

Diary of a Bird Watcher



Saturday, Feb. 13

In spite of the rainy day I took a group of young people to Crater Lake park for a snow trip and found it an interesting experience. There was officially 171 inches on the ground at headquarters. The road was like a canyon with steep, white walls. At headquarters, though, we could hike around a little and the kids finally found a place to toboggan. As for me, I saw some birds in the area of residences for the park personnel. There was a flock of mountain chickadees, as lively and cheery as any place, and with them one brown creeper. Also a gray jay flying into a garage and poking around for any food that might have been thrown out.

One thing we noticed was that wherever there was a hole in the deep snow it was a beautiful light blue in color. I suppose this is from the refraction of the light, something like the blue of the sky.

Sunday, Feb. 14

My friend, Mrs. P. B., called me up about some finches that come to her place. Later I went up to look at them. We tried to figure out whether they were purple or Cassin's finches but had a hard time doing it. The distinctions are difficult to determine in the field. Maybe there were some of each. Mrs. B. has found that pears make a fine bird food even if they are spoiling.

Monday, Feb. 15

For the usual Monday morning trip with J.H. we went first northwest of Central Point on Scenic ave., then turned on Willow Creek rd., across the highway and on down Tolo rd. to Gold Ray dam. Then we back-tracked a little and went up Kirtland rd. to Table Rock rd. and Bybee Bridge, then home via three or four small ponds. On a three hour trip we identified 43 species, which is pretty good for any season, but that is one of our best territories.

Our best find was a pigeon hawk, the size and shape of a sparrow hawk but with different coloration. They are rare enough that we consider ourselves lucky to find one or two a year. The prettiest birds we saw were buffleheads on one of the ponds, the males so pure a white with just a little contrasting black. They disappear quickly in the water with the skill of the best feathered divers.

In the afternoon I got out the old lawn mower and mowed one of our lawns. The wind was so strong it blew the grass away and I didn't have to rake. Some of the other lawns needed it, too, but they had to wait.

Tuesday, Feb. 16

Again the wind was strong. I noticed in the late afternoon when the robins passed over on their way to the roost north of Phoenix, they flew low to the ground, evidently to escape the strongest gusts. Often they fly quite high in the sky. While great numbers of robins use this roost along Bear creek I think that others must stay in local areas, because I see or hear one every morning when I step outside in the early dawn. I still don't hear them singing their early morning song, though.

Wednesday, Feb. 17

Mrs. P. B. called again and said she had settled in her mind that she had both Cassin's and purple finches. She could see them both together and tell the difference in size as well as markings. I accept her judgment. She has all the necessary books and a fine place to study them.

A fox sparrow was singing in our willows. I have seen one a good many times on the place but this is the first time I have heard one sing while on its winter feeding grounds.

Thursday, Feb. 18

A meadowlark came and sang on the highest branch of our big oak tree. Underneath in the branches about a yard away was another meadowlark. It wasn't hard to guess that this was a female, although they look alike. When he flew away she flew with him. It seems to me that the beautiful song and plumage of birds presupposes that the females have an appreciation of the beautiful. Perhaps she enjoyed that fine song even more than I did.

Friday, Feb. 19

As I stepped outside at 6:40 a.m. I heard the loud, clear song of a robin. The next time I stepped out, after breakfast, I heard the first cooing of a dove. This is an even surer sign of spring. Other birds will often sing in the winter, but I have never heard a dove coo until spring. As the poetry of the Bible expresses it: "Lo, the winter is past, the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtle dove is heard in our land."

Film on Heartbeat Shown at Meeting

Members of the Southern Oregon Osteopathic Physicians View Heart association saw the movie, "Disorders of the Heartbeat," at a recent meeting.

The film correlated the audible heart beat patterns of the normal and abnormal heart with electrocardiographic tracing and diagrammatic anatomical - physiological heart activity. The film was made possible by a grant from the Wyeth Laboratories and was shown at the Hawthorne Osteopathic clinic.

Certificates Are Conferred on Four

Salem — The Oregon Apprenticeship Council has conferred the state certificate of completion in skilled trades upon Joseph B. Kidwell, Donald D. Rasmussen, Allen W. Rettman and William L. Robinson all of Medford.

Kidwell, Rasmussen and Rettman received their journeyman rank as carpenters and Robinson completed his training as a dental technician.

Candidates for the journeyman certificates are trained on the job in skill standards which are developed by labor and management representatives of the particular trade.

Preston Takes Over Managers Duties

Ashland — W. G. Preston, former salesman with radio station KMED, Medford, has assumed duties as manager of the Ashland Furniture company, he has announced.

Preston, who lives at 1417 South Ivy st., Medford, assumed the job Feb. 1. The company is owned by H. L. Bush, formerly of Bush Home Furnishings in Medford.

The cable car was invented in San Francisco in 1873 by Andrew S. Hallidie, who couldn't bear to see horses struggling up the city's steep hills.

Local Man's Son Named to CARE Job

New York — Wallace J. Campbell, one of the original planners of the Cooperative for American Remittances to Everywhere, has been named a vice-president of CARE.

Campbell, who has been associated with the Cooperative League since 1934, also served as chairman of the CARE executive committee. He represents the Cooperative League on the CARE board of directors as an alternate to Murray D. Lincoln as president.

The CARE board is made up of 26 member agencies. Campbell's father, A. D. Campbell, and a brother, K. S. Campbell, both live in

Medford, Ore. Another brother, Don J. Campbell, is superintendent of schools at Parkrose, Ore., and a sister, Mrs. Harris Berg, lives in Salem.

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To Start in GH Sanitary Service

Gold Hill — Pat Fahey of Pat's Sanitary Service, Grants Pass, was in Gold Hill last week contacting local residents concerning the new garbage service which will begin Wednesday, March 5.

He plans to be in Gold Hill on Monday, Feb. 24, to call on residents who were not home last week. He stated that in such cases where the man and woman of the home both are working all day, and have not had an opportunity to talk to him about the garbage pickup they may call him collect at Greenwood 9-2391 after 6 p.m.

Fahey has announced that Mrs. Vaughn Whitmore at Whitmore's Variety Store on Second ave., Gold Hill, will collect payments for Pat's Sanitary Service. He said bills for March and April will be mailed to residents April 1st.

Bark, a waste product of the lumber industry, is now being converted into an unusually effective soil builder in a method developed by Armour Research Foundation of the Illinois Institute of Technology.

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