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E. P. LEAVITT

Acting Superintendent



**"LEARN TO READ THE TRAIL-SIDE"**

## 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.

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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.

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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.

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

—TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THEM—



# YOSEMITE NATURE NOTES

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September 30, 1927

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## The Yosemite Museum Flower Show

*By Mabel E. Hibbard*

The 1927 flower season is nearly over in the Yosemite National Park. Jack Frost is making his annual stride down from the high country, and under the glistening tapestry laid for his downfall, the flowers begin their long retreat. Some abandon altogether the upper stories of their dwellings. These upper stories sway serene and tenantless before the wind, while the living elements remain snugly in the root-cellars. Some kiss their precious seed babies goodbye and are themselves content to be no more. Wrapped in the gleaming frost blanket, their pale ghosts peer wanly into the face of the morning sun for a few days or weeks, until kindly oblivion beckons them away. Some flowers give the impression that never again will they don leaves and blossoms, but even now they are behind closed leaf-bud doors, studying the loveliest early spring fashions in coloring and design, while they dream of May.

We anticipate. This is only a prophecy for the Yosemite valley at present, a prophecy now being fulfilled in the upper regions of the Sierra, but all too surely within the next two months to be completely fulfilled even upon the floor of the valley.

All summer long, in gay procession, flowers have graced the stand on the rear porch of the Yosemite Museum, each in its own vase, lending its particular color to the harmony of the whole. Purples, blues, lavenders, yellows, whites and reds, all hues imaginable, displaying rival spectrum tints of matchless beauty to the sun. Practically every flower family sent representatives. Some four hundred different species of shrubs, trees and flowers have from time to time formed a part of the brilliant galaxy that has daily arrested the admiring attention of every museum visitor.

### Keeping the Display Fresh

Many questions have been asked concerning the exhibit, some of which we will answer:

"Do you put in fresh flowers every day?"

Few days pass without some fresh blossoms finding their way to the stand. Flowers differ so much in ability to keep fresh after being cut. Even with the utmost care being taken to gather them early in the morning and to place them at once in a vasculum containing dampened paper, some flowers begin to wither almost as soon as picked. These, although they serve to display a species to the public, must obviously be replaced by fresh blossoms each morning. Some flowers which appear most delicate often surprise one with their vitality. A specimen of Woodland Star (*Tellima scabrella*), whose cinnamon brown stalk was scarcely thicker than

coarse sewing thread, and whose delicate white, five-petaled flower measured hardly a quarter of an inch across, put forth blossom after blossom from tiny, closed buds, and remained a thing of beauty for much longer than a week.

"Who gathers the flowers?" is another often-asked question.

All of the nature guides are very interested in flowers and bring in fine specimens from their trips. Then, once each week, a nature guide is particularly assigned to special flower duty and makes a flower collecting trip.

An almost daily query is, "How do you keep the flowers so fresh?"

The stand is especially constructed so that fresh water is circulating constantly about the cut stems of the flowers. It is designed in the form of a pyramid of steps, beginning at about the height of three and a half feet, with water trough pans underneath each step. Through these steps at intervals are holes (there are at least fifty-five), into which fit removable cylindrical containers for each exhibit. By opening a drain pipe sufficiently, all the water leaves the pans, which can then be cleaned. The feed pipe is then opened until the pans are refilled; then both pipes are left open enough to cause a constant flow of fresh water upon the flower stems.

#### Almost Limitless

#### Variety of Habitat

The next question most commonly asked is, "Are all these flowers found here?"

If by "here" the Yosemite valley proper is meant, the answer would certainly be "No." From a third to a half, or perhaps at times even more, of the flowers are found in the valley itself. The flowers are always from somewhere in the park, which gives almost a limitless variety of habitat associations and elevation from which to draw. The difficulty is to get specimens from the high country to the flower stand in a fresh condition.

