

YOSEMITE

VOLUME FORTY-ONE, NUMBER 4

DECEMBER, 1971



YNHA Photo

Interpreter Diana Graves with a group of youngsters on an Adventure Walk. There are ongoing children's interpretive activities.

Summer Interpretive Programs

Yosemite visitors during the past summer had available to them the fullest and the broadest interpretive program yet developed. Aware that shifts in age groups and changes in interests were taking place across the land (these are perhaps magnified in Yosemite), the National Park Service shaped its interpretive concept to reach the interests and attitudes of every visitor. At the start of the summer, the park interpretive staff was supplemented by a task force of twenty young interpreters sent here by the National Park Service Director; they were most effective in planning and implementing several of the new programs.

It had become apparent that the traditional "ranger talk" was not reaching a great segment of the young people, who appeared to reject the straight, educational-type presentation and to be disinterested in programs which drew mixed age and life style groups.

The most discussed of the new programs was that which "happened" at Lower Pines Campground (Camp 14). It was known as a "Natural Experiment" and, though the topics varied, the programs centered around multi-image projection, contemporary music and unstructured discussions mainly on current environmental matters.

With the new Valley road system and the subsequent removal of autos from certain areas, bicycles were chosen by the interpretive people as convenient and logical to get visitors around the Valley. The result was a Bicycle Ecology Tour around the carless, quiet roads with stops to hear the naturalist-leader discuss the immediate environment and its ecological position.

A program for the fifteen and sixteen year old visitors, "You Want To Be A Ranger", was possibly the most successful of the participating activities.

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Single-Leaf Pine Grove Located

James Cole, in the 1939 edition of *Cone-Bearing Trees of Yosemite*, states that Park Naturalist C.A. Harwell had discovered in 1936 a grove of single-leaf pine (*Pinus monophylla*) near Tiltill Valley and that one tree was of uncommonly large dimensions. No subsequent records confirming the existence of the grove and the large tree, or showing a more precise location came in for many years.

In the June issue of *Yosemite*, we referred to this tree, and in July, Mr. Alan Bellon, a forester with the Bureau of Land Management, wrote that he had read Cole's account of the grove earlier and had planned to hunt for it one day. Our article spurred Mr. Bellon to make his exploration sooner rather than later. The following was received here on September 27, 1971.

Gentlemen:

"I can't say that finding the Hetch Hetchy grove of *Pinus monophylla*

(continued on page four)

Author Alan Bellon alongside the Hetch Hetchy single-leaf pinyon. While smaller, younger trees are generally more symmetrical, the forked, bent and crooked trunk and the short heavy branches are typical.

Photo by the au



Seminars Successful

The Yosemite Field Seminar program, announced in the last YNHA Bulletin, was carried out during the past summer.

Two seminars on *High Sierra Botany and Ecology*, one on *Living Glaciers of Yosemite* were conducted by Dr. Carl Sharsmith of San Jose State College. Lloyd Brubaker, of the Murray School, China Lake, directed *Yosemite, a Laboratory for Teaching and Interpretive Techniques*.

Sharsmith's classes were held in the Tuolumne region, Brubaker's mainly in Yosemite Valley, to be near the resources needed for the instruction.

In addition to handling his two classes, Brubaker donated his time for the research, programming and handling the accreditation details for the program. Participants who chose earned three, quarter-units for their participation, through the University of California (U.C. Davis).

A total of 71 persons attended the Seminars. Though the courses were demanding and on the technical side, non-professional people responded with much enthusiasm. Of the total enrollment, 35 elected to receive college credit. Two participants in the Ecology courses travelled half way across the country; Eleanor Huggins came from Deerfield, Ill., Stacy Gettier, from Youngstown, Ohio.

The association office has received many letters from participants. Typical comments were:

"It was a rare privilege to be instructed by Dr. Carl Sharsmith . . . a



Guide Published By YNHA

The Association was called upon in July to publish for the National Park Service a visitor's guide to show a complete program of the interpretive services.

