion displayed by these well-meaning people (reminiscent of the anguished pickets blocking abortion clinics) is to be admired for its sincerity and deplored for its lack of understanding. No one can applaud the deliberate killing of an attractive, cuddly little animal. But the marching, sign-bearing, shouting people at

Ballona do not realize the terrible toll the red fox is exacting on other wildlife.

Most of us are familiar with the history of the feral goats on San Clemente Island and the exotic burros in the California deserts. In these and other similar situations, native animals suffer from the destruction of habitat and the consumption of forage that is usurped by introduced species.

The red fox is somewhat different. It is indeed a wild animal but is not native to California. It has arrived here by the intervention of unthinking people for various reasons (including 19th century fox hunting!) and is an extremely successful animal. A fox can breed in its first year and may produce four to seven kits. The young foxes leave the home den, disperse to new locations and raise their own substantial families. Red foxes at Ballona have it both ways: they have no significant enemies and are very efficient predators on smaller animals and birds. The appearance of a family of foxes in a wildlife sanctuary like Ballona Wetlands signals an alarming decrease in bird populations. A rare subspecies, the Belding's Savannah Sparrow, nests at Ballona and has become a prime victim of the red fox. Observers who noted singing Belding's in the spring have been unable to find any in mid-summer. The specter of extirpation here is very real. Ballona mammals such as shrews, voles and long-tailed weasels are few and far between today. In a recent two-week period, nearly 20 fresh bird carcasses were found — terns, gulls and shorebirds.

The question arises: If predation is a law of nature, why should we object to the fox doing what comes naturally? But birds and other creatures have evolved over vast periods of time and have learned to survive with their *native* predators. When a non-native

predator is introduced, the prey species have no defenses against the intruder.

The pressure of red foxes on our native species has long concerned the California Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The list of victims is long and growing: endangered Least Terns in



Least Terns

Ventura and Oakland, Snowy Plovers in Monterey, avocets and stilts at Moss Landing, kit foxes in the San Joaquin Valley. Both agencies have tried for years to control the fox. At the Seal Beach National Wildlife Refuge, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service set up an electric fence to protect a small area where the Least Terns were nesting. Foxes burrowed under the fence and took eggs from 44 of the 69 nests in the colony.

Neutering the fox has been considered, but the difficulty and expense of capturing so many animals makes it an impractical solution. Neutering, of course, will not prevent a fox from continuing its depredations for the rest of its life, which may be many years. Another possibility is capture and relocation. Again, the expense of this option is prohibitive. And where would the foxes be released? California law forbids relocation anywhere in the state, and no other state wildlife department in the nation will accept them. Some years ago, animal rights advocates forced the U.S. Navy to capture feral goats on

San Clemente and move them to the mainland where they might be adopted. It soon became evident that this maneuver was not working when the goats retreated to inaccessible canyons and continued to reproduce. The Navy gave up and now controls the goat population by shooting them.

The state and federal agencies have come to the reluctant conclusion that only trapping and euthanasia by injection is the solution to the red fox problem. The Seal Beach Wildlife Refuge harbored one of the few remaining American colonies of the endangered Light-footed Clapper Rail. When the red fox arrived, it was not long before the rails were close to elimination. When the euthanasia program was begun in 1986, there were less than 10 rails counted; in 1991 there were 98. The agencies do not expect to wipe out all the red foxes in California. They will be satisfied if the foxes can be cleared out of open habitat areas and protected reserves so that native species can survive and increase.

The Ballona Wetlands situation has taken an ominous turn. Actual death threats and obscene telephone calls have been made to the opponents of the animal rights group. Heretofore, most of us have viewed the animal rights people as misguided but certainly decent citizens with an indiscriminate love for life — all life. Perhaps they are transferring their affection for their own domesticated pets to all the Bambis of the world. But the vituperative hatred expressed in Ballona is disturbing and possibly dangerous. The abandonment of civilized discourse by the leaders of this benighted movement must be opposed by all men and women of good will. The environmental community generally has avoided confrontation with the animal rightists. Out of a distaste for a battle against ig-

norance? Out of a fear of pickets and threats? In December 1991, the Board of Directors of Los Angeles Audubon passed a Resolution of Support for Threatened Species (*Western Tanager*, April 1992). In part it reads: "AND WHEREAS it may become necessary to control populations of non-native species (including, but not limited to, the Red Fox) that imperil the existence of native species after all alternative options are judged infeasible, ineffective or impractical;

"BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the Los Angeles Audubon Society supports the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Game in their efforts to protect native plants and wildlife, including threatened and endangered species, by whatever humane methods are deemed necessary to remove individuals or populations of detrimental exotic species in order to restore more natural ecological balances."

