

Diary of a Bird Watcher



Friday, Dec. 26.

At the Mail Tribune I was given a copy of a newspaper from St. Croix in the Virgin Islands which tells about receiving there a shipment of 400 valley quail from Oregon. The paper was sent by Mrs. Burton Daugherty, formerly of Medford, who says that she saw some of these quail on her lawn even before the news story was printed. She says, "What a shock!" But I think it must have been a pleasant one to see these familiar birds in a far away place.

This year I didn't have time to fix an outdoor Christmas tree for the birds but today I finally got around to hanging up a pine cone for them. I took a big sugar pine cone, thrust some peanut butter, suet and seeds into the spaces between the scales, and hung it on a wire so that it would swing freely, away from any branches of the apple tree where it is fastened. My object was to circumvent the jays who take the food from my suet feeder in large chunks. I also hope the house sparrows won't care for the swinging. My expectation is that my favorite little titmouse will get a lot of good from it. I know they don't mind swinging.

Saturday, Dec. 27.

The golden crowned sparrows were the first birds to feed at my pine cone; at least they were the first ones I saw. A jay fluttered its wings so as to pick up a morsel, but did not light. I can't complain if it wants to go to that much effort to get something from it. Later in the day a Bewick's wren came to it. This pleased me very much because I have seldom seen it take any of my food this year.

Sunday, Dec. 28.

Today a titmouse came to my swinging pine cone feeder, so I was happy. Its purpose is being fulfilled. Not a single house sparrow has been seen at it yet, although the golden crowns keep coming regularly.

Nine or ten myrtle and Audubon's warblers were feeding on our front lawn this afternoon. Most of them were myrtle, but I was sure of one with a yellow throat, the distinguishing mark of the Audubon's. I wish I knew what these insectivorous birds find to eat on the lawn.

Later in the afternoon I took a little run in the car out to the southeast side of town to see if I could see any signs of where the robins and starlings go to roost. No luck again, but I did find what I thought was a roost of tricolored blackbirds in a bamboo thicket near Barnett rd. east of the hospital. It was too dark to be sure of the identification but they sounded like tricolored, and a lot of them, too.

Monday, Dec. 29.

I didn't take a morning birding trip because I was saving up time for the Christmas count the next day. Late in the day, though, I went out north of town along Foothill rd. and other roads to see if I could find any indication of where robins and starlings go to roost. I saw one large flock of birds in the air, but lost it in the haze.

Tuesday, Dec. 30.

Along with other bird watchers I was out counting birds or observing them from the house practically all the daylight hours. We were all very happy over the results of the Christmas bird count which were presented for publication in the Wednesday evening Mail Tribune. Our 84 species comprises a pretty representative list of wintering birds in this area. One thing that made me happy about it is that each of our six different parties came in with at least one species not seen by any of the others, so every one could feel that their work was worthwhile.

I want to make a further comment on the large number of starlings found, especially since both the Mail Tribune and I have received inquiries and comments about them. Starlings resemble blackbirds but have much shorter tails. In winter they are heavily speckled. They travel in large flocks but sometimes scatter out into small groups or even singles. Most of the bird watchers are sorry to see their increase. On winter feeding areas they are likely to crowd out the robins to some extent. When they come to nest in our area increasingly they will crowd out bluebirds and other desirable species that also nest in old woodpecker holes.

The column published in the Mail Tribune entitled "Is That So?" stated not long ago that on balance the starlings are more useful than harmful to agriculture. However, like other birds that travel in large flocks, they may at times do considerable damage. I think they are most hated in large cities back east where they make a great dirt and mess where they roost. Efforts to prevent their increase in this area are likely to prove ineffective. Eventually, they will level off and strike a balance with other species.

I have other comments on the Christmas count, but I have already run over my allotted space.

Wednesday, Dec. 31.

I had a call from a woman at a house on Beach st. in Ashland who says a hummingbird has been coming to their place. Since I had to go to Ashland anyhow I went to look for it and saw it several times from her windows. It feeds at the holes in the trunk of a cedar tree which have been made by a sapsucker. A hummingbird in winter is certainly a very rare find. I tentatively identified this one as an "Anna's", a California species which isn't supposed to come nearly this far north, but is generally resident in winter where it is found. — T.M.

Counseling Service Starts Last Month

The final month of the work of the temporary Marriage Counseling Service for Jackson county is now beginning, according to Dr. Harry Danielson, psychiatrist. This service was set up by the Mental Health committee to provide much needed service for a limited time and to demonstrate to the community the importance of providing for a permanent Family Counseling Service with a professional staff.

The procedure is that any couples who wish to avail themselves of this service should call the Child Guidance Clinic, at Spring 3-3174. Appointments will be made through this office with the volunteer counselors who wish to see both marriage partners together for the first interview.

Counseling will continue as long as seems to be necessary or desirable. The function of Dr. Danielson is to hold weekly sessions with the counselors, helping them in the understanding of the problems that have come to their attention.

New cases will be accepted during the whole month of January, but not later. The eight volunteer counselors are all people who have had a background of study and experience in this field.

DECORATIVE GAS LIGHTS
New York (UPI)—More than half a million decorative gas lights made of wrought iron were sold in 1958 for use on lawns and beside driveways, according to the Gas Appliance Manufacturers Association.

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Collection of Best Sellers of Past Years on Library Display

A collection of "Best Sellers of Other Years" now on display in the browsing bins at Jackson County library headquarters is receiving a great deal of attention, according to members of the library staff.

