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Fish and Fishing in Yosemite

By RANGER NATURALIST A. E. BORELL

When the pioneers came to the area now known as Yosemite National Park they found but two species of fish—the Rainbow trout and the Western sucker. These were confined to the floor of Yosemite valley and Hetch Hetchy valley. The high falls on the streams which flow into these deep valleys prevented the fish from reaching the lakes and streams above the floors of the valleys.

Although the Indians living in Yosemite valley drew upon the fish for a part of their food supply, their weapons were so crude that they did not greatly affect the numbers of fish. The Indians used both suckers and trout but to the white man's taste the suckers are too soft and bony.

The quality of the flesh, the beauty and gameness of trout had long been known. With the coming of thousands of people to California and the Yosemite region following the discovery of gold, the supply of trout in many of the Sierra streams was depleted. Private individuals and sportsmen began importing and rearing trout, to be planted in our mountain streams, but this planting was limited and did not meet the demands of the public. The California Fish and Game Commission took up the work, establishing egg-taking stations and hatcheries. Millions of trout were reared and planted yearly in many sections of the State.

HAPPY ISLES HATCHERY

In 1927 the California Fish and Game Commission established a hatchery at Happy Isles in Yosemite valley. This hatchery has been maintained and operated successfully since that date. It has a capacity of approximately 1,500,000 trout a year, and each year produces almost that many. All of these are planted in the streams and lakes within Yosemite National Park or in adjacent areas.

The eggs of the native Rainbow and of nine other non-native trout have been hatched here and 10 species may be taken in Yosemite streams or lakes. This year the hatchery is concentrating mainly on three species, namely, Rainbow, Eastern Brook and Loch Leven trout. These have proved to be best adapted to Yosemite waters Trout are like all other living crea-

tures in that each species requires certain conditions in order to successfully live and propagate. The differences in temperature, rate of flow and type of food supply make some streams and lakes suitable for certain species of trout whereas other species can not live and reproduce there.

Proper planting of trout means more than dumping several thousand fry into a given lake or stream. Streams and lakes which do not dry up and which are adapted to the species to be planted must be selected. A few young trout are planted in each pool along the stream. This gives the youngsters a chance to seek sheltered places where they can find sufficient food and escape the larger fish which prey upon them.

WATERS LIBERALLY STOCKED

Practically all of the suitable streams and lakes in the Yosemite region have been planted and afford good fishing. Naturally the best fishing is found away from the main roads. In the spring when the water is high, bait fishing in the deep pools brings the best results, but during the summer and fall, when the water is low, trout rise readily to artificial flies.

All of our State laws regarding fishing license, open season, and bag limit apply and are enforced in Yosemite National Park.

The attitude of many people regarding "the limit" is unfortunate. If a fisherman goes on a long trip and can use 25 trout, he should not be critisized for taking them, but he should not feel that he can't return until he has his "limit." Those who remain in camp should not judge a fisherman's ability by whether or not he gets the "limit" each time he goes fishing.

To the true sportsman fishing means more than merely obtaining the maximum number of trout permitted by the law. It means quiet hours in the open away from the rush of our modern life. A trout stream lures the fisherman on to long hikes into regions where few people go. Here he not only matches his skill against the wariness of the trout, but he comes close to nature. He enjoys the solitude and becomes better acquainted with the flowers, trees, and wild life.

A Farallon Cormorant in Yosemite

By RANGER-NATURALIST C. C. JENSEN

It is not unlikely, but rather it is uncommon, to have the pleasure of seeing a Farallon cormorant in Yosemite Valley. On June 25, 1932, the writer observed a cormorant perched on a log in a pond adjoining the Merced river on the eastern edge of El Capitan Meadow.

Because of the rarity of the occurrence of cormorants in the Yosemite region, it was thought well to obtain some photographs immediately. Camera in hand and ready to snap, I approached cautiously, taking pictures when I had come within 25 feet of my "prey." Much to my surprise, the bird continued to preen the feathers on its back

and under its wings without concern or fear of my presence. Not heeding the water, I waded hip-deep close enough to have the bird cover the entire field of the camera. Such close approach caused much uneasiness on the part of the cormorant.

WENT TOO FAR

At the suggestion of the crowd of folks who had gathered on the shore, I made a hurried grab for the bird, so that it could be photographed by them at close range. Indignant of such rough treatment, it used its sharply-curved upper mandible to a degree that almost caused the bird's immediate release. So severe was his bite that my finger was punctured enough to flow blood. Rather than take the bird to the museum, where moving pictures could be taken at close range, and being fully aware of his protective abilities, I set him free in his home, where he has remained, leisurely feeding, until the present—July 9.

