



WESTERN TANAGER

The Los Angeles Chapter of
The National Audubon Society

Volume 59

Number 4

December 1992

Destination:

CAIRNS

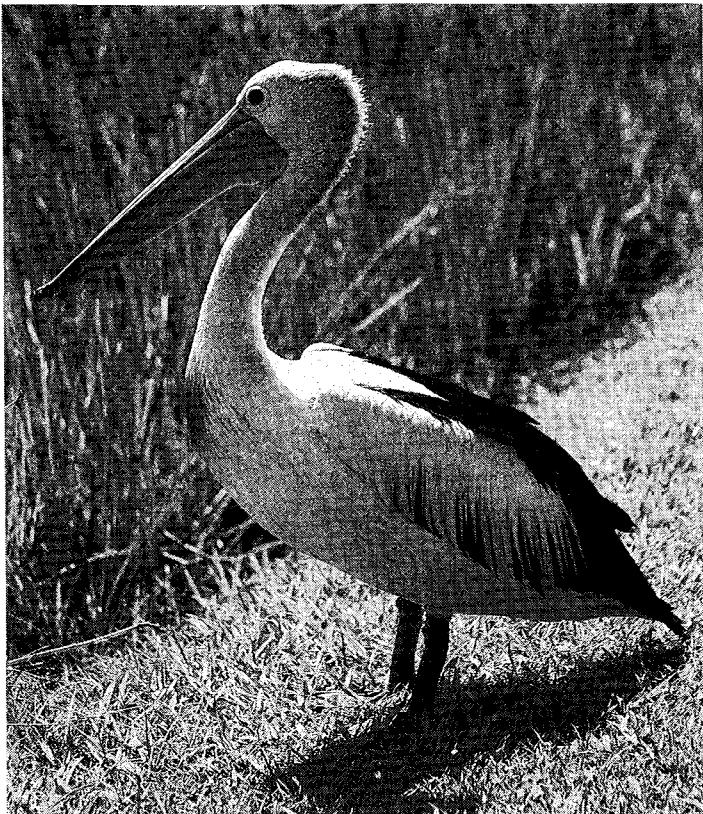
by Jean Brandt

If you fly to Australia on Qantas before May 31st, you will get double mileage on your frequent flyer program." That was all we needed to get our travel juices flowing. Wanda Dameron and I went into whirlwind planning as it was already the middle of March. Off went letters, books were purchased, advice was requested.

They said: "You shouldn't go in May—that's fall and the weather will be lousy; you can't do it by yourselves; and you won't see any birds at that time of year." Wrong, wrong and wrong. Planning the trip was a breeze, traveling on our own was fun, and we saw 215 species of birds plus ever-so-much more.

We quickly decided that Australia is too large and there is too much to see in two weeks so we would limit our trip to Cairns (pronounced CANS) and the surrounding area. We would rent a car, make some reservations and explore the countryside. (Driving on the other [wrong] side of the road was no problem. We had been warned about the "roundabouts" but they make more sense than having stop signs at every intersection, and we became quite adept at maneuvering around in them.)

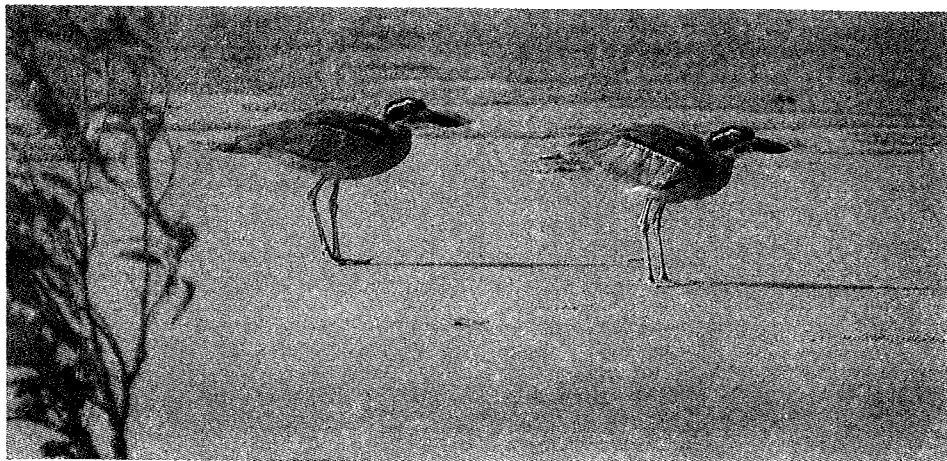
A letter was sent to the Squires at Cassowary House in Kuranda on the recommendation of many friends. It would be nice to spend a week in their care, being toured, fed and spoiled as is their reputation. Sara Dobson, the caretaker responded: the Squires were going to be in Europe for the month of May but we were welcome to stay at Cassowary House if we made our own arrangements for transportation and meals. This turned out to be pure serendipity.



