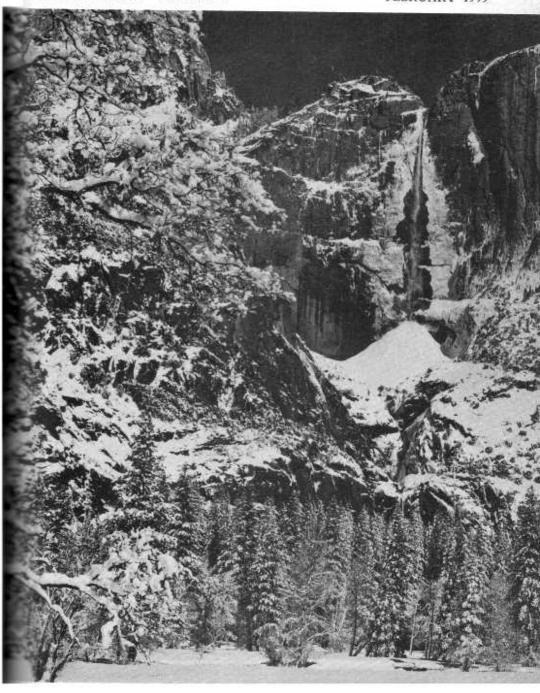
# YOSEMITE

VOLUME XXXVIII - NUMBER 2

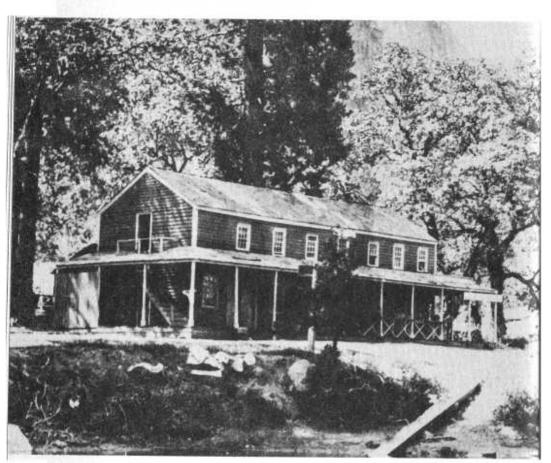
FEBRUARY 1959







IN COOPERATION WITH THE NATIONAL PARE SERVICE,



-Yosemite Museum

Built originally in 1858, the Upper Hotel was bought by J. M. Hutchings in 1864 and it became known as the Hutchings House. With the addition of a room around the large cedar in back it was also referred to as the Cedar Cottage.

### yosemite

NATURE NOTES

Since 1922, the monthly publication of the National Park Service and the Yosemite Natural History Association in Yosemite National Park.

Robert A. Grom, Park Naturalist Trainee

John C. Preston, Park Superintendent

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Paul F. McCrary, Assistant Park Naturalist

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VOL. XXXVIII

FEBRUARY 1919

NO. 2

#### PRESIDENTIAL VISITS TO YOSEMITE

#### By Marvin R. Koller, Ranger-Naturalist

#### Part I

The mute testimony that Yosemite National Park offers scenic wonders almost unique in the world, is the increasing numbers of visitors who pass through the entrance stations. People from all walks of life-from many foreign lands-come to Yoremite, attracted by the lodestone of its great beauty. The appeal of this park has reached even to the White House where the first citizens of the land, the Presidents of the United States, have expressed interest in coming to see for themselves its granite domes, its leaping waterfalls, its gigantic trees, its breathtaking scenery.

It occurred to me that perhaps you who have been visitors to Yosemite would like to know some of the details of the trips of our most distinguished visitors, our presidents. Their names, their historical importance, stand out among the many millions who have come here. All

the details cannot be given since their trips were guarded by special escorts whose purpose was to see to it that the personal safety and privacy of the president was guaranteed.

When most of us come to Yosemite we may travel about freely, untroubled by a host of people following us to catch our every word or gesture. To distinguished personages such as presidents, the price of fame is to be watched and followed by many people. In a democracy wherein a people elect their leader this person becomes, indeed, a man belonging to the people. The very importance of the person occupying the office of President necessitates the cloaking of his movements and the guarding of his person.