The YOSEMITE GUIDE, as it was called, gathered the schedules of interpretive programs for the entire park, organized and presented them in a readable style. The 30,000 papers were printed on Fridays in Fresno and distributed that night to all entrance stations where they were handed to each arriving car.

The expense of the GUIDE was borne by the Association and the National Park Service.

A poll of visitor acceptance showed that of 300 visitors queried, 290 responded that the GUIDE had been valuable in helping them make the best use of their time in the Park and that it had provided exact program scheduling, enabling the users to be at the right place at the right time.

privilege which everyone genuinely interested in the Sierra wilderness should be made aware is available."

"The Alpine Botany and Ecology course . . . really was a high point in my whole year."

"My experience in the Living Glaciers course was most rewarding . . .

"I am looking forward to taking another course next year."

Your association staff and the National Park Service feel the program was eminently successful and have plans for more and better courses in the future.

The Botany and Ecology group with leader Carl Sharsmith in the Lyell Fork Meadow.

A Message From Yosemite Superintendent

This is my first opportunity to extend greetings to members of the Yosemite Natural History Association since being appointed Superintendent of this wonderful park last July.

I feel there are exciting times ahead for Yosemite as we all work to create an environment where the physical needs of man are made as unobtrusive



Lynn H. Thompson

as possible. One big step has been the elimination of the automobile from roads in certain parts of the Valley. As time goes on, we hope to extend this effort to include other Valley roads.

Our interpretive programs of the past summer were broader in every dimension than in past years and we intend to search constantly for ways to bring through them the spirit of Yosemite to every visitor.

Over the years your association has been of great assistance to the park interpretive programs. This was especially true last summer when it directly sponsored several of the programs and, in addition, published the weekly guide for Yosemite visitors. Because you are more than casually interested in Yosemite, I encourage you to give us the benefit of your thoughts about the park, either through the association, or directly to me.

Cordially,
Lynn H. Thompson

Crayfish In The Merced River

Two young residents of Yosemite Valley, sons of park employees, were astonished to see what looked like a lobster in the Merced River. The magnifying effect of the water made the orange-colored animal seem larger than it really was, but Russell Jones and Mike Worthington watched it long enough to see it move and be sure it was alive. The next day, the boys led a park naturalist to the site, and although "Henry" (they had named their find meanwhile) was shy that day, their sighting was verified by several tube holes in the mud bank just above and below water level, typical crayfish homes.

No previous crayfish record is known in the park, although the crustacean is native to the Sierra, especially Lake Tahoe. When asked, long-time local residents and avid fishermen knew nothing of crayfish in the area. Some theorized they might have been used here as bait and escaped. In that case, they should be removed as they are not native to the area. But perhaps they are native, and so we are hopeful that anyone reading this who has seen crayfish anywhere in the park will let us know when and where.

This sighting was made August 14, 1971 on the north bank of the Merced River in the central part of Yosemite Valley, opposite the mouth of Sentinel Creek. Anyone going down there to see them is asked not to disturb the animals or dig in the bank until the park staff can decide whether to protect them or remove them.