Australian Pelican

Imagine, if you will, two people living in a rain forest, with all the comforts of home—and fantastic birds, dazzling butterflies and unique mammals everywhere we looked. It was too good to be true.

Sara welcomed us as if we were family, or at least old and



Beach Thick-knee

treasured friends, and made our stay very special. She kept the feeders full (fruit, nectar and dry dog food) and they attracted myriad species. We were visited daily by a male Cassowary with his two month-old-baby. (Male Cassowaries take full care of the young—hooray for Mama C!) One morning I woke Wanda to show her a flock of Wampoo Pigeons. She "ticked" a life bird without getting out of bed! We had Victoria's Riflebirds, Spotted Catbirds, Yellow-bellied Sunbirds, Macleay's Honeyeaters and other exotics (for us) on the porch plus Musky Rat-kangaroos and Agile Wallabies in the garden. Among many other species, we had Eastern Whipbirds, Northern Fantails and Mistletoebirds within walking distance along Black Mt. Road. For a birder, Cassowary House is one of the wonders of the world!

Three days were planned with Jonathan Monroe, the Squires' son-in-law and a fine naturalist and birder, whose knowledge and ability charmed both Wanda and me. Jonathan showed us the best birding areas around Cairns and out on the Atherton Plains while giving a running commentary on everything and anything in the local natural world. He packed the three days with flora, fauna and scenery beyond all expectations.

Late one afternoon, he took us to

Granite Gorge west of Mareeba, a most unusual place of huge boulders, muted light, Unadorned Rock-wallabies and Great Bowerbirds. It reminded me of the *kopjes* of East Africa. Just before entering the gorge, we watched as a large field was being burned. Overhead were hundreds of Whistling and Black Kites busily gorging on fleeing insects. The sky was undulating kites as far as one could see. A wondrous sight, never to be forgotten.

Experiences varied from ecstatic to uncomfortable. While looking for Tooth-billed Catbirds and Golden Bowerbirds along the trail at Longman's Gap, I apparently ran into an infestation of the local no-see-um creature, for the next morning my upper torso was

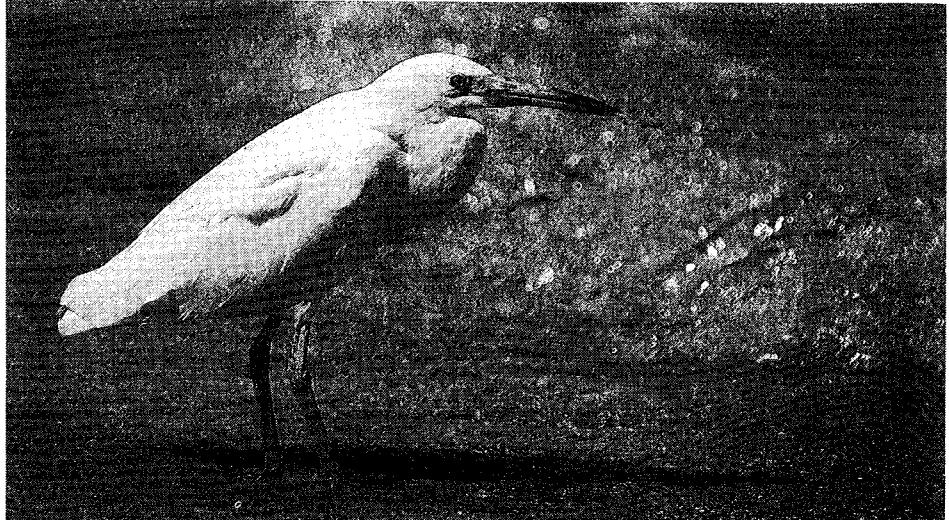
covered with a blazing red rash which caused a terrible burning sensation. This was cheerfully diagnosed as "Scru Bitch," an apt description (!), but in translation, it was Scrub Itch, caused by something similar to our chigger. Fortunately it went away within three days, something that chigger bites never do.