This particular individual was a young bird with dirty white or grayish underparts. Mature birds are much darker. It was queer that it allowed itself to be captured, for its rectrices and primaries were fully developed; and when released, it flew a short distance and alighted with a characteristic splash of the water and then swam freely to the center of the pond.

BRUIN IS TEMPTED

Ranger Frank Givins reported that on the same day of this observation he noted a bear attempting to catch the cormorant. His observations lasted for a period of 25 minutes, during which time the bear was very persistent in his quest for a rare morsel of food. Each time the bear came too close, the bird dived and the bear waited for the return to the surface—then repeating his antics without results. The presence of the cormorant in the pond more than a week since that episode is mute evidence of the victor in the struggle. This same performance has been reported several times since.

Farallon cormorants measure 30 inches in total length and may be distinguished from the Brandt cormorant of the same size by the yellowish-orange patch at the base of the bill. They occur at any season on large inland bodies of water as well as along the sea coast. Nests are built in colonies or apart on the rocks off the sea coast or lake shores and high up in trees bordering inland bodies of water.

They lay three to four, rarely more, pale blue of bluish white eggs. The range of this species is along the coast and inland bodies of water of California, Oregon and Southern Washington.

Only two other occurrences of Farallon cormorants in the Yosemite region have been recorded. One bird of this species was taken by Chief Ranger Townsley some time between 1916 and 1919. Grinnell and Storer in "Animal Life in Yosemite" report an observation of single birds in flight along the Tuolumne river below La Grange on May 6 and 7, 1919.

New Addition To Museum Staff

Cliff Presnall, Junior Park Naturalist, is the proud father of a baby boy; Jack David Presnall, born July 28 in Yosemite- weight 7 lbs. 10 ozs. Mrs. Presnall, the baby and Cliff are all doing nicely.

A New Attraction For Yosemite Motorists

By C. C. PRESNALL — Junior Park Naturalist

The Big Oak Flat road into Yosemite now offers unusual scenic attractions due to the improvements being made on a short side road leading to the Merced Grove Lookout, which commands a wider view of the park than any other point accessible by automobile. This vantage point is reached by a 10-minute drive from the Crane Flat Ranger Station, 106 miles out of Stockton. Motorists faced with the necessity of waiting at the Gentry Checking Station for the control to open will find it profitable to turn aside at Crane Flat, eight miles before reaching Gentry, and spend a pleasant half-hour viewing the park from the Merced Grove Lookout.

The Park Service is widening and oiling the mile and a half of road that leads to the lookout, and has built a model fire lookout station where tourists will find maps and binoculars to aid them in identifying the surrounding peaks. The panorama extends from Gale Peak on the southeast corner of the park to East Flange, a ridge 11 miles outside the park in the opposite direction, a total airline distance of 54 miles. Nowhere else along the automobile roads of Yosemite can there be seen so much of Yosemite National Park at one time. No one traveling over the Big Oak Flat road can afford to miss this opportunity to grasp the magnitude of California's largest park, covering an area nearly as large as Rhode Island.

FIRE PREVENTION

The lookout also impresses visitors with a feature of Yosemite National Park that is little known, namely the conservation of forest resources. The Merced Grove Lookout, and the nearby Aspen Valley Lookout, symbolize the constant vigilance exercised by the National Park Service in protecting against forest fires, while upon distant peaks on either hand can be seen two lookouts maintained by the Forest Service to guard the areas surrounding the park. The methods used in locating and supressing fires are ably explained to all visitors by Fire Guard L. J. Holland, who is on duty at the Merced Grove Lookout night and day. Mr. Holland takes special pride in pointing out where an unusually severe fire was once stopped just short of the Merced Grove of Big Trees, which is plainly visible from the lookout.

Still more interesting to forester and layman alike are the graphic comparisons between different logging methods as seen on three sides of the lookout. To the west is a terrible example of the greedy logging operations once universally employed throughout California—barren hillsides stripped of every tree and left naked to the elements that are already eroding great gullies in the exposed earth. South of the denuded area is a portion of the Stanislaus National Forest land that has been wisely logged—seed trees left uncut to reforest the region and make of it again a source of profit. East of the improperly logged region is a great forest of stately sugar pines that have never been touched and never will be, thanks to the recent Rockefeller purchase which brought them under the protection of Yosemite National Park.

EVERGREEN LEGIONS

It is upon this area that the ob-

server gazes the longest: the green ranks of the forest, marching over canyons and mountains as far as the eye can see, are emblematic of the spirit of men whose foresight has made possible the preservation of great national playgrounds such as Yosemite. Yosemite attracts visitors from all over the world, and points such as the Merced Grove Lookout give them a chance, before entering the incomparable valley, to realize both the magnitude of the entire park and the spirit of the National Park Service that protects it.

