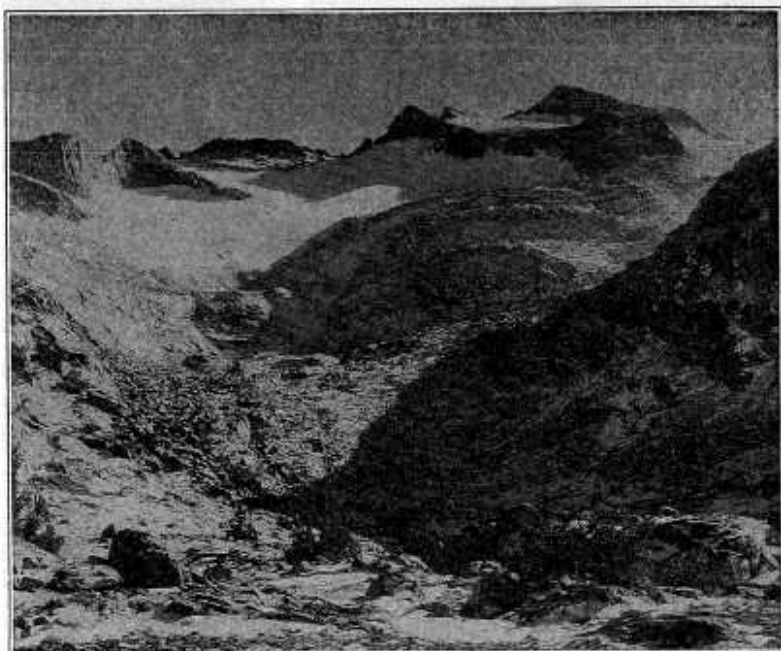


YOSEMITE NATURE NOTES



Mt. Lyell and Lyell Glacier
Headwaters of Tuolumne River and
main source of San Francisco water supply.

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Hetch Hetchy Water Flows into San Francisco

(By Mrs. H. J. Taylor)

On October 28, 1934, water flowed for the first time from Hetch Hetchy reservoir to San Francisco, 155 miles away. More than 30 years ago the city made original application to the Federal Government for the necessary water rights in Yosemite National Park. Expert engineering construction, years of labor, and vast sums of money have made tangible the vision of the men who first dreamed of this mountain water for the citizens of San Francisco.

In 1866 the United States Government ceded Yosemite Valley to California as a State Park, together with a strip of land running about a mile back from the rim, and including the Mariposa Grove of Big Trees. Five years later John Muir built his cabin in Yosemite Valley. For eleven years he explored the High Sierra, returning always to his valley cabin when the snow and cold of winter ruled the mountains. Muir saw the destruction brought about by sheep grazing, mining, and lumbering infringements which the meager state appropriations were

insufficient to control. That the Federal Government must create a National Park to preserve Yosemite was a growing burden on his mind and heart. Able and interested men assisted Muir in his appeal to the government. Robert Underwood Johnson, Associated Editor of "Century," aroused interest in the East. At this suggestion in 1889, Muir wrote two articles for "Century" entitled "Treasures of the Yosemite National Park." These articles aroused public interest and immediate action followed. On October first, 1890, Yosemite National Park was created, the boundaries suggested by Muir. It included Hetch Hetchy Valley, which Muir called a "second Yosemite Valley," "not less beautiful than the first." Sheep herding, mining and lumbering were prohibited, but unfortunately there have always been, and still are private holdings in Yosemite National Park.

When San Francisco first applied for water rights in Hetch Hetchy the application was denied by the Secretary of the interior, but this

did not end the matter. It rather increased the efforts of San Francisco to obtain from distant sources an abundance of pure water for her people. It also intensified the efforts of the opposition which sought to preserve the Valley for all time as an unimpaired recreation park for people. To grant water rights would of course destroy Hetch Hetchy Valley in that sense.

The Sierra Club, of which John Muir was President, was ever a definite and powerful factor in guarding mountain scenery, and its plant and animal life. Prominent men in the Bay Region as well as civic organizations joined in the protest against infringement on Yosemite National Park. The fight became intense. In 1906, Gifford Pinchot, in a letter to Marsden Manson, of San Francisco, said: "I hope sincerely that (San Francisco's) people may be able to make provision for waters supply from the Yosemite National Park which will probably be equal to any in the World." Also Garfield, who had become Secretary of Interior, looked with some favor on granting to San Francisco the water rights of Hetch Hetchy Valley. These were blows to the opposition. 1913, Congressman John E. Raker introduced a bill granting to San Francisco rights to Hetch Hetchy Valley as a water reservoir. It passed the House. Muir, and other leaders, had great hopes of its defeat in the Senate. Even if the Senate should pass it they had not only hope but assurance that the President would veto the bill. But it passed the Senate and President Wilson signed it in the same year. San Francisco had won its water rights.

