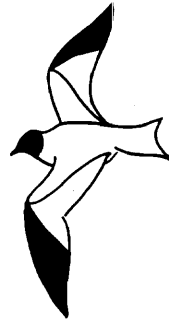


WESTERN BIRDS



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WESTERN BIRD PHOTOGRAPHERS

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I have known and photographed wildlife with Keith Axelson of Los Angeles for almost 20 years and during this friendship we have even photographed the same subjects together. And yet, when comparing results later I found that Keith had seen the subject from a much different mental perspective than I and this is what makes photography a truly creative art.

Keith's work always makes me envious because I know that he has the true artist's sense of creativity in his photographs. Other photographers whose work I have seen are technically excellent and except for the subject matter, seem to have been produced by a duplicating machine. No two of Keith Axelson's photographs ever seem to be the same although the *style* is unmistakable. I think that I would recognize Keith's work if hung anonymously among a hundred others.

Although I have seen Keith's color productions, his better medium is black and white. His careful use of the frame, cropping, nuances of tone, light, and shadow, and excellent composition are not restricted by the limitations of color film. Other photographers whose work has been exhibited in *Western Birds* would have benefited had their photographs been reproduced in the original color.

Keith Axelson is the editor of *Audubon Imprint*, the newsletter of the Santa Monica Bay Audubon Society and his creativity is evident in the superb quality of this bimonthly publication. He is a conservation activist with a deep and abiding love for the desert and as such has worked closely with the Bureau of Land Management in preserving the unique beauty of Butterbread Spring and Kelso Valley in Kern County. By profession Keith is an artist and designer but his real love is for wild things and wild places.