But the highlight of the trip, for me at least, was the evening Jonathan took us "spotting." At dusk, we watched two Duck-billed Platypus come out of their burrow and swim off downstream. Then, well after dark, we looked for night creatures—and, oh my, were we successful! I had not realized that there were so many denizens of the dark and that we would see such a good assortment. We saw Green Ringtail, Lemuroid, Coppery Brushtail and Herbert River Ringtail possums, Red-legged Pademelon, Waterfall and Northern Barred Frogs, Huntsman's Spiders, and an Amethyst Python.

Jonathan also pointed out a Leaf-toed Gecko, a bizarre lizard-like reptile about 10 inches long that looks like a Maori shield. It was a magical night. I think that birders miss a lot by just looking for birds to tick off on a list.

Another day was spent with Dawn and Arnold Magarry, who most gra-

Eastern Reef Heron



ciously showed us the birds in Cairns. We had written the Magarrys, and Dawn had sent us her famous "mud map" which shows all of the places to bird in the Cairns area. This proved invaluable. Dawn and Arnold are expert birders and are most generous with their time and advice. They took us to many of the local "hot spots."*

The Esplanade (beachfront) is justly notorious because of the thousands of migratory shorebirds that can be found there in season. May is a little late, but we found Mongolian Plover, Great Knot, Rufous-necked Stint and Curlew Sandpiper among others. The Botanic Gardens in Cairns are a MUST because of the many and varied habitats they include. Highlights were Little Kingfisher, White-browed Crake, Nankeen Falcon and Black-necked Stork. The spectacular iridescent-blue Ulysses Butterfly is common here. The Magarrys also took us north of Cairns to Yule Point, where we were lucky to find three Beach Thick-knees on the wild, lonely, wind-swept sands.

We spent one day on Green Island, where we watched Crested and Lesser Crested Terns, Silver Gulls, a Brown Booby and a Great-billed Heron. We saw a frigatebird which will forever be debated as to species. By all its field marks, it had to have been a Christmas Island Frigatebird, but they are extremely rare in that part of the ocean so we didn't count it. I guess everyone has a few of these sp.? on their lists.

Snorkeling on the Great Barrier Reef was one thing both Wanda and I had anticipated. Unfortunately, the day we were there the seas were turbulent, but we still enjoyed the many colored fish and coral. The world beneath the surface of the ocean is enchanting and we explored it with wonder. Fish Watching must be as addictive a hobby as Bird Watching.

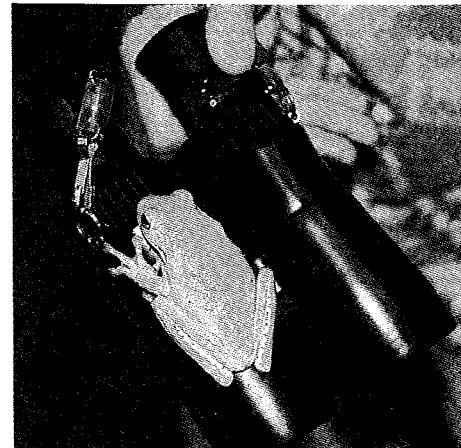
On the advice of the Magarrys,

Wanda and I decided to spend four days at Kingfisher Park in Julatin, at the base of Mt. Lewis, north of Mt. Malloy. Serendipity once again! Kingfisher Park is another wonder of the birding world! Sandy and Geoff Nicholson are ebullient, friendly hosts. The grounds are lovely with huge trees and broad lawns. Red-necked Crakes, Brush Turkeys, Orange-footed Scrubfowl, Duck-billed Platypus and Striped Possum are resident here. Wanda and I had a room with full kitchen and bath. Julatin has no local dining establishments so we had to cook our own meals. This proved to be no problem as a nearby market has Stouffer's and Sara Lee and we had a microwave in the room. (Meals were never a problem in Australia. Everywhere we went we found excellent "take away"—which is pronounced "tiykawyy"—and the local ice cream is delicious. Milk shakes come in four flavors: Chocolate, Vanilla, Strawberry and Green. I expected Green to be Mint but it turned out to be Lime. Lime flavored milk shakes are not wonderful). Beer is the national drink, superior and varied. One would be hard put to try them all, but I can heartily recommend Castlemain's 4X Bitter Ale, both "regular" and "lite."