Aside from flowers brought in from the valley floor, most of our specimens come from the various trails, as the Ledge trail, the Po-

hono trail, the Eagle Peak trail, or the Little Yosemite trail. Each of these are trips to the rim, 7000 to 7500 feet elevation, and each trail in some portion will usually parallel conditions on some part of another trail, so that flowers collected from any one of these will be specimens that might, with certain exceptions, have come from one of the other trails. Conditions change over each of these trails from early spring to late autumn, so that as some flowers pass to seed others take their places in the beautiful flower pageant which sweeps from the foothills to the highest mountain peaks during one comparatively brief season.

The flowers that have remained longest without having to be removed for fresh specimens have been the very interesting saprophytic pine drops and the snow plant. From June to September 1, only two snow plant specimens have been used. A protective fine of \$25 is placed by the Government upon every snow plant picked, and for this reason the museum is very careful to use as few as possible upon the stand, setting an example in conservation to the public.

#### Some of the Flowers Exhibited

It is interesting to summarize the flowers which have appeared most often as exhibits this summer. As nearly as one can estimate from daily contact, these have been: Meadow pennyroyal, Queen Anne's lace, yarrow, giant hyssop, white hedge nettle, farewell-to-spring, clarkia, columbine, canchalagua, the brodiaeas, the common mimuli, meadow pentstemon, yawning pentstemon, St. John's wort, Indian hemp or dogbane, small tiger lily, snow plant, pine drops, Azalea, slender gilia, self heal, collinsia, the dogwoods, knotweeds, pussy paws, miners' lettuce, the buckwheats, wild ginger, alum-root, the orchids, evening primrose, enchanters' nightshade, Yosemite aster and fleabane daisy.

The rarest visitors to the stand have been, perhaps, the heathers, purple and white, which grow along the montane streams, the white columbine, grass of parnassus, mountain pink, a montane buck-

wheat, Washington lily, woodland star, Sierra primrose, shooting star, monk's hood, bleeding heart, horckelia, corethrogyne flaginifolia, mountain daisy, Indian soap plant and the camas lily.

The flower which always arouses the most intense interest is the snow plant, since every one, more or less, has heard of the rare and beautiful plant and comparatively few have had the privilege of seeing it growing in its native pine forests or of seeing a living specimen.

The flowers and plants concerning which the most questions have been asked are the Washington lily, which grows so strikingly gleaming white in the midst of the chaparral bushes, and the sweet-scented bush (Calycanthus occidentalis), growing near the checking station on the El Portal road. It grows upon a medium-sized bush

and gives the appearance of a very small, dark, rich red chrysanthemum, with the odor of freshly opened wine. The California nutmeg or yew (*Torreya californica*) was next in interest, a small tree growing along the same road near the Cascade fall. Its leaves are needle-like, about an inch long, ending in stiff, sharp points, while its unripened fruit are smooth, green, elliptic bodies from an inch and a quarter to an inch and three-quarters long. From its wood the Indians fashioned their bows, and with the late revival of interest in archery, the wood may shortly become commercially valuable.

The love of flowers is so general on the part of the public that it is scarcely an exaggeration to say that the flower stand has elicited more interest and admiration, perhaps, than any other one Yosemite Museum exhibit.

## STRANGE HOMES ON OAKS.

Just to look at an oak, one sees only the oak, but on closer examination, one will find it a teeming little world all its own. Birds, beetles, mites, spiders, midges, moths, butterflies and flies will make up its population.

Many of their homes are familiar to most of us, but some of them are very curious and pass unnoticed. These are strange homes of the gall flies.

