

# WESTERN TANAGER

A detailed black and white woodcut-style illustration of a Western Tanager. The bird is shown in flight, its wings spread, with a bright orange-red patch on its wing. It has a black cap, a white patch on its wing, and a white belly. A small sprig of pine branches is perched on its back.

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*Original Pen and Ink Art by Kimball L. Garrett*

## SHASTA COUNTY'S FIRST *Ovenbird*

by Stuart Keith

I have to give Muffie, our 13-year-old bichon frise, the credit. She was up early and barking for her morning walk; she had missed it the day before because of the rain.

It was cool and damp but fresh when we left the house, with that earthy smell that comes after rain. The local platoon of Bushtits was already at work in the live oak by the garage. Our Ash-throated Flycatcher greeted us from the top of a pine — a pair comes every year.

As we walked down the drive I noticed a number of Orange-crowned Warblers singing; normally this time of year there's just the one that nests near the house. Then a Pacific-slope Flycatcher called, even more out of place — they're long gone by now. "I guess the storm brought in a few birds," I thought to myself. From my right came the "beez" of a gnatcatcher; then a dot flew across the road closely followed by a long tail which flashed white as it landed. Somewhere ahead in the bush an Ovenbird sang. The "puweet" of a Hutton's Vireo...

WAYDASECOND! An *Ovenbird*? Yes, it sang again. And again. "Holy \*!#t" I said and hurried down to the end of the drive. Unfortunately the singer was in thick woods across the lane, separated from me by a barbed-wired fence. I don't like to trespass, so I tried squeaking. Back East every properly trained *Ovenbird* responds instantly to squeaking, but this one did not. Perhaps I have developed a California accent that it didn't recognize. All I could see was an occasional glimpse of a warbler-sized something flitting in the undergrowth.

I took Muffie home and while having breakfast got out "The Bible" — Arnold Small's new book on California birds. In northern California, *Ovenbirds* occur on the coast (like all the good birds), mainly on the Farallons (thanks!), and are very rare as far north as Humboldt County. There are no interior records north of Yosemite and the Mono Basin. This bird was *way* out of range.

I hurried back down but was greeted by silence. I had to tear myself away to do some errands, and on my return spent an hour sneaking around my property, 10 acres of dry foothill woodland with digger pines, live and nonlive oaks and tall manzanita, with a flourishing understory of poison oak. Nothing.

I emerged onto the land, and... "teacher-teacher-teacher" right from where it had been singing four hours earlier (actually, *Ovenbirds* don't say "TEACH-er," they say "ti-CHAA," the books are misleading). Again it came, from a little gully at the base of an oak, "ti-CHAA, ti-CHAA, ti-CHAA, ti-CHAA." No movement at all.

Even though I still hadn't seen the bird, I figured it was time to call some people. Redding has a very keen group of Shasta County birders, and most of the time the county list is the only game in town. Of course we love to bird the whole of California, but to drive from Redding to the Tijuana River is like going from New York to Chicago. Redding birders usually head for Point Reyes or Humboldt County, but twisting through the mountains on Route 299, dodging logging trucks, wastes three hours before you even reach the coast to start looking for the wagtail that left the night before.

Luckily for birders, Shasta County is a peculiar shape that includes the wetlands of the Fall River area as well as the bare slopes and pine forests of Mt. Lassen where we get Grey-crowned Rosy Finch and Black-backed Woodpecker. Three years ago Wintu Audubon published a county list of 274 species. Since then we've added quite a few and are on our way to 300.

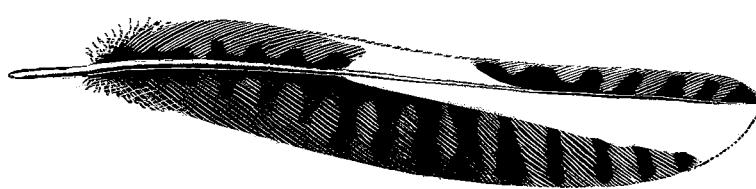
The Central Valley is thought of as pretty much a birding desert (at

least compared to the coast), and it's a real challenge to squeeze out new birds, but it's fun. The reigning champion, Mr. Shasta County, is former Wintu president Bill Von der Mehden, with an amazing 268 species (as of February 1 of this year). Today the county is probably covered most persistently by Red Modeen, a retired naval officer, and his wife Nancy, who spend half their time birding and the other half fishing — what an ideal retirement! We are also lucky to have Bob and Carol Yutzy, known to many birders because they ran the Nature Conservancy's Ramsey Canyon Preserve (better known as "Mile Hi") in Arizona in 1976-77. Bob was also Director of Education at Point Reyes Bird Observatory in 1981-82. Bruce Deuel, Associate Wildlife Officer in the California Dept. of Fish and Game, is another keen birder. I called all of them and they agreed to spread the word. Bob was with some clients, but I told his secretary it was "very urgent" that he call me.

