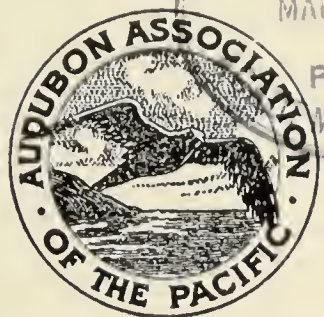


M&O
Serials
QL 671
.G84

THE
MONTHLY



GULL
BULLETIN

VOLUME 27

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF., MARCH, 1945

NUMBER 3

A Winter Record for the House Wren in Berkeley

On January 21, 1945, I found a house wren on the University of California Campus in Berkeley. The bird was in the top of a thicket of ornamental shrubs, just west of the Hearst Mining Building, and allowed me to approach to within ten feet, from which distance I could easily see the unmarked side of the head and the longish tail.

For a long time I have been puzzled by the rareness of this species in the San Francisco Bay region in winter, when it is found regularly in winter sixty miles to the east in the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys. I have seen it in Davis on almost every occasion on which I have been in the field there in suitable habitat in winter; and I have also seen the species in Stockton in January and near Woodland and two miles southeast of Knight's Landing in November. Whatever the factors which limit the winter range of the house wren are, temperature and food are not among them in the Bay area, as the winters are milder and insect food is more abundant near Berkeley than near Davis. The greater humidity and rainfall in the San Francisco Bay region may account for the scarcity of the house wren there in winter as it may well account for its scarcity in the northwest coast belt in summer; or it may be that this species became migratory at a time when the winter climate in central California was entirely unsuitable and has only recently begun to winter this far north. In this case its earlier appearance in the Valley may be due to a greater continuity of suitable habitat or to its being on the main path of migration for this species. It is also possible, although not probable, that its occurrence in the San Francisco Bay region in winter has been overlooked to some extent. In any event, the problem can only be solved by more extensive field work in the areas under consideration.

—ROBERT W. STORER.

Earth's Primal Singers

Song birds are the troubadours of the world, and in their songs are expressed emotions of the heart of man. They should be listened to by the heart, for to it they bring solace, hope and cheer.

Through the roar of storm, stringing silvery notes on shafts of rain, pours the song of a meadowlark. Always ending on a high note of rounded richness, this bird, born of the soil, seems impelled to sing to the world his unquenchable gladness in things as they are. He exults in rain; he glories in departing day. His reper-

toire is varied. I have counted eight distinct songs sung by one lark atop a fence post as the sun went down.

Most individual species of birds have several songs, and calls. There are calls announcing danger; flocking calls; roosting calls; and those of twilight, and most species vocalize in many measures in differing rhythms. Mating songs are the most beautiful and tender notes human ears can hear. They are whisper songs, coming through half closed beaks, differing entirely from the everyday, exuberant songs. A golden, rippling rapture is half breathed to a mate who raptly listens to the sublime tones.

Some birds sing at night, as Nuttall's White Crowned Sparrow, and in the south, the nightingale, intoxicated with the beauty of night, gives his whole being to the glory of song.

The robin, in June, forgets his plebeian winter croak, and at twilight, perching high, breaks into a lovely, lush melody that I call his twilight song. It is a prelude to night, a lovely haunting whisper that day is done.

The Mourning Dove, with impassioned notes seems to express achievement, yet hopeless discontent. The long, vibrant note is uttered only by the male.

Sometimes, suddenly, a shower of music breaks forth, so rapturous that one is afraid to breathe lest the spell be broken. "Contralto cadence of grave desire, tresses of moonlight shot with fire" swell from the throat of the somberly clad mockingbird.

Unforgettable is the day I heard successive singing of three gloriously phrased syllables. Seizing binoculars, I was stunned to see that the sweet singer was a California Shrike, he of the usual raucous squawk and the character of a power politician.

Bird song rises to its sublime triumph in May with the advent of the dawn chorus. What is it that so stirs the souls of birds at the dawn of a new day? At that time their voices are poignant ecstasy. There is a chanting solemnity in their hymn to Apollo, with undertones of joy that cannot be suppressed. The chorus swells as dawn advances, into a devotional volume of vibrant, impassioned power. Each bird, singing his own paean of praise, swells the whole in a concordance of spiritual beauty. This rhapsody of bird music rises to ecstatic heights, then, as dawn breaks, the music suddenly, sighingly dies.

Bird music! The rhythm of the world is in its cadences.

—GERTRUDE ZINKE.

February Meeting

The 329th meeting of the Association was held February 8, 1945 with President Arthur H. Meyer presiding.

The program of the evening was a discussion of the Passerine group of birds. Charles Bryant opened the discussion. J. J. Webb told the members where these birds might be found in the Bay Region and gave notes on their feeding habits. Mr. Webb pointed out the importance of the introduction of bird study in the public schools. Colored slides and skins of the birds, lent by Dr. Robert C. Miller, Director of the Academy of Sciences, were shown and discussed by Walter W. Bradley.