Not all the men who visited Yosemite and called "President" actually were President of the United



#### THE SIERRA CLUB

CORDIALLY WELCOMES

#### WARREN G. HARDING

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

MRS. HARDING

AND THE MEMBERS OF

THEIR PARTY

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

JULY 29 AND 30 1923

President Warren G. Harding was on his deathbed at the time these invitations to a reception in his honor were being

#### SIERRA CLUB

Founded t802

402 MILLS BUILDING, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

#### THE PURPOSES OF THE CLUB ARE.

To explore, enjoy and render accessible the mountain regions of the Pacific Coast; to publish authentic information concerning them; to enlist the support and co-operation of the people and the Government in preserving the forests and other natural features of the Sierra Newada Mountains.



JOHN MUIR, President 1892 to 1914

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—Courtesy of Henry E. Huntingte Library and Art Galler

received by many important persons. He died only a day's lourney away from Yosemite National Park on August 2, 1923.

States at the time of their visitation. They may have come before or after their term in office. A study of the records reveals that of a total of eight Presidents who have visited Yosemite, five were not President of the United States at the time of their visits.

A tragic story may be found in the case of President Warren G. Harding. He was to come to Yosemite on July 29 and 30, 1923. Elaborate arrangements had been made and an itinerary planned. The route of travel was carefully studied and men and equipment placed so as to facilitate the orderly movement of the President. Traffic had to be routed away from the presidential party or there would be a tremendous traffic jam and the President would be greatly inconvenienced. The speed of travel was noted and special stops of certain specified time intervals were planned. The comfort and safety of the President is kept constantly in mind by those charged with the responsibilities of the trip. In the case of President Harding, all these arrangements were prepared when death came to the nation's leader in Francisco, Thus, President Hardina died a day's journey away from one of his objectives. Yosemite.

As many of you know, President Abraham Lincoln signed the bill creating the Yosemite Grant in 1864. No man who occupied the nation's highest office came to Yosemite until 1875. The honor of being the first President to come to Yosemite fell to James Garfield. In six short years after his Yosemite visit, James Garfield took office as President. He came to Yosemite, however, as a member of Congress and was known officially as General James Garfield. On that occasion, General Garfield

presided over a meeting which expressed its apologies to James Hutchings who had been evicted from his hotel by the Park Commissioners. The resolution passed by this meeting told Hutchings that Yosemite would always provide shelter for a gentleman who had pioneered so ably in its behalf. Incidentally, James Garfield is buried in my old home town, Cleveland, Ohio, and when I visit there soon I shall view his memorial with a new insight into Garfield's character.

Four more years passed before another President visited Yosemite. This time the great man was a former general and ex-president. The gentleman to whom I am referring was General Ulysses S. Grant who was making a tour of the world at the conclusion of his presidential term. General Grant signed the Grand Register of the Cosmopolitan House on October 2, 1879. This would make General Grant one of the few Presidents who saw Yosemite in the fall rather than summertime.

Another four years elapsed and once again another ex-president arrived for a short visit to Yosemitethis time Rutherford B. Haves, President Hayes served in office from 1877 to 1881, the year the tunnel was cut in the world famous "Tunnel Tree" in the Mariposa Grove. In 1883, with a party of twelve, Mr. Haves enjoyed the sights of Yosemite. He was accommodated at the Sentinel Hotel, which stood for many years on the south bank of the Merced River facing Yosemite Falls. (There are markers to be found today to the west of Sentinel Bridge which mark this famous hotel's corners.)

This is Part I of a three part series, Part II will appear in the March issue.

#### MANZANITA - A NATIVE CALIFORNIAN

#### By Robert W. Crippin, Ranger-Naturalist

Many interesting features make manzanita unique among California shrubs. The twisted and curved branches of red-mahogany color are picturesque, and are beloved by the artist and park visitor alike. The wood is as hard as bone and generally must be sawed, rather than cut with an ax. The leaves stand up edgewise to the sky in a way that minimizes their exposure to the rays of the sun, and thus reduces the evaporation of moisture.