Red and Bruce were the first to arrive. The bird sang but remained hidden. We decided to wait for Bill before playing the tape; birds become inured to a tape if you play it too often. Bill was soon with us, and Red aimed his recorder into the dense oaks. Flip! Up it came; we had finally gotten its attention. It hopped around about 20 feet up in a live oak right by the fence, displaying its spotted under parts. Not the usual view of an *Ovenbird*; more often you see a brown bird walking away from you on the forest floor. It tilted its head to show us the crown stripes and then retreated into the bush.

Two more couples arrived, the Yutzys and Bruce's daughter Susan with her husband Robert Holquist. By now it was mid-afternoon and the sun had come out; not the best time for birds to sing. My wife

John Schmitt



Sallyann came down with some iced tea for the tense watchers. The bird would give an occasional burst. We spread out along the road, but even with all those pairs of keen eyes we still couldn't catch a glimpse of it.

It was time to give the tape another shot. I had gone up to the house and gotten the Borror/Gunn *Warblers of North America* tape which has five different Ovenbird songs. I started playing, and part-way through Bob motioned me to stop. The bird had answered back. It sang, but remained in place. Birds can be very stubborn that way. More peering, kneeling, sitting, stretching. Then it sang from some manzanita a few yards up the road. It's hard to see a bird in leafy oaks, try finding one in manzanita. This bird didn't play by the rules; it refused to walk on the ground where everyone could have a proper look. It definitely needed some lessons in birdmanship; not watcher-friendly, no manners at all.

The word had been well spread, and more birders arrived. Some of them, like Bruce Deuel, are "in the business" — John Coon is a Realty Specialist for the Bureau of Land Management; Paula Crumpton and current Wintu president Bill Oliver are with the U.S. Forest Service (Paula is Forestry Wildlife Biologist for Shasta-Trinity National Forest, and Bill is Project Leader for the Pacific Southwest Research Station). More cars — George Horn, Randy and Jackie Vanorden, and finally my dentist Dennis Holmes (who makes a point of not seeing patients on Fridays during migration time) and his office manager Karen Meyer.

The neighbors drove slowly by on their way home from work, wondering what was going on; I filled them in later. I live on a country lane with only five houses; it dead-ends halfway up the hill. Never before had there been so many vehicles on that lane at the same time. But it was all to no avail. The bird never sang again that evening. It was a hard-luck story for poor Nancy Modeen, who had been out shopping when Red got the call from me. He

decided not to wait, and left her a note. She arrived too late. As they say, that's birding. And she was not the only unhappy camper.

The next morning was wet again. Bob and Carol and Dennis came over; Carol picked up a bit of song through her Sonic Super Ear somewhere down by the seasonal creek that runs through my property. But that was the last of the Shasta County Ovenbird. We spent an hour walking through the soaking brush, but in vain. I checked the area at regular intervals during the day, and John Coon came back that evening for a couple of hours to be met only by silence.

Was our visitor blown inland by the freakish June storm, or did it make its way up the Central Valley? We'll never know. June is vagrant time. On June 7, 1986, a Chestnut-sided Warbler came singing into Bill Von der Mehden's garden; the Ovenbird arrived on June 15, 1995, and left the next day.

That was a state bird for me. The last Ovenbird I chased was in the San Francisco Zoo two years ago, but it eluded me among the cages. Very satisfying to get a state bird in one's own yard. I pulled that stunt off three times in my New Jersey garden — with Mourning Warbler, Pine Grosbeak and Common Redpoll — but never expected to do so in Redding. On the other hand... the Yutzys did have a full-breeding plumage Harris' Sparrow in their yard one spring, and a Costa's Hummingbird has reached their feeders. What will turn up next? That's what keeps the game exciting. ■

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*Stuart Keith is a Research Associate of the Department of Ornithology at the American Museum of Natural History. His specialty is Africa and the Malagasy region. He is a co-editor of the multi-volume series The Birds of Africa. He was a founding director of the American Birding Association and served as its first president. He currently lives in Shasta County, California.*

## At-Home Action for the Environment

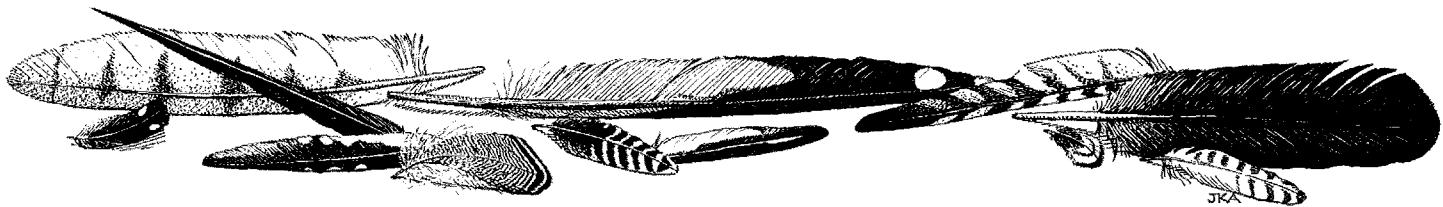
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# A CLOSER LOOK

by Kimball L. Garrett

If you don't recognize the bird in the accompanying photograph, don't feel bad. Nobody should be expected to identify with confidence a single fuzzy, harshly lit photograph of an infamous *Empidonax* flycatcher (and you'd probably be foolish to try). Even if the photograph were up to the standards of any of our well-known local bird photography experts, I doubt it would be identifiable beyond a reasonable doubt. For we are dealing with a visual identification problem that remains essentially unsolved.

