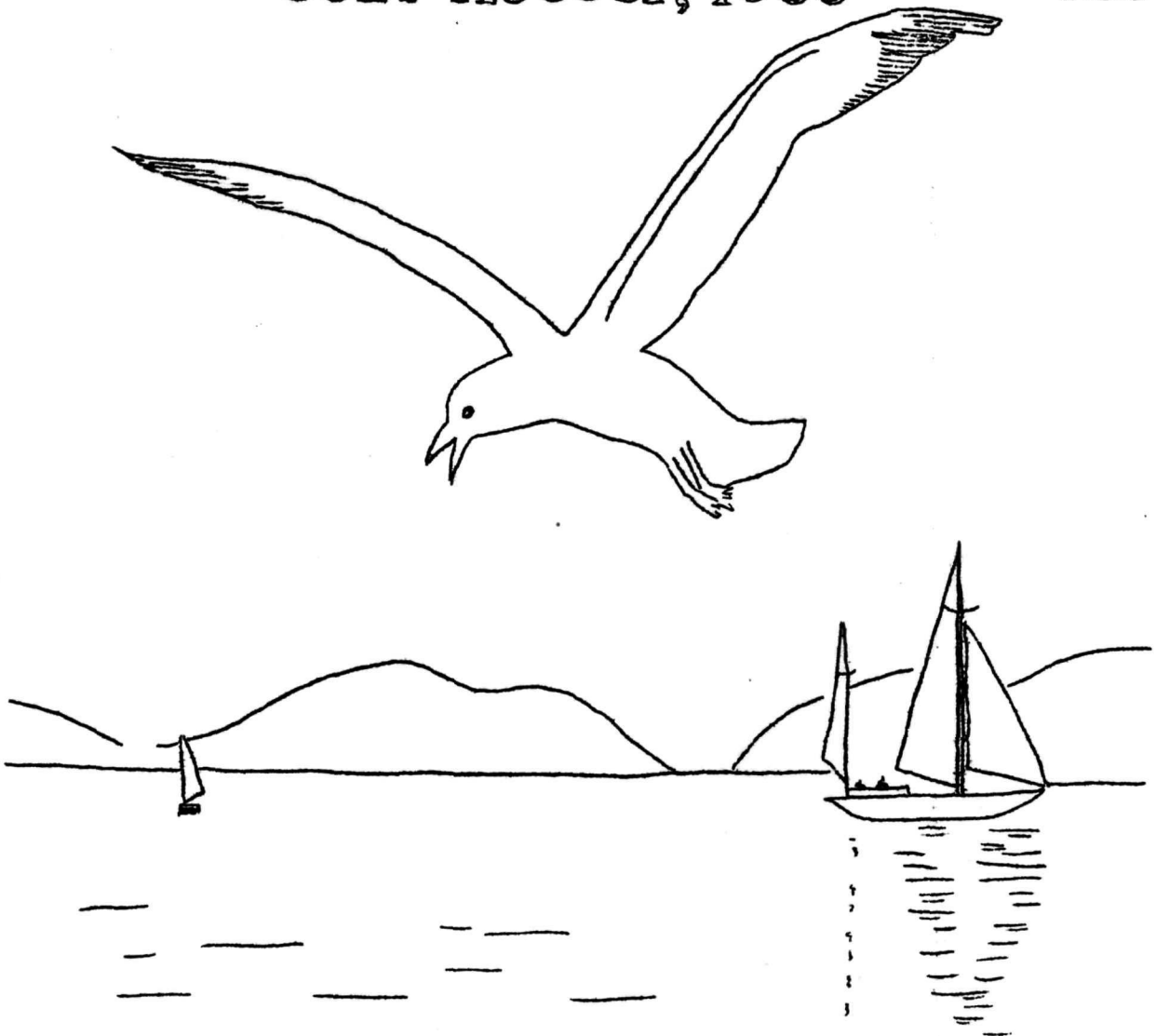


NATURE NOTES FROM ACADIA

VOL.2

JULY-AUGUST, 1933

NO.3



ACADIA NATIONAL PARK
BAR HARBOR, MAINE

Department of the Interior; Office of National Parks, Buildings & Reservations

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF NATIONAL PARKS, BUILDINGS,
AND RESERVATIONS.
ACADIA NATIONAL PARK
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Volume 2