The media bears a heavy responsibility here. Its treatment of the animal rights movement has been decidedly one-sided. The plight of a precarious den of red foxes near a busy freeway some time ago had "human interest" and was exploited for its sentimental appeal. It was played up like the tragedy of a child fallen down a deep hole. No science reporter was called upon to explain the reality of the red fox problem. The press is well aware of the power of a highly vocal minority that will whip up a storm of protest if its mission is questioned. So the press tends to go along and the animal rights people get a free ride.

The environmental movement must stir itself and take on the animal rights organizations head on. Our goal should be to convince the public that our own irreplaceable native wildlife has priority over introduced exotic species if the land we love is to remain

healthy and whole. By taking on this educational job we may prod the media into serious consideration of our vanishing wildlife and give it a fair hearing in the court of public opinion.

UPDATE

On August 25th, the *Los Angeles Times* carried a news story reporting that after a restraining order was granted Ruth Lansford, the City attorney charged a former vice-president of the Wildlife Protection League with one misdemeanor count of making a threatening phone call. An anonymous call was also made to Mrs. Lansford by another zealot who threatened to "... slice your f----- head off — and your whole family, too." Members of the League were forbidden to set foot on the Ballona Wetlands. Windows were broken in the office of Maguire Thomas, owner of the Wetlands, and graffiti were sprayed on the building.

Maguire Thomas has arranged to send eight foxes to Humboldt State for their behavioral research program and two to a zoo in Carson City, Nevada.

Perhaps this sordid event will provoke public recognition of the gravity of the exotic animal problem. Ten environmental organizations have already responded to Ruth Lansford's call for support in California. Let us hope that this is the beginning of a nationwide coalition to defend wildlife from those who love animals too well and not wisely. 

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Reference: Jurek, Ronald M., "Non-native Red Foxes in California," 1992. Nongame Bird and Mammal Section Report. California Department of Fish and Game.

Portions of this article were reprinted in the *Los Angeles Times*, 26 August, 1992. Original cartoon by Sherry Niedelman. Photo courtesy of National Audubon Society Archives.

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Personal Comment

In my *Lens View* column, I have frequently cautioned nature photographers to use common sense, so as to not endanger their wildlife subjects, and to respect private property. Also previously mentioned is the terrible reputation that we photographers have, rightly or wrongly deserved. I am convinced that the vast majority of camera enthusiasts try to do the proper thing when in the field. These statements apply as well to ardent birders among whom I consider myself.

Lately it seems there has been a great hue and cry about the damage we supposedly do to wildlife. Self-styled guardians of our wildlife have accused us of everything from the extinction of species to destroying the environment. Most of these accusations are based on hearsay, emotion, partial information, or sheer speculation. I am especially annoyed by researchers who view with disdain mere birdwatchers and lowly photographers. These are persons and organizations who demand our money for their support but ignore requests to view or photograph their research subjects even if done discreetly. They act as if they own the wildlife under study and only they know what's good for the problem in question. I have seen birds and animals roughly handled while being continually captured, weighed, banded or tagged, blood samples taken and feathers plucked, consequently creating much more trauma in these helpless creatures than viewing or photographing would ever cause. We rarely touch birds or animals when taking pictures. Nowadays, when photographs are available for record confirmation, the killing of birds frequently can be avoided.

Another example of this hypocrisy is the tale of two small Mountain Plover nesting colonies. Both groups, sadly, are suffering a severe decline. One, in a remote area of western Texas, is seldom visited by lay persons so no certain explanation has been advanced for this problem. Perhaps researchers are themselves to blame. The other, in eastern Colorado, is well known and frequently visited by birders and photographers. Immediately, based on a few instances of alleged harassment, you know who is accused for the situation there.

Many people believe that the slightest disturbance of any kind will cause the abandonment of a nest, the demise of the individual bird or radically change its routine. It's amazing how resilient most wildlife is. My experience has shown that if I'm careful, my subject readily accepts my presence and after I'm finished and depart, apparently soon forgets I was ever there.