Experienced birders have learned that *Empidonax* identification is not as difficult as long advertised. By applying knowledge of vocalizations, plumage, structure, behavior and timing of migration and molt, a careful observer can correctly name most (but certainly not all) *Empidonax* flycatchers encountered in the field. We've come a long way from the days when identification of these little flycatchers was considered possible only for singing birds on the breeding grounds. Eventually, almost all *Empidonax* encountered in the field will call, and these simple notes are immensely useful for field identification. The notoriously similar Hammond's and Dusky flycatchers, for example, have utterly different call notes ("peep" and "whit," respectively). (Duskies, on the other hand, have a call almost identical to that of the Gray Flycatchers, but those two species are not difficult to tell on structural and behavioral characters.) The daunting Willow vs. Alder flycatcher problem is aided by the fact that these species, morphologically almost identical, have distinctly different call notes.

## Cordilleran Flycatcher

The field identification of Pacific-slope and Cordilleran flycatchers in the field has yet to be mastered by any (but the most foolish) observers. Only recently "split," these species essentially form a coastal/interior pair that overlaps very locally in northernmost California. Cordillerans breed locally in California near the Nevada border from the White Mountains north to the Warner Mountains of Modoc Co. (and westward into Siskiyou Co.). The Pacific-slope Flycatcher is a familiar breeding bird in shaded woodlands over much of California west of the deserts.

The two species are usually separable by differences in the male's familiar upslurred call. Pacific-slopes give a sharply upslurred "psew-eeeet?", whereas Cordillerans give a distinctly two-parted "whee-seeet!" (the second note higher). Both species also give a simple "seet" note which, at least from my

*Cordilleran Flycatcher, Hualapai Mountains, Mohave Co., Arizona,  
29 May 1995*



Kimball L. Garrett

limited experience, sounds stronger and richer in Cordilleran. But any differences in this "seet" call are subtle ones of quality, which doesn't bode well for anyone out there looking for migrant Cordillerans in a vast sea of migrating Pacific-slopes.

Do Cordilleran Flycatchers pass through southern California? Probably they do, but only rarely. Their main routes of travel undoubtedly lie to the east of California, and they may move mostly through montane areas. Even in Arizona, migrant Cordillerans are few and far between. One accessible place to study breeding Cordillerans is in groves of aspens and Douglas-firs along the trails above Hualapai Mountain Park, just southeast of Kingman, Arizona. These extensive montane forests (which also host Red-faced and Grace's warblers, Painted Redstarts, Whip-poor-wills, Zone-tailed Hawks, "Red-backed" Juncos and many other mountain birds) are readily accessible by a good paved road and are only an hour's drive from Needles!

Watch and listen to your local Pacific-slope Flycatchers carefully, then travel to Arizona (or elsewhere) and get familiar with Cordillerans. You still won't be able to identify silent migrants, but you'll be better grounded in the complexity of the problem and might help work out some consistent, detectable differences in call notes given by migrants.

# West is North and North is East (And Never the Twain Shall Meet)

by Glenn Cunningham

**M**ost people know that the Pacific Ocean lies west of California. But southern Californians should also know that the coastline of our state is not a straight north-south line but bends sharply to the east at Point Conception, continuing easterly for over 100 miles to Santa Monica Bay where it begins to curve gently to the south — a curve interrupted by the Palos Verdes Peninsula.

We in the Northern Hemisphere have an understandable, and somewhat excusable, tendency to think in terms of "up north" and "down south." Locally, up the coast (that is, on the way to San Francisco) is north; anyplace in the opposite direction (on the way to San Diego) is south. Simple and easy, but untrue to much of southern California. Residents of Pismo Beach and San Francisco do look west to the Pacific, but those in Santa Barbara, Malibu and Long Beach much face south to see the ocean.

This conspicuous bend of the coastline follows the trend of the region's mountain ranges — indeed, is attributable to the same geologic history. The almost unbroken chain comprising the Santa Ynez, San Gabriel and San Bernardino Mountains, stretching west to east from Santa Barbara County into San Bernardino County (known to geographers and geologists as the Transverse Ranges) is one of few in North America that does not trend north-south. Paralleling it are the Santa Monica Mountains and their partially submerged western extension visible only as the Santa Barbara Group of the Channel Islands.

But all of this notwithstanding, many local residents persist in speaking of traveling west along our coast as traveling north, and hence, turning right from that course as turning east, a confusion of terms that is nothing short of painful to us

geographers.

During the 1994 Topanga-Malibu fires such confusion was rampant. Fire officials usually took care to describe positions correctly. But residents and some commentators often employed contradictory terms as they attempted to spot themselves or report movement of the fire or even traffic on Pacific Coast Highway.

