

# WESTERN TANAGER



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Los Angeles Audubon Society

## *Ménage à trois: Birders, Ducks AND Hunters*

by Harold Swanton

**T**he Duck Club Manager, a big, bearded, soft-spoken man, led me by the hand through the intricacies of operating his enclave on 583 acres of prime wetlands. His Club is a piece of local history, founded in 1908, and hunting ducks was not its prime objective. Like most duck clubs on the Pacific flyway, its purpose was to attract waterfowl away from winter crops in neighboring fields, where they were playing hob with the farmers' livelihood. What was called "supplemental feeding" baited the birds away from the lima beans, barley, sugar beets, celery and other crops, and it was very effective. Masses of pintail, wigeon, mallard and teal swarmed to the smorgasbord spread for them and left the crops alone.

This did not escape the notice of duck hunters in the East, where agriculture shut down in the winter. Shooting over bait began, nature lovers took up arms, and the Feds set down regulations to control it. At present, supplemental feeding is permitted only up to ten days before the opening of hunting season, superseding the regulation that permitted feeding during the season,

but at least 250 yards from the guns, with one quarter of the compass left ungunned. In our Manager's case, the opening was to the north. But it mattered very little. The birds, incredibly gunwise, would come in high, well out of range, then circle down to the feeding platforms in a tight spiral, avoiding the guns altogether.

Nobody has ever measured a duck's I.Q., but our Manager believes it is very high indeed. He even thinks the birds know that Wednesdays and Saturdays, the Club's shooting days, are good times to lie low.

Which is a dirty trick to pull on the hunters, considering what it costs them to belong to the Club. There is no initiation fee as such: you have to buy into the corporation. The 583 acres with its 70-odd diked-up ponds and dry barley land adjoins some of the most valuable agricultural terrain in California, priced to \$15,000 and up per acre at the top of the real estate boom, now somewhat less. There are 50 members of the Club, so you buy one-fiftieth of the assets, and it will cost you somewhere between \$75,000 and \$100,000 just to get in. And on top of this, one-fiftieth of the annual

cost of operation — power, water, staff, planting millet, barley, smartweed and other living duck foods, clubhouse expenses — all of which runs around \$300,000, or about \$6,000 a year.

This for the privilege of shooting the limit of four birds on each of the 20 shooting days of the season. You arrive the night before, snug down in a simple but adequate billet, rise at four A.M. on what is apt to be a cold, drizzly day, get into your rain gear, gulp breakfast with plenty of scalding coffee, then shoulder your Purdy 12-gauge and slog out into the marsh, take your position in a hole in the ground for three or four hours and wait for the ducks to come in.

You wouldn't do this for money, but if you're a dedicated member of the Club, you hunt ducks for the sheer joy of it. And if you get your limit of four a day, or 80 birds during the season, they will have cost you \$75 each, which bothers the members not at all.

"The Club," the Manager explained, "is midway in the affluence scale. There are clubs up north in the Delta with French chefs and black tie dinners where the buy-in runs from \$250,000 up and the an-

nual assessments \$100,000. With more acreage and less hunting pressure, they may hunt three days a week instead of two." But the price per duck still isn't exactly K-Mart.



All this by way of getting around to the heart of the matter: the catastrophic decline of wetlands in the Central Valley portion of the Pacific flyway and our increasing dependence on duck clubs to maintain wintering grounds for waterfowl.

Historically, California had 4,000,000 acres of wetlands; now there are less than 300,000. Fifty years ago the wintering waterfowl count was over 50,000,000; in the 1970s it had dropped to 12,000,000. Today, the Central Valley provides winter habitat for about 4,000,000 ducks, geese and swans.

What was once a 400 mile swatch of marsh and riverine habitat stretching from Red Bluff to Bakersfield has gone, mostly to farming. Of the remaining 300,000 acres, two-thirds are privately owned, most functioning as duck clubs. Some wetlands have been set aside as refuges, but they aren't enough. In the grasslands — our biggest stretch of wetlands around Los Banos — Federal refuges cover 33,000 acres and state 16,000. The rest, 111,000 acres, belongs to the duck hunters.