If the subject is on private property, the owner has a perfect right to make or bend any rule he wants, however unreasonable. That right must be respected at all times. But on tax supported public lands, regulations must be reasonable and apply to everybody, including so-called scientists or members of an elite inner circle.

Another of my pet peeves is the appeal for pictures by some of the very people who frequently loudly voice

concern about photographers. Often these photographs, when supplied, are not appreciated, poorly cared for and kept for inordinate amounts of time, in spite of repeated requests for their return.

All of the above is not sour grapes on my part. I am gratified that over the years I have been welcomed by most people and given much information and help beyond my greatest expectations from both friends and strangers. Occasionally, I have been denied access or information for sometimes illogical reasons, but I accept these special circumstances as part of the game.

This is not to proclaim that birders and photographers never engage in irresponsible acts and therefore should not be admonished for their transgressions. The vast majority of us take the welfare of wildlife under serious consideration during our activities. However, I am making an appeal that all of us should not suffer from the blanket condemnation that is becoming increasingly popular. I sincerely believe I have been discussing only a tiny but vocal group of detractors of the great fraternity of birders and photographers. We must never forget we are all on the same side in the war to protect and enjoy our natural heritage. I can only hope that tolerance be used when judging various methods in which to appreciate wildlife, bearing in mind that there is no completely right or wrong way to participate in this wondrous avocation. 

— Herb Clarke

The opinions stated in this article do not necessarily reflect the views of the editorial staff of the *Western Tanager*. The Editor welcomes and encourages its readers to respond to our articles.

Birds Of The Season

by Hank Brodkin

October is the height of the fall vagrant season. While the main thrust of fall migration is slowing down and the first of the winter visitors are starting to show up, some of the most unusual birds of the year should show up this month. The desert oases should be comfortably cool and coastal promontories and canyons inviting as seekers of the rare sort through confusing *Empidonax* flycatchers, sparrows, thrushes and immature warblers. So bring your cameras and notebooks and the phone numbers of fellow birders for verification and enjoy our fine fall season!

August saw fall migration already under way with reports of raptors, hummingbirds, western vireos, warblers and tanagers moving through such places as Rustic Canyon and Hansen Dam and commonly through the mountains.

The most intriguing report of the season concerns the sighting of two possible *Townsend's Shearwaters* seen along with 2,500 Black-vented, 25 Sooty, and 12 Pink-footed Shearwaters in the Catalina Channel on 17 August (Mitch Heindel, Charles Mayhood and David Moody). Records of this species have been circulated before through the California Bird Records Committee but none has been accepted for the state list.

A striking pure white *Green-backed Heron* was at Malibu Lagoon on 15 August (Kimball Garrett). An immature *Little Blue Heron* was reported from Mugu Lagoon on 16 August (CM), and a second year *Bald*

Eagle with red wing tags (from the Catalina Island re-introduction?) was seen over King Harbor on 20 August (DM).

A *Solitary Sandpiper* was at Madrona Marsh on 5 August (DM), a juvenile *Semipalmated Sandpiper* was at Malibu Lagoon on 15 August (KG), and two *Baird's Sandpipers* were in the Los Angeles River bed at Del Amo (Martin Byhower).



Mitch Heindel, pelagic trip leader

An extended pelagic trip off central and southern California in mid-August produced two immature *Red-tailed Tropicbirds* as well as an unprecedented 40 *South Polar Skuas* (off Santa Rosa Island) on 10 August (Jon Dunn, Kenn Kaufman, Peter Pyle, *et al.*). Two *Black Tern* reports, one on 16 August at Bolsa Chica (Laurie Conrad) and another at Harbor Lake on 19 August (Jerry Johnson), feature a species quite scarce on the coast.

One of our earlier migrants, a *Willow Flycatcher*, was in Arcadia on 7 August (Ed Cooper).

A *Red-eyed Vireo*, a traditionally

early "vagrant," showed up at Cortelyou Springs on the Angeles Crest Highway on 19 August (CM). A *Hooded Warbler*, possibly a returnee of the spring "invasion," and an *Indigo Bunting* were seen on 18 August at Hansen Dam (DA). Another *Indigo Bunting* was in the Los Angeles River channel near Elysian Park on 8 August (KG).