Muir was cast down, yet at the same time he was greatly relieved.

Writing to a friend, he said: "I'm glad the fight for Tuolumne Yosemite is finished. It has lasted twelve years. Some compensating good must surely come from so great a loss." But Underwood Johnson wrote bitterly: "As for the destruction of the Hetch Hetchy Valley, California and the Government owe (Muir) pennance at his tomb."

The dam was completed 1926. The conduits have long been under construction. The San Francisco Chronicle, on September 3, 1934, stated: "The Coast Range tunnels of the Hetch Hetchy Water System, toughest section of the whole project, will be completed . . . ready to transmit water into Crystal Springs lakes and thence into the homes of San Francisco, within five or six weeks . . . We still have \$594,000 of Hetch Hetchy bonds on hand. Of that, we must turn over \$500,000 to the National Park Service, \$250,000 next year, and \$250,000 the following year."

M. M. O'Shaughnessy, the consulting engineer of the project, in the Chronicle of August 23, 1934 emphasized the advantages of Hetch Hetchy water to the city: "Its arrival will usher in a new period of growth for San Francisco . . . There is a shortage of water over the whole northern hemisphere . . . but here, in California we have plenty of water in the mountains. Our problem is one of proper storage reservoirs."

Even before a drop of water from Hetch Hetchy has reached San Francisco it was decided to heighten the dam. The reservoir. As the San Francisco Chronicle for September 14, 1934, says: "Plans and specifications for the \$3,500,000 job of raising O'Shaughnessy dam 85 feet to nearly double the storage

capacity of the great Hetch Hetchy Springs lake into which water reservoir, will be ready for the contractors in about three weeks." 155 miles distant.

October 28, 1934 was the date set for the Hetch Hetchy Water Festival. The Secretary of Interior, Harold Ickes, was guest of honor. The ceremony took place at Crystal beautiful Hetchy Hetchy Valley.

ERRATUM

Page 85, November, 1934 issue of Yosemite Nature Notes, "New Birds For Yosemite" should read: "Barrow Golden-eye" instead of "Red-eyed Ducks".

GIVE BOOKS FOR XMAS

To members of the Yosemite Natural History Association, we offer for the month of December, 1934 only, the following books and pamphlets at substantial savings:

	<i>Regular</i>	<i>Special</i>
1- Birds of the Pacific States - Hoffmann	\$5.00	\$4.50
2- Outdoor Heritage - Bryant	5.00	1.75
3- Place Names of the Sierra - Farquhar	2.00	1.50
4- The Living Past - Merriam	2.00	1.50
5- Handbook of Yosemite - Hall	2.00	1.25
6- Songs of Yosemite - "Poems & Watercolors"	1.25	.90
7- The Last Survivor - Taylor	1.00	.80
8- Guide to Yosemite - Hall	.50	.40
9- Birds of Yosemite - Naturalist staff	.25	.15
10- Mariposa Grove Guide - "	.10	.05
11- Gift Subscriptions to YOSEMITE NATURE NOTES		
One year	2.00	1.00

Order through C. A. Harwell, Park Naturalist



Cowbirds in Yosemite

By Charles W. Michael

On May 14 feeding in the Museum Garden with a mixed flock of Brewer and Red-winged Blackbirds, smaller than the other blackbirds was a strange black bird, and with a more cone-shaped bill. It was not, however, these apparent differentia that first attracted my attention, but something in the stranger's stride and mannerisms that caught my eye. The bird was some distance away and I sat quietly on the bench hoping that it would move closer, but instead of coming closer it flew away. As it lifted to wing and started off it uttered two whistled notes that were unfamiliar to my ear. It then dawned on me that the stranger was a male Cowbird. For the next several days I visited the garden, looking for the bird without success. The Cowbird was not listed in the May Bird Report as identification was far from satisfactory. However, events which followed did much to verify my tentative identification.

On the morning of May 21 I went

to visit the nest of a pair of Cassin Vireos which I had under observation. Nothing was seen of the birds; the nest was apparently deserted. On the morning of May 23, when I again visited the nest I discovered the vireos building a new nest about 100 feet from the original nesting site. Now I was sure that the first nest was deserted and as it was a very beautiful example of avian artifice I decided to collect it for the Museum. On taking the nest I was surprised to discover that it contained one Vireo egg and one odd egg—the odd egg of some species which I did not know. The nest along with the eggs was sent to the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, at Berkeley. The odd egg was identified as that of the Dwarf Cowbird (*Molothrus ater obscurus*) which proved that at least one Cowbird had been present in the Valley. And this was a record as Cowbirds had never been reported from Yosemite Valley.