Geoff takes visitors out on weekends and at night to look for birds and mammals in his open Toyota truck. We went to the top of Mt. Lewis to look for the Atherton Scrubwren (which we missed) and the Golden Bowerbird (which we saw). We also had very good looks at the Chowchilla. This bird has disjointed knees and when it scratches the ground for bugs, it scratches sideways. Most unusual!

Blue-faced Finch is a specialty at Mt. Lewis and we saw several. They were feeding downslope in low brush with Double-eyed Fig-Parrots—a spectacular sight to have in one binocular field.

Mt. Lewis is also the home of the



Green Tree Frog

"killer" plant—the Gympie Gympie (*Dendrocnide cordata*)—a low-growing bush with large heart-shaped leaves which have hollow hairs that contain a virulent poison which causes an initial itch followed by intense pain and sometimes death to the unsuspecting wayfarer. They were common, but we were always warned in time to avoid this peril.

Night spotting produced Papuan Frogmouth, Spotted Nightjar, Southern Boobook Owl among others, plus more species of possum. It was bitter cold atop Mt. Lewis at midnight, and Geoff boiled up a "billy" for tea and served Sandy's homemade brownies. It is nice to be spoiled, isn't it?

Time went by much too fast. As we said our farewells to Sandy, I mentioned that I had not seen the green tree frog that is on all the post cards and T-shirts. She took me out onto the porch, reached up, and handed me one! It was every bit as personable as I had expected—and very photogenic.

Reluctantly, we left Kingfisher Park and headed back to Cairns. On the way, we stopped at the rice fields on Pickford Road. There we found both Brolga and Sarus Cranes. A fitting end to a perfect trip.

*If you would like a copy of a map of Cairns birding areas, send a SASE to: Jean Brandt, 3846 Sapphire Drive, Encino, CA 91436.

All photos by the author. 

Lens View

by Herb Clarke

Because electronic flash is such an indispensable part of nature photography, I frequently mention useful equipment and methods. From questions asked, there appears to be so much confusion about this subject that many people are reluctant to use this valuable tool. I'll attempt to clear up some of the mystery so that you will be confident enough to at least try to use flash when the occasion arises.

Advantages to using flash are many. Often there is simply not enough natural light. Properly used, flash can reduce harsh shadows and usually add a desirable highlight to the eye of the bird or animal. Additional sparkle makes the image appear to leap out of the picture. Depth of focus is increased while the almost instant light can freeze action and eliminate camera shake. Birds seem to take no notice of flash, being more alarmed by shutter noise. Some disadvantages are: bulky, expensive equipment is required and flash light is cool, which sometimes slightly changes subject color. Trial and error methods may be required each time because no two field situations are alike.

Electronic flash is an electrical device that produces a rapid (from $\frac{1}{300}$ to $\frac{1}{50,000}$ second or even faster depending on the model) luminous discharge. The quality of light is approximately that of daylight. Flash can be used to totally illuminate the subject or to augment ambient (existing or natural) light. Modern cameras and flashes have many features offering photographers great latitude in deciding suitable exposure. Some camera models even have a small built-in flash which is very

useful for close-ups of flowers, insects, etc. In attempting to make the equipment more versatile and simple, manufacturers seem to have made it even more complicated.

If you are reasonably serious about nature photography, you should buy the best equipment you can afford. There are a number of excellent systems on the market. Some are Nikon, Canon, Minolta, and Pentax. Standard brands of used cameras, lenses, and flashes from a reputable source can be a good choice. Make sure the camera body be-

tem usually works fairly well, but manual control should be available also because there are times when it is desirable to override the camera's choice. The camera can't know what the photographer wants emphasized. For example, a slower shutter would let the background be better exposed at a time when the camera would automatically select a higher speed, darkening the background. Some films have difficulty handling white so that less exposure would help insure that the whites would not be washed out.