It might be said that the manzanita sheds its skin like a snake. Naked stems are covered by a paper-thin and satiny smooth bark of rich red. As the stems expand in growth this thin bark gives way, cracks and peels off in curling flakes, leaving a tender new bark exposed to view. At first the new bark is soft green. but it is soon burned by the sun into a rich mahogany. Immediately after flowering the plant generally sends out new foliage and twig growth in brilliant colors of crimson and scarlet. The colored foliage of the new growth is more spectacular than the levely, urn-shaped flowers of white or pink.

The manzanita was used extensively by the California Indians, and the Spanish and early American settlers. Only a little less than the acorn did the manzanita berry enter into the diet of the Indians. The fruit was eaten either raw or cooked; however it was generally ground and used as a base for cider. Quantites of the berries were packed home by the women and saved for winter con-

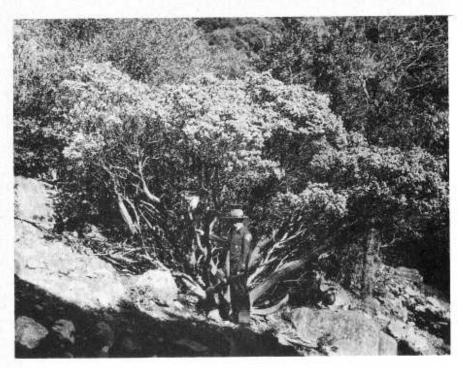
sumption. It has been estimated that an acre of selected manzanita bushes is capable of producing as much solid nourishment as an acre of wheat. The leaves were sometimes used for smoking and from the wood were fashioned pipes, digger sticks, and acorn mush paddles. The leaves were used for a tea to cure colds and to ease the effects of poison oak.

In mission days, when iron was scarce, the hardness of the wood seems to have recommended it as a substitute for nails. Manzanita pegs were used in the building of Mission Dolores at San Francisco.

The white settlers of the West used the berries to make cider, vinegar, brandy, and jelly. Today the branches are popular as decorative pieces, for the making of ming trees, lamp bases, book ends, and pipe bowls. In addition, the wood has been a source of firewood and charcoal.

In many localities the manzanitas are among the first plants to appear in burned-over areas. Some sprout from root crown, while others reestablish by abundant seeding initiated by the heat of the fire. This rapid recovery often prevents erosion. It also offers shade and moisture conservation, enabling the less durable conifers to reseed and return the devastated area to the climax forest in a shorter time.

The members of this genus are evergreen shrubs with crooked branches and smooth, reddish, exfoliated bark. The leaves are entire (rarely toothed), alternate, and more



-Upton, NPS

Mariposa Manzanita.

or less vertical by the twisting of the petioles; firm or leathery and often similar on both surfaces. The flowers are pinkish or white, jug or urnshaped, five-toothed and borne on terminal cluster or panicle composed of a few or several racemes, and are small and usually nodding. The fruit is a drupe or berry with four to ten seed-like nutlets that may be separable or united into a solid stone.

There are about fifty species of manzanitas distributed in North and Central America, chiefly on the Pacific Coast. Thirty-eight species with several varieties and numerous forms are native to California. Three species are common in Yosemite National Park

The genus name, Arctostaphylos, is derived from the Greek arktos, a bear, and staphule, a grape, in reference to the feeding of bears upon the berrylike fruits. The Spanish word, manzanita, refers to the fruit and means "little apple".

The genus Arctostaphylos is easily recognized, but the classification and identification of the various forms are rather difficult. The Yosemite manzanitas vary in growth-form from prostrate, mat-forming shrubs to small trees. Some crown sprout after fires or after cutting, while others are completely destroyed by fires. The foliage varies from dark, glossy green to gray or whitish in hue.