My next contact with Cowbirds

came on the morning of June 23, while out "bird walking" with Mr. Henry G. Hill. We came upon a pair feeding on the edge of a meadow and Mr. Hill being familiar with Cowbirds identified them at once. After this experience Cowbirds were seen on several occasions, the last occasion being on the morning of August 24, when a pair was seen.

These unwelcome guests are still more or less strangers to me, but I think after these several meetings that I know them well enough to recognize them when next we meet. This much I learned: Cowbirds associate with Blackbirds and they look a good deal like Blackbirds. The male Cowbird looks like a small Brewer Blackbird with a rusty head, the female is marked like a young Red-winged Blackbird. The young Cowbird looks like a young Redwing, but it is smaller and much lighter in color. The male bird often whistles a double note when on the wing.

A DISTINGUISHED VISITOR TO THE MUSEUM GARDEN

(Ranger Naturalist, Enid Michael)

In the beginning the main object of the Museum Garden was to develop a floral display where Yosemite visitors might be offered the opportunity to study our native wild flowers, but it was soon realized that the garden could be made equally attractive to the bird student. A feeding table placed in the fringe of a large coffee-berry bush

and generously supplied with food was soon being patronized by a number of different species of birds. Here during the summer months one might get close-up views of California Woodpeckers, Black-headed Grosbeak, Blue-fronted Jay, Red-winged Blackbird, Brewer Blackbird, Western Tanager, and Western Robin. In the garden proper, Hummingbirds congregate during the floral season, five different species, and when chains of seed-pods bead the tall stems of the Evening Primroses the Green-backed Goldfinches gather in flocks to feast.

In the late summer the little brook that flows through the garden offers the only running water on the north side of the valley, and this is an important feature in the lives of many birds. Besides the Hummingbirds, the Goldfinches, and the patrons of the feeding tables many other birds come here to drink and bathe. Band-tailed pigeons and Evening Grosbeaks are regular visitors to the stream and once a drake Mallard was found resting on one of the pools. Perhaps the birds above mentioned would not constitute more than one quarter of the number of species that have been seen in the garden.

To me one of the most thrilling bird pictures to be seen in the garden is the sight of a glorious male Lazuli Bunting swinging on a stalk of blooming Castilleja, what a combination of color—flaming red and dazzling blue

On August 2, 1934, I came upon the biggest surprise of all. A water Ouzel was found feeding along the stream that begins and ends in the garden. Now the Ouzel is a bird that lives along streams, a bird that seldom flies over land. He will follow every twist and turn of a stream and never cut corners. In many years of observation I had never seen an Ouzel leave his stream to fly overland, but here was an Ouzel that had made an overland passage of at least a quarter of a mile to discover a stream, and artificial stream quite disconnected with any other stream. How did this Ouzel know that there was such a stream? What induced him to make the overland flight?

Sage Sparrow, New Bird for Yosemite

(By Charles W. Michael)

On September 13, 1934, I came upon the bird at the edge of the great brush pile that is headed up in the meadow below Old Yosemite Village. At first glance I took it to be a female Audubon Warbler that had her feathers fluffed out after a bath. It had the general blue gray cast and the white throat patch. A closer view of the bird and I realized that it was a sparrow and a stranger in Yosemite Valley. The stranger was associated with a flock of Sierra Juncos, but apparently not on friendly terms with them. It appeared slightly larger than the Juncos and was able to drive them off when they came too close.

I spent a half hour with the bird. It went from one side of the brush pile to the other side, and from one end of the brush pile to the other end, but at no time did it make a flight of more than fifty feet. It came often to the base of the brush pile to pick grass seeds, but never strayed out into the meadow. When perched and resting in the sunshine it crouched low so that the fluffy belly feathers covered its feet. When moving about there was a constant jerky movement of the narrow dark tail. And when landed on a perch after a short flight there was a thrush-like flit of the tail.

The head of the strange sparrow was blue gray and smooth looking. The back was gray, streaked with brown and appearing light brown from a distance. The throat and breast were white and in the center of the breast there was a dark bluish, or lead colored, dot. Small black eyes were ringed with white and just above the eyes on the forehead were short white lines. A leaden wash irregularly splotched the sides of the breast and through this wash a patch of white curved down from the bill. There were dark patches just behind the eyes, and possibly dark dots just in front of the eyes.

