

Is That So?

Among birds, assuredly, the all-time contenders for laziness are the American cowbird and the Old-World cuckoo, no relation. Their marital ties are free and easy; they don't build nests; the tedium of hatching eggs is never theirs; and other birds feed their gluttonous young.

Yet their indolent, parasitic lives are among the most fascinating in wild life.

To assure their offspring the distinct benefits conferred by strength and size (while saving their own skins) the cowbird and cuckoo usually lay their eggs in the nests of much smaller birds. To assist them in carrying out their deception, their eggs are proportionately small.

However some birds recognize the cowbird's deceit. One, the yellow warbler, may dispose of the intruder's egg by building a second floor atop its old nest. In fact, three stories may be built before the warbler will resign itself to hatching a false egg.

The European cuckoo, however, is less often discovered in its deception: its eggs are small and some of the cuckoos seem to practice egg-mimicry. Two Indian species for example, which lay quite different colored eggs, tend to deposit their respective eggs in nests of hosts which are remarkably like theirs in color, markings, and to some extent in size.

Removes Host's Egg

(Before laying her egg in the nest, the cuckoo usually removes one of the host's eggs in her open beak—thus fostering the popular conception that the cuckoo lays its egg on the ground and then flies with it to the foster bird's nest.)

Even so, some put-upon hosts discover the deceit. Hence, to assure adequate offspring to maintain the species, these two parasitic birds lay more eggs. Where the non-parasitic relatives of the cuckoo, say, lay from two to six eggs, the parasitic cuckoo may lay up to 18!

To aid further the parasitic offspring, they hatch in an extraordinarily short time. Where the sparrow's eggs take from 12-13 days, the cow-birds take only 10 days. And, first come, first served—thus the early bird gets most of the food from the foster parents.

Legitimate Young Destroyed

Besides, for even greater assurance of survival, both the cowbird's and cuckoo's young ruthlessly destroy their foster parent's eggs and legitimate young. To facilitate the dastardly deed, the cuckoo, which is born naked and blind, has evolved a mechanical aid—a hollow back. Being a heavy youngster, it wiggles to the bottom of the nest, hunches the eggs or messmates on its back, and then by raising itself, hoists them over the side.

Left alone in the nest, these changelings prove gargantuan eaters, keeping their little parents in a constant frenzy to supply food.

When he has outgrown the tiny nest, the overgrown usurper opens his long wings and flies

By Eugene Burns
Ranger-Naturalist



New City Officials For Rogue River Take Over Duties

Rogue River—New city officers at Rogue River were sworn in at this week's council meeting, according to Recorder Orva Jean Cruise.

Phil B. Engle became mayor, succeeding Fred Dengler. The latter was presented a television lamp as a parting gift from the city.

Others sworn in were Councilmen Leslie Weigart, Harold Sander and Shade Combs. Councilman-Elect Robert DeArmond could not attend the meeting.

Employees reappointed included Police Chief William Peters, City Judge Raymond Greenhill and Roland Stiehl, maintenance man.

Chairman Named

Engle's council committee appointments included, chairman, Mrs. Agnes Magerle, finance committee, and Combs, street committee. Others will be named later.

A fire committee and chief will also be named later. Citizens voted last year to have their own department. The city is now awaiting delivery on a new fire truck before organization is made. The Rogue River Rural Fire department is now furnishing protection to the city.

The \$15,000 in fire bonds to finance the new department were received and signed. They will be forwarded to June S. Jones company, Portland, the purchaser.

Evening Classes Slated at School

Start of four evening classes in accounting, shorthand, typing and public speaking have been scheduled by the Robertson School of Business, 40-42 North Riverside ave., it was announced yesterday.

The classes will be conducted on Monday and Thursday evenings from 7 to 10 p.m. The school also announced plans for an eight-week course in beginning typing to be offered on Saturday mornings. The course will be open to all persons over 12 years of age.

Stewart Hopper, commercial instructor at Eagle Point high school, will teach the evening beginning shorthand classes. The evening beginning typing classes will be under the instruction of Mrs. Mary McLoughlin. Ashland, Clyde Gwaltney, who formerly taught in the Draughtons School of Business, Oklahoma City, Okla., will teach the accounting classes. Instructor for the public speaking course will be J. N. Tobin, who taught for 28 years in the Emily Griffith Opportunity school, Denver.



WEARING expression of cat that swallowed canary, Premier Mendes-France leaves French National Assembly after victory on German rearmament plan by 287-260 vote. (International)

Gasoline Dealers Hit Trade Stamps

Roseburg—The Oregon Gasoline Dealers association, in convention here last week, adopted a resolution deploring the collection of premium trading stamps by government employees on gasoline purchased for federal use on credit cards.

The resolution also said the use of such stamps at all involved the giving away of "unreasonable proportion of profits."

Among officers elected by the association was Vic Milnes, Medford, as third vice-president.

The group took no action regarding a proposed two cent increase in the state gasoline tax, and outgoing president Ernest M. Barker Jr., Roseburg, said the organization went on record against the proposal three months ago.

Some 80 members attended. Next meeting will be in Eugene on April 12 and 13.

Local Business Names Changed in Listings

Changes in status for three business names were listed yesterday in records at the office of the Jackson county clerk.

Gordon E. Young and Regina Young have retired from the assumed business name Medford Plate Glass and Mirror Company, which has been assumed by T. R. Flury and Blossom Flurey, J. W. Mildred, and Robert M. Wickman.