We frequently heard such comments as, "I am talking to a fire official about one and a half miles south of Malibu Pier," which would place the conversants in rather deep Pacific water. Or, "The fire is threatening to jump to the south side of Topanga Canyon." The Canyon runs north to south — it has no south side. Or, "Traffic is at a standstill from Malibu Lagoon on the north to Big Rock on the south." Malibu Lagoon is actually a bit farther south than is Big Rock — not a great deal — but it certainly is not north.

More recently, the host of a popular TV program, describing the trip to the locale of the show, stated, "We headed north on the 101 then at Ventura turned east to Santa Paula." Similar statements are common, but in truth Ventura is more than 60 miles farther west than Los Angeles but only about 13 miles farther north.

Perhaps it is time to initiate a program of reorienting the local population to create an understanding that some of our coast does extend east and west, and that "up" and "down" the coast does not alter the cardinal points of the compass. ■

*Reprinted from FOG HORN, a publication of the University of California, Los Angeles, Friends of Geography. Glenn Cunningham is a retired professor of geography and volunteers as librarian at Audubon House on Thursdays.*

## WESTERN TANAGER

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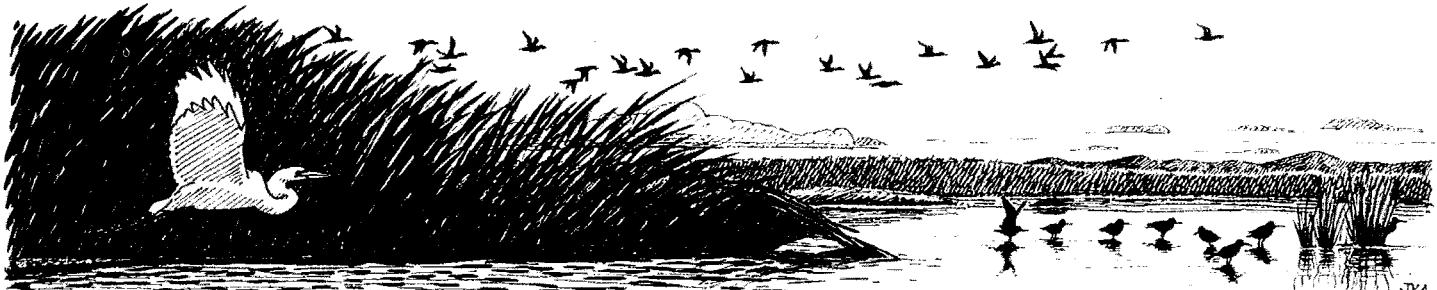
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# CONSERVATION CONVERSATION

by Sandy Wohlgemuth

**P**erhaps it's time to look back and see where we came from. How did the concept of "The Environment" appear on the world stage 30 or 40 years ago when it hardly existed before? World War II and the decade that followed brought an enormous explosion of technology, especially in chemistry. New industrial plants appeared, making a bewildering assortment of plastics, drugs, lubricants, fertilizers and pesticides. During the war, a new use for an old chemical was discovered that miraculously combatted diseases like malaria and typhus. DDT killed mosquitoes and lice and other vectors that carried the plagues that in previous wars were as lethal to armies as weapons. Millions of lives were saved.

After the war, DDT became the pesticide of choice for the control of insects that fed on our agricultural bounty. Clouds of DDT were spread on fields and orchards by light planes. The chemical industry said it was harmless to people and the U.S. Department of Agriculture agreed. Soon it was used in towns and cities to kill garden pests and common mosquitoes. Like garbage trucks, municipal vehicles would methodically go up and down streets spraying trees and yards with abandon. By 1955, 600 million pounds of DDT a year were being used in the United States. It was a highly successful operation. Farm production boomed, aphids on the roses were laid low and the chemical folks were happy.

In the late '50s, a wildlife sanctuary in New England was sprayed with DDT and a short time later the manager noticed that many birds

were dead or dying. Horrified, she told her friend Rachel Carson about it. Rachel Carson was a biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service who had become the chief science writer for the agency and was already aware of some of the effects of DDT on birds. The flagrant sanctuary kill so disturbed her that she decided to write a book about the effect of man upon the natural world. This was virgin ground. There were isolated studies in the scientific literature but no one seems to have grasped the big picture and its dreadful potential. And Carson knew she must build an impeccable case against the overuse of pesticides. Dead birds were only a warning, much more was at stake: the balance of nature, the interrelatedness of all life and the ultimate fate of the human race. It took her four years, reading countless documents, talking to colleagues, slowly and painfully creating a body of evidence that could not be questioned.

She had written *The Sea Around Us*, a lovely poetic invocation of the wonders of life in the oceans while presenting the reader with a lucid explanation of tides and whales, coral reefs and grunion. When she approached her publisher, Houghton-Mifflin, with the new, unfinished manuscript of *Silent Spring*, it was eagerly accepted. When it was completed, publication was to be in the fall of 1962. The *New Yorker* magazine printed three extensive excerpts in June — and all hell broke loose. The chemical and agribusiness industries denounced it as faulty science written by an obscure woman who didn't even have a Ph.D. One of the larg-

est chemical companies wrote that she was an agent of sinister forces, probably communist. Opponents threatened to sue the *New Yorker* and the publisher, attempting to actually prevent publication. The industries set aside a quarter of a million dollars to fight the book. Nasty stories were planted in newspapers and magazines. Derogatory speeches by white-smocked authorities were made coast-to-coast at meetings and on television. Rachel Carson was grilled before a congressional committee and appeared on "CBS Reports" with Eric Severeid. She was ill with cancer — and would die in two years — but she had guts. When her opponents sneered at her talk of the web of life she answered, "My adversaries seem to believe that when man came along the balance of nature was repealed. You might as well repeal the law of gravity."

