

The Bulletin of the Webster Groves Nature Study Society

Webster Groves, Mo.

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Nip and Pull vs Tuck and Haul.


One afternoon late last fall four individuals blocked the sidewalk to the best of their stretching ability, between me and my safety zone, -home. They were ants, smaller than the fierce carpenter ants that use their augers on the wood-work, larger than the miniature pests that seek shelter in the sugar bowl, but black, or nearly so, with mouthparts very much present.

The two in the center, Nip and Tuck, were gripped jaw to jaw, Pull had a jaw-lock on Nip's hind most claw while Haul had a hard hold on Tuck's trailing tarsus.

Back and forth across the sidewalk they struggled, running up mileage and getting nowhere until, after watching for five minutes I placed them under arrest by slipping a card under the group and taking them with me. Even then they clung together while riding on their movable platform, clung together while being transferred to a tin box, and hung on until the lid and darkness-closed around them. Later, when the lid was lifted they separated, each bent on escaping prison excepting Tuck, who was tuckered out and limping.

Was it a fight with two peace makers trying to separate them, meddlesome relatives trying to break up a lovers' tryst, a wrestling match, -or tug of-war for the Ant College championship?

Maybe our Ant-omologist of East Argonne could answer.



Espy Jay.

A novel Method of seed Distribution.

Last summer I collected a minnow which had a fruit of the Spanish Bayonet (*Bidens* sp. x) firmly fastened in its head. The fish (*Notropis velucellus* Cope) had evidently been in this predicament for some time since it was swimming weakly and turning belly upward at intervals. Dr. Green a keen student of fishes, said that he observed such a case only once before.

Did the fish impale itself while nosing around the bottom.

Dr. Chas. K. Sibley

New Books.

Birds of Arkansas by W. J. Baerg
Bulletin # 258 Illustrated 197 Pages
Send 76 cents plus 8 cents for postage to
Dan F. Gray, Director
University of Arkansas College of Agri.
Fayetteville, Arkansas.

The Arlington Chemical Co.
Yonkers, N. Y.

Has issued its third Pamphlet in colors showing the trees that cause Spring Hay Fever. Free.

Congratulations to the Feagers.

While looking at the new letter heads we notice, Miss Marty our Geology group Chairman has changed her name to Mrs. Arthur Feager. We wish you many, many happy hours.

A Tray for Bottled Specimen.

Since most of my collection is in small vials I have the problem of storing these bottles in a satisfactory manner. Recently I made some trays from $\frac{1}{4}$ th inch mesh wire hardware cloth and have found them very satisfactory.

The cloth was folded over a block of wood 12 inches long; 2 inches high $\frac{3}{4}$ th inch thick. Then the sharp ends were turned in and twisted to hold the ends of the tray together. The advantages of this over wooden trays are two: First, one can see the contents of each bottle without removing from the tray. Second, when a tray is not full there is no trouble because of bottles tipping over. The top of the wire is squeezed in with the fingers wherever needed so that the bottles are held upright.

The only disadvantage found is that there are likely to be a few sharp ends of wire remaining.

Dr. Chas. K. Sibley.

Juvenile Notes:

The Juniors make a trip to the lovely Huntington Home.

We met the Avery school group before proceeding to the Huntington home. The first thing our host showed was the Seed Pod Zoo. A Dragon was represented by a Mullein pod. Its legs were composed of Red Bud seeds and his eyes of Barberry berries. Next was a turtle: The shell made of half of an english walnut with a prune inside, cloves made its legs and part of the prune stuck out for its head. There were many other quaint things made of seed pods. Last our host took us through her beautiful garden. There was a Japanese, Dutch and a Desert garden, also one representing the scene of the Village Blacksmith. The Huntingtons at the show in Shaws Garden won a blue ribbon for the best amateur garden, and a green ribbon for the second best Japanese garden.
Katherine Pickens.

The Nature Study Classes of the Avery and Bristol Schools with Mrs. Pickens as Chaperone paid a visit to the reptile house in Forest Park one Saturday in February. Mr. Perkins took the children through the house and explained all about the different kinds of snakes, he even let us touch one.

Martha Cox.

Nature Notes

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Natural History Museum of the
University of Minnesota.

The Natural History Museum of the University of Minnesota is housed in the large three-story brick Zoology building. It is located on Washington Avenue, one of Minneapolis principal thoroughfares running right through the spacious campus. From the windows of the upper story of the building one gains a view of the whole campus and its fine, large halls, the magnificent Auditorium and other University buildings. The campus is very beautifully arranged.

The exhibits occupy two floors of the building. The third floor exhibits are mostly birds, though there are a few mammals and other groups represented. In the basement fish predominate, while many other forms are there. The manner of exhibition in life-like scenes and the exquisiteness of the specimen is quite marvelous.