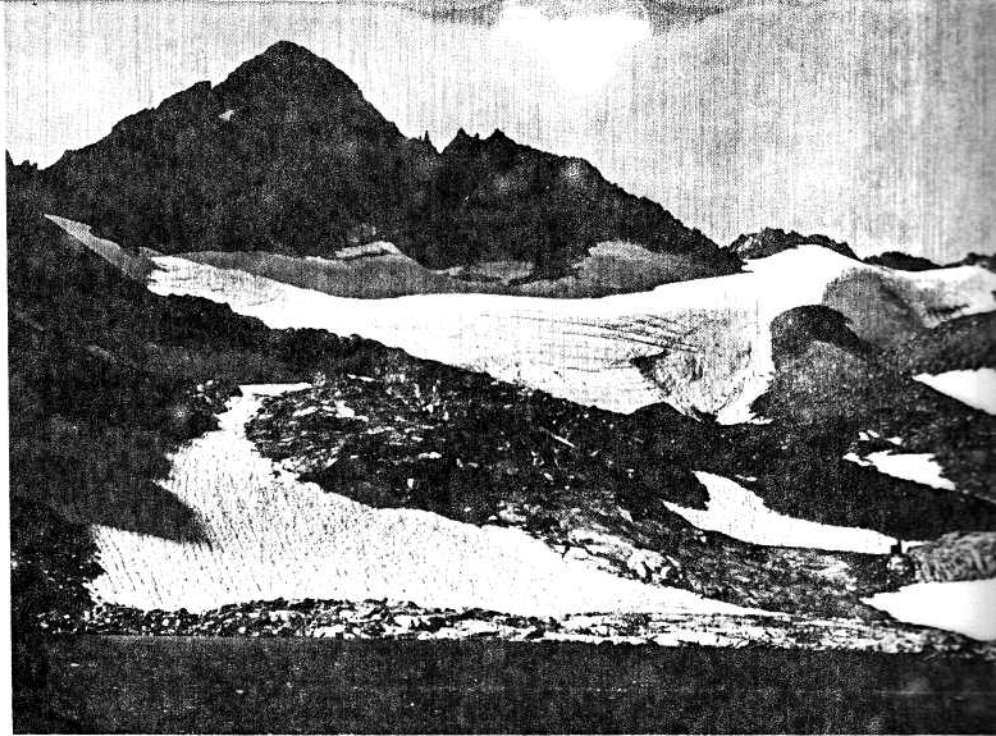


Photo by Norm Messer

Early in October, 1971, six members of the National Park Service staff made the annual survey of the Maclure Glacier on the northwest slope of 12,960 foot Mt. Maclure. Near the foot of the glacier, the United States Geologic Survey maintains an instrument shelter where continuous recordings of windspeed, temperature and water volume are measured. The National Park Service people, in addition to other observations, found in their motion study that the glacier had moved downhill about 15 feet, that the index stake at mid-glacier indicated a depth about the same as at last year's reading but that the stake at the glacier's toe showed a 6 foot loss of ice. In this photo, the glacier is the v-shaped mass at the center; a snow bank appears in the lower left. Mt. Maclure is seen in the immediate foreground.

Cleaner Uppers

Yosemite Kindergarten children, and the members of the Yosemite Cooperative Nursery School, joined forces to tidy up the refuse left behind (by adults) in the Badger Pass parking lot. After being "deputized" by resident ranger Bill Wade, they attacked their mission vigorously and managed to gather thirty huge bagsful of assorted trash.

Photo by Ann Hendrickson



Reciprocity

An added benefit for members of the Yosemite Natural History Association was revealed with the announcement by the Eastern National Park and Monument Association that members of any cooperative association such as Y.N.H.A. operating in the National Park System are now entitled to a 15% discount when purchasing items at one of the affiliated sales centers.



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A non-profit, educational association dedicated to the interpretation of the natural and human history of Yosemite National Park, in cooperation with the National Park Service. Contributions and donations are tax deductible.

Cleaner Uppers

Single-Leaf Pine Grove Located

(continued from page one)

was an unalloyed pleasure. September 14 was the day San Francisco reached 101° and most of northern California sweltered as badly. Hetch Hetchy was no exception, and it didn't help that *Pinus monophylla* grows on a high, dry ridge remote from water.

"Anyway, that was the day Robert T. MacDougall, Jr., a Consulting Forester from Ukiah, and I chose to make the search. Since much of the ground is massive granite with only scattered trees, it's possible to cover a large area in a short time. By noon of the day we spent there we searched the area I have circled on the enclosed map. I can say with near certainty that no *Pinus monophylla* exists within that area except the one grove (the cross-hatched spot above Rancheria Falls).

"The grove covers about six acres, extending roughly 600 feet in a NE-SW direction and about 450 feet NW-SE. In addition to *Pinus monophylla*, we noted western juniper and Jeffrey pine. Ceanothus and manzanita are the common shrubs.