What is suggested here is a re-ordering of attitudes in the birder/environmentalist/nature lover fraternity *vis-à-vis* the sportsmen. They, with Ducks Unlimited, their conservation arm, have been by far the most effective agency in achieving what both factions want: more ducks. And more swans, shorebirds, herons, cranes and rails and raptors thriving on the artificial marshlands the duck clubs create. Since its founding in 1937, Ducks Unlimited has raised more than \$750 million and conserved over 6.2 million acres of habitat throughout North America. And the work goes on, now more necessary than ever.

Driving north on Hwy. 99 last December, I became aware of some-

thing new in the rice country. To the east, the stubble had been burned off in the traditional way and the land was dry and barren. But to the west the fields were still flooded. We stopped and got out the scopes as we picked up a long line of white in the distance, stretching for hundreds of yards along the Sutter Bypass. Snow Geese, we thought, but we were wrong. They were Tundra Swans, 5,000 or more, along with hundreds of White-fronted Geese.

Farther north, the geese were beyond counting. We estimated the mixed flocks of Snow, Cackling Canada and White-fronted at 10,000, but there could have been twice that many.

There had been a phenomenally successful breeding season for both White-fronted and Cackling Geese, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, but the concentrations on the flooded rice stubble suggested something else was going on.

Dr. Jack Payne, in charge of Ducks Unlimited's new private lands program, sent me a sheaf of literature explaining what is underway. Sparked by a D.U. initiative, habits are changing in California's rice bowl in the Sacramento Valley. Burning off rice stubble in the fall will be phased out over the next ten years in the name of clean air. In its stead, D.U. has proposed a new regimen: the stubble will be crushed with a specially designed rice roller D.U. has helped develop, then the fields will be flooded. The roller has been engineered to spare rice gleanings from the harvested fields rather than jam them into the mud, making them available for wildfowl. Decomposing stubble composts, combined with the adobe rice soil, encourages populations of invertebrates the birds feed on.

D.U.'s goals under its "Valley Care" program include annual winter flooding of 200,000 acres of rice land and 30,000 acres of other farm land in the Central Valley, improving wildlife habitat on 100,000 acres of farm and ranch lands, restoring and enhancing 1,000 acres of wetlands, riparian forests and related habitats each year.

The idea, Dr. Payne explains, is to turn productive farmland into wildlife habitat while it lies fallow between crops. "Habitat restoration," he says, "acquiring wetlands outright and setting them aside as refuges, is expensive. There is just not enough money in government budgets to put back the wetlands that have been destroyed. If we cannot have restored wetland, then an enhanced agricultural field, such as a flooded grain field, may be the next best thing."

So, back to the duck hunters, the energizing force behind Ducks Unlimited since its founding in 1937. And back to our Manager, sitting in the lounge of his Club. Neither of us are hunters, he by choice and I out of a deeper feeling about blood sports. But we agree that the guys who roll out at four in the morning to sit in a hole in the damp, clammy chill to wait for a sprig (limit one) or a Mallard (limit three drakes and one hen) or a teal or shoveller or a gadwall, and find joy and renewal in it, are nature lovers, too, and conservationists who put their money where their mouth is.

"We feed and water about 200,000 ducks, according to aerial surveys," he says, "and we harvest from 2,200 to 2,400 per year. You can make a case that at least that many would die of natural causes if it weren't for the food and habitat we offer them. But this, of course, is arguable."

Arguable or not, the habitat is there, and if it weren't for the hunters, it would be in asparagus or row crops.

And the future?

The Manager grew wistful. "It will depend on the game laws," he said. "If it becomes [an issue] in the minds, not of the hunters, but the hunter's families or accountants or business partners — if they lower the limit to one or two ducks, and expenses keep going up, so all of a sudden they'll be paying eight or nine thousand dollars a year to shoot one or two ducks on a hunting day, everyone's going to tell them they're fools. And that will be the end of it."

The bottom line is more ducks. More geese. More swans. More herons, egrets, cranes, shorebirds, rails, raptors. More acres of wetlands on the Pacific flyway, more farmlands that become wetlands in the winter, more enhanced breeding grounds in Canada.