Readers of the younger generation have paused to examine the favorites of former days, and older patrons seem to feel a twinge of nostalgia on finding favorite books that have sometimes been forgotten.

The selection was assembled by Miss Joyce Marlin, assistant librarian in charge of adult services, from a list compiled by Alice P. Hackett, formerly associate editor of "Publishers' Weekly" and author of the book, "Sixty Years of Best Sellers: 1895-1955." Her list, which is available for consultation at the library's information desk, includes two best sellers for each year since 1895, the first year best sellers were announced in this country.

It should be pointed out that this is not a "best book" list for those years and does not imply that the titles listed have stood the test of time. They are simply "best sellers," the books that people liked best at the time they were first published.

Many titles among them have, however, remained popular through the years, as, for instance, "Quo Vadis" one of the two leading titles of 1897, "David Copperfield," a leader in 1899, and "The Virginian," top title in 1902, and the original western novel.

On the other hand titles like "A Lady of Quality," by Frances Hodgson Burnett, and "Tom Grogan," by F. Hopkinson Smith, best-sellers of 1896,

"The Choir Invisible," "Caleb West," and "Red Pottage," by Mary Cholmondeley, are now quite forgotten, librarians and booksellers report. Some other of the turn-of-the-century best-sellers like "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm" and "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch" are no longer considered adult reading but are now to be found in libraries' juvenile collections.

In general, the reading trend for the past six decades shows a turn away from the very sentimental novel to the very realistic.

Around the turn of the century such titles as "Tribby," by du Maurier; "The Prisoner of Zenda," by Hope; and "Sentimental Tommy," by Barrie, were captivating the reading public. Then came "The Crisis," by Churchill;

Court Records
MUNICIPAL COURT
Robert Daniel Shultz, drunk in public, \$50; failure to leave information at the scene of an accident, \$10.
Charles Louis Morave, 516 West Jackson st., drunk in public, \$10.
Frank Louis Minges, transient, drunk in public, \$10.

DISTRICT COURT
Mary E. Payne, passing school bus receiving and discharging children, \$15.
Oscar E. Yoakley, failure to stop, \$10.

Jack A. Rinn Jr., racing on public highway, \$30.
Eugene F. Feldman, failure to transfer title, \$5.
Joseph D. Wickham, overload, \$197.
Hollis W. Hatten, overload, \$152.
Alphonse E. Murphy, violation of basic rule, \$15.

MARRIAGE LICENSE APPLICATIONS
William A. Reidel and Betty Maye Fenton, both Los Angeles.
John Smith Power, 427 North Grape st., and Kathleen Winifred Allingham, 704 West 10th st.
Horace Stuart Brown Jr., Glenwood, Wash., and Dorothy Kay Whitmore, Lindsay, Calif.

"The Virginian," by Wister; and "The Marriage of William Ashe," by Coniston.
In the years after 1915, authors like H. G. Wells, Sinclair Lewis, Henry Adams, and even Emily Post hit the best seller lists, along with Edna Ferber, Pearl Buck, and Lloyd Douglas.

In 1955 "Marjorie Morningstar," by Herman Wouk, and "Gift From the Sea," by Ann Morrow Lindbergh, made the list.

Best sellers for 1956-1957 included "Don't Go Near the Water," by William Brinkley; "The Last Hurrah," by O'Connor; "Arthritis and Common Sense," by Alexander, and "Websters New World Dictionary of the American Language," edited by Guralnik. Current best sellers, which will not necessarily top the list for the year, are "Doctor Zhivago," by Pasternak; "Lolita," by Nabokov; "Only in America," by Golden; and "Aku-Aku," by Heyerdahl.

A copy of Mrs. Hackett's book, "Sixty Years of Best Sellers," which provides some highly entertaining reading on the subject of best-sellers and the reasons for their success, is available at the Jackson County library.

HAUL DOWN FLAG
Swindon, England — (UPI)—Angry residents climbed to the roof of a Swindon movie theater Friday to haul down a Nazi flag being flown to advertise a war film. A crowd besieged the theater while young men tore the flag from the flagstaff and threw it to the ground, where it was trampled in the mud. The theater manager flew the flag beside the Union Jack to advertise the war film "Sea of Sand."

State Capital Newsmen In New Capitol Quarters

Salem — (UPI)—One of the country's smallest United Press International bureaus will move to more sumptuous quarters in the state capitol building here next Tuesday.

The bureau, about the size of a telephone booth, will be transferred from the present ground floor press room of the statehouse to enlarged quarters on the basement floor of the capitol.

Making the move with UPI will be the Associated Press bureau and representatives of The Oregon Journal and the Portland Oregonian.

New facilities will include a television studio for joint use by the Association of Oregon Broadcasters and KOAC-TV, the state-owned television station.

Two radio studios will also be provided for joint use by Oregon Broadcasters and KOAC radio.

Volunteer help from the Oregon unit Masonry association, a labor-management group, is making the move possible before the Legislature convenes Jan. 12. About 15 members of the association are putting up partitions.

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and Wayne Pettitt, Oregonian, will have to give up one advantage in moving, however—a marble-lined latrine.

In return, they will be closer to the governor's private elevator and to the coffee shop.

Gov.-elect Mark Hatfield's new press secretary, Travis Cross, reported that all problems had been solved in the move except how the newsmen would breathe when the

doors are closed on their new bureaus.

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