July-August, 1933

Number 3

Beginning this summer, the Ranger-Naturalist Service in Acadia National Park becomes a permanent year-around service. "Nature Notes from Acadia," in accordance with this announcement, becomes a year-around publication and will be issued bimonthly. This, the July-August, 1933, number is the first of the bimonthly issues.

The purpose of this bulletin is to make those who are interested in Acadia better acquainted with its plant and animal life and with its geologic story. Publications wishing to use these notes should give credit to Nature Notes from Acadia.

George B. Dorr, Superintendent
B. L. Hadley, Asst. Supt.

Arthur Stupka, Temporary Jr. Park Naturalist, Editor

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WILD ANIMAL REPORT FOR 1933*

The area of Mount Desert Island, on which Acadia National Park is located, is approximately 100 square miles, and about one-sixth of this lies within the park boundaries. A glance at the map will show how irregular these boundaries are and how closely this island lies to the mainland. These facts must be borne in mind when estimating the numbers of the larger fur-bearing animals in Acadia National Park.

Mr. O. Y. Thompson, permanent ranger in Acadia National Park, and Mr. Lyle E. Smith, state game warden for this region, together are undoubtedly better informed regarding animal numbers here than any two men. They have given me the following information, which I regard as as accurate as possible:

Virginia White-tailed Deer - 200 on the island, of which 50 are within the park boundaries. Number fairly stationary.

Beaver - 75 on the island, of which 10 are within the park boundaries.

Red Fox - 50 on the island, of which 10 are within the park boundaries. Number fairly stationary.

Muskrat - 300 on the island, of which 50 are within the park boundaries. Number increasing.

Raccoon - 10 on the island, of which 2 are within the park boundaries. A rare mammal here.

Skunk - 250 on the island, of which 40 are within the park boundaries. Number increasing slightly.

Woodchuck - 20 on the island, of which 3 are within the park boundaries. Slowly increasing in number.

Gray Squirrel - 20 on the island, of which 3 are within the park boundaries. Slowly increasing in number.

Mink - 40 on the island, of which 7 are within the park boundaries.

Varying Hare - 500 on the island, of which 80 are within the park boundaries. Increasing appreciably in number.

The approximate numbers of smaller mammals, such as mice, shrews, and certain species of squirrels, are not known.

- Temporary Park Naturalist

* This article represents the annual wild animal report submitted by the Temporary Park Naturalist of Acadia National Park to the Director of the Office of National Parks, Buildings, and Reservations.

THE MASSACHUSETTS AUDUBON SOCIETY'S LIST OF MT. DESERT ISLAND BIRDS

For a period of five consecutive years, 1926-1930 inclusive, members of the Massachusetts Audubon Society spent the first two weeks in July at the Appalachian Mountain Club Camp on Mt. Desert Island. During each of these two-week periods, bird lists were compiled, and the number of species seen varied from 96 in 1927 to 81 in 1928 and 1930. The lists are of special interest in that they represent a tabulation of those birds which the summer visitors to Acadia National Park are liable to see.

A compilation of the five lists shows that a total of 121 species are represented. As these lists are confined to birds seen only during the first half of July, it is reasonable to assume that approximately 150 species may be seen on the island in the course of a summer.

Through kind permission granted by Mr. Winthrop Packard, Secretary of the Massachusetts Audubon Society, we are enabled to make use of these lists for "Nature Notes from Acadia." For the sake of ready reference the five lists have been made into one. The number which follows each species represents the number of years the species have been reported. The classification is according to the check list recognized at the time the separate lists were compiled.