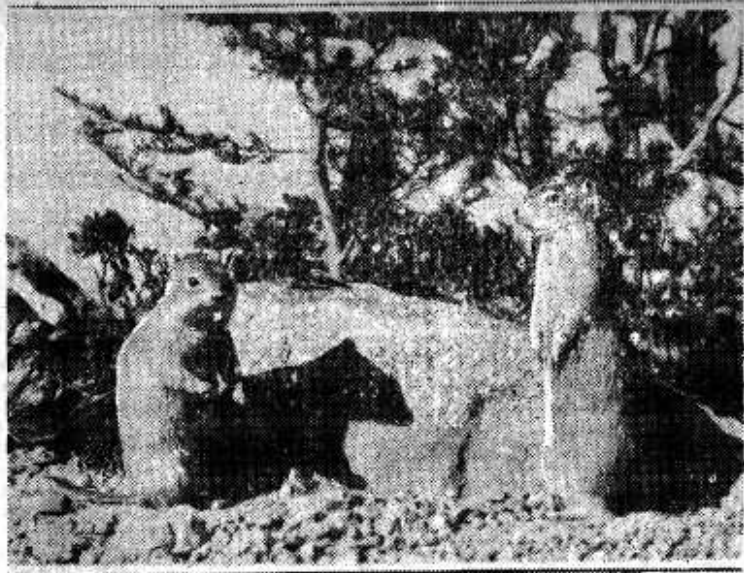
Where the aphids have been satisfied with the turned back lobe of the black oak, or others have sucked the green juices from the chlorophyl of the leaves, leaving blisters to show their eating course, these insects must cause a malformation in the plant structure to form their homes.

The female may lay her eggs in the stem, the petiole, the leaf, the bud, or even the blossom. When the larvae hatch they exude a juice or substance which causes an abnormal growth of plant tissue. This strange structure forms the home for the young until they emerge as adults.

Some of these curious homes are very woody, and may be balls, small and large, and even wrap completely around the stem. Other balls may be fragile like rare glass and colored orange-brown. These have a tiny core in the center for the larva, which is held there by fine threads. In the blossoms of the golden-cup oak one may find similar, but smaller balls in which the core is almost as large as the outer portion.

Some of the galls take on unusual shapes, such as flat disks like solid wheels; or the balls that are covered with a hairy covering of rose or yellow green. Another is like a tiny spindle perched on the vein or margin of the leaves. One is urn-shaped and apparently only hollowed out as a saucer and hangs down from the under side of the leaf. But most unusual is the pagoda-shaped gall of two stories, rounded instead of square. These hang down with tiny apertures in either story showing where the adult has escaped to lay more eggs, to build new houses all over again.—Rena P. Duthie.





The Belding Ground Squirrel or Picket Pin.

## MY ACQUAINTANCE WITH PICKET PINS

By RUTH H. KIRKLAND

On August 8 the students of the Yosemite School of Field Natural History trekked over the long trail from Boothe Lake to Tuolumne Meadows. We stopped for lunch where the Evelyn Lake trail drops to the meadows along the Lyell fork of the Tuolumne river. After lunch I went on by myself but instead of staying on the trail, I wandered along the river which now leaps happily over huge rocks and now meanders smoothly through the meadows which flank its borders for miles. In the course of my ramble, I disturbed a goodly number of Belding ground squirrels and even made speaking acquaintance with a few of them.

These little animals have rightly earned the name of Picket Pins. With their tawny coats and their habit of standing rigidly upright on their hind legs, they closely resemble stakes driven in the ground. Stories are told of old prospectors who walked themselves to death in their endeavors to picket their horses to these pickets.

One of these little creatures scampered across my path, paused a little ways off, perched upright with his forefeet hanging limply down, and fixed me with a disapproving stare. He stared for a few moments, then uttered an inquiring squeak. I replied by making a clucking sound. He cocked his head on one side and chattered vigorously at me. His disapproval of me was so evident that I laughed at him. He dropped down on all four feet, bobbed up immediately and launched himself on a veritable oration of sharp, squeaky whickerings. As he chattered, he seemed to pat himself with his forepaws. He paused not for commas

nor for periods. His breath came would have been the envy of many a singer. Finally, he did pause in his tirade and in a moment he scuttled away.

Later, as I was luxuriating in the dappled shade of trees along the stream, I heard faint scratching sounds and an occasional tiny squeak under a nearby log. The scratching progressed under the log and finally a tiny foot, an inquisitive, tawny nose and two beady eyes were pushed under the log. I sat as nearly unmoving as possible and the two eyes stared curiously and unblinkingly at me for many minutes. When I moved, the little picket pin immediately disappeared. Almost instantly its head reappeared over the top of the log to resume its staring. It bobbed up and down but evidently decided that the languid human under the tree warranted no further attention. He scuttled off a little ways, reared upright, uttered a few disgruntled whickers and then disappeared.