I just received my summer 1992 issue of *American Birds*, published by the National Audubon Society (call (212) 546-9173 for subscription information). This fine journal, along with membership in the American Birding Association (call Gayle Benton at (818) 790-0996), should be the absolute minimum for anyone interested in birding in the United States. This issue has an article on Guy McCaskie by *American Birds* editor Susan Roney Drennan. Please forgive the cliche — but Guy is a legend in his own time. Birding in California is what it is today because of Guy, Arnold Small, and a handful of others — some, like Shum Suffel, who are no longer with us. If you don't have this issue, please go to Audubon House and read this article — especially if you are new to our particular obsession. 

Good Birding!

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

Hank Brodkin OR
27-1/2 Mast Street
Marina del Rey, CA 90292
(310) 827-0407

David Koeppel
(310) 454-2576

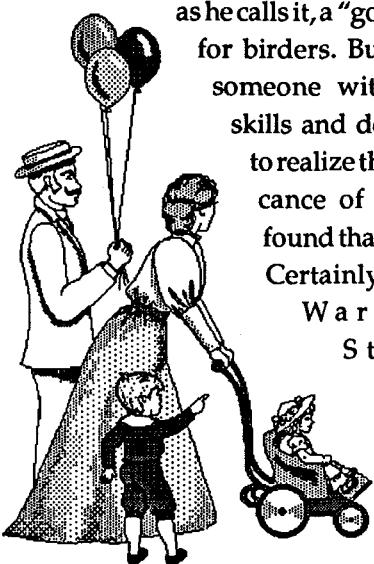
Celebration

On October 2 and 3, 1992, the San Diego County Parks Department will celebrate two very special anniversaries. We're extending an invitation to all birdwatchers and nature lovers to join us in the festivities to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the discovery of the Tijuana River Valley as one of the nation's finest locations for observing migrant birds. This weekend of birding, entertainment, and food — the second annual Return to Meyers Ranch — marks the first anniversary of the Tijuana River Valley Regional Park. Highlighting the weekend will be a presentation by Herb Clarke, well-known photographer, birder and author of *An Introduction to Southern California Birds*, who will use his beautiful slides to show us the birds of the Tijuana River Valley.

Thirty years ago, an energetic young Scotsman named Guy McCaskie discovered that rare birds, some previously unrecorded in California, could be found in the Tijuana River Valley. A large majority of those vagrants frequented the trees and fields at a water processing plant run by Henry Meyers. What Guy stumbled upon in 1962 was,

as he calls it, a "gold mine" for birders. But it took someone with Guy's skills and dedication to realize the significance of what he found that first fall. Certainly Prairie

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the like had been in those trees before, but no one thought to look. Guy did. What followed was a nationwide revolution in birdwatching. As a recent article in *American Birds* points out, Guy taught most of us to look at birds "with the eyes of a discoverer." Certainly his eyes are acute: most, if not all, of the more than 12 first state records found in the valley are Guy's, as are the 50 or so first county records. In addition to these vagrants, eight of the threatened or endangered bird species in San Diego depend on the valley and its wetlands for food and shelter. Fully two-thirds of the county's birds have been recorded there.

Of course, the Tijuana River Valley is far more than a stopping-off place for wayward birds. Though it has changed much in the last decades, it still offers an exceptionally rich array of resources, from fertile agricultural land to multiple recreational opportunities. To preserve these resources, the San Diego County Parks Department created the Tijuana River Valley Regional Park. The first step in the process of restoration and preservation was the reopening of Meyers Ranch in 1991.

The weekend will begin on Friday, October 2, with a reception at 7:00 p.m. at the Tijuana River Estuary Nature Center, 301 Caspian Way in Imperial Beach. Herb Clarke will then use his exceptional photographs (and the knowledge gained during his many years afield) to show us the highlights of birding in the valley.

Saturday's activities will get under way with the traditional Meyers Ranch "birders' special" (coffee, doughnuts and muffins). Meet at 7:00 a.m. in the parking lot at Meyers. Take the Coronado Avenue/Imperial Beach Boulevard exit from I-5, go west to Saturn (formerly 19th Street) and head south to the signs. You'll see what the Parks Department has done since last year to improve the area, and we'll

show you what our plans are for the future. After everyone is fueled up and informed, we'll begin looking for rarities — last fall's visitors to the valley included Buff-breasted Sandpipers, Red-throated Pipits, Cape May and Prothonotary Warblers, and McCown's and Lapland Longspurs.

Hopefully we'll need a break from all the excitement; join us at noon for lunch at Border Field State Park at the west end of Monument Road. We'll meet at the picnic area near the bullring to go over the morning's sightings and enjoy the spectacular view of the valley.