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100 YEARS IN YOSEMITE

By Park Naturalist C. A. Harwell

I am sure all readers of our Yosemite Nature Notes will be interested in knowing about the newest book on our park, "100 Years in Yosemite," by Dr. Carl P. Russell, who for six years was park naturalist of Yosemite and was well known to our readers. After years of research he has brought together the fascinating story of Yosemite's discovery and early development.

The book is very well illustrated, is published by the Stanford University Press, and is on sale at the Yosemite Museum at $3.50.

Horace M. Albright, director of the National Park Service, has written the following foreward to this book:

"As events and people fade into the past, a glamour is thrown about them, a deepening degree of mystery which intrigues the imagination. Especially is this true of a region where the so-called savage past and the civilized present have merged in a surprisingly short time, as in California.

"In the brief span of a hundred years, even less, the Yosemite National Park of today, of world-wide fame and visited each year by nearly half a million people pleasure-bent, has emerged from the rendezvous of Indian tribes yet unseen by the white man. Necessarily much of change was crowded into a few years, and their history is fascinating.

"I know of no one better fitted to present the history of that period in interesting and accurate form than C. P. Russell. For half a dozen years he was engaged in natural history and museum work in the park, collecting, classifying and exhibiting data, both scientific and historical. It was while engaged in these duties that the idea of presenting '100 Years in Yosemite' occurred to him.

"As, through strenuous endeavor, he unearthed a wealth of material regarding the human events in the Yosemite region, he came more and more to realize the desirability—almost the duty—of presenting these facts in easily accessible form to others interested in the same subject. Undoubtedly, too, his inspiration came in large measure from the eager interest displayed in the human history exhibits by visitors to the Yosemite Museum.

"Having known this Yosemite country since boyhood, I gladly give Dr. Russell's book my hearty endorsement."

Enjoyable Cedar Waxwings

By WALTER W. BENNETT, Ranger-Naturalist

Of particular interest to Yosemite visitors during the last of May, 1932, was a flock of sleek plumaged cedar waxwings (Bombycilla cedrorum Vieillot), birds which have so many peculiar habits that they always have a great human appeal. Nor are they very common in this national park. Sometimes they come to the Yosemite Valley in the fall to eat mistletoe berries, and have been reported during the winter months, but this time it was in the spring and because they stayed longer than usual there must have been something in particular to keep them. This was carefully watched.

They were first discovered by the writer May 26, when 15 were noted in one flock in the top of a black oak, not far from the New Village in Yosemite. Apparently they were not feeding. Although closely observed for some 20 minutes they remained very close where their white under tail coverts clearly distinguished them from the Bohemian waxwing, which irregularly comes to the region. The writer took C. A. Harwell, park naturalist, to see them later in the day, when, for several minutes, both enjoyed watching three of them leisurely bathing in the cold waters of Yosemite Creek.

No matter how many times a person has seen cedar waxwings or how intimately he knows their interesting life, the sight of them always furnishes a thrill. In this case their crests, the soft and beautiful brown shading of their upper parts, and clean lemon yellow tips to their tails were all noted, and on some of the birds' wings were those odd wax-like patches of brilliant red, which give them their name of waxwings.

BUCKET BRIGADE METHODS

Their manner of feeding is interesting. One will swing on the smallest twig and reach far for a cherry. Sometimes a row of the birds man be seen perched on the same branch, the one on the end will pluck a cherry and instead of eating it will pass the fruit on to the next. It, in turn, may pass it to the next and so on down the line. Reaching the last bird, the cherry is sometimes returned down the line until it finally is swallowed by one of the waxwings.

There are hard and indigestible parts of some fruits. Cherry seeds, for instance, do not make food, so cedar waxwings disgorge them after their organs have used the fleshy part. Then, too, feeding their young, adults will come to the nest with no food showing in their beaks, then will disgorge several honeysuckle berries or worms for clamoring progeny.

And why were they in Yosemite? If one studies cedar waxwings over the United States he soon finds much of tneir roving is due to a search for food. Although they eat insects in summer, during the other three seasons they feast upon berries to a large extent. And so in Yosemite it was the delicious fruit of cultivated cherries which held the interest of this flock.

LIKE THEIR CHERRIES

This was discovered on May 31 when seven of the flock were feeding in the top of a cherry tree in the same locality. They were gorging themselves with the ripe fruit, then resting until it digested before

eating again. No more than seven were seen, so apparently the other eight birds had gone on a northward journey to their nesting. These seven were then watched daily to see when they might depart. They were still in the neighborhood June 1, but on June 2 or later none could be found or even heard anywhere in the valley, so apparently June 1, 1932, was the last date when they enjoyed Yosemite before resigning their cherry tree to some black-headed grosbeaks, Western tanagers and California purple finches. Dr. Joseph Grinnell and T. I. Storer, in their splendid book, "Animal Life in the Yosemite," give May 26 as the latest spring date in the region, so June 1 may be a new "late record."