And the things the hunters and Ducks Unlimited are trying to do.

The 2,400 birds taken on the Manager's 583 acres seems like a fair price to pay. 🐾



## New Titles at the Bookstore

<i>The Nature of the Islands, Plants and Animals of the Eastern Caribbean</i> , Barlow, 1993 .....	14.95
<i>Field Guide to the Orchids of Costa Rica and Panama</i> , Dressier, 1993 ..	35.00
<i>Oaks of California</i> , Pavlik, et al, 1992	21.95
<i>Sagebrush Country, A Wildlife Sanctuary</i> , Taylor, 1992 .....	12.00
<i>SASOL Illustrated Guide to the Birds of Southern Africa</i> , Sinclair, et al, 1993 (soft cover) .....	29.95
<i>Safari Companion</i> , Estes, 1993 .....	29.95
<i>Birdwatching in East-Central Alaska</i> , Springer, 1993 .....	11.95
<i>Field Guide to Birding in Anchorage</i> , Scher, 1993 .....	10.95
<i>Birder's Guide to Churchill</i> , Chartier, 1994 .....	14.95
<i>The Marin County Breeding Bird Atlas</i> , Shuford, 1993 .....	24.95
<i>10,001 Titillating Tidbits of Avian Trivia</i> , Todd, 1994 .....	24.95
<i>MacMillan Field Guide — Bird Identification</i> , Harris, et al, 1993 ....	14.95
<i>Crows and Jays, A Guide to the Crows, Jays and Magpies of the World</i> , Madge and Buon, 1993 .....	TBA
<i>Finches and Sparrows, An Identification Guide</i> , Clement, et al, 1993 .....	49.50

## CalPaw: Vote Yes on Prop 180

June is just around the corner. CalPaw '94 is on the ballot and if it loses, we all lose. CalPaw is a \$1.9 billion bond issue that will buy rich ecosystems in danger of development, revive moribund local parks, save forests at risk, restore riparian habitats where salmon can no longer spawn or where the Least Bell's Vireo might nest once more, helping people and wildlife in all 58 counties in California.

June elections are notoriously ignored by a sleepy electorate, and a small determined band of voters can frequently defeat measures the rest of us want passed but lose by default. It is up to us — Audubon and others — to get out the vote and pass this initiative for funds for the environment. It is an opportunity that may not occur again for years.

Thousands of volunteers worked for months and got 725,000 signatures on CalPaw petitions, the largest ever for any volunteer initiative. Despite economic problems, most people want to save the good stuff in California. But it will be no easy job to get 51% of the vote. So let's be sure to vote and to get family and friends to the polling booth in June. *Onward and upward!* 🐾

## Bookstore Summer Sale

(On Selected Items)  
May 1 to June 30

- *Nature Travel*
- *Checklists*
- *General Ornithology*
- *Video Tapes*
- *Bird Feeders*
- *Software*

## WESTERN Tanager

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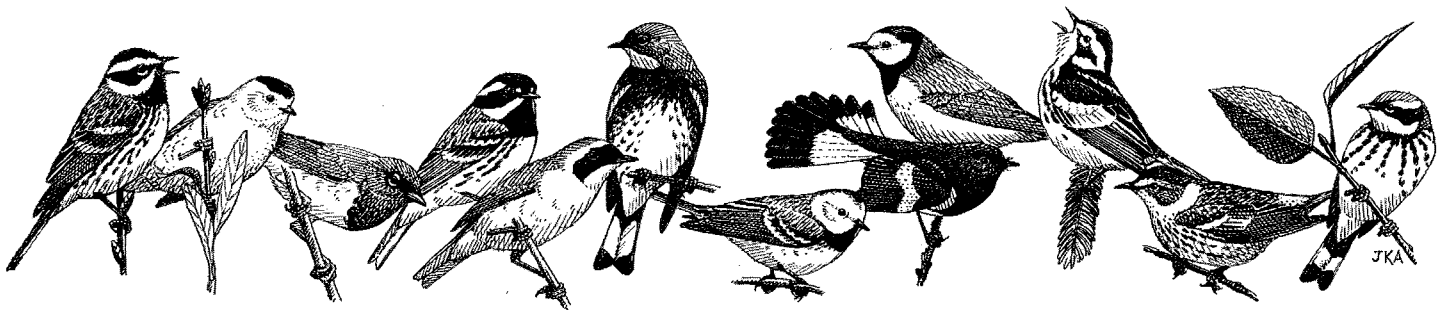
Annual membership in both societies is \$35 per year and \$20 for new members for their first year. Members receive the *Western Tanager* newsletter and *Audubon* magazine, a national publication. Renewals of membership are computerized by National Audubon and should not be sent to LAAS; however, new memberships may be sent directly to LAAS. Make checks payable to the National Audubon Society.