Cost for the weekend is \$5 per event or \$10 for all three.

In addition to the anniversary weekend, an exciting program just underway is the "forestation" of Meyers Ranch. The Department will plant between 1,500 and 2,000 trees on the perimeter of the field north of Meyers. A double row of cottonwoods and silver maples will encircle the field; the tree-lined promenade between the two rows will provide a place for a pleasant stroll or ride on horseback, as well as an exciting vantage point to look for rare birds. Besides these recreational enhancements, the trees will help aid and maintain the biodiversity of the valley.

The Department needs your help to get the project off the drawing boards and into reality. As the saying goes, the best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago — the second best time is now. You can help sponsor a tree for as little as \$5, or purchase the entire grove for \$50,000. Or we can set up a matching-funds program. The more energetic among you can also help by offering to help us plant the trees. All donors and volunteers will be acknowledged on a special plaque.

For information about the "Return to Meyers Ranch" weekend or the tree-planting project, contact Nancee Hanson at (619) 694-3044 or 694-3049. Reservations for the weekend are requested. 

F I E L D T R I P S

Continued from Page 8

documentation. Phone LAAS for limited sign-up. Spotting scope, folding chair and sketch pad mandatory. Meet at Malibu kiosk at 8:00 a.m.

Sunday, October 25 - Newport Back Bay. Leader Mary Carmona. The 6.7' high tide on this day should flush a few rails. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the first pullout along the bay along Back Bay Dr. just off Jamboree Rd. Take the 405 Fwy S to MacArthur Blvd. S, turn right on Jamboree Blvd., drive past San Joaquin Hills Rd. to Back Bay Dr. on your right. If you hit PCH, you've gone too far. (OC, p.31, F-5)

Sunday, November 1 - Topanga State Park. Leader Gerry Haigh. Meet at 8:00 a.m. See October 4 write-up for details.

Saturday, November 14 - Whittier Narrows. Leader Dustin Alcala. Meet at 8:00 a.m. See October 10 write-up for details.

Saturday, November 28 - Upper Bee Canyon. Leader Dustin Alcala. Six mile strenuous walk through real wilderness. Park at the side of Meadowlark Ave. where it dead-ends into Van Gogh St. just outside of O'Melveny Park. Reserve with Audubon House. (LA, p.1, E-3) 

P E L A G I C T R I P S

Sunday, October 18 - Santa Barbara Island and out to sea; 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Cost \$32. Leaders: Kimball Garrett and Mitch Heindel.

Saturday, November 21 - Palos Verdes Escarpment to Redondo Canyon; 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Cost \$20. Leaders: David Koeppl and Mitch Heindel.

Saturday, February 6, 1993. Palos Verdes Escarpment to Redondo Canyon; 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Leaders: Herb Clarke and Mitch Heindel.

Sunday, March 21, 1993. Palos Verdes Escarpment to Redondo Canyon; 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Leaders: Bruce Broadbooks and Mitch Heindel.

Sunday, May 16, 1993. Santa Barbara Island and Osborne Banks or leeward side of island and out to sea; 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Leaders: Kimball Garrett and Jonathan Alderfer.

Saturday, June 5, 1993. Santa Barbara Island and out to sea; 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Leaders: Kimball Garrett and Arnold Small.

Saturday, July 10, 1993. Palos Verdes Escarpment to Redondo Canyon; 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Leaders: Sherman Suter and Mitch Heindel.

Saturday, August 7, 1993. Santa Barbara Island and out to sea; 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Leaders: Kimball Garrett and Herb Clarke.

Sunday, September 19, 1993. Santa Barbara Island and out to sea; 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Leaders: Arnold Small and Mitch Heindel.

Saturday, October 16, 1993. Toward Santa Barbara Island; 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Leaders: Kimball Garrett and Jonathan Alderfer.

Sunday, November 7, 1993. Palos Verdes Escarpment to Redondo Canyon; 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Leaders: Kimball Garrett and Herb Clarke.

NOTE: Marine Mammal Expert Linda Lewis will be one of our leaders when her schedule permits.

WESTERN TANGER

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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 \$15 per year. The newsletter is sent by first class mail to subscribers and members who pay an additional \$7. Make checks payable to Los Angeles Audubon Society.

