



The Phainopepla

Bulletin of the California Audubon Society



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No. 2

The Phainopepla

*I am glossy black with an eye of red,
And a white patch on my wing;
I help build the nest and brood the eggs,
And when brooding I sometimes sing.*

"I am just the happiest bird in the world in spite of the fact that I was not chosen as a candidate in the State Bird Contest. I suppose you wonder why I am so happy and am holding my head high and my crest well up? I don't suppose you could ever guess, so I suppose I shall have to tell you. Well, it is a very simple but very good reason. It is just because the State Audubon Society has chosen me for their emblem and uses my picture on their stamp for their publications. And now they have named their monthly Bulletin after me! Do you wonder that I feel very proud?" and the handsome, glossy black bird raised his crest a little higher and sang his low warbling song. His red eyes looked a little redder and the white wing patches seemed a little larger as he flew out into the air in pursuit of a passing fly.

These beautiful black birds who are summer visitors only in most of their range, are somewhat smaller than a Mocker but long and slender. The male is an iridescent black and the female a dull gray. Both have high crests, red eyes and white wing patches. While they are among our most aristocratic birds, their being found only in the south barred them as State candidates. They are distinctively western, not being found east of the Rockies.

One unique thing about them is that the male is so domestic. They usually appear the last of April, or first of May, and soon after the male may be seen engaged in building the nest. A horizontal crotch, or flat top of limb, is selected and the nest is a shallow, saucer-shaped one, made mostly of plant fiber. It is amusing to see the male bird drive the female away and himself bring material, light in the nest with it and turn and twist about as he shapes it to his liking. Sometimes he sings his low warbling song as he works. As the modest gray female looks on, her mate seems to be saying to her: "My dear, I will save you all this troublesome work, and you need not worry for I am sure it will be to your liking and very comfortable." So he works away until the nest is ready, and even then he is no lazy fellow, for he shares with his mate in keeping the eggs warm, doing his share of the brooding. Very jaunty he looks, and out of place, seated upon the nest. When the eggs are hatched, and there are, perhaps, four little gray birds that look like the mother, the father again does his share of the work.

Phainopeplas, or Silky Flycatchers as they are sometimes called, are very fond of berries, but they also fly about in the air, going in big circles in pursuit of insects. They do not belong to the Flycatcher Family, but have one by themselves, the only other birds resembling them being the Cedar Waxwings, who used to be placed in the same family. However, in their methods of getting insects from the air they are like Flycatchers.

The Phainopepla

Bulletin of the
CALIFORNIA AUDUBON SOCIETY
Organized May 31, 1906
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The objects of the California Audubon Society are to encourage the study of birds, that their economic value to mankind shall be understood; to use all lawful means for their protection and propagation, and to prevent the destruction of wild birds, their nests and eggs. The State Society depends for its support upon the contribution of its members and friends. The present income is inadequate to meet the needs and to carry forward the work with the best results. All friends of the birds are cordially invited to become members of our Society. Our Annual fee is only one dollar; Sustaining, five annually; Patron, twenty-five; Life, ten.

AN IMPORTANT MOVEMENT

At the convention of the Wild Life Conservationists which was held in Seattle, Wash., last August, an important resolution was presented by the Chairman, Dr. T. Gilbert Pearson, and unanimously adopted. It concerned the long-fought-over "Game Refuge Bill," and those present endorsed in principle the provisions of the Norbeck Bill as ap-

proved by the U. S. Senate in May, 1928. This bill is now pending in the lower House of Congress. There was, also, created the "National Committee on Wild Life Legislation," consisting of eleven members to be selected from Game, Fish and Conservation organizations, and interested individuals. This Committee will act as a permanent national committee on Federal Legislation. Our organization is represented by Dr. T. Gilbert Pearson, our National President, who has recently been elected Chairman, with Seth Gordon, of the Isaac Walton League of America, Secretary.

Vote "Yes" State Parks. Amend-
ment No. 4.

JUNIOR AUDUBON CHIRPS

Miss Helen Pratt is the Junior Club Secretary for California, and orders should be sent to her. Junior Club material may be obtained, also any of the National Educational leaflets, at 5 cents each, and any leaflets issued by the California Society.

Talks will be given on request, illustrated with specimens, portraits in color, or stereoptican slides. A small expense fee is expected.

Last year more than 13,000 Junior members were enrolled in California.