The upshot of the massive attacks was an amazing avalanche of sales of *Silent Spring*. It appeared at the top of the *New York Times* bestseller list for 86 consecutive weeks! It was a Book-of-the-Month Club prime choice, going into many printings. This was not a fad. It seemed to fill a void in the education of America. People were moved and angered by the book. They were suddenly made aware of their own heritage they had taken for granted or perhaps didn't even realize was theirs.

*Silent Spring* was a turning point in American thought, and it was the dawn of the environmental movement. Carson's searing story of the despoliation of our rivers, forests, oceans, air, drinking water and

wildlife struck home. Rachel Carson, a small, quiet-spoken, obscure federal worker, became a genuine revolutionary. An entire generation of men and women in the general population and in the halls of government were carried away by the passion and common sense of her argument. The book was translated into 22 languages and became the nucleus of the international "Green" movement. It is still decidedly in print and widely read.

The fruits of Rachel Carson's struggle ripened in the early '70s when Congress passed the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, National Environmental Policy Act, toxic waste and pesticide laws and Endangered Species Act. The counter-revolutionaries in Congress are trying to repeal "Silent Spring." They have been screaming for years about regulations that protect the health and welfare of people and nature and now claim a mandate from the 1984 election to destroy the barriers to their greed. They and their giant industry sponsors are as vindictive as the mean-spirited adversaries of Rachel Carson. If they can't wipe out regulations, they vote to cut the money to the enforcement agencies; the already underfunded Environmental Protection Agency's budget has been cut by one-third. Poor loser Jerry Lewis who fought the Desert Protection Act passed this year has reduced the funding for the act from \$600,000 to \$1. And so it goes. David Broder, a respected moderate columnist wrote in the *Washington Post*, "The Republicans, as far as anyone can tell, are preparing to take the country on the greatest leap backward in American history." All the opinion polls show that the public still wants to see the environment preserved. Can we hope that the public will not let this happen, that the law of gravity will not be repealed? ■

## In Praise of Ravens

by Charles Hood

Especially when one arcs French curves  
then collapses into a black rag  
tumbling through the flock of swallows,  
pulling out to plane along landfill's  
creosote margins. The Shoshones  
called him *Hih*, Papago just "black guy,"  
vulture's little brother. If you watch  
one walk it's like a child keeping  
a big coat out of the mud, coattails  
not quite making it, while the bill is  
medieval pike tip, eyes black, feet black,  
named by Saxons in a hawked spit of  
caw sound, hunger bird, breaker of clams  
on asphalt, eater of roe, voles, flies,  
roadkilled coachwhips, coyote squash, the  
eggs of teal and terns, red sorghum heads.  
When sticks fall from his nest he never  
picks them up; if the wind keened he laughs  
like a brick breaking in four pieces.  
Lives in places like Aklavik, Snag,  
Tikal, the Winnemucca Basin.  
In the Bible God liked him, Noah  
did not. "Sneaky bastard" to Haidas.  
Hunts in packs. Goitered. Baited out in  
the Panhandle when the wolves were killed  
to make room for pickups yet still lord  
of telephone poles elsewhere, going  
*kock, kock, kock* over Russian thistle  
and lost hubcaps, waiting for the rain  
to scumble the air with alfalfa,  
waiting for the drowned pullets floods bring.  
Hangs with kestrels over locust fields.  
Patient under scupper and tower.  
Sneak thieves, bad neighbors, denizens of  
salt pans, fens, dumps — and even so,  
they guarded the relics of St. Vincent,  
once fed Elija barley and figs.  
They praise the horizon by using it,  
going from cloud to noon like hawks  
or peregrine angels, and when the light  
is right they can row white with each  
wing beat, flashing silver as they cut  
tinsel from the sun, beating home.



Herb Clarke

David Ricalde and Hank Brodkin



Green Honeycreeper

## SELVA SUR: The Southern Forest – a Vision of the Future

by Hank Brodkin

**T**he southeastern Peruvian provinces of Cusco and Madre De Dios contain some of the most threatened and most pristine wild country left in South America. Abra Malaga, Macchu Picchu, Tambopata and the Manu — place names that leave the naturalist salivating — are in grave danger.

The polylepis forests, ancient woodlands in the puna of the high Andes that are home to many unique species, are being cut... and not only by substance farmers of these highlands. Like the mesquite of our own West, polylepis is very hard, dense and hot burning which makes it perfect to fuel the pizza ovens in the tourist capital of Cusco.