Nonmembers 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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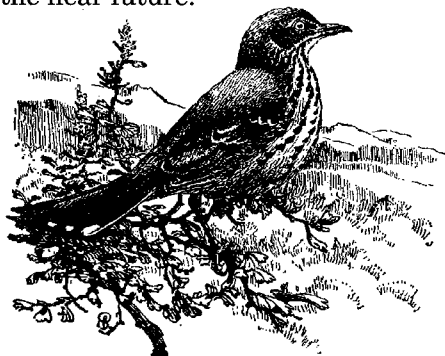


# BIRDS OF THE SEASON

by Hank Brodtkin

**M**ay is upon us. From now until mid-June, other wise normal people will fan out across the countryside — combing coastal canyons and promontories, perusing local parks, and hitting desert hotspots — all in an intense, half-deranged kind of way — seeking that gem of the avian world, the vagrant! Only a birder can understand the feeling of pleasure and extreme satisfaction that comes from finding — and showing others — these lost wandering waifs. So those of you not yet smitten, get out your copy of *Where Birders Go In Southern California* by Hank Childs or check past columns of “Birds of the Season” and see where the “vagrant traps” are and join the madness.

Before you go dashing off to distant oases, however, remember: some of the best birds are consistently being discovered in close-in places like Hansen Dam Park in the Valley and Harbor Lake Park near San Pedro by meticulous birders like Dustin Alcalá and Mitch Heindel working their “patches” practically in their own back yards. And also remember that May is peak atlassing time, an activity that will occupy more and more of us in the near future.



Early March saw the first reports of Pacific-slope Flycatchers, Warbling Vireos and other birds — right on schedule — following the age-old clock that has been ticking since the last ice age. Reports in our area, to me anyway, have been few. Please, if you enjoy reading this column, call in your reports to the numbers listed at the end of this article. Don't assume I'll hear about your find. Without cooperation from birders in the field, this column will become little more than a vehicle for my opinions... dull stuff indeed!

A **Northern Goshawk** was found on a Pasadena Audubon Field Trip to Harper Dry Lake, San Bernardino County, on 20 February (Ebbe Banstorp), and a **Zone-tailed Hawk** was in Ojai on 1 March (Brad Sillasen).

The first **Western Kingbird** report comes from Chatsworth Reservoir on 6 March (Art Langton). **Sage Thrashers** were noted migrating this spring with five or six seen near Lake Los Angeles in the Antelope Valley (Gayle Hightower), several in Anza Borrego State Park (ABSP) on 12 March (Fred Heath) and several others on 13 March (Hank & Priscilla Brodtkin).

A very rare winter **Black-throated Blue Warbler** played hide-and-seek in a Sherman Oaks yard from December to February, only to have a fatal encounter with a cat in March (Fritzi Bernstein; remains to L.A. County Museum).

Oriole first reports include a **Hooded** at Leo Carrillo State Beach on 5 March (Kimball Garrett), and one at Borrego Palm Canyon in ABSP on 12 March (FH), a **Northern** at the L.A. Zoo on

9 March (Harvey Fischer), one near Tamarisk Grove ABSP on 14 March (H&PB) and two more at Chatsworth Reservoir on 15 March (AL). The first **Scott's** was seen at Pena Springs ABSP on 13 March (H&PB). Most interesting was the report of an **Evening Grosbeak** at Monrovia City Park on 15 March (Hank Childs).

