

AN ITEM OF NATIONAL PARKS HISTORY



Photo Courtesy of Oregon State Highway Commission and Crater Lake Natural History Association

Ranger Naturalist's group, Crater Lake National Park. "The best instance of a CALDERA in U.S.A. is Crater Lake . . . The former mountain, "Mt. Mazama", is conceived to have had about the size . . . of Mt. Shasta". (Pirsson & Schuchert's Geology.)

Ever thinner grow the ranks of those who, in the early 1920s, laid the foundations of what now is called "National Parks Interpretive Movement". It is spreading in State, also in Municipal Parks. Some of the younger generation, (who muchly have improved our older techniques), insist this octogenarian should reduce, to the printed word, details of our *Vierwaldstaettersee* discovery. Also, why we-2 then made several trips, over some years,—trying to build a technique promising appeal to Americans. Elsewhere has been told the Goethes' "Tahoe Laboratory" story, also of political conditions prompting the late Director Mather to request its transfer to Yosemite National Park. This little pamphlet's object is to record experiences of us-2 in those nations in Europe our Swiss friends counseled should be covered toward consummation of our plan.

Mr. Mather, amidst our conferences that memorable 1919 Yosemite Christmas party remarked: "Yosemite is as much a cathedral as Notre Dame or Canterbury, as Chartres or Cologne. It would be sacrilege to convert it into a Coney Island, with, eventually, a gambling casino."

The different overseas field studies accordingly are listed as follows:

I. SWITZERLAND. Because of its dominant LOYALTY coloration, the Swiss data, tho chronologically first, is given last. (It might be noted here however, that the Swiss Agassiz counseled Nature Hikes. He said "*STUDY NATURE, NOT BOOKS*".



Ranger Naturalist and vanguard of his group mounting a "saddle" near 49-Palms. The great Linneaus, father of modern biology, advocated the nature walk. We-2 made pilgrimage to his Upsala University.

II. GERMANY. Part of one European trip was allocated to study German nature guiding. Participants were called, poetically, "*wandervoegel*". (See page 12) We repeatedly joined these guided groups of children, teenagers, adults. The Germans then were some 50 years ahead of U.S.A. in nature study literature. Amazing was the excellence of the printed word, also their canny use of illustrations.



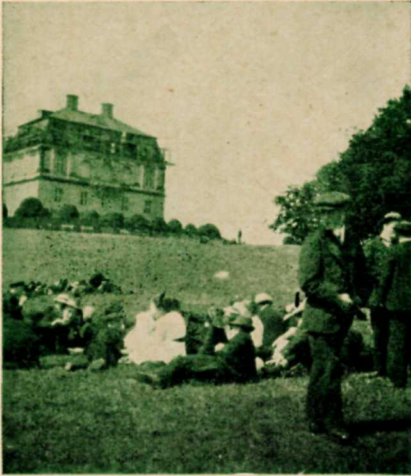
Photo Courtesy Charles Egger of National Parks Association and Everglades N.P. Natural History Association.

Anhinga Trail, Everglades National Park.

Germany had two schools of thought, the naturelovers, the industrialists. On the latter we concentrated most of our German survey. It was with profit. Big Business fundamentally was concerned, sometimes brutally so. Curiously, however, their deductions reminded us of a certain U.S.A. national band directorate. One director was a pure idealist, another a ruthless merchant. Their voting near-

ly always paralleled. Conclusions tallied, tho reached by different routes.

Space limits prevent citing more than this: One, unforgettable, was a famous Cartel executive. (This, before World War I.) He snapped:—"We, overseas, win market after market. Your American China Clipper trade is past history. Your godowns rot. We take account after account from Sheffield, Manchester. The Japanese also cannot compete with us, even up Yangste-kiang. Our success is based upon leadership. We start with *die kleiner Kinder*. We watch them thru adolescence as they go *a-wandervoegling*.* The boy quick enuf to catch color identifying which species he is seeing of our finches,† becomes the man also quick enuf to outwit our competitors in Singapore, Canton, Yokohama."



Teaching blind children the enjoyment of wild bird music. (Royal Deer Park, Klampenborg, Denmark).

III. DENMARK. This tiny nation does many things far ahead of the rest of Mankind. It yielded much of our best Nature-Study-Field-Excursion data. Here, only space for two items:—

(a) TEACHING BLIND CHIL-



Photo Courtesy Yosemite Natural History Assn.

Ranger Naturalist leads group on overnight hike over glacial polished granite. National Parks, under such guidance, are laboratories in glaciation, also vulcanism.

*See *Wandervoegel*, Hildesheim, page 12. (One of our Field Survey photographs.)

†He counted on his fingers: "goldfinch, bullfinch, chaffinch, hawfinch, siskin, greenfinch."

DREN ENJOYMENT OF WILD BIRD MUSIC.