## SOME JOHN MUIR REMINISCENCES

By Mrs. H. J. Taylor

Given at the Museum Camp Fire, Yosemite Valley, August 2, 1927

Three hours ago the chairman of the evening asked me to talk at this camp fire for a few minutes on my personal recollections of John Muir. Mr. O'Neil is not well acquainted with me, or he would know that I need at least a week's notice to speak extemporaneously.

My early recollections of John Muir are undimmed, but I fear you may find them poorly sorted and not very well arranged. I can't remember when I didn't know John Muir, though I never saw him face to face. My parents, like his, were pioneers on a Wisconsin farm. Our farm was ten miles from Madison and south and west of Lake Mendota. The Muir farm was north and east of the lake. In pioneer days, neighbors included all whose farms we knew, even if they were twenty or more miles away.

Mendota lake freezes over, and on our winter trips to Madison we had an eight-mile sleigh ride over this sheet of ice. Father usually pointed out the direction of the Muir farm and said, "If that Muir boy wants anything, he makes it for himself." To many a request we received the answer, "The Scotch boy would make it for himself."

Among the interesting devices that Muir made was a bed that would dump its occupants out at rising time. This was to be exhibited at the annual fair at Madison. Our whole family wanted to see it, but ten children can't be taken at one time—not that the wagon box wouldn't hold them, but a farm can't be left alone. Some must remain at home to do that innumerable, all-comprehensive, never-ending task on a farm known as "chores." My brother just older than I, who had been to school one term, was not very rugged. He and I were among those selected to go to the fair. Evidently, neither of us figured in doing chores.

**When Horses Displaced the Oxen**

We still had Buck and Bright, our ox team, and we had recently acquired our first team of horses. Our latest and most prized possession was a light spring wagon, known as a "Democrat," though as a family we were Republicans—not by any intellectual process, but rather by inheritance.

We left the farm at sunrise. Sitting in state in our new Democrat, we enjoyed a thrill that no Rolls-Royce could bring today—a fit subject for "Ain't It a Grand and Glorious Feelin'?" At length we reached Madison and the fair

grounds. My parents wanted to go to the horticultural building, but in self-defense they took us to the dumping bed.

The bed was occupied by two small boys, Jimmie Butler and Jimmie Carr, who feigned sleep. Jimmie Butler, whose younger sister later became my classmate in the university, was the son of Professor J. D. Butler, whose presence in the Yosemite valley John Muir felt when he was on Half Dome. (Making a rapid descent, Muir found him at the hotel, where the professor had arrived but a few hours before.) At fixed times the bed rose suddenly as if bent in the middle. The two boys, thrown forward, landed on their feet and stood wide awake in their nightgowns. A miracle to us! How often my parents threatened to get a dumping machine to help us rise, but they never did. My own four children knew that the final call to rise was, "Do you want me to get one of John Muir's dumping machines to help you up?" I was surprised when they shouted, "Yes, we'd like it." Much more effective was my admonition, "If you can't hear me when I speak, I'll put your head between your ears." Response was instantaneous. My children, being normally bright, realized the seriousness of such an operation.

**Muir's Room at Colloge**

My husband's oldest brother attended the University of Wisconsin with John Muir and occupied the room next to his. His tales of Muir's unkept room were many. He used to say, "Muir is a smart fellow, but you can't get beyond his doorstep, he has so many things in process of making all over the floor."

One of his interesting devices was a lever that reached to his bookshelf at the hour for study, brought down the history or geography and placed it on the table, opened at the lesson page. At the end of the time allotted to the study, the lever closed the book, returned it to the shelf and brought down the next, opened at the lesson.