In closing, for those of you who enjoy doing Breeding Bird Surveys, your Senators might be interested in your views on the anti-volunteer amendment attached to the National Biological Survey bill in the House of Representatives by anti-environmentalist congressmen. This amendment would bar information from volunteers being included in the Survey — volunteers who one particularly enlightened congressman labeled as “the environmental gestapo.” This amendment would also bar information from the Christmas Counts being used in the Survey. If this amendment is removed by the Senate, it would still have to be removed in the House/Senate Conference. So you might want to express your opinion several times. See the April *Western Tanager* for details.

Good Birding! ➤

**R**ecords 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 Brodtkin**

27½ Mast Street, Marina Del Rey, CA 90292.  
(310) 827-0407 E-Mail: hankb@kaiwan.com  
Or call **David Koepfel** at (310) 454-2576.

# Acorn Woodpeckers

by Corinna Lu

**A**corn Woodpeckers (*Melanerpes formicivorus*) are found from southern Oregon to northern South America. Within these areas, they are closely associated with oaks, preferring mixed pine/oak woodlands but also living in oak savannas, parks and other areas where there are an adequate number of oak trees.

These birds are territorial and often live in the same areas generation after generation if the habitat is ideal. While they usually nest in trees other than oaks, they are dependent upon oaks for almost all aspects of their biology including their cooperative breeding behavior. They store acorns in granaries, often choosing the softer wood of species such as pines to the hard wood of oaks, but also taking advantage of telephone poles in more urban areas. Many times the granaries are in dead standing trees or snags.

Although they are omnivorous and eat everything from berries to insects to tree sap, the adult Acorn Woodpeckers rely on their supply of acorns to survive through the winter. Without an adequate sized granary or a sufficient mast of acorns, the birds are forced to abandon their territory. Thus, the quality of an oak grove can be judged on the size of the granary as well as the size of the grove itself.

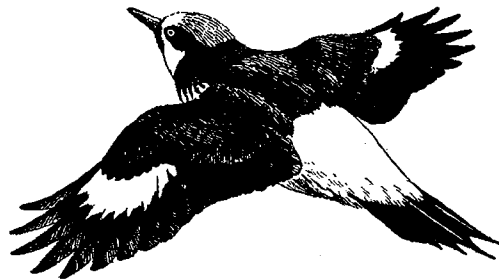
Oaks and acorns are important to other aspects of the woodpecker's life history, such as their breeding strategy. In good times, when there are sufficient acorn stores, the birds live in groups of two to twelve or more. Of these, there are usually three to four that mate, a system known as polygyny. The rest are usually their offspring and, although often capable of breeding themselves, choose to become helpers for a variety of reasons not discussed here. All birds in the group contribute to the incubating, feeding and general care of the young in

a system that is truly communal. Additionally, while each bird contributes to the granary in the fall, once an acorn has been collected it is common property and available to any bird in the group.

In bad times, however, when there are not enough acorns to last the winter and the birds are forced to migrate, the entire social system falls apart. Communal sharing of acorns is not possible as there is not enough food to go around. The birds do not congregate in large groups but instead break up into pairs. Instead of a polygynandrous mating system, monogamy prevails, although the pairs do not remain with each other for more than one breeding season.

It is evident, then, that Acorn Woodpeckers are entirely dependent upon oak trees in many aspects of their life and cannot live anywhere where there is not a sufficient number of oak trees and acorns present. Their continued presence in Southern California may be called into question if the 15 native species of oaks continue to be cut down for urbanization and their habitat destroyed. Many oak woodlands and savannas are on private property and therefore are not protected by the many oak preservation ordinances enacted in recent years.

Since 1940, California has lost more than one million acres of oak woodland due to rangeland clearing and agricultural conversion. Continued suburbanization of our land may destroy a quarter million acres of oak woodland by 2010 (Pavlick, *et al*, 1991, p. 21). This loss of land presents a problem for the woodpeckers, who may not be able to obtain the resources necessary to survive in the limited areas designated for oaks.



