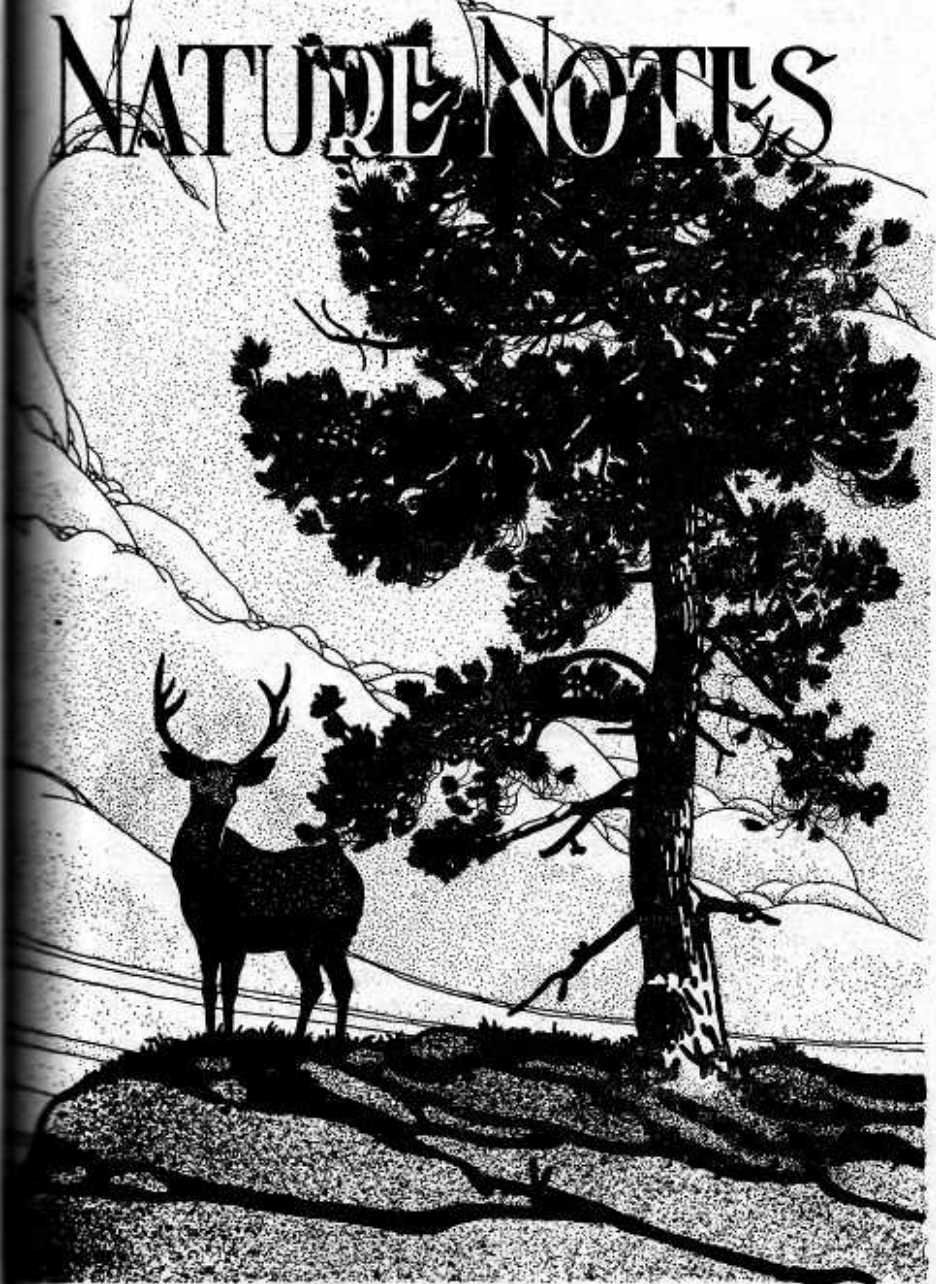


YOSEMITE NATURE NOTES



Volume IV

July 14, 1925

Number 8

A PERSONAL INVITATION.