"The largest tree we found has these dimensions:

| | |
|-----------------|-----------|
| Diameter: | 38 inches |
| Height: | 37 feet |
| Average Spread: | 42 feet |

"We have submitted this to the American Forestry Association as a record, but the question naturally occurs whether this is the same tree Harwell reported. I think it is, in spite of the

Photo by the author



smaller measurements, for these reasons:

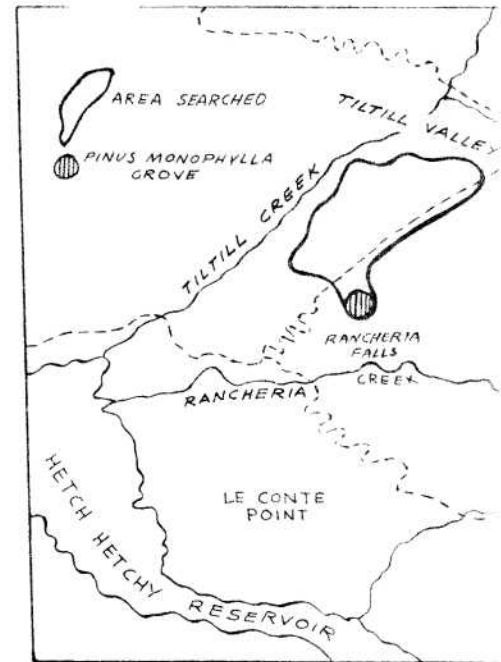
1. There are a few dead trees in the grove, but none approaches the size of this one. It is very unlikely that a tree over four feet through could die and disappear without trace in thirty-five years.
2. The trunk of the tree is oval, almost figure eight shaped in cross-section; it divides into two stems a short distance above breast height. Measuring through the long axis you might describe the tree as forty-nine inches across (the word used in the Nature Note).
3. The maximum, not average, crown diameter might measure close to fifty-seven feet, since the crown, like the stem, is distinctly oval or oblong.
4. Parts of the crown are dying back and the height could have decreased a few feet.

"Although the tree lacks vigor, and has many dead branches and twigs, the main trunk seems sound and the foliage is healthy.

"There are clear differences in acreage, number of trees and size of the largest tree between what Harwell reported and what we found. Is this the same grove? I believe the answer is "yes" for these reasons:

1. We found a number of "ducks" in the grove, especially near the big tree, showing that someone had been to the grove before.
2. The area we did not search (to the N and NE) is much less accessible than this grove. In fact, the most likely route to get to the unsearched area because of the rugged topography would be through this grove.
3. This grove is clearly visible from the trail. With binoculars, someone familiar with the character of *Pinus monophylla* could probably identify the trees from the trail.
4. The grove fits well the description of being on a granite ridge overlooking Hetch Hetchy Reservoir.

"When we were in the grove we had temporarily misplaced our increment borer so we could not check the age of any of the trees. However, most of the trees are small; moreover, the small trees are young. They aren't small



because they are stunted and deformed. Their good form and vigor show this clearly without the need of a ring count.

"Perhaps this is the most noteworthy characteristic of the grove: the low average age. Clearly, the species is adapted to the site. It is not merely a dying remnant of a formerly more extensive stand.

"In spite of what I said in beginning this report, it was an enjoyable excursion. Thank you for providing the incentive for the trip."

Sincerely yours,
Alan L. Bellon

Editor's note: The Y.N.H.A. office received a letter from author Bellon dated November 16, 1971. Parts of it are printed here.

"When I was looking up the size of the record tree listed by the AFA, I carelessly overlooked the latest updating of the list published in American Forests in January of this year. That list shows a *P. monophylla* slightly larger (based on the point system used by the AFA) than the Hetch Hetchy tree. I thought the specimen shown in the February, 1969 list was the existing record. The Hetch Hetchy tree easily outclasses that tree. As some consolation, Mr. Pomeroy of AFA wrote that the Hetch Hetchy tree is the largest reported from California."

The Association and the National Park Service are deeply grateful to Mr. Bellon for his admirable assistance.

A Member Speaks

Y.N.H.A. member Mrs. Karl Cohen of Palo Alto dropped in one day at our office and described for us her feelings about park changes. They represented the attitudes of an obviously interested park visitor; so we asked her to write them for us. She did. Here they are. Thanks, Mrs. Cohen.