I am interested in studying exactly how large an oak grove needs to be in order to sustain a population of Acorn Woodpeckers in Southern California. Mostly this will be

simply a function of the number of oaks needed to produce a sufficient mast of acorns. However, it will

also include other factors such as oak species diversity and habitat quality (including granary size) as well as those factors external to the site such as how far away the nearest oak grove is. The more isolated a grove is, the less likely it is that it will continue to be occupied. This is due to genetic factors as well as random environmental factors. For example, a poor acorn crop may not be able to sustain the population, leaving them with nowhere to go. Similarly, a large storm, or even an earthquake, could fell a granary tree, leaving the birds with no food for the winter. These are all issues which have to be considered.

In order to begin a study, of course, isolated areas of woodpeckers need to be identified. It is my hope that some of you will be able to tell me where there are some Acorn Woodpeckers in Los Angeles County and its outlying areas. This can include birds in local parks, reserves, even shopping malls — wherever there is a small community of oak trees. It is likely that the most isolated populations will be in urban areas such as these. Any information will help, even if there is only one bird, as one bird in an area will give me an idea of how far they are dispersing and help me in finding the main population. Please send to:

Corinna Lu  
Department of Geography  
1255 Bunche Hall, UCLA  
Los Angeles, CA 90024. ✉  
Pavlick, B. M., P. C. Muick,  
S. Johnson, and M. Popper, 1991,  
Oaks of California, *Los Olivos:*  
Cachuma Press, Inc.



# CONSERVATION CONVERSATION

Jon Winter, Wildlife Biologist

## The GATT Agreements and California's Wildlife

**T**he full impact of the GATT agreements will not be felt or completely understood for several years, but there may be some hidden and welcome benefits for California's wildlife that has been overlooked in all of the discussion of side agreements, tariff reductions and improved global commerce.

The Japanese government has been enforcing tariffs on imported rice for decades to protect its domestic rice farmers from competition on the world market. This egregious policy, which protects only a small segment of the Japanese economy, has resulted in Japanese consumers paying seven to ten times more for rice in their domestic markets.

The trade barrier, which became a major point in the GATT discussions in Uruguay, was resolved in December when Japan agreed to open its domestic market to a small quantity of foreign rice. The largest source of foreign rice that will benefit by the relaxed tariffs will come from California's rice industry because California largely grows a variety of rice favored by the Japanese consumer. This policy signals a major change in Japan's attitude toward trade barriers\* and harbors some significant benefits for California's wildlife. This may seem like a rather disconnected leap in

logic, but consider the following:

It has been estimated that 95 percent of the four million acres of California's historic wetlands have been destroyed or seriously modified within the last 100 years. Rice fields in the Central Valley of California have enormous significance to bird populations that winter and breed in California because the rice fields provide a viable substitute for natural wetlands that waterfowl and other wetland-dependent species need to maintain their populations. Equally important is the fact that the waste grain left after the rice harvest is an important source of food for a large number of these species. The rice farmer also benefits by receiving large amounts of free fertilizer left behind in the droppings of these feeding flocks.

In addition to the 26 species of waterfowl using the Central Valley on an annual basis, there are at least 51 species of wetland-dependent birds such as shorebirds, egrets, herons, gulls, terns, ibis, cormorants, pelicans, grebes, loons, moorhens and rails that regularly utilize rice wetlands during their annual cycle. Recent research by the Point Reyes Bird Observatory has indicated that as many as 230,000 shorebirds currently are using the Central Valley. The total wetland bird population using the Valley has been estimated to be be-

tween 10 and 12 million. Whatever the true figure, one fact is clear; the Central Valley is home to an enormous number of wetland-dependent birds. We can only guess what the ancestral populations were, but it is certain that major declines have taken place and continue to do so. For example, winter waterfowl numbers have declined by 27 percent in California since 1955, a fact that can be largely traced to the loss of wetland habitats.

Without rice farming in the Central Valley, wetland habitats would be reduced by as much as 45 percent. Such a loss would have a disastrous effect on waterfowl and other wetland bird populations.