An adequate list of the various forms exhibited is utterly impossible in a short time, but mention of a few of the outstanding exhibits follows shortly.

In a small assembly room moving pictures of nature subjects are shown to the visitors each Sunday afternoon at two, three and four o'clock. This affords the opportunity of resting oneself without wasting the time. It is a most novel idea!

Three small glass cases containing a miniature model of an ancient Saurian in each greet one as he enters one of the long corridors of the third floor. One is the Triceratops; another is an armored Dinosaur having two rows of bony plates along the back of his neck, body and tail, standing straight out like the fins of a fish. These reptiles are each placed in a scene depicting the supposed habitat of the animal, one having a great Brontosaurus dimly painted on the background.

Nearby is a wonderful exhibit showing a section, lengthwise, of the nests of the Kingfisher and Bank Swallows, each with the adults; the eggs of the former and the young of the latter are shown in the nests.

A few plants are shown on this floor; the most interesting exhibit being the "Life Cycle of the Polypody Fern" (see Nature Notes, Vol. 2, page 9.) An adequate description would be too long to include in this article.

A pair of double-crested Cormorants with their nest and eggs is shown. One of the most life-like exhibits is that of Beavers at work. Virginia deer make up another beautiful display. Among a great number of birds, the Cliff or Cave Swallows with their interesting nest is quite an attraction.

A large number of other mounted birds is shown, but two very large habitat groups attract nearly all of the attention. These are the "Heron Lake Bird Group" and the "Pipestone Prairie Group"

The first group includes Herons, Ducks, Grebes, Terns, Phalaropes, Rails, Coots, Gulls, Gallinules, Teals, Blackbirds, Marsh Wrens, and the Maryland Yellow-throat; some on nests, some in flight.

Various forms of plant life make up the picture. They include Bulrushes (Scirpus) Cattails (Typha), Quil-reed or cane (Phragmites), Smart-weed (Polygonum), Arrow-head (Sagittaria), Calamus (Acorus), and Blue Flag (Iris). Besides these a Leopard Frog is shown. Any Nature Enthusiast could and would like to study this group and the next one a whole day each. They are truly marvelous.

The "Pipestone Prairie Group" depicts a mixed desert and grassland scene. The plants represented include the Wild Rose, several coarse grasses, a cactus (Mamillaria), two other cacti of the Prickly-pear group, Ground Plum, Loco Weed (Oxytropis), Red Lily, Prairie False Dandelion, two Psoraleas, Wolfberry, Pale Purple Cone Flower and Buffalo Berry Bush. The setting for the birds is completed with a Jack Rabbit, Badger-den and a Buffalo skull. The latter has a fine male specimen of the Lark Bunting, "Buffalo Bird", perched on the tip of one horn, and a female of the same species near-by. A short-eared Owl, nest and eggs is very interesting, as are the following birds: - Chestnut-collared Longspur, Pinnated Grouse with young, Western Willet and Avocet each with young, a Pipit, Longbilled Curlew, Bairds Sparrow, Marbled Godwit and young, Western Meadow Lark, Whooping Crane, Upland Plover with young, Western Burrowing Owl and young, Marsh Hawk, nest and young, Western Kingbird, nest and eggs, Sandhill Crane, Sharp-tailed Grouse with young. Printed descriptions and diagrams of the last two exhibits were furnished to all visitors.

The basement exhibits include a very remarkable group of Mountain Goats. It is undoubtedly the most realistic of all. It must be seen to be appreciated. I am quite familiar with the animal as several specimens are boarding at the St. Louis Zoo where I have been a rather constant visitor. I came to the realization while standing before this exhibit, that a zoological park, even though exhibiting live animals, cannot compete with a well executed natural habitat group in a museum, in conveying to the public mind a true picture of the animals's natural mode of life. A great many paintings of plants, mostly grasses are on exhibition. One large glass case contains a great variety of animals of low types such as insects, crabs and other Arthropods, sponges corals and various Echinodermes (Star-fish sea-urchins.) Most of the space in the basement is devoted to live fish. The aquaria are well lighted and completely free of dirt, the clear water permitting a wonderful view of the fish.

Minneapolis has two fine museums, the Academy of Science Museum and the one just written about. St. Louis has the Educational Museum of the Public Schools. How long is St. Louis going to lag so far behind the Twin Cities?

Stuart L. O'Byrne.

Webster Groves Nature-Study Society

A BRANCH OF THE AMERICAN NATURE-STUDY SOCIETY

(Organized in 1920)

Webster Groves, Mo.

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Ornithology

R. C. LANGE
Editor

NATURE NOTES

DR. EDWIN P. MEINERS
Camp Director

ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR MAY - 1954

GENERAL MEETING - MONDAY MAY 11, 8 PM, in Assembly Hall, Webster Groves High School, Selma Ave. and Bradford.