—JEAN BRADFORD FAY, *Recording Secretary.*

February Field Trip

The February Field Trip was taken on Sunday, February 11 to the Chain of Lakes at the west end of Golden Gate Park and thence to the ocean beach where lunch was enjoyed overlooking the ocean. Here a very interesting study of gulls was made. After lunch most of the members went to the Cliff House where a few more species of birds were seen. Some of the members continued to Sutro Heights. birding and I am sure every one enjoyed the trip.

The weather was clear and warm which made the day very delightful for birding and I am sure every one enjoyed the trip.

A total of thirty-six species was seen during the day. They are as follows: Western Grebe, Pied-billed Grebe, Mallard, Pintail, Shoveller, Canvas-back, White-winged Scoter, Surf Scoter, Ruddy, California Quail, Florida Gallinule, Coot, Black Turnstone, Glaucous-winged Gull, Western Gull, California Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Belted Kingfisher, Red-shafted Flicker, Downy Woodpecker, Black Phoebe, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Creeper, Western Robin, Myrtle Warbler, Audubon's Warbler, Yellow-throat, English Sparrow, Brewer's Black-bird, Pine Siskin, Green-backed Goldfinch, Spotted Towhee, Nuttall's Sparrow, Golden-crowned Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, Song Sparrow.

Thirteen members and five guests were in attendance: Misses Plymell, Fay, Papina, Goen, Roscoe; Mesdames Zinke, Meyer, Sterns; Messrs. Meyer, Sterns, Heyneman, Kwaski, Altrocchi. The guests present were as follows: Mr. B. C. Brewer, Barbara Meyer, Jim Caison, Burton Olsen, and Elliot Rudee.

—MARY L. ROSCOE. *Historian.*

Condensed Treasurer's Report for 1944

FINANCIAL STATEMENT—

Balance on hand January 1, 1944.....	\$ 93.44	
Receipts in 1944	312.50	\$405.94
	<hr/>	
Expenditures	\$317.78	
Balance in commerical account January 1, 1945.....	83.16	
Cash on hand	5.00	\$405.94
	<hr/>	

TOTAL ASSETS—

Commercial account	\$ 83.16	
Cash on hand	5.00	
Savings account	450.37	
U. S. Treasury Bond	370.00	\$908.53

MEMBERSHIP—

Membership in force December 31, 1943.....	123
Membership in force December 31, 1944.....	140
Net gain in 1944.....	14

—IVANDER MACIVER. *Treasurer.*

Observations

Edited by JUNE A. W. KELLY

4 Golden-crowned Kinglets, January 28, El Sobrante, Contra Costa County; Walter Bradley.

6 Whistling Swans, February 4, San Andreas Lake; Mr. Chas. A. Bryant, Mr. L. P. Bolander.

Several hundred Evening Grosbeaks, February 4, Kent Grounds, Kentfield, Marin County; observed by Augusta Samuel, reported by Mary L. Courtright.

Allen's Hummingbird, February 9, Larkspur.

White-tailed Kite, February 10, 5 miles south of Santa Rosa; Mary L. Courtright.

24 semipalmated Plovers, February 18, Alameda; Junea W. Kelly.

March Meeting

The 330th meeting of the Audubon Association of the Pacific will be held Thursday evening, March 8, 1945 at 7:30 p.m. in the Assembly Room of the San Francisco Public Library, Larkin and McAllister Streets. The speaker of the evening is to be Dr. Carlton M. Herman, Parasitologist of the Bureau of Game Conservation, California Division of Fish and Game. His subject is entitled "Birds Have Their Own Troubles".

In Memoriam

It is with sadness that we note the death of Mrs. James T. Allen on Feb. 15, 1945. She was well known in state and national ornithological associations as well as in local bird organizations. All bird lovers will miss her.

March Field Trip

Will be taken to East Bay Regional Park (back of Berkeley), on Sunday, the 11th. Members and friends take the 8:50 a.m. "F" train at the Terminal. Get a transfer and take the No. 67 bus on University Avenue to the top of Spruce Street at the Reservoir and above the park. East Bay members take any car going to University and Shattuck and transfer. The party will meet at 9:45 a.m. Bring binoculars and lunch.

Guest leader: W. D. Landels, San Jose Ornithological Club.

Next month's trip to vicinity of Mills College.

New Member

Miss Ivander MacIver reports Mrs. Clayton Mote of San Francisco as a new member proposed by Miss Fay.

Audubon Association of the Pacific

Organized January 25, 1917

For the Study and the Protection of Birds

President.....	Mr. Arthur H. Myer.....	25 El Camino Real, Berkeley 5
Corresponding Secretary.....	Mr. Joseph J. Webb.....	519 California St., San Francisco 4
Treasurer.....	Miss Ivander MacIver.....	2414 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley 4
Editor.....	Miss Clelia A. Paroni.....	575 Vincente Avenue, Berkeley 6

Monthly meetings second Thursday, 7:30 p.m.

Assembly Room, San Francisco Public Library, Larkin and McAllister Streets, San Francisco.

Membership dues, payable January 1st, \$3.00 per year.

Student memberships, \$1.50 per year.

Life memberships, \$50.00

Members are responsible for dues until written notice of resignation is received by Treasurer.