Good flash pictures can be taken with older non-automatic cameras and flashes. In these cases, familiarity with the characteristics of the film and equipment is essential. Here the guide number comes into use. This number is a multiple of the light output of the flash times the distance to the subject in feet. The flash manufacturer usually supplies this information in the instructions or by way of a dial calculator on the flash itself. Say, for example, you are using a film with a rating of 100, your flash indicates a guide number of 80 and you are 10 feet from the subject. Divide 10 into 80 which is eight, indicating $f8.0$ is the proper lens setting when the camera is set at the built-in flash shutter speed. Almost all lenses have a footage scale to give distance information when properly focused. This all sounds difficult, but with practice quick calculations become easy. Nothing takes the place of practice while making lots of mistakes which I still make after all these years.

Keep in mind that flash light reaching your subject diminishes as the distance increases in accordance with the inverse square law. In other words, if the distance from flash doubles, the amount of light striking the subject is reduced to a quarter, requiring the aperture (lens opening) to be increased by

**Mark Your Calendars:
Annual Photo Contest
February 9, 1993**

ing considered has electronic shutter synchronization of $\frac{1}{125}$ second at least. Point and shoot models are not satisfactory for nature photography. The reason for the fairly high flash shutter speed is to avoid ghost images in the photograph. A ghost image is in reality an unintentional double image, that is a slow shutter setting allows an ambient exposure to be made while the shutter is open, during which any movement of the camera or subject can create a second picture illuminated by the flash. A faster shutter speed in these cases reduces this problem.

Some newer cameras automatically make the selection of flash settings by means of through-the-lens exposure control (TTL). This means there are sensors in front of the film plane which control the flash light output. This sys-

Christmas Bird Counts – 1992

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19

| | | |
|------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Big Bear Lake | Leo Best | 818/334-2528 |
| Butterbredit Springs | Keith Axelson | 310/390-6378 |
| Claremont | Dan Guthrie (H) | 714/621-4000 |
| | | (W) 714-621/8000, X2836 |
| Lancaster | Fred Heath (H) | 805/527-0986 |
| | | (W) 805/984-3752 |
| Morro Bay | Tom Edell | 805/995-1691 |
| Pasadena | Jon Fisher (H) | 818/821-0263 |
| | John Pepin (W) | 818/793-3330 |
| Santa Ana River Valley | Larry La Pre | 714/684-7081 |
| San Diego | Doug Aguillard | 619/475-3848 |

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20

| | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Catalina Island | Lee Jones | 714/640-1237 |
| | Misty Gay | 213/510-0954 |
| Malibu | Larry Allen | 213/221-2022 |
| Palos Verdes Peninsula | Mitch Heindel | 310/516-7407 |
| Rancho Santa Fe | Luis Santaella (H) | 619/756-2082 |
| | | (W) 619/753-5588 |
| Ventura | Virgil Ketner | 805/642-3480 |

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 22

| | | |
|--------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Salton Sea (south) | Guy McCaskie | 619/423-7524 |
|--------------------|--------------|--------------|

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 26

| | | |
|---------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Oceanside | Herb Williams | 619/967-8840 |
| San Fernando Valley | Art Langton | 818/887-0973 |

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27

| | | |
|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| Grass Mountain | Cal York | 805/270-0222 |
| Thousand Oaks | H. E. McClure | 805/482-0411 |

FRIDAY, JANUARY 1

| | | |
|--------------|-------------------|--------------|
| SDFO-Pelagic | Marjorie Hastings | 619/464-7342 |
|--------------|-------------------|--------------|

SATURDAY, JANUARY 2

| | | |
|--------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Carrizo Plains | Roger Zachary | 805/466-6222 |
| Escondido | Ken Weaver | 619/723-2448 |
| Salton Sea (north) | Chet McGaugh | 714/781-3699 |
| Santa Barbara | Paul Lehman | 805/967-2450 |
| | Joan Lentz | 805/969-4397 |

SUNDAY, JANUARY 3

| | | |
|--------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Mojave River | Steve Meyers | 619/949-3567 |
| Los Angeles | Mary Semski (H) | 310/204-6355 |
| | | (W) 310/273-5880 |

two stops. Depending on the speed of film being used, most flashes are not useful at distances more than about 15 feet. Consult previous columns where I have discussed other methods of illumination, multiple flashes and Fresnel flash systems to overcome some of this distance limitation.