Malabar School, Los Angeles, has named its Junior Clubs "The Orioles," "The Lone Eagles," "The Meadowlarks," "The Hummingbirds," "The Mocking Birds," "Malabar Songsters," "Linnets of Malabar," "Song Sparrow Club." This year they have already enrolled for "Audubon Circle No. 1."

Hillside School, Berkeley, has its "Bryant Club."

Lakeport, School, Lake County, enrolled 115 members, Mrs. H. M. Wright, teacher. Winton, Merced County, has a club of 59, with Mrs. Maude Suito. Independence, Inyo County, also has a club, Miss Clara DeWitt, leader. Ducor, Tulare County, enrolled under their teacher, Catherine Berry. Delhi, Merced County, Campfire Girls have a club of 25, Mrs. Florence E. Smith, leader.

Miss Helen Chamberlain, Nature

Study supervisor of Glendale Schools, was a recent visitor to the Junior Audubon office.

..FIELD STUDY OF BIRDS FOR..
TEACHERS

The Saturday morning field study class for teachers starts November 3, 9-11 a. m. Meet at 2451 Ridge View Ave., Eagle Rock, before 9 a. m. Object, the recognition and identification of birds, by appearance, song, and behavior. Registration limited. Phone Miss Pratt for terms. Albany 4723.

OCTOBER CALENDAR

October is an important month in the bird world for it is then that some of the winter visitants are first seen; migrating birds that have nested farther north are passing along on their journey to more southern parts where they are wintering; some summer visitants are still lingering, and the resident birds are many of them singing again after the moulting season. It was my pleasure to hear the little Anna Hummer singing his wheezy song as if his life depended upon it. About the twelfth of the month we had our first general rain, followed by cold for a few days, then lovely spring-like weather. Gnatcatchers, Plain Titmice, Bush-tits, San Diego Wrens, Spurred Towhees, Lutescent and Tolmie warblers, and Hermit Thrushes, besides the common residents, were in my garden. A Ruby Crowned Kinglet appeared on the 14th.

The Western Tanager is reported by Mrs. E. J. Saunders of Whittier as being in her yard as late as October 3rd, the Tanager being minus the red on his head. The Arizona Hooded Oriole was present October 20th, and a Robin on the 19th. Barn swallows were seen flying low over the lagoon at Playa del Rey October 4th by members of the L. A. Audubon. Road-runners were reported from many different localities as being unusually common.

A red-breasted Sapsucker was reported in a Lindsay garden on the 10th.

Notes From the Country

Our Director, Mrs. W. L. B. Hill, of Kelseyville, reports large flocks of migrants on Clear Lake which appeared at the same time as last year. Blue Herons, a solitary Sandpiper, Killdeer, an occasional Gull, and Kingfishers are at edge of lake. A large flock of Coots appeared early in the fall. At Soda Bay, a few miles away, Pelicans and Comorants roost. Few ducks or geese have been seen. Golden-crowned and White-crowned Sparrows about, also Hummingbirds; small finches gone, also Barn Swallows. The following list is reported as about now: many Quail, Red-shafted Flicker, Golden and White-crowned Sparrows, Winter Wren, Song Sparrow, Calif. Jay, Crows, Owls, Slender-billed Nuthatch, Spurred Towhee, California Towhee, Kingfisher, Night Heron, Killdeer, Herring Gulls, Grebes, Coots, Poor-Wills. Linnets, and Turkey Vultures gone. Warblers late in passing but none at this time.

From Frank A. Leach of Diablo come the following notes: Of the birds observed passing through and making only a brief stop were Juncos on Oct. 10; a flock of Cedar Waxwings on the 4th; on the 15th a large number of Audubon Warblers appeared and a few stragglers are still about. Winter Wrens appeared Sept. 21st, Golden-crowned Sparrows on Sept. 22nd, four days later than last year; Hermit Thrushes first seen Oct. 1st. A migrating Sora Rail found dead about the 15th, striking wires the probable cause of death.

The Pasadena Audubon Society recently enjoyed their third bird talk of the season and report the following birds seen in the gardens of the H. E. Huntington estate. Miss Caroline Harris is the general chairman of bird walks committee. Black Phoebe, Audubon Warbler, Calif. Jay, Mockingbird, San Diego Towhee, Song Sparrow, Thrasher, Calif. Woodpeckers, Kingfisher, Red-tailed Hawk, Anna Hummingbird, Brewer Blackbird, Linnets, Gambel, Golden-crowned and Chipping Sparrows, Anthony Towhee, Black-throated gray Warbler, Bushtit, Ruby-

crowned Kinglet and Hermit Thrush.