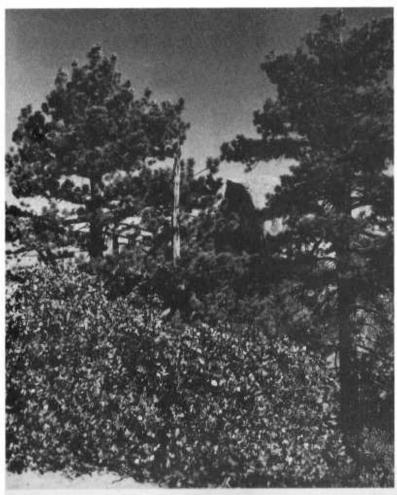
The Yosemite species of manzanita will be briefly outlined for easy identification:

#### Mariposa manzanita

Mariposa manzanita is an erect, branched shrub, four to eight feet high, that is common in the Upper Sonoran and Transition zones. This is the most common manzanita on the valley floor and on the northern wall and talus slopes of Yosemite Valley, and is found up to an elevation of 6000 feet.

The bark is smooth and dark-reddish brown and the branchlets and inflorescence are glandular hairy with short stiff hairs. The leaves are nearly hairless or bald, with few exceptions, and are firm or rigid, oval to elliptic, rounded to acute with a short, soft point at the tip, entire trarely toothed), pale grayish-green, rough in texture and from one-hali to one and three quarters inches long and three quarters to one and a quarter inches broad. The petals are usually about one quarter inch long and are usually covered with hairs.

The white or pinkish-white flowers are borne in flat-topped clusters or panicles. The stems of the flower-clusters are glandular and hairy, from one quarter to one third inch long. The red berry is hairy and sticky, scarcely a quarter inch broad, with three solitary and two united nutlets.



The Yosemite Indians used these berries in making a pleasing ciderlike beverage.

#### Green Manzanita (Arctostaphylos patula)

This shrub is found in the Transition and Canadian Zones, in open forest or on open slopes. It is abundant in open forest on both walls and rims of the valley above 6000 feet; abundant below the north side of Sentinel Dome and the chaparral slope above Union Point; found occasionally on slopes of the north wall down to Columbia Point; rarely on the valley floor, seen only among the boulders behind the Old Village.

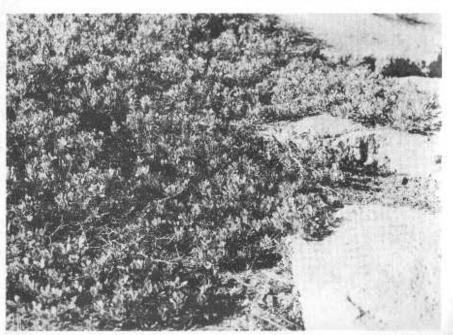
The stems of green manzanita are erect, four to six feet high and branched, forming a bushy shrub with rigid, crooked branches. The bark is smooth, bright reddish brown and not exfoliating, and the branchlets are glabrous.

The leaves are dark green and glabrous, oval to obvicular, obtuse, broad at the base, one to two inches long, three quarters to one and three quarters inches broad, and mostly rounded or heart shaped at the base, and firm and leathery in texture.

The urn-shaped, deep pink flowers are a quarter inch long and are borne in dense, round terminal clusters, the pedicels being glabrous. The fruit is chestnut brown, globose or depressed, hard to open, and about one third inch broad. The juice of the fruit is similar to that of green apples and may be used to quench one's thirst. They are eaten by mammals as food. The Yosemite Indians used there berries also to make manzanita cider. The nutlets are rounded on the back and are nearly smooth.

## Dwarf Manzanita (Arctostaphylos nevadensis) his shrub is found in the Canad

This shrub is found in the Canadian and Hudsonian Zones, in open



pine forest. In Yosemite it is found at elevations as low as 4,500 feet but generally above the valley flor. It may be found at Gin Flat, Illilouette Fall, Eagle Peak, Glacier Point, Clouds Rest, along the Pohono Trail, and elsewhere at timber line.

Dwarf manzanita is a low, prostrate, depressed shrub, often forming a rough, low thicket over the forest floor. The erect branches may attain the height of six or nine inches and may spread out for one or two set. The bark is reddish-brown and exfoliating.

The leaves are ovate to oblanceolate, commonly narrowly obovate, roundish to acutish at the apex, tipped with a soft point, glabrous or minutely hairy, bright green on both surfaces, and one half to one inch long.

