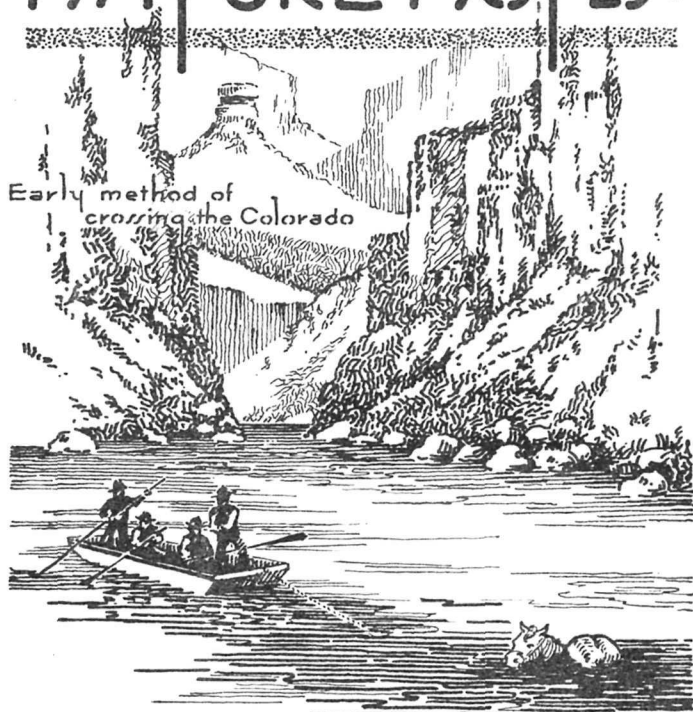


GRAND CANYON NATURE NOTES.

Early method of
crossing the Colorado



After photo by Kolb Bros.

Vol. 8. No. 8.

November, 1933

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GRAND CANYON NATURE NOTES

Volume 8, Number 8.

November 1933.

Office of National Parks,
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Grand Canyon Natural
History Association
Grand Canyon, Arizona

This publication is issued monthly for the purpose of recording observations and of making known the results of research and scientific investigation in the Grand Canyon region in the fields of natural history, history and related subjects. It is published by the Natural History Association for the Grand Canyon National Park. Membership in this Association is \$1.00 per year and includes a subscription to Nature Notes. Additional copies of Nature Notes may be obtained at 10¢ each by addressing The Grand Canyon Natural History Association, Grand Canyon, Arizona

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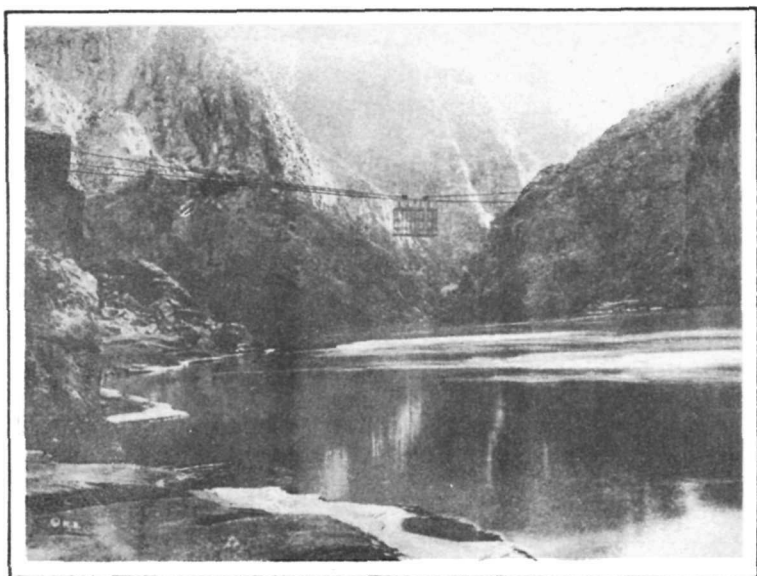
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Yesterdays on the Kaibab Trail and Phantom Ranch

By H. H. Waesche, Blacksburg, Virginia.

I N the early days, crossing the Grand Canyon was a rather hazardous undertaking. Trails were few in number and poorly defined, and the crossing of the Colorado River was very difficult. Only at a few places was it even possible to get across, and at these places it was necessary for horses to swim behind the boat in going to the opposite side. One of the most accessible places for crossing the river was near the mouth of Bright Angel Creek, at a point where the Kaibab suspension bridge has since been constructed. It was a natural place to cross because of comparatively easy access from both North and South Rims; from the former via Bright Angel Canyon, and from the latter by way of Pipe Creek Canyon.