Loon - 5
Black Guillemot - 5
Great Black-backed Gull - 1
Herring Gull - 5
Common Tern - 5
Arctic Tern - 3
Leach's Petrel - 5
Double-crested Cormorant - 3
Mallard - 1
Black Duck - 4
American Scoter - 4
White-winged Scoter - 4
Great Blue Heron - 5
Black-crowned Night Heron - 1
Woodcock - 3
Least Sandpiper - 5
Semipalmated Sandpiper - 3
Greater Yellowlegs - 2
Spotted Sandpiper - 5
Canadian Ruffed Grouse - 5
Mourning Dove - 1
Marsh Hawk - 2
Sharp-shinned Hawk - 2
Cooper's Hawk - 3
Red-shouldered Hawk - 2
Broad-winged Hawk - 1
Bald Eagle - 5



Sparrow Hawk - 2
Osprey - 3
Short-eared Owl - 1
Barred Owl - 2
Screech Owl - 1
Great-horned Owl - 1
Yellow-billed Cuckoo - 1
Black-billed Cuckoo - 3
Belted Kingfisher - 5
Hairy Woodpecker - 5
Downy Woodpecker - 5
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker - 1
Northern Flicker - 5
Whip-poor-will - 4

(continued on next page)

Nighthawk - 5
 Chimney Swift - 5
 Ruby-throated Hummingbird - 4
 Kingbird - 5
 Phoebe - 4
 Olive-sided Flycatcher - 2
 Wood Pewee - 3
 Alder Flycatcher - 2
 Least Flycatcher - 4
 Blue Jay - 4
 Northern Raven - 1
 American Crow - 5
 Bobolink - 1
 Cowbird - 3
 Red-winged Blackbird - 4
 Meadowlark - 4
 Baltimore Oriole - 2
 Rusty Blackbird - 1
 Bronzed Grackle - 1
 Pine Grosbeak - 1
 Purple Finch - 5
 American Crossbill - 1
 White-winged Crossbill - 2
 American Goldfinch - 5
 Pine Siskin - 2
 English Sparrow - 5
 Vesper Sparrow - 5
 Savannah Sparrow - 5
 Grasshopper Sparrow - 2
 Sharp-tailed Sparrow - 2
 White-crowned Sparrow - 2
 White-throated Sparrow - 5
 Chipping Sparrow - 5
 Field Sparrow - 3
 Slate-colored Junco - 5
 Song Sparrow - 5
 Swamp Sparrow - 5
 Fox Sparrow - 1
 Towhee - 3
 Cliff Swallow - 5
 Barn Swallow - 5
 Tree Swallow - 5
 Bank Swallow - 5
 Cedar Waxwing - 5
 Red-eyed Vireo - 5
 Warbling Vireo - 4
 Blue-headed Vireo - 2
 Black and White Warbler - 5
 Nashville Warbler - 4
 Tennessee Warbler - 2
 Northern Parula Warbler - 5
 Yellow Warbler - 5
 Black-throated Blue Warbler - 5
 Myrtle Warbler - 5
 Magnolia Warbler - 5
 Chestnut-sided Warbler - 5
 Bay-breasted Warbler - 3
 Black-poll Warbler - 2
 Blackburnian Warbler - 3
 Black-throated Green Warbler - 5
 Pine Warbler - 3
 Oven-bird - 5
 Mourning Warbler - 2
 Maryland Yellowthroat - 5
 Canada Warbler - 5
 American Redstart - 5
 Catbird - 4
 House Wren - 2
 Winter Wren - 5
 Brown Creeper - 5
 White-breasted Nuthatch - 5
 Red-breasted Nuthatch - 4
 Chickadee - 5
 Golden-crowned Kinglet - 3
 Wood Thrush - 1
 Veery - 5
 Olive-backed Thrush - 5
 Hermit Thrush - 5
 American Robin - 5
 Bluebird - 5

INNOCENT HAWK?