**Muir Belonged to the People**

John Muir left Wisconsin before I entered the university. I knew

he had gone to the Sierras. My interest in him was re-awakened when I read his "Boyhood and Youth." Seven years ago I spent my first winter in California in Berkeley. Everywhere people spoke of John Muir as if he belonged to California, Berkeley in particular. All this I inwardly resented. He belonged to Wisconsin, rooted there through pioneer days. He belonged to its university. Hadn't we but recently dedicated a campus knoll to John Muir? And didn't we own the finest bust of him, made by the Italian sculptor, Pietro? In time I began to realize that not California, but I, was at fault. How eager we are to claim as our own the lives that have unfolded abundantly in some avenue or in many avenues! My attitude was human and not very unusual. We would hem in and claim as a personal possession lives that have grown universal. Selfishness does not lie in taking the biggest piece of cake or the choicest bit of fruit. Selfishness is the spirit that one hu-

man being has toward the life of another. Parents are selfish whose spirit is to keep their children in the home corral. And children who do not get beyond that enclosure are pitiful, for they have not the rocts of a growing life. John Muir by no easy route got out of his home enclosure and entered the world. Wherever men and women attain in some avenue or in many avenue of life a degree of fullness, they are beyond the walls of home, beyond the bounds of state, beyond the limit of country. They belong to the world.

John Muir belongs neither to California nor to Wisconsin. He is not fenced in. He stands above the timber line. He belongs to each and every one who can catch something of the inspiration of his spirit. He belongs to everyone whose heart is deepened, whose mind is quickened, whose understanding is broadened because of John Muir's love for the beauty and the grandeur of things that are natural.

## A GLACIER POINT INCIDENT OF THE EIGHTIES

In a book recently published in London, called "Leaves from a Viceroys Notebook by the late Lord Curzon," I find a most interesting chapter telling of his visit to Yosemite in 1887. He pays the valley a most glowing tribute, calling it "The Valley of the Waterfalls," giving all the Indian names of the various points and a general description of the adjoining Sierras.

His description of the wonderful display of flowers is, I regret to say, applicable to those days when there were but few visitors to destroy them.

One of the amusing incidents is as follows: It might have a heading of "Yosemite's Wonderfully Trained Hen:"

"Glacier Point is 3257 feet in sheer height above the valley and

a tale is told in one of the guide books of an antique hen which, for the satisfaction of a party of visitors, was tossed over the precipitous bluff. Down and ever down sank the hapless fowl till it became a tiny ball of feathers, then a speck, and finally vanished altogether in the abyss. The spectators, somewhat chagrined at this gratuitous sacrifice of animal life, ventured upon a remonstrance, but were met with a cheerful reply, "Don't be alarmed about the chicken, ladies, she's used to it. She goes over that cliff every day during the season. The story then relates how the course of the afternoon, en-same party descending the cliff in countered the old hen, uninjured, composedly ascending the trail."—M. Hall McAllister.



## SEEING MT. HAMILTON FROM YOSEMITE

To the Editor Yosemite Nature Notes—Dear Sir: The various articles published in your monthly are much enjoyed by one who knows the valley well. It will be forty years next April since I spent my first vacation there (April, 1888) at the old Stoneman Hotel, and I have kept a record of all my visits to the valley—seventeen in all—since that time.

On my second or third visit, I remember we were staying at the old Glacier Point Hotel, and, as was my custom, I used to get up about 4 o'clock in the morning and watch the sunrise and then take an hour's hike before returning for breakfast.

On one particularly clear morning, I climbed, or walked, to the top of Sentinel Dome and then went up the ladder to the old platform which then stood on top of the Dome. I had a good field glass, and I spotted a white mark on the Coast Range to the west, which, I felt, must be the dome of the Mount Hamilton Observatory overlooking San Francisco Bay. On my return to the hotel and also when we went down to the valley I asked about it and was informed that it was impossible to have seen the Lick Observatory, as it was out of sight "over the hill." I never questioned this information until later years, when I found that I was correct in my guess, as the photographs taken by Professor Wright in later years distinctly show the domes of the Yosemite from Mount Hamilton, and so, if the sun-rays are favorable, the Lick Observatory should be seen easily with the naked eye or, at least, with a good glass, from the top of either Half Dome, Clouds Rest or Sentinel Dome. Is the old platform still on Sentinel Dome? Also, has anyone of late years reported seeing the Lick Observatory?