But what does this have to do with the GATT agreements? Recent evidence indicates that the physical condition of ducks when they leave their wintering grounds has a direct bearing on their breeding success. Part of this physical condition is related to availability of food resources on their wintering grounds and migratory stopover areas. A similar case can be argued for other species as well. A weak market for rice can translate into a smaller land base under rice cultivation which in turn reduces the amount of wetland habitat and the accompanying food resources available to waterfowl and the host of other wetland-dependent birds using the Central Valley. Taken to a worst case scenario, a weak rice market could easily drive farmers out of business or into farming other crop types that have little or no value for wildlife. There is already too much agricultural land being bought by



land speculators and held until development interests drive up the market value of the land. Once the land has been developed, it can never be returned to a better use and wildlife suffers. Hence, the GATT agreements are linked, in part, to an improved rice market, which in turn is linked to a better outlook for the vast host of wetland-dependent birds that pass through our borders each year.

As we approach a new millennium, this planet we call Earth has become a small community of nations. Our future, and the commonality of our interests, will no doubt bond us ever more tightly to the realization that we now live in a global community. 🌿

\* Informed sources in the rice industry have stated that it is unlikely the recent trade dispute between the United States and Japan will affect the GATT agreements.



### 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:

LAAS Reservations  
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 Wednesdays from noon to 4:00 P.M. to answer questions about field trips. Our office staff is also available Tuesday through Saturday for most reservation services.

## FIELD TRIPS

*Continued from page 8*

**Saturday, May 14 — Butterbredt Springs — Lizards.** L.A. Zoo herpetologist and LAAS member **Harvey Fischer** will lead our search for Desert Horned, California Whiptail, Leopard, Collared, Zebra-tailed, Desert Spiny and other lizards in Jawbone Canyon. We will briefly visit Butterbredt Springs. Meet at 8:00 A.M. at the intersection of Jawbone Canyon Rd. and Hwy 14. Take Hwy 14 past Mojave and continue N on Hwy 14 about 17 miles to Jawbone Canyon Rd. on the west side. Meet 100 yds. along at the message board on the left. Anticipate heat, thirst, hunger and rockhopping. Red Rock Canyon State Park five miles north is good for camping. About a two hour drive from L.A. Sign up by phone with LAAS.

**Sunday, May 15 — San Gabriel Mountains.** Leader **David Koepfel**. Leave from entrance of Charlton Flat picnic grounds at 7:30 A.M. Likely spots along Angeles Crest Hwy. for our full day of mountain birding include Chilao, Buckhorn, Dawson Saddle, Grassy Hollow and Arches. The drive to Charlton Flats along Angeles Crest is about one hour from La Cañada.

🚤 **Saturday, May 21 — From San Pedro on the R.V. Vantuna,** 6:00 A.M. — 6:00 P.M. Santa Barbara Island and the Osborne Bank. Leaders **Kimball Garrett** and **Barney Schlinger**. Fee: \$37

**Saturday, May 21 — Santa Anita Canyon.** **Irwin Woldman** will lead this four-mile moderately strenuous walk along the forested creek bottom and chaparral hillsides leading to the falls at the top of the canyon. Dipper resident; Pygmy Owl possible. Take the 210 Fwy toward Arcadia. Take the Santa Ana Ave. offramp N to the parking lot at the end. Meet at 7:30 A.M. at the trailhead at the bottom of the parking lot. Pack a lunch and water.

🚤 **Friday Night, June 3 —** From Ventura on the *M.V. Vanguard*. This 30-hour trip departs at 10:00 P.M. Reserve with LAAS. Leaders **Richard Webster** and **Mitch Heindel**.

**Saturday and Sunday, June 11 and 12 — Yosemite.** Leader **Louis Tucker**. We'll concentrate on Goshawk, Pileated and Black-backed Woodpeckers, Pine Grosbeak, Great Grey Owl, Blue Grouse, etc. Trip ends Sunday afternoon in Owens Valley. Strict silence enforced during owl watch. Bring Saturday night sack dinner. Meet at 7:30 A.M. in the Mariposa Grove parking lot just E of Yosemite's south entrance. Suggest staying in Oakhurst area south of park Friday night. We will plan to reserve sufficient campsites for the group for Saturday night at Crane Flat. Yosemite campsites on sale April 15 through Mistix — (800) 444-7275. Participation limited to 13. Reserve with SASE and \$20 to LAAS for itinerary and lodging information.