A visitor's viewpoint

YOSEMITE

1971 APPRAISAL

"We change", said the Ranger at Glacier Point to his current flock. "We had a hotel here — burned down. A tunnel tree — it fell one winter. Mirror Lake is half its size of 25 years ago; in time it will fill with silt, then meadow and later forest will march in. We all change."

There was an undertone in his message that we did not remember catching before, as though he was trying to remind himself, and some of the old-timers, that change is not the order of human beings only, but of nature as well.

For change is very visible in Yosemite the last 2 or 3 years. More and more people have come. Different categories of people: minority group representatives; foreign tourists; long-haired youths and motorcyclists. Not all sufficiently aware of the destructive power of sheer numbers. The big rocks look solid enough, and trees and wild flowers seem to grow in unlimited numbers. Not all used to respecting the environment. Beer and soda cans have appeared, and names scratched in the bark of a majestic pine tree near Tioga Pass, and painted on Tuolumne Meadows granite. Not all familiar with the concept of sharing instead of appropriating. A foreign visitor told me: "How great it would be to pick the one snow plant visible on the whole length of Tioga Road, and be the only person to have it." Small wonder the Rangers appear at times somewhat "uptight", as the young put it.

The effort at containment is equally noticeable: restrictions on private car driving; reduced facilities such as along the Glacier Point road; multiplication of supervised group activities. The Park Administration is caught on the proverbial horns of a dilemma, rather pointed ones. A National Park belongs to all the people, but Yosemite Valley cannot be made any longer, or wider, to accommodate them. Charging higher, admission fees, as is done in Europe, is not democratic, and does not even keep the tourist hordes from literally wearing down the ancient castles' floors. What then?

Right now, the Park people are making great efforts, and displaying heroic patience, taking in and attempting to educate all comers, while at the same time trying to preserve what they came to see and experience. One may only wish that visitors be judged, as much as possible, on an individual basis rather than, say, by the length of their hair. This brings to mind the middle-aged man encountered on a trail a short distance from the Tioga Road, indignant at a group of "hippies bathing in the nude in Lukens Lake", said he, all the while puffing on a cigar as he was walking through the brush. Some regulations also hit those they were not primarily aimed at: shutting off the access road to Sentinel Dome may keep out "the drinkers and the carousers", but by equating purity of heart with stoutness of limb, it punishes the not-so-young whose stamina is limited.

Yet, on the whole, the system is working, and the new shuttle trams are a great success, judging by the crowds who use them. One even wonders if especially the children do not hop on just for the ride, but they cannot help absorbing some of the surrounding beauty as they do so. We probably *all* started by driving around the Valley before we took to the trails.

What of the future? If visitors keep coming in increasing numbers — and not only are there more people, they are also more mobile — how can we anticipate a time in the future when registration at birth would be the only way to secure the right for an individual to visit the great scenic

wonders in the country once in his lifetime? It is a fact that length of stay in the Valley campgrounds is already limited. Perhaps this should be extended to the hotel-type facilities, rather than reducing their numbers and downgrading their standards, such as for food, to deter the non-camping tourists. And why provide non-related recreation, games or sports, which attract a casual public not primarily interested in scenery, but appreciative of the modest prices? This can be had, and should be, in specific recreation areas.

At this point I sought the ideas of a member of the young generation, who, together with her friends, has become deeply attached to Yosemite, and comes regularly to camp, always in the High Country, and climb mountains. She was emphatic: "Only those who really appreciate it should be let in, who love the Sierra and do not just come to see other people, or because it is easy of access and cheap." But how is that to be determined? Note in passing that the new generation does not seem to be as wary of the authoritarian approach as we are. She had no patience at all for the beer-can throwers, and would have them ejected on the spot!

A more tolerant way will be found, we hope. And when a workable solution is evolved, one has no doubt that other National Parks and Monuments will eagerly avail themselves of it, for it is a world-wide problem. California has always blazed the trail. With our cooperation, as individuals and through organizations such as the YNHA, Yosemite will continue to inspire those who come to it, and to refresh their souls.