The bird was a Sage Sparrow (*Amphispiza nevadensis*). Sage Sparrows are supposed to be very shy, but this bird did not live up to the reputation. It did not appear to mind my presence in the least. *Nevadensis*, as the name would indicate, belongs on the east side of the Sierra Nevada Range. Had I been told there as a representative of *Amphispiza* in Yosemite Valley I surely would have expected it to be "belli," from the foothills on the western border of the Park, instead of "nevadensis" from across the range. However, in other years birds from the desert have drifted across the range and so why not a Sage Sparrow even though it be a new record for Yosemite Valley.

A RARE HAWK IN YOSEMITE

(By A. E. Borell, Naturalist)

There are days in the spring when the office seems like a prison and we long to be out on the trail. April 17, 1934 was such a day, and I was fortunate to be on my way to Half Dome.

It has been a mild winter and there was little snow left below 8,000 feet. Light tips on the ends of the branches of pines and firs indicated the amount of this year's growth. The booming of the Sierra Grouse and the antics of a pair of Red-breasted Nuthatches indicated that the mating season of at least some species of birds was at hand.

Upon reaching the foot of the cable which is about 8,400 ft. in ele-

vation, I surveyed the panorama which laid below me. A passing shadow called my attention to a large bird soaring above me. It was obviously a falcon but I could not identify it as to species. However this individual was obliging and continued to circle about me in a great spiral, getting lower until it flew slowly past at eye level. Then, I could see distinctly the black bar down the side and the dark color of the back which identified it as a Duck Hawk (*Falco peregrinus*). It continued to circle and disappeared to the south.

The Duck Hawk is a comparatively rare bird throughout California and is decidedly rare in Yosemite. According to our records this species has been recorded in the Park since June, 1926, and only twice previous to that date. All of the former observations were made in Yosemite Valley.

The Duck Hawk lives mainly along the sea coast and about large bodies of water. It is powerful and fast in flight and was the species most used in Falconry.

GLOWWORMS

Asst. Park Naturalist M. E. Beatty

At Firefall Point, elevation 6800 ft., on the night of July 11th while waiting for the firefall my attention was called to a bright dot of light shining on a ledge below. One individual in the party said it had appeared in the same spot for the past few nights and expressed an op n-

ion that it was an owl.

After suggesting that it was probably a glowworm one of the party volunteered to scramble down and collect the specimen. It proved to be a Pink Glowworm (*Miscophotus angustus*).

In this interesting species only the female emits light. The female is larviform, flattened and pinkish in color and between 10 and 15 m m in length. The males are normally winged and smaller and lack the phosphorescent property.

About midnight on July 18th Ranger Naturalist A. E. Borell found a glowworm near Glacier Point, elevation 7200.

This was a much larger and differently shaped specimen. It was about 45 m m long and 7 m m wide. The head was much narrower than the body and the six legs were situated near the anterior end. In the light the glowworm was yellowish brown but in the dark each of the broad segments was bordered with a phosphorescent - like substance. There was a row of glowing spots down each side and a number of such spots on the under surface.

It was a beautiful and interesting specimen but unfortunately escaped before we could get it identified. The description given by Dr. E. O. Essig (*Insects of Western North America* page 87) indicates that this large glowworm was Zarhipis picivetr's Lec. or at least a species very close to it.

A NEW REPTILE FOR YOSEMITE

By A. E. Borell, Naturalist

The Pacific Mud Turtle is the only species of native freshwater turtle inhabiting central California. It is to be found in ponds and slowly moving streams throughout the lower, warmer portions of the state below 3000 feet elevation. In this region turtles have been reported from La Grange, Smith Creek Pleasant Valley, Mariposa and from the mill pond at Mather. But so far as I can learn no turtles have been previously recorded within the boundaries of Yosemite National Park. Most of the waters of Yosemite are not suitable for habitation by turtles. However, Swamp Lake, which is near the western boundary of the park in Tuolumne county, seems to provide a suitable environment for this species.

Although this lake has an elevation of 5300 feet it is quite different from most of our mountain lakes. The water is comparatively warm, and the lake abounds in lilies, water grass, algae and insect life. On May 10, 1934 Ranger Otto Brown brought from Swamp Lake an adult Pacific Mud Turtle (*Clemmys marmorata*). He reported that turtles are numerous in the lake.

One or two turtles have been seen on the floor of the valley but these were probably introduced. I know of no other place in the Park other than Swamp Lake where turtles seem to live in numbers under natural conditions.

The Pacific Mud Turtle is also known as the California or Pacific Terrapin and is sold for food.



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Dan Anderson