I hope the above clarifies a few of the mysteries of flash photography. Keep trying different combinations of equipment settings, and try not to get discouraged with poor results. Mastering the art of picture taking with flash will open a new world of exciting photography. 

Pasadena/San Gabriel Valley Christmas Count

First censused in 1946, the present Pasadena/San Gabriel Valley Christmas Count circle covers many different habitats. Included in the area are parts of the San Gabriel Mountains, Whittier Narrows and the San Gabriel River channel, and extensively landscaped areas such as the Arcadia Arboretum and Huntington Gardens. This habitat mix invariably turns up a good variety of birds.

Though the count is not particularly renowned for its rarities, there is always the

possibility of something unusual, such as last year's flock of Tundra Swans found at Whittier Narrows. Other possibilities include Summer Tanager, Great-tailed Grackle (new to the count last year), and a good selection of mountain birds.

This year, as always, we rely on dedicated volunteers to make the count a success. The date is Saturday, December 19. Call Jon Fisher (818/821-0263) or John Pepin (818/793-3330) for info. 

Birds Of The Season

by Hank Brodkin

December—and it's time again to think of the upcoming holidays... and the Christmas Bird Counts. Organized by the National Audubon Society over a hundred years ago as a protest to the then traditional Christmas Bird Hunt, this project has grown to the point where it can supply some real bird population data. The count now covers North America and the Caribbean south to Venezuela and Peru, as well as Hawaii and Guam.

The 91st (1990-1991) Count involved 42,686 people on 1,593 counts. The total number of birds counted in North America alone was 54,194,718 of 587 species. Everyone can participate, no matter what your birding skill level is. Check this issue of the *Tanager* for the counts in our area and join as many as you wish. If you are able to get an area assigned in advance, you may wish to do some pre-count scouting. Most counts meet for lunch and have a dinner countdown of the birds seen. I can promise a most pleasant experience to those of you who haven't participated in a count before.

The month of October saw the arrival of the first of our winter residents along with an invasion of Pine Siskins reported all over the deserts and just recently in the San Fernando Valley. Many interesting vagrants were also found, and the challenge of fall birding with two or more plumages per species provided hours of satisfying field work.

A Common Loon was on the pond in Shoshone, Inyo County, on 12 October (Hank and Priscilla Brodkin). A good "fulmar" winter is shaping up:

the LAAS pelagic trip on 18 October found 62 Northern Fulmars in the San Pedro Channel. Also seen on the trip was an immature Brown Booby three miles south of Pt. Vicente (Sherman Suter, *et al*). A Broad-winged Hawk was at Hansen Dam Park on 15 October (Dustin Alcala), 16 Ferruginous Hawks were reported from the Antelope Valley on 11 October (Doug Martin), and a Peregrine Falcon was seen in the Sepulveda Basin on 18 October (Jean Brandt).

An Inca Dove was at the Cactus City Rest Stop east of Indio on 10 October (Ned and Linda Harris). An Eastern Phoebe was found at Desert Center, Riverside County, on 16 October (Mike Patten), and the Thick-billed Kingbird had returned to the sod farm and golf course on Seal Beach Boulevard in Orange County by 17 October (Laurie Conrad).

A Gray Catbird was found at Huntington Beach Central Park on 12 October and was joined by a Bendire's Thrasher on the 13th (Phil Swan). Single Brown Thrashers were at Hansen Dam on 5 October (DA) and at the Cactus City Rest Stop on 10 October (N&LH).

A Philadelphia Vireo was at Galileo Park, near California City, on 10 October. Warbler sightings include a Northern Parula at 29 Palms on 16 October (MP), a Palm at Hansen Dam on 15 October (DA), a Black-and-White at Harbor Park on 4 October (Wanda Dameron), and a Canada at Redondo Wilderness Park on 8 October (David Moody).