Early in August while a group of hikers whom I had guided to the summit of Huguenot Head paused along the trailside to listen to the singing of a Red-eyed Vireo, a Sharp-shinned Hawk suddenly flashed upon the scene in close pursuit of some small frightened bird. We all had an unusually good look at this aggressive little "bullet hawk" who dashed this way and that through the leafy crowns of a grove of birch trees. He disappeared as suddenly as he came, leaving us to wonder whether he had or had not been successful in his chase.

When we put sentiment aside, is not the Sharp-shin as innocent as the smaller songbird who makes sallies after the insect folk? The smaller bird, in the course of a day, takes many more lives. The sight my group beheld gave me a splendid opportunity to discuss the hawk problem.

- Temporary Park Naturalist

PLANTS OF THE OCEAN FRONT

In view of the uniformity of conditions which prevail along a narrow strip of land just beyond the reach of the highest tides, it is not surprising to find that many of our seaside plants have an extensive distribution. Sea Lovage (*Ligusticum scoticum*), Beach Pea (*Lathyrus maritimus*), and Seaside Plantain (*Plantago maritima*) are plants of northern distribution on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts as well as on the northern coasts of Europe and Asia. The Sea Lavender (*Limonium carolinianum*) is found very close to the restless ocean from Labrador to Florida and Texas while the Seaside Goldenrod (*Solidago sempervirens*) grows still farther south into Mexico and is found on the Bermuda coast.

All the above are common plants along the Mt. Desert Island shoreline. In August the Seaside Goldenrod with its large panicles of closely-clustered golden flowers presents a lovely contrast to the blue of the sea and to the color of the rocks into whose crevices it sends its roots. The remaining above-mentioned plants display their blooms earlier in the summer, although some will continue to flower into September. The natives know the Seaside Plantain by the name "Goose Tongue" and they make use of the thick crisp salty leaves for greens.

- Margaret Stupka



SEASIDE PLANTAIN x $\frac{1}{2}$

WHITE-FOOTED MOUSE

Unless you camp out or take an occasional walk through the woods at night, you probably have not become acquainted with White-foot. Because the word "mouse" to the layman means an animal identical in form and habit with the very undesirable house mouse - a fur-bearer foreign to our country - I hesitate to call White-foot a mouse, even though he is a member of that group. For to know White-foot is to change one's conception of those very small gnawing animals which we call "mice."



About 100 species of White-footed Mice are to be found on our North American continent, and all are readily distinguished by their snow-white feet and under parts. Their eyes and ears are large, and in their habits they approximate the squirrels. Their food consists largely of seeds and grain which they frequently store away. In many sections of the United States they are by far the most abundant of the fur-bearing animals. In a report on the wild life of the Yosemite National Park area one authority makes the statement that there are more of these mice than all the other mammals combined, while the same could be said of many extensive areas in our eastern Adirondaacks.

In Acadia National Park our White-footed representative is a large, long-tailed, big-eared variety whose color is predominantly grayish above. Being nocturnal, these attractive mice are rarely seen although they are common throughout most of Mt. Desert Island. In captivity I have found them easy to keep.

The White-footed mouse ranges from Central America to the arctic circle, and is to be found from coast to coast. Roosevelt, in his "African Game Trails," describes mice "looking like our white-footed mice" which he saw in the course of his travels, but the true White-footed or Deer Mice are known to be confined to the North American continent. They occur at sea level and below it (Death Valley) and some species go to the very summits of some of our highest western mountains. I recall when two years ago a party of which I was a member found a young White-foot at an elevation of 11,000 feet on the slopes of Mt. Dana, Yosemite's second-highest mountain.

In his "Animal Life of Carlsbad Cavern," Dr. Vernon Bailey writes: "The only mammals living their entire lives, being born and reaching old age, in the dark depths of the great cavern, are the cave mice, or the Texas form of the White-footed mice, near relatives of our eastern white-footed or deer mice. How they find their way about or locate their food in the utter darkness is still a cave mystery."