The temperate and subtropical forests on the eastern slopes of the Andes have always been in danger. Abra Malaga near Ollentaytambo once contained roadside polylepis stands and the highest temperate forest on the continent. The polylepis that is left involves a long hike at high altitudes, and the famous temperate forest is practically gone.

The natural forests around Macchu Picchu are rapidly disap-

pearing, even though this is a sanctuary. The trees around the ruins themselves have been cut back allowing growth of cusquea bamboo to form impenetrable thickets (fine for Inca Wrens and Azara's Spinetails, but not so fine for many threatened forest species). Also the trees along the famous Inca Trail are being cut for firewood for the unbelievably large number of trekkers along this route, a small-scale version of what is happening in Nepal. The Urubamba River is the open sewer for Cusco (think of this before going on that rafting trip!), and the spectacular gorge of the Urubamba has been visually polluted by high tension power lines spoiling the view from the train to the ruins.

The Spectacled Bear, symbol of the Macchu Picchu Sanctuary, will surely be wiped out here, being squeezed out of habitat.

In better shape is the Manu Biosphere. Spreading from the crest of the Andes down through the Amazon lowlands — connected to the outside world only by a one-way dirt road, a couple of rivers and an air-strip — this area of near-pristine

wilderness has in recent years been made accessible to the tourist along special Cultural and Reserved Zones on its southern edge. Mercifully the larger Manu National Park is off limits to the tourist. This Delaware-sized wilderness is home to widely scattered settlements of indigenous peoples and hopefully will remain closed to all development. For some special places it is enough just to know they are there. There is still enough area for the traveler to experience Spectacled Bears, Jaguar and other cats, Giant Otters, Cocks-of-the-rock, Razor-billed Curassow and 800 to 1,000 other bird species. However, these near-pristine conditions may be short lived. If the schedule has been met, Mobil Oil is already on site — with the usual promises of environmental responsibility — to start looking for oil. Remember eastern Ecuador and the damage done there by the oil companies?

The Tambopata Reserve area down toward the Bolivian border is another area of wilderness lowland rainforest that is desperately trying to be saved. Pressure from gold

miners, lumbering and settlers are pressing in, however.

In response to these threats to the countryside that they love, a small group of concerned Peruvian biologists have formed the nongovernmental organization Selva Sur: The Southern Forest. Donating their time, these dedicated scientists have taken a two-pronged attack concerning these problems. The first chore is to identify problems concerning threats to the environment, point these out to the Peruvian government and suggest remedies for the problems. This includes purchasing key plots of land in sensitive areas.

The second chore they have set for themselves is to train Peruvian students in field procedures. It is their belief that only Peruvians can save Peru.

Daniel Blanco is the director of Selva Sur. Our chief contact with

*Red-and-Green Macaw*



the group is David Ricalde whom we were fortunate in having as a guide on a recent birding trip to the Manu. David can best be described as driven. A native of Cusco where he lives with his wife and son, he has devoted most of his 32 years to this cause. He has a Masters Degree in Conservation from Duke University and has worked with such neotropical experts as Charles Munn and John Terborgh. He also has worked with Al Gentry and Ted Parker — perhaps the two most knowledgeable neotropical biologists who ever lived and whose loss to science through that unfortunate plane crash can not be underestimated.

To put bread on the table, David guides tourists (mostly birders) for Manu Nature Tours. A trip with David is an educational experience. He is well on his way to reaching his goal of learning the calls of 500

birds of the area, and most of his spare time is spent plugged into a tape recorder. Besides the birds, David has a working knowledge of the plants and mammals of these very complicated ecosystems.

When we returned to Cusco after three weeks in the Manu, David had an offer to work as a consultant to the Bolivian government. We find it very hard to believe that he would leave this area of Peru that he loves so much (and in which there is so much he wants to accomplish).

David's current projects include conducting an educational program with the local farmers concerning protection of the endangered polylepis habitat. This he feels is more critical than saving the lowland rainforest. He is initiating a program to invite students from



*Blue-Gray Tanager*

all over the world to do research on Selva Sur land on the eastern slope of the Andes adjoining the Manu. Selva Sur provides the facilities, the students supply their own projects and financing.

He is also involved in an ongoing battle with the authorities at Macchu Picchu to preserve the habitat in the sanctuary around the ruins. And, as mentioned above, he and his fellow Selva Surians are deeply involved in the training of Peruvian biologists to appreciate and protect this unique corner of the world.

If you wish to help Daniel, David and Selva Sur in their efforts, related scientific journals and books are sorely needed. David has turned his library over to Selva Sur. "I'm hardly ever home anyway — and when I am I spend the time with my family," he told me. Used binoculars and other optical equipment are also needed. And of course cash donations are welcomed.

The above-mentioned materials and checks made out to Selva Sur can be sent to: Selva Sur, c/o The Drexel Family Office, 668 Public Ledger Building, Sixth and Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106. The telephone number is (215) 923-3641 (ask for Judy). The fax number is (215) 923-5535.

David Ricalde can best be reached by E-Mail. The address is: [david@acss.org.pe](mailto:david@acss.org.pe)



## COF Drops

### Data From Your Casual Observations

**N**ow that you have been atlasing for one season, you are probably discovering that breeding confirmation is more difficult for some species.