An immature male Rose-breasted

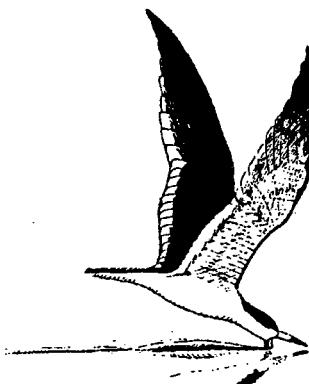
Grosbeak was at Desert Center on 4 October (H&PB), and a Vesper Sparrow, scarce on the coastal slope, was at Hansen Dam on 15 October (DA). A Clay-colored Sparrow was at Sepulveda Basin on 11 October (Irwin Woldman) and on the same day, two were seen at Desert Center (H&PB).

Southern California's second Field Sparrow was found at Furnace Creek Inn on 16 October (Jon Dunn), and a Lark Bunting was seen in the Antelope Valley on 4 October (Dave Koeppel). A Grasshopper Sparrow was at Desert Center on 4 October (H&PB), a Swamp Sparrow was in the marsh at Orcas Park on 11 October (DA), and a Bobolink was found in the Sepulveda Basin on 14 October (DM).

As 1992 draws to a close, I would like to thank all of you who share the sightings that end up in this column. Without your input there would be no column. Thank you Jean Brandt and Kimball Garrett for your patience, David Koeppel for your invaluable cooperation, and Arnold Small for the benefit of your many years of involvement with California birds. And thank you Priscilla for sharing this passion with me and for seeing that the deadlines are met. 

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 David Koeppel
27-1/2 Mast Street (310) 454-2576
Marina del Rey, CA 90292
(310) 827-0407



LAAS FAX

Special thanks to Larry Sansone for the donation of a fax machine to the Bookstore. The fax number is (213) 876-7609.

Banded Black Skimmer

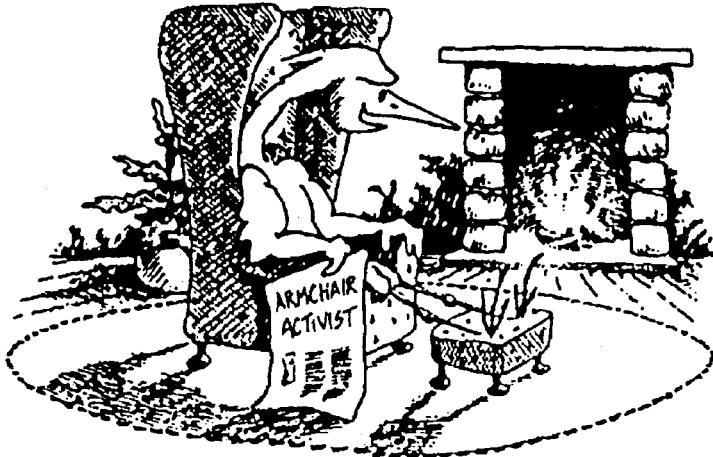
Please report any banded Black Skimmers to Dr. Charles Collins, Dept. of Biology, California State University, Long Beach, CA 90840-3702, phone 310/985-4813.

Dr. Collins is heading an ongoing study of the skimmer's colony at Bolsa Chica. These birds have been seen as far north as Moss Landing. Right legs will have a colored band, left will have aluminum. Please note the color and any numbers or letters you can read.

Illustration by Jonathan Alderfer

Holiday Quiz:

What's fun, easy to do, effective, satisfying, and can be done from the comfort of your home in about half an hour a month?



At Home Action for Environmental Protection!
ANSWER: Audubon's Armchair Activist

Join the *Letter of the Month Club* or give a gift subscription to a friend. Just send your name, address, city, state, zip and phone number along with \$6 (to cover postage and production), made payable to Los Angeles Audubon Society, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, CA 90046-6694.

WESTERN TANAGER
Published 10 times a year by
Los Angeles Audubon Society
7377 Santa Monica Boulevard
West Hollywood, CA 90046-6694

EDITOR: Jean Brandt
CONSERVATION: Sandy Wohlgemuth
ORNITHOLOGY CONSULTANT:
Kimball Garrett
FIELD TRIPS: Nick Freeman
PROGRAMS: Dan Kahane
PELAGIC TRIPS: Phil Sayre
DESKTOP PUBLISHING: WP Plus
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: E. H. Kendig, Jr.
1st VICE PRESIDENT: Thomas Van Huss
2nd VICE PRESIDENT: Linda Harris
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: Mildred Newton
RECORDING SECRETARY: Mary Thompson
TREASURER: Richard Epps

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 \$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.