Capt. A. J. Lorimier will speak on "REPTILE LIFE OF INDO-CHINA and PHILIPPINES" - (Python hunting on the Island of Luzon, how fast they can move, when they will attack and the nature of their haunts), (This meeting was changed from the usual first Friday).

FIELD TRIPS.

SUNDAY MAY 10. The ANNUAL ALL-DAY FIELD TRIP AND BIRD WALK to

Borschertown. Assemble at the east approach of the St. Charles,

Mo. bridge at 5 AM; cross the bridge at 5.15 to St. Charles and

follow Highway 94 north about five miles to Boschertown, parking at

the school house. Bring land and water bird books, note books,

field glasses and lunch for two meals.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY MAY 16-17. WEEK-END TRIP TO HORSE-SHOE LAKE (about

seven miles from East St. Louis). Assemble Saturday afternoon at

2.30 at 9th and Chouteau Ave. Those going later or going over on

Sunday can go north on 9th Street, East St. Louis to the fork or

junction of Highways 4 and 11; take the highway to the left and

continue on highway to large sign reading "To Diamond Club"; at

this sign turn right on cinder road, continue on cinder road, cross-

ing R.R. Tracks to another "To Diamond Club" sign, turn right and

continue to observe signs. Bring cots, blankets, bird-books, lunch.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY MAY 30-31. WEEK-END TRIP TO NATURE-STUDY LODGE, five

miles South-west of Valley Park. (Good road all the way.)

Observations of Scorpiid Meteors and the Constellations Saturday

night. Early morning bird-walk Sunday morning. Bring cots, blan-

kets, lunch. Many other hikes during the day.

OTHER EARLY MORNING BIRD-WALKS, - 5.30 starting from

Bach Station Road on Manchester-Osage Hills car line (south) on

Sunday morning May 3rd: // From Junction of Watson Road and Grant

Road Sunday morning May 24. (Best route, Big Bend Rd to So. Rockhill

Rd - to Watson Rd to Grant Road. Park there.

GROUP MEETINGS

ICHTHYOLOGY, FRIDAY MAY 1, 8 PM, in Assembly Hall, Webster Groves High

School. The entire year will be devoted to "FISHES OF MISSOURI".

their classification, distribution and economic value. This one, -

"Missouri families".

PHOTOGRAPHY, MONDAY MAY 4, 8 PM, at the Mueller home, 12 Armin Ave.,

Glendale Heights. "Superspeed pan-chromatic plates". Mr. Todd.

MICROSCOPY, FRIDAY MAY 8, 8 PM, at Dr. Meiners' office, 6600 Delmar,

University City. More about "Microscopy of Foods". Bring microscopes.

GEOLOGY, FRIDAY MAY 15, 8 PM, U.S. Entomological Laboratory, 527 Ivanhoe Pl. Webster Gr.

BOTANY, MONDAY MAY 18, 8 PM, at U.S. Entomological Laboratory. "Insect and Wind

Pollination in Spring Flowers", Mr. David L. Baker, teacher of Botany, Beaumont High.

ENTOMOLOGY, FRIDAY MAY 22, 8 PM, sharp. At the Laboratory. Speakers, Dr. Chas. K.

Sibley of John Burroughs School on "Aquatic Insects" and Mr. Raymond Fues of

Webster Groves High School on "Insect Biology".

ASTRONOMY, SATURDAY MAY 23, 8 PM, at Dr. Brandhorst's home, 160 So. Gore Ave., Web-

ster Groves. "The Solar System as Seen by the Amateur" (Surface features of the

planets, the chairman; Satellites with special mention of the Medicean stars,

Miss Matlock; Topography of the Moon, Mrs. Mueller. Telescope observation.

NATURE-MELODY, MONDAY MAY 25, 8 PM, at the Satterthwait home, 118 Waverly Place,

Webster Groves. Mrs. Edgar Anderson will have charge of the program.

ORNITHOLOGY, FRIDAY MAY 29, 8 PM. Also at the Satterthwait home. Subject later.

JUNIORS will have two field trips: Saturday May 9, to Meyer Farm and Saturday

May 23 to "Nature-Study Lodge". Tuesday May 26, the GIRLS of Bristol meet at

Mrs. Pickens' home; Thursday May 28, the BOYS of Bristol and Avery, at Mrs. Pick-

ens' home; Friday May 29, the GIRLS of Avery will have a meeting.

INSECT COLLECTION CONTEST MEETING

The Insect Collection Contestants and Coaches are requested to meet at the U.S. Entomological Laboratory, 527 Ivanhoe Place at 2 PM, SATURDAY MAY 2.

(Please read, fill out and return enclosed post card.)