Woodpeckers, for example, can guide you to a nice hole in a tree trunk, and you still cannot be sure there is an active nest. Simply seeing a woodpecker entering a cavity is not enough to confirm it, since woodpeckers use cavities for roosting as well as nesting. The following casual observations show that woodpeckers can be documented as confirmed or probable breeders:

- Jerome Johnson saw a **Downy Woodpecker** nestling sticking its head out of a hole in a tree trunk at Harbor Park (Block TOR6).
- At Malibu Creek State Park (MAL1), Tom Hinnebusch saw a male **Nuttall's Woodpecker** drum and call, attracting a female; courtship followed.
- Sandy Wohlgemuth observed **Northern Flickers** copulating at O'Melveney Park in OAT4.
- A **Downy Woodpecker** excavated a nest and chased away a pair of **Flickers** at Descanso Gardens (PAS3), according to Gayle Hightower. This provided codes B and T for the **Downy** and code P for the **Flicker**.
- Rae Anderson saw two adult **Acorn Woodpeckers** taking food to a nest cavity in Sierra Madre (MTW4).

• Kimball Garrett spotted a foraging male **White-headed Woodpecker** carrying food in its beak off the Angeles Crest Highway west of Cloudburst Summit (WAT1).

What woodpeckers that breed in the county are missing? If four of them do not come to mind, check your Atlas Handbook.

This season, Atlas Central received over 375 casual observation forms (COFs). Not surprisingly, most sightings were in the densely populated areas where most people live and work. All the COFs you have sent in advance the Atlas' goal to achieve complete coverage of the county.

Next season we will ask you to keep sending in those COFs from your neighborhoods, and encourage you to take more notes when you are in the county's more open areas. ■

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*Reprinted from nest notes, the newsletter of the Los Angeles County Breeding Bird Atlas. You can get this newsletter regularly by participating in the Breeding Bird Atlas project. To do so, contact Mark Wimer at (213) 745-2473.*

### COFs RECEIVED BY REGION

Region 1	South Coast	52
Region 2	Santa Monica	
	Mountains	52
Region 3	Los Angeles Basin	146
Region 4	Southeast County	16
Region 5	San Fernando Valley	63
Region 6	San Gabriel	
	Mountains South	72
Region 7	High San Gabriel	
	Mountains	16
Region 8	Santa Clarita	17
Region 9	San Gabriel	
	Mountains North	1
Region 10	Northwest County	2
Region 11	Antelope Valley West	9
Region 12	Antelope Valley East	0
Islands	Catalina and San Clemente	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>All Regions</b>	<b>447</b>

### *Birds of the Season*

will resume in the November issue and will include August sightings.

### Announcing...



#### NATIONAL CONVENTION '96

JUNE 8-12

The American University  
Washington, D.C.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW  
AND BE A PARTICIPANT IN THE  
DIVERSE 1996 CONVENTION  
PROGRAM THAT WILL FEATURE  
POLITICAL ACTION, BIRDS, AND  
SKILLS TRAINING!

#### MOBILE LEARNING LABS

JUNE 12-14

Chesapeake Bay &  
Important Bird Areas in PA

Registration materials available January 1996

**Audubon Convention Office**

**4150 Darley Ave., Suite 5; Boulder CO 80303**

**(303) 499-3622; Fax (303) 499-0286**

## FIELD TRIPS

Continued from page 12

right on Stratford. Meet at 8:00 A.M. in the lot near the fountain at the library entrance. Bird until about 10:00 A.M., then continue to nearby areas. No fee anticipated.

**Sunday, October 15 — Oxnard Plain.** Leader **David Koeppel.** Meet at 7:30 A.M. at the Hueneme sod fields to look over the plovers until 8:15. Next, Oxnard Plain and Sycamore Canyon for warblers and other late song birds. There are usually one or more vagrants seen here. From the 101 Fwy W, take Las Posas Rd. S to Hueneme Rd. W. Meet in front of the Edison building on the N side of Hueneme Rd. just before Casper Rd. and about 1½ miles W of PCH. Bird until 2:00 P.M. (at least). Scopes helpful.

 **Saturday, October 21 —**  
12-hour trip on the *R.V. Vantuna* out of San Pedro to Santa Barbara Island and the Osborne Bank. \$37.

### 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.

**Saturday, October 28 — Sketching Birds in the Field.** Renowned bird artist **John Schmitt** will show eight participants how to render useful bird sketches for field documentation. Spotting scope, folding chair, pencils and sketch pad a must. Bring a book illustrating bird plumage topography. Meet at 8:00 A.M. at the Malibu Lagoon parking lot kiosk. Free parking on Cross Creek Rd. located just W of lagoon bridge. Phone LAAS to register. Limited sign-up.

**Sunday, November 5 — Topanga State Park.** Leader **Gerry Haigh.** Meet at 8:00 A.M. See October 1 write-up for details.