At Ojai, Oct. 26th, Bluebirds, Juncos and a Robin seen. At Filmore, the 27th, flock of Cedar Waxwings, Red-breasted Sapsucker, and Rock Wren.

BIRDS LISTED BY THE SOUTH-WEST BIRD STUDY CLUB

OCTOBER, 1928

41 Residents

Eared Grebe, Pied Billed Grebe, Western Gull, Farallone Cormorant, Brown Pelican, Virginia Rail, Snowy Plover, Valley Quail, Mourning Dove, Sharp Shinned Hawk, Coopers Hawk, Desert Sparrow Hawk, Burrowing Owl, Belted Kingfisher, Cabanis Woodpecker, Willow Woodpecker, Nuttall Woodpecker, California Woodpecker, Red-shafted Flicker, Anna Hummingbird, Black Phoebe, California Jay, Meadow Lark, House Finch, Willow Goldfinch-Green Backed Goldfinch, Belding Marsh Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Spurred Towhee, Anthony Towhee, Shrike, Hutton

Vireo, Pacific Yellow Throat, Mocking bird, Brown Thrasher, San Diego Wren Western House Wren, Plain Titmouse, Wrentit, Bushtit, Western Gnatcatcher.

31 Winter Visitants

Western Grebe, Parasitic Jaeger, Glaucus Winged Gull, California Gull, Ring Billed Gull, Hiermon Gull, Bonaparte Gull, Forster Tern, Common Tern, White Winged Scoter, Surf Scoter, *Anthony Green Heron, Least Sandpiper, Sanderling, Marbled Godwit, Greater Yellow Legs, Western Willet, Black Bellied Plover, Semi Palmated Plover, Black Turnstone, Savanna Sparrow, Gambel Sparrow, Golden Crowned Sparrow, Thurber Junco, Cedar Waxwing, Townsend Warbler, Dusky Warbler, Audubon Warbler, *Pileolated Warbler, Sierra Creeper, Ruby Crowned Kinglet, Alaska Hermit Thrush.

* Summer visitant, occasional in winter.

2 Migrants

Knot, Hudsonian Curlew.

DIRECTORY

National Assn. Audubon Societies, Dr. T. Gilbert Pearson, Pres., 1974 Broadway, New York City.

California Audubon Society

Lecture. The second Thursday of each month, 7:45 p. m., in the lecture room of the Los Angeles Public Library, a lecture by a good speaker will be given. Free to the public, who are cordially invited.

Nov. 8.—“State Bird Candidates,” illustrated with colored slides, by Mrs. F. T. Birknell.

Field Day, Nov. 23, Griffith Park (Western entrance), 9 a. m. Box lunch.

Los Angeles Audubon

Pres. Mrs. Leonard S. Hall, 117 Wavecrest Ave., Venice. Santa Monica 61679.

Rec. Sec. Mrs. Oliver Edwards.

Meetings. First (Field Day) and third Thursdays. Indoor at State Bldg., Exposition Park, 2 p. m.

Nov. 15, Lecture by Capt. Dudley S. Corlett, “The Gardens of the World,” illustrated with slides.

Pasadena Audubon

Pres. Mr. A. L. Hamilton, 836 North Raymond, Pasadena. Wake. 1872.

Sec. Miss Effie R. Gaylor, 1551 Mar Vista Ave.

Meetings. Last Saturday evening of each month in Public Library Assembly Hall, Pasadena.

Audubon Society of the Pacific

Pres. Dr. Frederick W. D'Evelyn, Phelan Bldg., San Francisco.

Sec. Mrs. Carl Smith, 563 42nd Ave., San Francisco.

Meetings. Second Thursday of each month at 8 p. m., Ferry Bldg, 2nd floor, room 19.

Publish a monthly bulletin, “The Gull.”

Nature Club of Southern California

Chairman Bird Study Section, Mrs. Ada B. Maescher, Union League Bldg., Los Angeles.

Santa Monica Audubon Society

Meetings. First Tuesday of each month, 2:30 p. m. in Committee Room of Santa Monica Public Library. Intensive study of birds.