Thus do cedar waxwings add their interesting story to the many others which Yosemite holds forth to visitors.

Yosemite Museum Received Valuable Exhibit Material

By C. A. HARWELL, Park Naturalist

George Pratt of New York City recently presented to the National Park Service his extensive collection of Indian baskets. Field Naturalist Dr. Carl P. Russell, who was formerly park naturalist of Yosemite, is classifying this material and distributing it to the appropriate national parks and national monuments. Thirty of these baskets have come to Yosemite. A number of them are superior in workmanship and design to any previously in possession of our museum.

Our national park museums must depend on the generosity of friends for practically all of their exhibit material. The Yosemite Museum has certainly been most fortunate. Our park visitors marvel at the wealth of material we have on exhibit in our well organized fireproof museum, which in itself was largely a gift of the Laura Spellman Rockefeller Foundation and interested individuals.

The following recent accessions had not previously been reported in these columns.

The Stockton Record contributed to the museum a bound copy of the "Out-o-Doors Section" of the Stockton Record for the year 1931, making our files complete to date.

A four-volume set, each volume in two books, of "Lives of Game Animals" by Ernest Thompson Seton and Comstock's "Butterflies of California" were presented to the museum by the 1930 class of the Yosemite School of Field Natural History.

A file containing telegrams, correspondence, program, autographed menus, et cetera, relating to the dedication of the Ahwahnee Hotel July 14, 1927, was presented to the museum for our historical files by Yosemite Park and Curry Company.

A photograph of toll rate sign at Crockers, taken August 3, 1902, and the articles of incorporation of Mount Dana Mining Company, 1879, was presented by D. G. Kidder.

Mrs. F. C. Bicknell of Los Angeles presented us with eight voulmes of mammalian studies prepared by the Roosevelt Wild Life Forest Experiment Station.

Through the interest of Field

Naturalist Carl Russell, "Far West Sketches, 1890," by Jessie Benton Fremont was presented to our museum.

"Big Trees of the Giant Forest" by Stuart, Dewey Classification Book for use in cataloging the library, "History of Entomology" by E. O. Essig, "Insects" by E. O. Essig, "Plant Life Through the Ages" by A. C. Seward, "An Introduction to the Literature of Vertebrate Zoology" by Casey A. Wood, "Demons of the Dust" by W. M. Wheeler, "Common Pests" by Rennie W. Doane, "Snakes of the World," by Dr. Ditmar, "Manual of Style" the University of Chicago Press, "Structural Life of Forest Trees" by Busgen, were presented by the Yosemite National History Association.

"Check Life of the Forest Trees of the United States, Their Names and Ranges," by George B. Sudworth, and "Conservation in the Department of the Interior," by Secretary Wilbur and Du Puy, were presented to the Museum by the director.

Three large Fagersteen photos of Yosemite were presented by Ernest Cochrane of Fresno.

Painting of Mount Lyell, gift of the artist, Chris Jorgensen.

Complete set of the "Encyclopedia Britannica," ninth edition, gift of M. Hall McAllister.

VALUED LETTERS

Francis P. Farquhar presented typewritten copies of two valuable manuscripts. One a letter from J. D. Whitney regarding the early survey of the Sierra, and James T. Gardner's account of his ascent of Mount Clark, with Clarence King in 1886, also descriptions of several expeditions through Yosemite.

White quartz arrow point found in Matterhorn Canyon at 10,300 feet elevation, summer of 1931, was presented to the Museum by Jules Eichorn, the finder.

Maps showing structure of "Sierra Nevada" Batholith between Mono Lake and the Mother Lode, gift of Dr. E. Cloos, Hanover, Germany.

Painting of John Muir, gift of J Horace McFarland.

A bequest of $4000 made by Miss Marjorie Montgomery Ward, to be used in landscaping the area back of the Museum, and developing there a wild flower garden.

A bequest of $200, also made by Miss Ward, to be used by the Yosemite Natural History Association for whatever may be deemed best.

WHAT IS A MAMMAL?

Author Unknown

Oh what in the world is a mammal?
Have you puzzled a lot about that?
It may be a man or a camel,
It may be a seal or a bat.

And really its size does not matter,
It may be a mouse or a whale.
It may gallop on four hoofs that clatter,
Or silently swim with its tail.

Though it is not a bird that wears feathers,
It may fly, it may swim, it may creep.
It may roam through the woods in all weather
Or spend the long winter asleep.

But whether its coat is like shoddy,
Coarse as wire, or finer than silk,
A mammal wears hair on its body
And feeds its young babies with milk.