Again, 'twas "sugar-coated medicine". Typical was one trip we-2 made with the sightless was to Royal Deer Park beyond Klampenborg. Reaching a grassy meadow in the beech forest, we squatted on the ground. The nature guide announced: "There will be 3 prizes. You'all have been out here several times. Raise your hand if you recognize a bird's song. Then point direction, name the bird. 1 for common calls, such as bullfinch or chitchat. 2 for thrushes, including the blackbird. 5 for the first nightingale." (Latter eventually was won by an excited goldenhaired, blueeyed girl of 11. Those cerulean orbs, unfortunately, had been sightless from birth.)



"Barnen ser efter vildgassen." (Children looking at wild geese, Copenhagen collection.)

(b) RATING TEACHER-CANDIDATES' ABILITY ON THEIR PUPIL COMPOSITIONS. On one excursion in our Danish survey, the naturalist leader was most painstaking. We-2 could not refrain from comment. He grinned, then confided:—"I'm engaged to the most won-



Photo Courtesy Yosemite Natural History Assn.

Ranger Naturalist's group, Yosemite Meadow. Writer, on such leadership, tries to limit attendance to 20. (Congress never appropriates for enuf Ranger Naturalists to build loyalty on the Swiss plan for U.S.A.'s greatest opportunity.)

derful girl in the world. Our marriage is delayed until I have a job. My fate as to becoming a teacher does not depend on any examination I take. It is decided by compositions to be written by today's kiddies. I just HAVE to make them absorb the facts!"

IV. NORWAY. For some centuries this Northland has had population-overload as against infertile acres. Same forces venture into new niches, even into Antarctic whaling. Thus, to be expected was highly organized exploitation of fjord scenery's assets for tourist income. Summer-resort employment of nature guides impressed us-2. We here became prepared for adult Tahoe trout fishermen later abandoning fly and rod to learn names of trees, wildflowers, birds along trout streams.

As to such backsliding disciples of Izaak Walton: Here is an item from our "Tahoe Laboratory":—A father came to the writer's cabin before breakfast one morning. He had a handful of green twigs. They included lodgepole pine, silver fir, cedar, creek dogwood, chaparral oak. He said: "I implore your aid. My 3 kids think I know everything. I must live up to that hero worship. Born in the city, this is their first High Sierran day. They ask names of trees. I hardly know an oak from an onion."



Quartette of Hardangerfjord lassies. Some of the best nature guiding we-2 saw in Europe was by young women.



A canal-boat trip yielded some of our best Dutch data. Many of the kiddies wore wooden shoes. One tyke, not tall enuf to reach the pump's spout, had his drink of water from his elder sister's sabot.

V. HOLLAND. Is there, worldwide, any sweeter music than the clatter of two-score wooden shoes on a brick-faced dyke when one of the twenty kiddies has made a nature find? This may be a bit of a rarer seaweed on the dyke's ocean face. It may be the season's first blossom of a blood-red poppy, (the very poppy of Flanders Fields). It may be *koenigskreissen*, (blue cornflower), sure to elicit the nature guide's tale of Napoleon*. Or, wonder of wonders, by the side of venerable windmill, a lapwing's nest. The nature guide has a puffing time of it trying to keep up with a score of goldenhaired, blueeyed kiddies, explorers by inheritance.

Dutch emphasis seemed to be almost as practical as neighboring Germany's. One sensed children were being trained to grasp Holland's agriculture depended upon insectivorous birds. Anyone familiar with the excellence, decade after decade, of bulbs from those *polders* grasps that high income per acre can result only from similar high intelligence. No hawk-and-owl hunt in Zeeland!



Ranger Naturalist's Group, Joshua Tree National Monument. This writer has written repeatedly on the amazing progress already made in Desert Research.

VI. SCOTLAND'S "School Treat". The Land o' Oatcakes we-2 reserved for another Atlantic crossing. This, following our Swiss Mentor's advice. Had we crowded too many nations into our fieldwork without winter contemplation of our field studies, we probably would have failed to comprehend the real motive of Scotland's "school treat". Caledonia has a yearning for education on her heather-purple moors that perhaps springs from necessity for trained intelligence. Same spells survival. One thoughtlessly laughs at Scotch jokes. One

*For the Napoleonic legend, dear to Germans and Dutch alike, see writer's "Geogardening" page 108. Same is in most U.S.A.'s libraries.

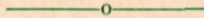
senses, however, in that land of plaided kilts an almost adoration of education.

Thus Scotia's nature-study-field excursion becomes the "School Treat". It is a reward. There are few spiritual experiences equal to accompany a group of lads and lassies collecting wildflowers. These, to press them between old newspapers for the home herbarium. When one tries to analyze the success of the Scot who ventures everywhere, sees him masterful in Hong Kong, in Chile, or up in Yukon Territory, one feels that his ability to survive in the most unpromising environments is due not a little to a training to form the habit of intelligent observation. This commenced when child minds were plastic, remains lifelong.