**Sunday, November 12 — Sepulveda Basin Natural Area.** Leader **Steve Ducatman.** Some good birds have shown up here in the past (swans, longspur, Palm Warblers), and the habitat is improving. Sora is quite possible. Take Burbank Blvd. W from the 405 Fwy, turn right onto Woodley Ave. and continue to the Woodley Park entrance on the right. Meet at 8:00 A.M. in the first parking area.

**Sunday, November 12 — Whittier Narrows.** Leader **Ray Jillson.** Meet at 8:00 A.M. See October 8 write-up for details.

 **Saturday, November 18 —**  
8-hour trip on the *R.V. Vantuna* from San Pedro to the Palos Verdes Escarpment and Redondo Canyon. \$25.

 **Friday, November 24 —**  
30-hour trip (10 P.M. Friday to 4 A.M. Sunday) on Island Packer's *M.V. Vanguard*. NW out of Ventura past Point Conception to Arquelle Canyon and W to the California continental shelf with several daylight hours along the shelf. \$250/double bunk, \$145/single bunk.

 **Friday, February 2, 1996 — Deep Water Laysan Albatross Trip.** 30-hour trip (10 P.M. Friday to 4 A.M. Sunday) on Island Packer's *M.V. Vanguard*. NW out of Ventura past Point Conception to Arquelle

Canyon and W to the California continental shelf with several daylight hours along the shelf. \$260/double bunk, \$150/single bunk (breakfast, lunch and dinner are included in the cost).

### BIRDS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

#### SEEN ON PREVIOUS TRIPS:

Black-footed and Laysan albatross  
Leach's Storm-Petrel  
Xantus' Murrelet  
Cassin's and Rhinoceros auklet  
Tufted Puffin

### MARINE MAMMALS

#### SEEN ON PREVIOUS TRIPS:

Blue, Finback, Humpback, Sperm,  
Gray and Baird's Beaked whales  
Orcas  
Northern Right Whale Dolphin  
Risso's Dolphin

 **Sunday, March 10, 1996 —**  
8-hour trip on the *R.V. Vantuna* from San Pedro to the Palos Verdes Escarpment and Redondo Canyon. \$25.

 **Saturday, May 4, 1996 —**  
12-hour trip to Anacapa Island, Santa Rosa Island and through the Santa Rosa Passage to Santa Cruz Island. \$65.

 **Saturday, May 18, 1996 —**  
12-hour trip to Santa Barbara Island and the Osborne Bank. \$40.

 **Saturday, September 14, 1996 —**  
12-hour trip to Santa Barbara Island and the Osborne Bank. \$40.

 **Sunday, October 6, 1996 —**  
12-hour trip to Anacapa Island, Santa Rosa Island and through the Santa Rosa Passage to Santa Cruz Island. \$65.

 **Saturday, October 21, 1996 —**  
12-hour trip to Santa Barbara Island and the Osborne Bank. \$37.

 **Saturday, November 16, 1996 —**  
8-hour trip to the Palos Verdes Escarpment and Redondo Canyon. \$25. 



Jean Brandt

# EVENING MEETING

Meet at 8:00 P.M. in Plummer Park.

Call the Bird Tape for information on possible ID Workshops.

**October 10, 1995**

**Jean Brandt**

**Trinidad and Tobago:  
A Tropical Birding Adventure**

**J**oin us for a visual trip to Asa Wright Nature Center, Caroni Swamp and many other spectacular birding spots. Slides of birds, reptiles and even one rare mammal will whet your interest in visiting these lovely islands.

**November 14, 1995**

To Be Announced

## 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, October 1 — Topanga State Park.** **Gerry Haigh** will lead participants through this diverse coastal mountain area. 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 Rd.

(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, October 7 —**  
An anchor icon is followed by text: 12-hour trip out of Ventura to Anacapa Island, Santa Rosa Island and Santa Cruz Island. Full galley on board. \$60.

**Sunday, October 8 — San Diego Area.** Leader **Nick Freeman**. A good portion of the morning will be spent at Pt. Loma. Some odd birds have been known to pop up here during late migration. Other pos-

sible areas include the Tijuana Marsh and nearby farm fields. Take the 5 Fwy S about three miles past Route 52 to the Clairemont Drive offramp and head W into the small lot adjacent to the Mission Bay Information Center. Meet at 8:00 A.M. E of the kiosk. Bring a lunch. Send \$5 registration fee to LAAS.

**Sunday, October 8 — Whittier Narrows Regional Park.** Join ranger **Ray Jillson** to view resident raptors, waterbirds and songbirds. Take the Peck Dr. exit S off the 60 Fwy in South El Monte (just W of the 605 Fwy). Take the offramp onto Durfee Ave. heading W (right), and turn left into the Nature Center, 1000 Durfee Ave. Meet at 8:00 A.M. \$2 voluntary donation suggested by park.

**Saturday, October 14 — Huntington Library and environs.** Leader **Daniel Cooper**. Wintering warblers, three hummers, mixed sparrow flocks and montane birds expected. Take the 210 Fwy E to the Hill Ave. offramp S and continue to the end. Turn left on Lombardy Rd. and right on Allen. Turn left on Orlando, right on Oxford,

*Continued on page 11*

Los Angeles Audubon Society  
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