M. HALL McALLISTER.

San Francisco, California, August 25, 1927.

THE PICTURES FROM  
LICK OBSERVATORY

Dear Sir: "Intervisability of Mount Hamilton With the Peaks of Yosemite." Referring to this subject, on which I wrote you on August 25, beg to say that I have a letter from Prof. W. H. Wright, who took the well known photos of the Yosemite from the Lick Observatory. He writes me:

"Mount Hamilton,  
August 26, 1927.

"There is, of course, no doubt of the intervisability of Mount Hamilton and some of the heights about Yosemite valley. In particular, I am quite sure the Lick Observatory dome can be seen from Sentinel Dome. The pictures you have seen were taken from a point ten or a dozen feet south of our large dome. Part of the observatory building is undoubtedly obscured, but the dome stands clear.

"The only difficulty would be in seeing the dome against the sky. A red glass would undoubtedly help out in the observation. I climbed up to Glacier Point during the holidays last winter and could clearly make out the outline of Mount Hamilton, but could not see the dome because the sky was very white at the time."

Evidently, the above seems to about settle this mooted question, and the next thing to do is to get some good and enthusiastic photographer to get a set of photos of the Lick Observatory from the summit of Sentinel Dome. This, then, would prove that an airplane could circle high over the Golden Gate and see the Yosemite in the east.

Hoping the above is as interesting to you as to the writer, I beg to remain, Yours cordially,

M. HALL McALLISTER.

San Francisco, California, August 29, 1927.

## MORE ABOUT OUR FAWN PROBLEM

### BABY DEER NOT TO BE DISTURBED

As is usually the case at this time of year, Yosemite visitors find it difficult to resist the temptation to adopt a cunning pet in the form of a mule deer fawn. The baby deer have been arriving for some weeks now and they are to be seen in numbers both on the valley floor and in the high country. Even at this late date there are some of the mothers about. It is the habit of does to cache their new-born young for the first week or so of their existence. The little things have little or no body odor and are not apt to be picked up by predatory animals. Their spotted coats serve as excellent camouflage and it is not always possible for human eyes to spy them out. The does return to their hidden babies frequently to feed them and it is during this time of nursing that park visitors are most apt to see them.

Park rangers and nature guides have been urging visitors to have no mistaken ideas about apparently deserted fawns and fewer cases of "adopted" baby deer have occurred than in past years. There have been instances of unnecessary compassion and the following incident as related by Ranger Crawford is well worth bringing to notice.

"Ranger Bingaman, in charge of Soda Springs checking station, noticed an animal in the lap of a woman in a car passing through his station. He asked if it was a dog and the woman replied, 'No, it is a fawn with a broken leg. We are going to take it to San Francisco and have a splint put on the injured limb.' Bingaman reported the facts to Ranger Nelson, who is in charge of that district, and he

sent Ranger Crawford down to Soda Springs checking station to get the fawn and order the people who had it to report in the morning for further questioning.

"Crawford took the little doe up to the ranger cabin, examined it and found there was nothing wrong with it. The people displayed their ignorance when they tried to feed it rich cow's milk. That night Nelson and Crawford fed it diluted milk.

"In the morning the motorist reported and Ranger Nelson called Chief Ranger Townsley on the phone, who ordered that the man take the animal back to the place where he had picked it up. When the man heard what the price would be on the little doe he was willing to make any concession to get it back to where it belonged—a mile east of Aspen valley—and thirty-five miles from the ranger station by road. Crawford started out with him and after a wild goose chase which included stops at many places where the man thought he had found the animal he finally found the trail where he had come out, and there deposited the little doe. To make sure it was the right place Crawford back-tracked him. As they put the fawn down on the ground it gave a little cry. A crackling in the brush nearby made them reasonably sure that the mother was still on the job although it had been thirty-six hours since the fawn had been removed.

"They started to leave but the little doe wanted to follow the two. In order to have the fawn remain there Crawford had the motorist leave and then he broke brush through which the little doe could not go."



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