**Sunday, June 12 — LAAS Annual Picnic.** See Page 8.

**Friday to Monday, June 24 to 27 — Southern Sierra Weekend** with **Bob Barnes**. **Friday:** Great Basin, Eastern Sierras and Troy Meadows. **Saturday:** Kern River Preserve and Giant Sequoias. **Sunday:** Kern River Preserve, Butterbredt Springs, Lake Isabella and Greenhorn Mountains for day and night birds. **Monday:** Giant Sequoias and Western Divide. Probable 130 species in two days; 160 over four days. Hopeful-to-likely species include Evening Grosbeak, Red Crossbill, Calliope Hummingbird, Wood Duck, Pileated Woodpecker, Goshawk, Yellow-billed Cuckoo and Willow, Grey, Hammond's and Brown-crested Flycatchers. Some night birding with seven owls and Poorwill in the area. Limited participation. Fee: \$11 for each day you sign up (\$44 for four days). Reserve with SASE to LAAS for trip and lodging information per field trip policy. 🌿

# ANNUAL PICNIC

EVERYONE IS INVITED

**Sunday, June 12, 1994**

Charlton Flat Picnic Area  
in the beautiful  
San Gabriel Mountains

8:00 A.M. Bird Walk.  
Breeding Bird Atlas Workshop  
held by Kimball Garrett and  
Fred Heath.

Bring your lunch.  
LAAS supplies drinks.

# EVENING MEETING

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

**May 10, 1994**

**Herb Clarke**  
*Birding the Southern Sphere*

**J**oin one of Southern California's premiere wildlife photographers on an illustrated trip from the tip of the neotropics to the tip of the Ethiopian biogeographic region.

**June 14, 1994**

**Jared M. Diamond, Professor of Physiology, UCLA**  
*What New Guinea People Know About  
New Guinea Birds*

# F I E L D T R I P S

**B**efore setting out on any field trip, **please 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.

↓ Denotes Pelagic Trips

**Sunday, May 1 — Topanga State Park.** **Gerry Haigh** will lead participants through this diverse coastal mountain area spared by last fall's fires. An ideal trip for a beginning birder or someone new in the area. A botanist is usually present. 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 at 8:00 A.M. in the parking lot of Trippet Ranch. \$5 parking fee.

**Saturday, May 7 — Van Norman Reservoir.** Leader **Dustin Alcalá**. Riparian and grassland habitat surround the reservoir and adjacent ponds. Migration should be in full swing, and breeding birds will be singing. Take the 405 Fwy N to the Rinaldi offramp just S of the 5 Fwy interchange. Go W on Rinaldi about

a mile to the front gate on the right (N) side. Meet at 7:30 A.M. in the lot inside the gate on the left. We will carpool from there and stop about 1:00 P.M. Restrooms on-site.

**Sunday, May 8 — Whittier Narrows Regional Park.** Join ranger **Ray Jillson** to see songbirds, migrants, breeding raptors and others. A population of cardinals is resident. Meet at 8:00 A.M. at the Nature Center, 1000 Durfee Ave. Take the 60 Fwy to South El Monte, just W of the 605 Fwy, taking the Peck Dr. exit S. Take the offramp onto Durfee Ave. heading W (right), and turn left into the Nature Center.

**Saturday, May 14 — Chatsworth Reservoir.** Leader **Dustin Alcalá**. Grassland/oak scrub habitat with a large body of water. Migrants should be prevalent, and breeding birds will be singing. Take the 405 Fwy N to Roscoe Blvd. and head W to Fallbrook Ave. Take this N to the DWP entrance at the end. Meet at 7:30 A.M. at the gate. Finish up early afternoon. Bring lunch and water. No restrooms.

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*Continued on page 7*