The pinkish flowers are borne in short, simple or few branched racemes and are about one quarter inch long. The flower stalks are glabrous and one-sixteenth of an inch long.

#### MOUNTAIN AND FORESTS SPEAK

The voice of the wind has spoken
In the trees is a sweet refrain.
Laughter in rhythm comes rippling
From a waterfall making its rain.
Blossoms of dogwood are gleaming
In satin white, orange, and green.
Springtime all dressed in her finery,
On top, below, and between.

Should now these majestic mountains
In finery, cut out in pain,
Because of a careless camper
Who had let his fire inflame,
This greatest and beauteous garden,
By leaving an ember to glow.
Their cries would be shaking as

Yet People are treating so lightly
That which is the poets lore,
And for all artists a playground
Of stillness. A sanctified floor,
Where is dwelling the school of nature,
And the noblest of things are wrought,
By those here in meditation,
Who are elevating their thought.
—Alfred E. Brighton

#### 1958 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT IN YOSEMITE

#### By W. J. and Erma Fitzpatrick

The annual Christmas Bird Count taken in and adjacent to Yosemite National Park between El Portal (elevation 2,000 ft.) and Shippey Meadow (elevation 7,000 ft.) and including Yosemite Valley, was conducted on December 30, 1958 under ideal conditions. Clear skies, no wind, and mild temperatures were characteristic. Temperatures ranged from 24° to 65° with snow and ice being encountered only from about 4,000 ft. upwards.

Twenty observers, working in four parties, recorded 60 species and 2.044 individuals. This did not equal the previous year's all-time record of 65 species, but the count was highly successful nevertheless. The average was well above usual, and of unusual interest were the large numbers of Band-tailed Pigeons, Pygmy Owls and Dippers observed. Widespread interest was indicated by the fact that participants came from points as far distant as San Francisco and North Hollywood. The participants were: Mignon Augsbury. Katharine Coakley, Gerald Conley, Lydia Fatzinger, Erma Fitzpatrick, Michael Fitzpatrick, W. J. Fitzpatrick, Zelda Garey, Mrs. Edmond S. Gillette, Jr., Gale Glass, Jane Glass, Bob Grom, Douglass Hubbard, Vergena Koller, Bill Pruner, Ginny Ann Sturm, Mary Lou Sturm, John Townsley, Mary Curry Tresidder, and Sig Zachwieia.

The detailed count follows: Great Blue Heron, 1; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1; Red-tailed Hawk, 2; Golden Eagle. 1: Sparrow Hawk. Mountain Quail. 1: Band-tailed Pigeon, 352: Mourning Dove, 50; Pygmy Owl, 5; Anna's Hummingbird, 1; Belted Kingfisher, 6: Red-shafted Flicker, 25: Acorn Woodpecker, 29; Yellowbellied Sapsucker, 3; Hairy Woodpecker, 2: Downy Woodpecker, 4: Nuttall's Woodpecker, 7: headed Woodpecker, 2; Black Phoebe, 6; Steller's Jay, 86; Scrub Tay, 28: Mountain Chickadee, 34: Plain Titmouse, 23: Common Bushtit 92: White-breasted Nuthatch, 1; Red breasted Nuthatch, 4; Brown Creep er, 10; Wren-tit, 5; Dipper, 19; House Wren, 1: Winter Wren, 6: Bewick's Wren, 3; Canyon Wren, 11; Rock Wren, 1; Robin, 157; Varied Thrush. 33; Hermit Thrush, 6; Western Bluebird, 35: Townsend's Solitaire, 11: Golden-crowned Kinglet, 180; Ruby crowned Kinglet, 111; Cedar Wax wing, 20; Hutton's Vireo, 1; Audu bon's Warbler, 6; House Sparrow, 12 Purple Finch, 8; Cassin's Finch, 6 House Finch, 4: Pine Siskin, Lesser Goldfinch, 23; Rufous-sided Towhee, 59; Brown Towhee, 85; Lark Sparrow, 100; Rufous-crowned Spar row, 1; Slate-colored Junco, 1; Ore White-crowned gon Junco, 187: Sparrow, 7: Golden-crowned Spar row, 98; Fox Sparrow, 11; Song Spar row, 5.