Being a common rodent throughout much of its range, White-foot has many enemies. Hawks and owls take great toll while weasels, minks, skunks, foxes, wild cats, badgers, and other predators feed upon it to greater or less extent.

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Unlike the dark stocky-bodied meadow mouse White-foot does not gnaw the bark and roots of young orchard trees while the amount of grain which it may consume is usually insignificant. Then too, being at home only in the wild, it does not enter the human habitations of our towns and cities. For these reasons its economic significance is slight. If, however, you come to know this beautiful large-eyed wild mouse its slight economic significance will disappear altogether and you too will look upon it as one of the most interesting fur-bearers of our woodlands. It is that way with all wild life - the more we know about it the more fascinating it becomes.

- Temporary Park Naturalist

NOTES ON MT. DESERT ISLAND SNAKES

On July 25 a fine adult specimen of the Ring-necked Snake (*Diadophis punctatus edwardsii*) was caught in the woods between Huguenot Head and Champlain Mountains. It was the first of its kind I had seen on Mt. Desert Island in two summer seasons, although having collected it in the Belgrade Lakes region of Maine in 1929. In the years which I spent in the hills of southeastern Ohio, the Ring-necked Snake proved to be one of the commonest of reptiles.

This species is strikingly marked, the dorsal color being a uniform dark slaty-gray while the belly and the neck-ring are a bright orange-yellow. The snake is slender and small, usually under 18 inches in length. It is secretive in habits, dwelling under rocks, pieces of bark, etc.

From August 9 through 11 a number of Red-bellied Snakes (*Storeria occipitomaculata*) were born to adult females kept in the terrarium at our temporary museum quarters. Last summer one of our captive Red-bellied Snakes gave birth to four young on August 23 while on the 26th another female brought a small litter into the world. This snake is the smallest of the reptiles native to Mt. Desert Island. In some individuals the dorsal coloration is a rich brown while others are slaty gray above. The undersurface in either case is a bright vermilion, hence the common name of this species.

The Smooth-scaled Green Snake (*Liopeltis vernalis*), a slender species of small size, is one of the commonest snakes in Acadia National Park. On July 29, last summer, 30 eggs of this snake were found and these began to hatch on August 17. This year the eggs laid by a captive female hatched on August 22.

The sight of a starving house cat eating a green snake was had by members of the Appalachian Mountain Club who, in mid-July, accompanied me on a nature walk from their camp site at Echo Lake. The cat, very thin and so hungry that it paid no attention to us, had evidently caught the snake only a short time before. I succeeded in recovering all that remained of the luckless reptile, enough to convince me that the cat had actually caught and killed this rather unusual kind of prey. It was evidently a matter of eat anything or else starve, and the cat spent no time in deliberation. Upon returning the piece I had rescued from the animal's jaws, the cat ate it, head and all, voraciously.