At about the beginning of the present century a small company of Mormons developed a plan to put a cable tram across the Colorado River as an aid in transporting tourists on this portion of their trip from the North Rim to the South Rim of the Grand Canyon. A man by the name of D. Wooley was responsible for the first attempt to put through such a project. He personally advanced five thousand dollars for cable and trail construction. Wooley's son-in-law, Dave Rust, was put in charge of work on both the trail and cable crossing. Some work was done as early as 1903. The cable was taken down as far as the Blue Lime (Redwall) in that year. Rolled into two coils it was transported into the Canyon on the backs of two mules, each carrying one of the coils. It was a difficult process with two mules fastened together, but in spite of this handicap only one mule was killed in the enterprise. Two years were spent, 1905 to 1907, in improving the trail, and finally in 1907 the cable was placed across the river. A small cage, large enough to carry a mule, was suspended from the cable, and by means of other cables could be trammed back and forth above the river.

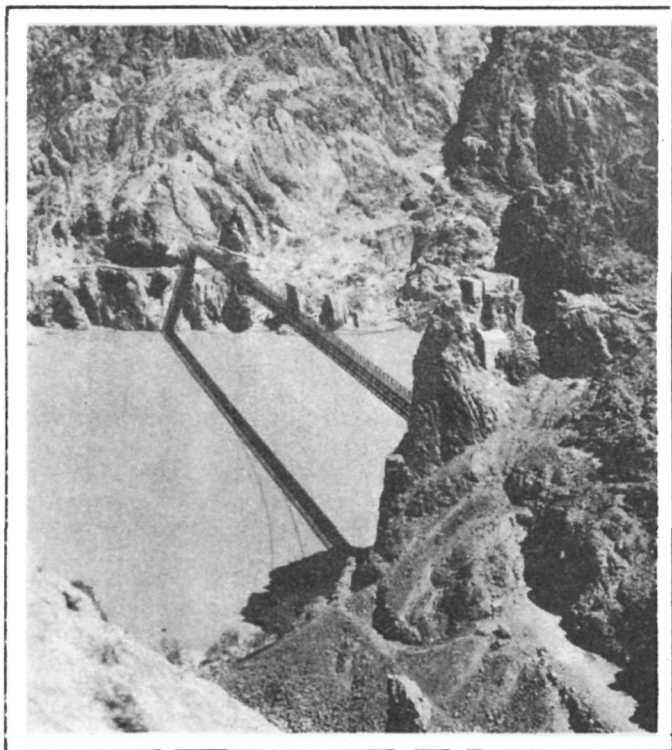


KOLE BROS PHOTO

Crossing the Colorado by cable tram 1917

Coincident with this work, a camp was established near the mouth of Bright Angel Creek, later known as Rust Camp. The Rust party started irrigation and was responsible for the planting of the trees now found in that locality. Rust also did some work on the southside of the river, building a trail from his cable crossing up the inner gorge to the Tonto Plateau. From there he continued it around by way of Burro Spring to the Bright Angel Trail which has been built about 1891 by Cameron Brothers, Pete Berry and others.

In 1913 ex-President Theodore Roosevelt made Rust Camp his headquarters while on a hunting expedition in the vicinity. From that time until about 1925 it was called Roosevelt Camp. Since then it has been known as Phantom Ranch, and is now an overnight stopping place for tourists who make trail trips into the Canyon. The name Phantom Ranch is derived from the nearby Phantom Canyon. The ranch is equipped in an up to date manner with a lodge and cabins.



GRANT PHOTO

Crossing the Colorado by bridge 1.9.2.8.

The old cable crossing was used until 1921, when a rather flimsy suspension bridge of the swaying variety took its place. In 1928 the National Park Service constructed a substantial steel suspension bridge near the location of the old one. This bridge is suspended by eight cables, each an inch and a half in diameter, which are anchored to the rock walls on each side of the Inner Gorge. Other cables prevent any horizontal motion. Along with this a much improved trail now extends from the North Rim to the South Rim, with the bridge across the river as its connecting link. The entire unit forms the Kaibab Trail, wonderful both for the scenic beauty it affords and as an engineering feat.