#### YOSEMITE'S KING SNAKES

#### By John D. Cunningham, Ranger Naturalist

Not uncommonly in the Yosemite region, mountain king snakes (Lampropeltis zonata) are discovered which lack red in their dorsal coloration. Even when red is present it is frequently faded to a light purple, especially in juveniles, and only a close inspection will reveal its presonce at all. If such snakes are keved out" by means of a color key they would be classified as the California king snake (Lampropeltis getula Californae). The only sure way to determine the difference between a black and white mountain king make and a California king snake is to look at the anterior supralabials. the scales on the upper jaw nearest the snout. If these scales are black the snake is Lampropeltis zonata; if they are light, with or without dark edges, the snake is L. getulus. When one becomes familiar with the two species, however, their general appogrance and behavior are usually sufficient to distinguish them. The usual king snake most commonly encountered in Yosemite mountain king snake.

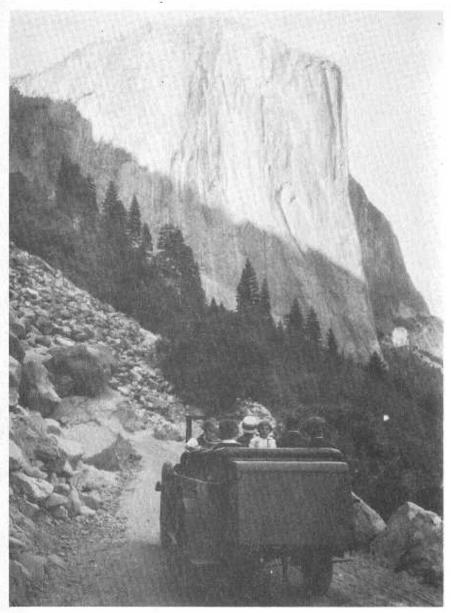
Much has been said concerning the relationship of king snakes and rattlesnakes. The diet of the king snake is actually quite variable, although they feed upon snakes to a greater extent than most other species. Rattlesnakes are not ignored, if small enough to swallow, but there is no evidence that the king snake makes a special search for them or prefers them to other snakes. King snakes are relatively immune to the bite of a rattlesnake and can survive a dose that would make a human, weighing 300 times as much, seriously ill. If the fangs of the rattler penetrate some vital organ, such as the heart, brain, or lung, the king snake would probably succumb from the effect of the venom.

When capturing a rattlesnake, the king snake usually makes no special attempt to secure the rattler's head. Thus the rattlesnake is frequently free to bite and usually does. Although they will throw body coils around the rattler to secure it during the swallowing process.

When in the presence of king snakes, rattlers react in a very peculiar manner. The central portion of their body is raised, the head and tail anchoring the rattler to the ground, and this loop is brought down upon the king snake like a club. The California king snake is the usual enemy of the rattler, although a few cases are on record of racers (Masticophis sph.) eating small rattlesnakes.

27 YOSEMITE

#### REMEMBER WHEN?



-Yosemite Museum

Many early visitors entered Yosemite Valley over the Big Oak Flat Road before portions of it were destroyed by rock slides. At least one visitor was more impressed by the camera than the magnitude of El Capitan!

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	Geologic History of Yosemite Valley (Prof. Paper 160) - Matthes Geology of Yosemite Valley, Brief Story of - Beatty High Sierra Camp Areas, Pocket Guide to - Clark High Sierra Camp Areas, Trail Guide to - Clark Incamparable Valley, The - Matthes (poper) Map of Sequola-Kings Canyon NP, Topagraphic - USGS Map of Yosemite National Park, Topagraphic - USGS Map of Yosemite Valley, Topagraphic, shaded (aeology story printed on back) North Country of Yosemite, Pocket Guide to - Clark North Country of Yosemite, Trail Guide to - Clark South Boundary Country, Pocket Guide to - Clark South Boundary Country, Trail Guide to - Clark	1.15
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