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK IS YOURS! WE OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE WANT TO HELP YOU TO MAKE FRIENDS WITH YOUR PARK AND TO UNDERSTAND IT IN ITS EVERY MOOD. ALL OF THE FOLLOWING SERVICE IS OFFERED TO YOU *free* BY YOUR GOVERNMENT:

Visit the Yosemite Museum!

Here you will learn the full story of the Park — what tools were used by the great Sculptor in carving this mighty granite-walled gorge; who lived here before the white man came; how the Days of Gold led to Yosemite's discovery; how the pioneers prepared the way for you; and how the birds and mammals and trees and flowers live together in congenial communities waiting to make your acquaintance.

Plan your trail trips on the large scale models in the Geography Room.

The Yosemite Library in the museum provides references on all phases of Yosemite history and natural history.

Popular lectures on Yosemite geology and other branches of natural history are given by nature guides at scheduled times each day.

The nature guide on duty will be more than willing to answer your questions on any subject.

Go Afield with a Nature Guide!

Take advantage of this free service that will help you to know your Park. A competent scientist will conduct you over Yosemite trails, and from him you may learn first hand of the native flowers, trees, birds, mammals, and geological features.

See Schedule of Nature Guide Field Trips.

Visit Glacier Point Lookout!

From there you will obtain an unexcelled view of Yosemite's High Sierra. The binocular telescope will bring Mt. Lyell to within one third of a mile from where you stand; you can recognize friends climbing trails several miles away. The Nature Guide in attendance will help you to operate it and will explain what you see.

A small library is at your command.

You will enjoy the informal nightly campfire talks given here.

Attend the Nature Guide Campfire Talks!

In addition to the museum lectures members of the educational staff give talks as a part of the evening program at Camp Curry and Yosemite Lodge. Non-technical explanations of how Yosemite came to be; what you may expect of Yosemite bears; how the local Indians lived; what birds you see about your camps; what trout you will catch in Yosemite waters; how you may best visit the wonderland of the summit region; and scores of similar subjects are given by the National Park Service Nature Guides.

ALL OF THESE OPPORTUNITIES ARE PROVIDED FREE OF CHARGE BY YOUR GOVERNMENT.

—TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THEM—



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WITH A NATURE GUIDE TO SENTINEL DOME

By Enid Michael

A nature-guided class on Saturday, June 20, climbed to Glacier Point, by the Ledge trail, ascended Sentinel Dome and returned to the valley by the Four-mile trail.

Early spring flowers were in bloom along the Ledge trail. Tall, airy sprays of Alum-root (*Heuchera micrantha*), delicate clustering bells of drapers and lemon-yellow flowers of Yosemite sedum grow on the dry lower slopes. Then there was the startling golden hawkweed (*crepis acuminata*) and the rose-magenta, pride of the mountains (*pentstemon mentziesii*). Where the trail turns into the shaded chimney and climbs to the music of dancing streams, water loving plants were found. These, for the most part, were not yet flowering, but there was one member of the buttercup family, *Actaea spicata arguta* with towsley heads of white bloom, and an exquisite saxifraga whose delicate sprays of white flowers rose from clusters of round, soothed leaves.

On Sentinel Dome the first spring flowers are blooming. Multitudes of plants, scarcely more than an inch tall, paint the dome's round cheeks with vivid flowers.

Mimulus lewisii with golden

trumpets, pink gilia with slender tube and spreading petals and mountain sedum are among the first flowers that garden the dome. Then there is the Douglas phlox with mats of needle-like foliage, thickly starred with white and pink flowers, and silver-tails (*steliariopsis santolinoides*) waving ethereal sprays of snowy flowers. Most wonderful is the forget-me-not-like lappula *velutina*. This plant usually roots under some low bush and today on the dome the wand-like stems wave their clusters of heavenly flowers.