An Outrage

By Paul Kraus, Ranger Naturalist.

A most interesting little creature is the Pygmy Nuthatch. His courage is out of all proportion to his diminutive size; he seems to know no fear. That is just why three chipmunks decided not to remain any longer in a certain hole in a dead Quaking Aspen tree in the camp grounds on the North Rim.

The nuthatches had just reestablished the routine of family life in a home which Ranger Laws says they had occupied for the last four years. While the parent nuthatches were absent on one of their many journeys, three chipmunks spied their home and decided to take it over as their own. Moving in they found several of the younger members of the nuthatch family at home. Without any ceremony, they immediately proceeded to eat them.



When the parent nuthatches returned, naturally a great furor arose. Seeing the irate birds outside, the chipmunks decided it was time to leave the place, but when they attempted to climb out they found that they were trapped by the two vigilant parents. Every time a chipmunk would rise up to peer about for a possible chance to get away, the angered birds would rain a torrent of vicious pecking on its head, particularly on its nose.

This onslaught continued until one of the captive chipmunks was killed, with its head pecked into a bloody mass and its nose completely gone. Apparently the other two chipmunks finally escaped. Thus was the savage intrusion of the home of the nuthatches revenged.

Ranger Laws reports other interesting observations which further qualify the Pygmy Nuthatch as a spunky little fellow. He has seen them at winter feeding racks on the North Rim ruff their feathers and prance about to frighten away an intruding Kaibab White-tailed Squirrel. Although ordinarily friendly little birds, they are nevertheless creatures which will show the greatest spirit of fight, and are well able to care for themselves when imposed upon.



The Naming of the Grand Canyon

By Barbara H. McKee, Grand Canyon.

THE Grand Canyon was first seen by white men in 1540, when a scouting party in charge of Don Garcia Lopez de Cardenas was sent out by Coronado from the Indian village of Zuni. However, they seem to have left the great chasm unnamed. Cardenas¹ realized that the river at the bottom was one that had already been discovered and crossed by Melchior Diaz, then named the Tison (Firebrand) river, but he did not refer to the canyon by any name.

Grand Canyon Nature Notes.

In 1858 Lieutenant J. C. Ives and J. S. Newberry, geologist, having completed a survey of the Lower Colorado River, visited this huge gorge and wrote of it under the names of "Big Canon" and "Great Canon". It is interesting to note what Ives² had to say about this country: "The region last explored is, of course, altogether valueless. It can be approached only from the south, and after entering it there is nothing to do but leave. Ours has been the first, and doubtless will be the last party of whites to visit this profitless locality. It seems intended by nature that the Colorado River, along the greater portion of its lonely and majestic way, shall be forever undisturbed."

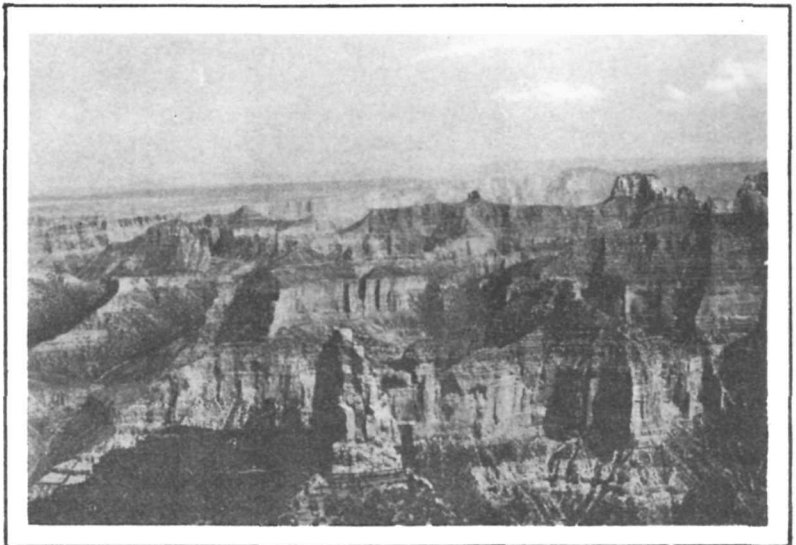
It was only a few years later, however, in 1869, that Major John Wesley Powell explored the length of the Green and Colorado Rivers. He passed through the great canyon in the course of the journey, and it was he who gave it the name Grand Canyon, probably shortly after this trip. Mr. Frederick S. Dellenbaugh, who was one of Major Powell's topographers on his second trip, in 1871 and 1872, tells³ how Powell used that name in his report following the journey, and how it was not until his topographers made the first preliminary map of the region in the winter of 1872 and 1873 that the name was recorded on a map.