Photo Courtesy Yosemite Natural History Assn.

Ranger Naturalist Group in Yosemite. Here is where, in the early 1920s, was opened Ranger Naturalists' School.



(An article by Regional Chief of Interpretation National Park Service, Dorr G. Yeager, is 'The National Parks—World's Largest Summer School'. It is in *May American Biology Teacher*. Chief Yeager makes an amazingly-dramatic characterization, telescoped into the above. He pictures our National Parks as 'the largest Summer School in the World, with a 25,000,000 acre campus, and an enrollment of 18,901,244.')



Photo Courtesy Yosemite Natural History Assn.

Ranger Naturalist describing the geological forces that made Yosemite Valley.

VII. AND AGAIN, SWITZERLAND. Added to all above, this writer, more and more, is convinced that the continued urge to make these overseas studies was what first impressed us-2, i.e.: **THE SWISS CONCEPT OF INDOCTRINATION OF LOYALTY.** This, as Yosemite Naturalist Hubbard well says, brings "A SENSE OF DEDICATION".



Photo by Charles Eggert, Courtesy of National Parks Magazine.

Everglades N.P. Nature trails **INEXPENSIVELY** are reachable by automobile from U.S.A.'s heaviest population-concentration. (Hawaii N.P. means costly travel.) Exciting Florida fishing cuts wanderlusting costs. Catfish fries, hush-puppies, conch chowder, turtle steaks, lime pies. In lieu of shooting, photographing alligators, anhingas, rare egrets. Wee bairns learn most snakes, like hawks, owls are assets.



Photo by Abbie Rowe, Courtesy National Parks Service.

One National Parks Magazine's caption comments about a Ranger Naturalist, with boys hand-in-hand: "If he isn't a father, he ought to be . . ." Above photograph of Rocky Mountain N.P.'s Naturalist Sullivan might also illustrate why mighty German industrialists knew of the value of a boy, able to "Catch in its flight, the flash of a bird's color."



Photo by Charles Eggert, Courtesy of National Parks Magazine.

Everglades National Park's Nature trails appropriately are named. "AN-HINGA" is for that feathered missile, swift and efficient, the tropical Water Turkey or Snake Bird . . . "GUMBO LIMBO" is a reminder that in Everglades N.P. can be studied, (as researcher graduate students working for higher degrees already are) strangler fig, vanilla orchid, gumbo limbo, poisonwood, blolly, mangos, also the saw grasses that blocked the Dade expedition. Everglades N.P. also has cabbage palms, saw palmettos, tropical hardwoods, bay trees, perseas or wild avocados, magnolias, custard apples, buttonwoods, airplants, even royal palms.



Ranger Naturalist helps long distance hikers to interpret government contour map. On some hikes by us-2 (150, 200, even 250 miles) we saw no one for days. Such maps, plus our compass, were our only guides. Such advice from an occasional Ranger Naturalist now is muchly appreciated.



(Ranger Naturalist Dr. Hubert Jenkins discussing a Western tanager in Kings Canyon National Park.)

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NATURE LOVERS . . . OR LITTERBUGS. At University of Upsala, (where the Linnean Garden affectionately is continued), we-2 tried to fathom, on the terrain that very great leader had trod, what was behind his philosophy of his students taking children on nature walks. It paralleled Agassiz's “Study Nature, Not Books.”—Home-ward bound, we tarried at University of Lund. At its railroad station at 6:30 A.M., we were the only passengers. Then came a boy of about 10. He bought a chocolate bar at an automat. He took its wrappings to a waste can a half block away, returned to also wait for the train. No litterbugs in Lund! Upon the Nature Study Field Excursion may depend whether U.S.A. raises Litterbugs or Nature Lovers.

Yosemite Superintendent Dr. Carl Russel, wrote: “It is no exaggeration to say that Mr. and Mrs. C. M. Goethe personally brought into our educational scheme a distinct means of broadening patriotism, of advancing understanding of the principles of American democracy and of inspiring love of country.”



“Wandervogel” (Wandering Birds) Hilesheim, Germany.

Wordsworth wrote:—“A primrose on the river’s brim, yellow primrose was to him, AND IT WAS NOTHING MORE!” If we can raise a generation biologically literate, will we not have a different type of voting in matters of conservation? Do we not need to increase vastly the number of those whom Pasteur described as having “the prepared mind”?

Everglades National Park is becoming part of a great outdoor Tropical University. (Note also plans for Virgin Islands Nat’l. Park) . . . Venezuela already has created Pittier National Park. Mexico has a chain of National Parks. Conservationists are moving to save the last bits of Mexican Cloud Forest with their quetzals, the Birds of Freedom.