August 1971

New Board Member

By action of the Y.N.H.A. Board of Trustees on October 4, Assistant Park Superintendent John Good replaced Wayne B. Cone as a board member. Cone was transferred to Rocky Mountain National Park, Good came to his Yosemite post from Acadia National Park in Maine, where he was superintendent.

Summer Interpretive Programs

(continued from page one)

Over three-days, the class was exposed to Yosemite ranger training, to the skills and the techniques involved in 'rangering'. The highlight was an overnight back packing hike from Tenaya Lake to the Valley.

The very young visitors had their own "nature walks". The walks began from the Visitor Center garden where a naturalist gave each child a name tag, made from a bit of wood, a small magnifying glass and a simple orientation about what was ahead. Then, they went off through the forest, to see, feel, hear and smell the things encountered. The youngsters not infrequently questioned some of the disturbances to the natural scene; they liked best those things which had not been touched.

Ranger Demonstration

"Fire, Search and Rescue" demonstrations took place near LeConte Lodge. Ranger-naturalist teams explained and demonstrated the techniques employed in rescuing "stuck" or injured hikers or climbers from precarious locations, the tactics followed in searching for lost visitors, and how fire fighting personnel approached the job of extinguishing forest fires.

Living History

By mid-summer the Pioneer Yosemite History Center at Wawona was a living, mid-seventies village, giving the visitor a taste of park life of that period. Of great interest was the stage coach and its handsome team of four matched horses, which carried visitors around the Wawona area, illustrating the mode of park travel experienced by the early day visitor and settler. Within the center were several young ladies who baked bread on a wood-burning stove, brewed coffee in a supersize pot and presided at the ranger patrol cabin and the art gallery. At the forge, a blacksmith hammered out candle holders and gate hooks. A carpenter showed how pine roofing shakes were split.

YNHA Membership Tops 1000

Since the last quarterly bulletin, when the membership of the Y.N.H.A. was reported as being 559, 452 new members have been added, for a total of 1011. These memberships filed by address, do not account for the additional individuals who would be included in a "family" membership. We intend, in the future, to count "noses" as well as residences.

A breakdown of membership types shows 169 student, 559 individual, 203 family, 169 sustaining, 27 life.

Life members, new since June are:

| | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Mr. & Mrs. David Dunatchik | Yosemite, California |
| Mrs. Edmond S. Gillette, Jr. | San Francisco, California |
| Dr. Fredrick Harper | Los Angeles, California |
| Michael Haughton | Sunnyvale, California |
| Mr. & Mrs. Alvin J. Herbert | Berkeley, California |
| Mr. & Mrs. John J. Krisko | Yosemite, California |
| Elizabeth Roemer | Tucson, Arizona |
| William Stephan | Yosemite, California |
| Gordon Studebaker | Palo Alto, California |
| Alvin J. Hebert | Berkeley, California |

Yosemite Forums

Under the sponsorship of the Y.N.H.A., Forums were held in the Visitor Center Auditorium each evening, bringing before the visitor speakers or moderators of varied accomplishments and backgrounds. Management people discussed and answered questions on resources management; the concessions people participated in a discussion of their roles; an authority on John Muir discussed that revered conservationist. Films of a provocative nature were shown.

Ecology Float Trips

A great source of interest were the Ecology Float Trips. Participants, in swim suits and sneakers floated on air mattresses from Lower River Camp examining the river ecology, its river banks, the marshy places, its bottom, its contents, and the relationship of one to the other.

In addition to these specifically targeted programs, there were evening ranger-naturalist talks at The Ahwahnee Hotel, Yosemite Lodge, and Curry Village; there were daily films and talks in the Visitor Center, ranger led walks around the Valley and demonstrations on back packing at the Happy Isles Trail Center.

It is through the interpretive people who meet with the park visitors, in small groups or large, that the place

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and use of the national parks in the natural, social and environmental stream can be expressed.

Your Association was gratified to have had a part in this mission.



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Dan Anderson