The Painted Desert is another region, the name of which has often been attributed to the early Spaniards who came into this part of the country. Mr. Dellenbaugh⁴ has shown this also to be incorrect, and cites the exact place in Lieutenant Ives' report on his exploration of the Colorado River. In the Section on Geology, pages 76 and 86, written by Dr. Newberry, geologist of the expedition, we find the region between the Little Colorado River and the Hopi mesas called the "Painted Desert", due to the colorful and strange scenery of that country. So it seems that it was really Dr. Newberry who gave the name.

According to Dr. Harold S. Colton⁵ of the Museum of Northern Arizona in Flagstaff, the Painted Desert is now defined as embracing the valley of the Little Colorado River from the neighborhood of Holbrook to the Grand Canyon, and

extending southeast for approximately 140 miles.

1. Winship, George Parker, Translation of the Journey of Coronado, A. S. Barnes & Co., p. 35, 1904.
2. Ives, Lieut. J. C., Report Upon the Colorado River of the West, Senate Ex.Doc. 36th Congress, 1st Session, p. 110, 1861.
3. Dellenbaugh, F. S., "Naming the Grand Canyon", Science, Vol. 77, No. 1997, p. 349, April 1933.
4. Dellenbaugh, F. S., "The Painted Desert", Science, Vol. 76, No. 1976, p. 437, Nov. 1932.
5. Colton, Harold S. "Days in the Painted Desert and the San Francisco Mountains", 1932, page 1.



GRANT PHOTO

A North Rim view toward the Painted Desert

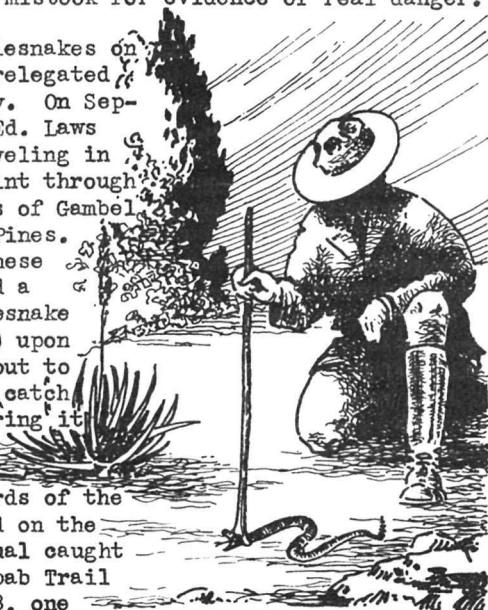
Rattlesnakes *on the* Canyon Rim

By Donald Edward McHenry, Junior Naturalist.

MUCH interest has been shown by park visitors over the possible presence of rattlesnakes on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon. Every once in a while, some panic-stricken person reports having killed such a snake. Such persons frequently describe just how the "rattlesnake" rattled when they approached him unexpectedly. These people appear disappointed when they learn that their "rattler" is none other than the harmless and decidedly beneficial Bull or Utah Gopher Snake (*Pituophis cantenifer rutilus*, Van Denburgh) a snake frequently found on this rim, and that the rattling which they heard was nothing but the hissing of this snake which, in their excitement, they mistook for evidence of real danger.

All reports of rattlesnakes on the North Rim cannot be relegated to this mistaken identity. On September 26, 1933, Ranger Ed. Laws and a companion were traveling in the vicinity of Swamp Point through country covered by clumps of Gambel Oaks and Western Yellow Pines. Passing through one of these groves of oaks they spied a three foot Prairie Rattlesnake (*Crotalus o. confluentus*) upon which Ranger Laws was about to step. They were able to catch the specimen alive and bring it in for mounting.

The only other records of the Prairie Rattlesnake found on the North Rim are an individual caught near the head of the Kaibab Trail during the summer of 1928, one



found near Powell's Saddle in the summer of 1931 and one reported at Jacobs Lake some years ago.