- Temporary Park Naturalist

A TIMELY PHOTOGRAPH

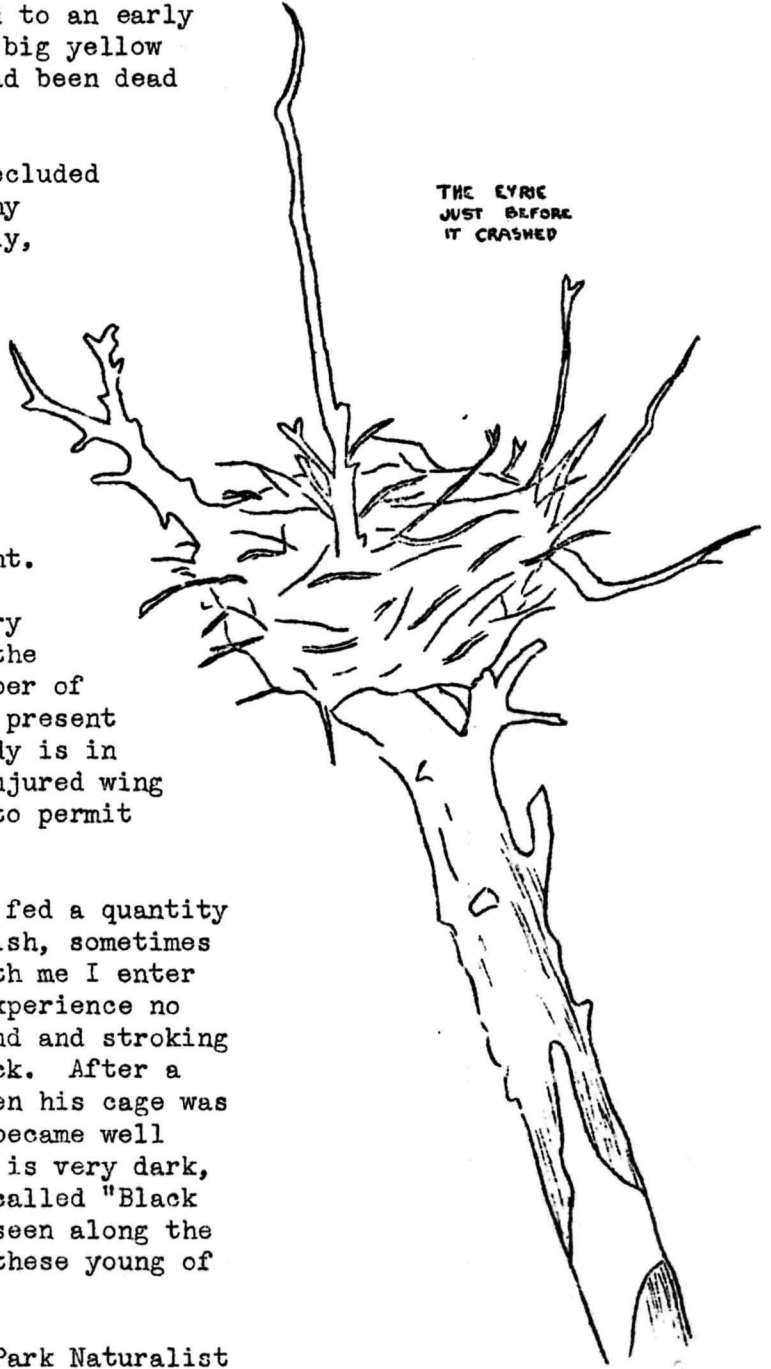
The last number of "Nature Notes from Acadia" (June, 1933) contained an account of an ill-fated nest of the Bald Eagles. On the day I first saw the eyrie I took a single snapshot of it, having no premonitions of the tragedy which came on the wings of the night wind. The nest, one of many years' standing, was doomed to an early destruction, however, since the big yellow birch in which it was cradled had been dead for many years.

Since the eyrie was in a secluded part of a heavily wooded area, my companion and I were, undoubtedly, the last to see, let alone photograph, the big nest. That night it went down before a fierce gale and carried its two helpless feathered occupants with it. Fortunately, the photograph proved to be a good one, and from it I have made the rough sketch which appears on the right.

The account of the discovery of the eaglets nine days after the crash, appeared in the June number of "Nature Notes from Acadia." At present the lone survivor of this tragedy is in perfect health, but his badly injured wing has not recovered sufficiently to permit flight.

Once a day the big bird is fed a quantity of raw meat or freshly-caught fish, sometimes both. If no other person is with me I enter his spacious cage and usually experience no trouble feeding him from the hand and stroking the feathers on his head and neck. After a period of molt in early July when his cage was littered with down, the eaglet became well feathered out. Now the plumage is very dark, almost black in color. The so-called "Black Eagles" which are occasionally seen along the Maine seacoast are undoubtedly these young of the Bald Eagle.

THE EYRIE
JUST BEFORE
IT CRASHED



- Temporary Park Naturalist