John P. Jones and Henry J. Davis have retired from the assumed business name J. and J. Trucking Company, which has been reassumed by Davis alone. Jones and Davis have retired from the assumed business name Three Pines Lumber Company, which has been reassumed by Jones.

The Calendar Years

By J. HUGH PRUETT
Astronomer, Extension Division Oregon Higher Education System

A reader of this column (a minister) asks, "What is the difference between the Julian and Gregorian calendars?" In ancient times many nations tried to run their calendars according to the phases of the moon. If we call the time from one full moon to the next a month, it is impossible to have an even number of months in a year. Extra days were sometimes added but confusion usually resulted so that when the calendar said it was summer, snow might be falling.

We usually say that a year is the time it takes for the earth to make one complete revolution around the sun. This is the sidereal year and from a mechanical viewpoint is the true year. But the historical year is the tropical year, the interval from one "spring begins" to the next "spring begins." This is about 20 minutes shorter than the sidereal year. Space forbids a full explanation here.

Julius Caesar and his astronomer Sosigenes in 45 B. C. decided to put an end to the calendar confusion by establishing a tropical year which was very accurate. It seemed that a year was very close to 365 1/4 days. To end a year part way through a day wasn't practical. Four years would be 1461 days. Said Sosigenes, "Let's have three successive years of 365 days each, then have a fourth (leap year) of 366 days." The vernal equinox ("spring begins") came March 25 in 45 B. C.

This Julian calendar (named for Julius Caesar) made the year actually 11 minutes 14 seconds too long and gave an error of a whole day in 126 years. It is now known that the length of the tropical year is 365 da. 5 hr. 48 min. 46 sec. By the time of the church Council of Nicea in A.D. 325, the vernal equinox had fallen back to March 21.

By A.D. 1582 the equinox came March 11. Pope Gregory and his astronomer Clavius that movement. First of all they advanced the date by ten days so as to bring the equinox back to March 21, the time it occurred in A.D. 325. As for leap years, they were to come every four years as previously, excepting that a century year must be divisible by both four and 400 to be a leap year. Thus 1600 and 2000 are leap years but not 1700, 1800 and 1900. This plan makes the year only 26 seconds too long. Thus an error of only one day will result after 3323 years.

The Eastern calendar adopted by some European countries in 1923 gives a year that is off by only three seconds, or an error of a day in about 30,000 years. This differs from the Gregorian in that century years are leap years only when a division by nine leaves a remainder of either two or six. It will not differ from the Gregorian until A.D. 2800.

Getting Used to College Work Worst Worry of Freshmen

Ashland—Getting used to college work is the major concern of freshmen, Southern Oregon college Director of Guidance Harold A. Cloer reports.

Cloer, in discussing responses of freshmen to a "problem check list," said "not knowing how to study" was the primary problem facing the new students. Other problems, in descending order, were "not spending enough time in study," "need for a part-time job," "getting low grades," "having poor background in some subjects," "easily distracted from work," and many more. A few complained of worry about examinations, the study facilities in dormitories, military service, and preparation to do college work.

The purpose of the survey was to determine the troublesome problems of freshmen and to give individual students and opportunity to work with staff members in solving specific problems, Cloer said. On the basis of the survey a student-faculty committee has organized a "How to Study" seminar.

Typical of summary statements by the students was one by a boy in the liberal arts curriculum, "I can't get as much studying done as I would like to, mainly because of friends coming in to dorm room and talking, and because of trouble concentrating. My troubles are two: studying and money." A teacher education woman student said, "I worry most about my mother and the sacrifices she is making, and secondly about my studies because I don't think I'm getting as much out of college as I should."

APPEAL TROUBLE

New Haven, Conn. — (U.P.) — Mrs. Mary Scilla objected to a \$10 fine on a charge of breach of the peace. She appealed and a higher court sustained the fine and sent her to jail for 30 days.

Sunday, January 9, 1955

MEDFORD (OREGON) MAIL TRIBUNE—FIVE

Both Banks Here Show Increases in '54 Deposit Totals

Deposit and loan figures as of Dec. 31, 1954, were released here yesterday by the managers of the Medford branches of the First National Bank of Portland, and the United States National bank.

Year-end statement of condition figures for the Medford branch of First National show that on Dec. 31, deposits at the branch were \$26,578,476, and loans were \$9,805,366, according to Manager C. E. Hedberg.

At the same time one year ago, the branch reported deposits of \$24,456,320, and loans of \$10,331,896.

Statewide, First National reported new all-time deposit and loan records. Since the Dec. 31, 1953 statement of condition, the First National organization has increased by 20 banking offices. The year-end summary for the

Medford branch of United States National, prepared by Manager Allan F. Perry, showed branch deposits at \$20,125,869. This compared with about \$17,877,000 at the end of 1953, and some \$20,075,000 on Dec. 31, 1952.

Loans Down

The Medford branch of United States National reported loans and discounts totaling \$7,228,697 as of Dec. 31, 1954, down from 1953.

On a statewide basis, United States National marked up a record gain in deposits during 1954. Part of this growth resulted from the merger of the Commercial Bank of Oregon group, and the Bank of Albany,

with U.S. National last November. In addition, U.S. National acquired branches at Dufur and Brookings earlier in the year.

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