As if to balance this most recent record from the North Rim, Ranger Naturalist Paul Kraus brought a juvenile specimen of the Prairie Rattlesnake from the vicinity of Havasupai Point on the South Rim. These recent records should not lead our readers to conclude that rattlesnakes are becoming more numerous on the rims of the Grand Canyon.

The Hopi Cloud Serpent



Are There Any Bears Here?

By Edwin D. McKee, Park Naturalist.

ONE of the outstanding features of the animal life of several of our National Parks in the west is the bear. Because of this, many visitors to the Grand Canyon National Park ask the question: "Are there any bears here?" The answer is "No", except for an occasional transient along the South Rim on its way through the park to another region.* In view of this, the following observation is of considerable interest.

Mrs. Charles D. Walcott, wife of the late Dr. Walcott, who did much pioneer geological work in the Grand Canyon, recently called attention to an interesting animal record of the past century. She told about a trip upon which her husband came face to face with a grizzly bear on a ledge down among the Algonkian rocks of eastern Grand Canyon. Both bear and man apparently were frightened by the unexpectedness of the meeting, and each made a hasty retreat towards the direction from which he had come. This record of the early '80s, even though vague, is of especial interest since no grizzly bears

have been reported from the Grand Canyon before. Mrs. Walcott felt that there was no question concerning the identity of the animal.

- * Bare Facts about Bear Tracks, by George L. Collins, Grand Canyon Nature Notes, Vol. 5, No. 6, June, 1931.



Miscellany

During the absence of Park Naturalist Edwin D. McKee Acting Park Naturalist Donald Edward McHenry is most ably assisted by Ranger Naturalist Louis Shellbach. Mr. Shellbach is a fortunate temporary addition to the naturalist force, being an archaeologist of considerable experience and ability. As a member of the Museum of the American Indian in New York, he accompanied M. R. Harrington on his expedition to the Lost City in southern Nevada, 1924-5-6, conducted the Idaho Archaeological Expedition in 1929, and led an expedition excavating Indian mounds in northern Wisconsin in 1930. In 1932-33 he was a member of the Cogle Expedition to the interior of Panama for the Peabody Museum of Harvard University. Mr. Shellbach is doing some valuable reworking of the exhibits at our Wayside Museum of Archaeology.

The first Brewer's Sparrow, *Spizella b. breweri*, to be recorded from the South Rim of Grand Canyon was a female found dead in front of the general store on September 23. We now have migration records of this species from both rims and the bottom of Grand Canyon.

Louis Shellbach

A large Mountain Sheep ram (*Ovis canadensis nelsoni*) seen in the neighborhood of Havasupai Point on the South Rim of the canyon instead of down on the slopes below the canyon rim, represents a new record of this animal living upon the rim. At first this animal was wild and timid, but as he be-

came accustomed to the daily presence of members of a surveying party in the vicinity, he would run short distances and stand and watch the men of the party for long periods of time.

Paul Kraus

A townsend Solitaire (*Myadestes townsendi*, Audobon) was killed by flying into the large window at Yavapai Observation Station on September 20. On this same day Park Naturalist McKee saw one of these birds at Grandview. The last record of this bird in the park was July 10, 1929, when a female was collected just under the east rim in the Kaibab Forest.

Joseph Bryan

This year there is a large increase in the number of Colorado Rock Squirrels (*Otospermophilus g. grammurus*) both at Indian Gardens in the Canyon, and along the South Rim.

William Dowling

It appears that about September 28 the tarantulas began their annual parade across the highways on the South Rim of the canyon. Thirty-four were counted on the east drive between the junctions of the roads leading to Yavapai Point and to Yaki Point. All seemed headed northward.

Louis Schellbach

Two Kildeer (*Oxyechus v. vociferus*, Linn.) were seen on the east rim road between Grandview and the ranger station at the junction of the old Cameron road. The previous record was made by Park Naturalist McKee in Lookout Canyon on August 30, 1929.

Louis Schellbach

An Arizona Gray Fox (*Urocyon cinereargenteus scotti*) was seen in the center of the road at a point between the main highway and Yavapai Observation Station about 7:15 P.M. on October 7, 1933. He paused for a moment, blinded by the headlights of the car, and then slowly trotted off into the darkness on the east side of the road.

Louis Schellbach

Ed. Note:

The author of the account of rattlesnake on page 213 has learned since writing this article that the recent records are new records from these localities, and careful examination of the specimens may revise the identifications.

Illustrations by Louis Schellbach.