While the party stood on Sentinel Dome a golden eagle, on set wings, shot from the sky to disappear in a chasm at the side of the dome. Song birds were with the party all day long. Their music came from the brushy slopes, it rang from the stern cliffs and sounded from the tall trees. Just below Union Point the party came upon a Sierra grouse in the trail. He was picking up morsels of food and walked demurely about affording all in the party the unusual opportunity of seeing the bird whose booming voice often mystifies the trampers along the trail.



The new Glacier Point Museum and Lookout Station from which the high Sierra may be clearly seen.

THE GLACIER POINT LOOKOUT

By--R. D. HARWOOD

By--C. P. RUSSELL

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK, June 27. — That the Glacier Point branch of the nature guide service fills a real need has been definitely established. In addition to the walks and evening talks there is the Glacier Point Lookout, with its powerful Zeiss binoculars. It has already become the mecca of the hiker and the reward of the tourist.

The response to the invitation for nature-guided walks has been most gratifying. Many have taken advantage of the service and as a result have a finer enjoyment of their vacations. The trips to the top of Sentinel Dome proved the most popular. There is so much of interest to be found along the way, and the breadth of view to be obtained from the summit gives one the feeling of real accomplishment.

The number and variety of the questions asked following the evening talks in the hotel lobby showed that the guests were really interested and had been using their eyes. None of the so-called foolish questions were asked.

However, it was the binoculars which drew the crowds. During the first five days that they were up nearly two thousand people had the privilege of having distant snow-capped peaks brought to easy view. All the little irregularities of the granite surface of Half Dome stand out clearly.

As some so aptly put it, you could all but feel the spray from Vernal and Nevada Falls — they seemed that near. To many the few minutes spent at the Lookout were the most enjoyable of their trip. Many availed themselves of slack moments to return for further inspection of the High Sierras. With the telescope in such constant use it ought soon to pay for itself, if not financially then in the coin of appreciation of service rendered.

As the work being done at Glacier Point becomes better known it is bound to increase greatly in its service to the people.

On June 10 the park naturalist opened the Glacier Point lookout and entertained the Congressional Appropriations Committee. The splendid high-powered binocular telescope met with great enthusiasm on the part of the visitors when they discovered how quickly they might be transported to the ice fields of Mt. Lyell, eighteen miles away. Climbers on the summit of Half Dome, invisible to the naked eye, were readily recognized through the powerful lenses. Geological features, previously talked about but unseen from Glacier Point, were centered upon and brought to the very feet of the group. Western junipers, miles away, were so magnified as to make identification possible.

This branch of the Yosemite museum, with its accompanying extension of the nature guide service is the first accomplishment of the Yosemite Natural History Association. The construction of the picturesque stone lookout, superintended by Architect Herbert Maier, was undertaken by the association with the co-operation of the Yosemite Park and Curry Company, the National Park Service and the American Association of Museums. A naturalist is now stationed at Glacier Point who will entertain the thousands that climb from the valley, 3200 feet below. Reading material of interest to nature lovers provides a fund of information to visitors on the lookout and the nature guide on duty will point out the many features of interest to be seen, operate the telescope, and answer the many questions. Each evening he will give informal camp-fire talks on the natural history of the region, and once a day he will go afield with parties from the Glacier Point Hotel, giving them opportunity to learn first-hand of the wild life of Yosemite's "Rim." The first step in extending the educational work to the higher levels of the park has been made.

A FIELD WITH THE NATURE GUIDES

SCHOOLING A ROBIN

MANY of the nesting birds of the Yosemite region are bringing their broods from the nests. At this time there is afforded an excellent opportunity to study the family relations of the various nestlings.

Young robins are feathering out and each day finds another nest empty, the young perched conveniently upon a branch of the nest tree. Such a situation was found and watched by the members of a field trip of the nature guide service.

As the group approached a tree in which there was a nest known to the guide, a young bird suddenly perched upon the rim of the nest and glided to the ground. Immediately he set up a chirping which brought the parent birds to the scene with loud alarm notes.