National Headquarters, New York
212 832-3200
Los Angeles Audubon Headquarters, Library
and Bookstore are open
Tuesday - Saturday
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
213 876-0202 - office
213 876-7609 - fax
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 Blvd., West Hollywood, CA 90046-6694.

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. If you desire to carpool to an event, she can also provide contacts for you. Our office staff is also available Tuesday - Saturday for most reservation services.

Printed on Recycled Paper

CALENDAR

EVENING MEETINGS

Meet at 8:00 p.m. in Plummer Park
ID Workshop precedes the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

December 8 - Herb Clarke presents *A Florida Bird Fantasy*. In the spring of '92, Herb set out to photograph the birds of southern Florida. Starting at Ft. Jefferson in the Dry Tortugas (and not exactly in the tradition of J. J. Audubon), Herb shot his way through the Florida Keys, the "Ding" Darling Refuge, the Loxahatchee Refuge in the Everglades, and the Corkscrew Swamp. This slide presentation will feature not only the spectacular wading birds of the area but will include the "dickie-birds" and other wildlife as well.

ID Workshop: Dr. Henry E. Childs, Jr.—*North American Cormorants and Grebes*.

January 12 - Moose Peterson—*Madonnas of the Feathered World*

February 9 - Annual Photo Contest

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).

Saturday, December 5 - Chatsworth Reservoir. Leader Doug Martin. Primarily an "old California" native grassland habitat with a large body of water and oak riparian woodlands in the adjacent arroyos. Take 405 Fwy N to Roscoe Blvd., head W to Fallbrook Ave., then N to the DWP entrance at the end. Meet at the gate at 7:30 a.m. Bring lunch and water. No restrooms. Confirm trip by calling December Bird Tape. (LA, p.6, A-6)

Sunday, December 6 - Topanga State Park. Gerry Haigh will lead participants through this diverse coastal mountain area. An ideal trip for a beginning birder or for someone new in the area. From Topanga Canyon 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 turn 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 90046-6694

DATED MATERIAL
Please Expedite

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
PERMIT NO. 276
Glendale, CA

Saturday, December 12 - Whittier Narrows Regional Park. Join Jack Nash at 8:00 a.m. to see wintering birds. Meet at the Nature Center at 1000 Durfee Ave. Take the 60 Fwy to South El Monte, just W of the 605 Fwy, taking the Peck Drive exit S. Take the offramp onto Durfee Ave. heading W (right), and turn left into the Nature Center. (LA, p.47, D-5)

Saturday, December 12 - Carrizo Plains. Leader Sam Fitton of BLM. Meet at 7:30 a.m. in Maricopa. Vehicles \$13 each. Good *buteos*, eagles, and Mountain Plover for sure! Cross fingers for cranes. Priority given to 4-person cars and carpoolers. Sign-up with Audubon House for exact directions.

See Page 5 for
local Christmas
Bird Counts

Sunday, January 3 - Topanga State Park. Leader Gerry Haigh. Meet at 8:00 a.m. See December 6 write-up for details.

Saturday, January 9 - Whittier Narrows. Leader Ed Craven. Meet at 8:00 a.m. See December 12 write-up for details.

Saturday, January 9 - Santa Barbara Area. Leader Shawneen Finnegan. Christmas Count stake-outs may liven up the bird list. Participants limited to 15. Reserve with Audubon House to learn fee and 8:00 a.m. meeting place. Heavy rain cancels.

Friday, January 15 - Raptor Workshop Lecture. Speaker Ned Harris. This lecture/field trip series is the best thing LAAS offers for raptor lovers. Fee \$10 for lecture only. The lecture will be 7:30-10:30 p.m. on Friday evening at the Union Federal Savings meeting room at 8485 Wilshire Blvd. (LA, p.42, E-2)

Sunday, January 17 - Antelope Valley Bus Trip. Leader Ned Harris. Given in conjunction with above lecture. Fee \$15 for bus trip only. Leave promptly at 7:30 a.m. Meet in the Valley near 5 Fwy and 210 Fwy interchange. Sign-up with LAAS for exact directions.