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213 874-1318 - bird tape
(updated Thursdays)

RESERVATION AND FEE EVENTS (Limited Participation) POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Reservations will be accepted ONLY if ALL the following information is supplied:

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

Send to Reservations Chairman Millie Newton, LAAS, 7377 Santa Monica Boulevard, West Hollywood, California 90046-6651.

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

Millie Newton is available at Audubon House on Tuesdays 10-3 to answer questions about field trips. Our office staff is also available Tuesday-Saturday for most reservation services.

CALENDAR

EVENING MEETINGS

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

ID Workshop precedes the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

October 13 – Birding the Los Angeles River—Past, Present and Future. Kimball L. Garrett. Most of the Los Angeles River and its tributaries have undergone transformation from a complex riparian ecosystem to concrete flood control plumbing. But from Switzer's Camp and Tujunga Wash to the Sepulveda Basin and Los Feliz willows and on to Long Beach, an outstanding variety of habitats and wildlife remain. This slide-illustrated talk will look at the bird life remaining along the River and examine some of the changes proposed for the future. Kimball Garrett has been the project coordinator for a study of the biota of the Los Angeles River being conducted by selected staff of the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History.

ID Workshop: Jonathan Alderfer

November 10 – Coastal Sage Scrub: Endangered Habitat in Our Backyard. Jess Morton.

Sunday, October 4 – San Diego Area. Nick Freeman leader. A good portion of the morning will be spent at Pt. Loma. Other areas that may be visited include the Tijuana Marsh and the Tijuana River farm fields. Take the 5 Fwy S about 3 miles past Route 52 to the Clairemont Dr. offramp and head W into the small lot adjacent to the Mission Bay Information Center. Meet at 8:00 a.m. Bring a lunch.

Friday, October 9 – Chatsworth Park South. Join leader Allan Keller for a morning of late migration birding. From Topanga Cyn. Blvd., go W on Devonshire and continue into the parking lot by the Recreation Center. Meet at 8:00 a.m. (LA, p.6, B-3)

Saturday, October 10 – Whittier Narrows Regional Park. Join Mary Carmona at 8:00 a.m. to see late migrants as well as some wintering bird arrivals. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Nature Center at 1000 Durfee Ave. Take the 60 Fwy to South El Monte, just west of the 605 Fwy, taking the Peck Dr. exit S. Take the offramp onto Durfee Ave. heading W (right), and make a left into the Nature Center. (LA, p.47, D-5)

Sunday, October 11 – Oxnard Plains. Leader Fred Heath. We will be exploring the windbreaks and thickets that crisscross the agricultural plains around Oxnard. Usually excellent for warblers, vireos and other migrants. From Hwy. 101, take Las Posas Rd. S, turn right on Pleasant Valley Rd., and left on Laguna Rd. If coming via Hwy. 1, take Pleasant Valley Rd. inland to Laguna Rd. and turn right. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the side of Laguna Rd. across from the house.

Saturday, October 17 - Hansen Dam. Join Dustin Alcala as he searches for birds in a variety of habitats filling the old lake bed. Resident Cooper's Hawks and late migrants should be of interest. Meet at 7:30 a.m. for a morning of birding. From the 170, 5, or 405 Fwy N, take the 118 (Simi Valley) Fwy E to the Glenoaks Blvd. offramp, turning left then right to get onto Glenoaks. Continue SE for 1 mile, turn left on Osborne St., then right on Dronfield St., and drive straight into the parking lot. (LA, p.9, C-2)

Saturday, October 24 – Sketching Birds in the Field. John Schmitt (see *Western Tanager* June '92 cover) will show eight non-artists how to render useful bird sketches for field

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FIELD TRIPS

CALL THE TAPE!

Before setting out on any field trip, call the Audubon bird tape at (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 pre-1992 Thomas Bros. map page and grid coordinates (county, page number, grid coordinates).

Sunday, October 4 - Topanga State Park. Gerry Haigh will lead participants through this diverse coastal mountain area. This is an ideal trip for a beginning birder or for someone new in the area. A plant person is usually in attendance. From Topanga Can-

yon Blvd. heading SW from the Valley, turn E (uphill) on Entrada Dr. (7 miles S of Ventura Blvd., 1 mile N of Topanga Village). Follow the signs and make a left into the park. Meet in the parking lot of Trippet Ranch at 8:00 a.m. \$3 parking fee. (LA, p.109, D-4)

Los Angeles Audubon Society
7377 Santa Monica Boulevard
West Hollywood, CA 90046-6651

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