Gradually as the class remained quiet and out of sight the birds became more composed. Then the youngster hopped to a perch on the lowest limbs of a lodgepole pine. The male robin, apparently feeling that there was no need for alarm, left the scene. The female then flew to the ground, where she picked up a worm and flew back to the young bird, as it looked to feed it. But as the nestling would open its mouth to receive the morsel the parent would take it away, flying in the direction of the old nest, still trying to coax the young to follow her.

When the young would not follow, the female robin apparently lost patience and after swallowing the worm flew to the same perch upon which the young was seated.

Deliberately, then, the parent attempted to push the young bird from his perch. This performance was continued for some time the nestling keeping his position against the pushing and shoving of the female only with difficulty. At last the mother bird tired of the attempt at getting the young back into the nest and again flew to the ground to gather food for the more timid nestlings which had remained under the parental care.—L. W. Wilson.

* * *

DAINTY FISH FOOD

Those who take the trouble to ascertain what the food of their breakfast trout consists of have been somewhat surprised to discover that lady bird beetles are the main article of diet. It is not difficult to discover how they get into fishes' stomachs, for the tiny beetle is to be found everywhere at this

time.

This little insect, *hippodamia convergens*, hibernates in the mountains in great numbers. In early spring they are to be found in great masses under rocks, beneath loose bark and in any other sheltered place. The outer wings have brick-red background, characteristic of most lady birds, and the spots are also black. There are six of them on each wing, the three in front are smaller than those on the caudal half. The head and thorax are glossy black, with white markings.

Their gregarious instinct is taken advantage of by the State Department of Agriculture and others, for they are easily collected and held in readiness for future needs. Their economic value can readily be seen if you are to notice the insect inhabitants of the old apple orchard of the valley. In spots the trunks of the trees are covered by white masses, which are the woolly aphids. You will not need to look long to see lady birds eagerly eating these tender bits of sweetness. And therein lies their value, for they are the natural enemies of plant lice and similar insects. So, whenever one is troubled with aphids, he gets lady bird beetles and the aphids disappear as by magic.—Robert Harwood.

* * *

HERMIT WARBLER FORAGES ON GROUND

The first time I noted a male Hermit Warbler catching insects on the ground at my back door, I considered it but a passing eccentricity on his part. But since that first day I have observed him regularly, morning and afternoon, hunting about at my doorstep for all the world like a Junco or Chipping Sparrow. Ordinarily this warbler limits his forage range to the pines and firs or perhaps descends to bushes along with other warblers.—C. P. Russell

THE YOSEMITE NATURAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION ITS PURPOSES

1. To gather and disseminate information on the wild-life of the Sierras.
2. To develop and enlarge the Yosemite Museum (in co-operation with the National Park Service) and to establish subsidiary units, such as the Glacier Point lookout and branches of similar nature.
3. To promote the educational work of the Yosemite Nature Guide Service.
4. To publish (in co-operation with the U. S. National Park Service) "Yosemite Nature Notes".
5. To study living conditions, past and present, of the Indians of the Yosemite region.
6. To maintain in Yosemite Valley a library of historical, scientific, and popular interest.
7. To further scientific investigation along lines of greatest popular interest and to publish, from time to time, bulletins of non-technical nature.
8. To strictly limit the activities of the association to purposes which shall be scientific and educational, in order that the organization shall not be operated for profit.

MAY WE SEND YOU EACH ISSUE OF YOSEMITE NATURE NOTES?

Your check for \$2.00 sent to the Park Naturalist, Yosemite National Park, will help to pay the cost of its publication for one year and make you a member of the Yosemite Natural History Association for the same period.

FROM THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON OUT-DOOR RECREATION

Called by PRESIDENT COOLIDGE

THAT THE CONFERENCE ENDORSE NATURE STUDY IN SCHOOLS AND THE EXTENSION OF THE NATURE STUDY IDEA TO EVERY AMERICAN SCHOOL AND FAMILY; THAT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MUSEUMS OF NATURAL HISTORY IN NATIONAL PARKS WILL INCREASE THE EDUCATIONAL RECREATIONAL VALUE OF THE PARKS".—Resolution of the Conference.



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Dan Anderson