

A Summer at Maine's Audubon Camp

By LYDIA KING FRESH
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

At a recent lecture at the Cranbrook Institute of Science, it was my privilege to hear once more America's distinguished ornithologist, Roger Tory Peterson.

Many of you know him best for his famous bird paintings. He is also the author of many bird books and articles, as well as a top-ranking field naturalist.

For two decades he has been associated with the National Audubon society as staff member, editor, lecturer and photographer. He has been awarded the Brewster Bird medal and the John Burrows medal for nature writing.

In introducing him Dr. Robert Platt said, "Mr. Peterson has probably interested more people in birds than any other living American."

Since the publication of his "Field Guide to the Birds" (1934) this little volume has found its way into many a pocket to become a kind of bird watcher's "bible." Its concise text and detailed sketches, which point out field marks for each species, recommended it to all bird lovers.

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I FIRST MET Mr. Peterson in July 1936, when I attended the Audubon camp in Maine.

Upon landing at a beautiful spruce-covered island just off the Atlantic coast at Medonak, we were escorted to our living quarters by a slender young man dressed in work shirt and blue jeans.

We had not gone far until the suitcase he was carrying was dropped for his binoculars while he pointed out the nest of a parula warbler.

"Remarkable," I thought, "Here even the help is interested in birds!"

Afternoon came. Sea air filled our lungs and the cry of sea birds was loud in our ears. We gathered on the old ship's store for our first assignments. It was then that our "porter" of the morning was introduced as Roger Tory Peterson — bird instructor on the camp staff.

And so began a choice adventure in the out-of-doors. Alan Cruickshank was Mr. Peterson's assistant and together we scouted a family of magnolia warblers until the young would eat out-of-hand.

We sat in the dark spruce forest on most cushioned rocks, listening to the song of the olive-backed thrush until we could no longer fit its limpid notes. We were party to many field trips on the island and on the nearby mainland.

WHILE WE ATE and slept, Mr. Peterson seemed never to stop either his observations or his photography.

We braved the ocean in a small cruiser, to visit the rocky islands. With black cormorants, their nests, their young and their fish dinners made a sight and a stench not easily forgotten.

We found the curious puffin that amazing "sea parrot" whose triangular bill is tipped with red. On the shore of another rocky island Mr. Peterson rolled up his sleeve to reach an arm's length into the nesting burrow of the night-flying Leach's petrel to bring forth its single sooty-colored chick.

Mr. Peterson has spent most of the last three years birding in England and Europe in preparation for his latest book, "Field Guide to the Birds of Europe" (1953). Here he was chaperoned on much of his wandering by the eminent English naturalist, James Fisher.

IT WAS ON a kind of return courtesy trip that the film was shown which illustrated the Cranbrook lecture "Wild America."

The tour began at New York showing Mr. Fisher in, not only the Audubon Bird sanctuaries in many parts of the United States, but on through mountain and desert as far south as Mexico and north to Newfoundland, Fla. Mr. Peterson just missed photographing the nest of the cattle egret, the first bird from the old world to settle on the mainland of North America without human aid.

In Brownsville, Tex., the record daily bird count was 141 species in contrast to Mr. Fisher's European record of 90 species in central France.

In a night shot at a water hole in the Arizona desert a gila monster crept out of its rocky crevice and a wild pig and a mule-deer came down to drink.

ON THE PACIFIC coast the colonies of sea-nesting gulls and terns filled the screen like snowflakes. On our Northwest shore the ocean spray played over colonies of sea lions sunning themselves on the rocks. A wild-life preserve in eastern Montana yielded herds of antelope and the rare white pelican.

Off the Newfoundland coast the party recorded the behavior of the large government-managed colonies of fur-bearing seals at play and at war. Here was filmed the greatest concentration of seabirds, among them auks, murres, puffins, gulls and terns covering the rocky coast for miles, their numbers estimated at uncountable millions.

At evening's end we felt convinced that Mr. Fisher had carried back to England with him a new knowledge of "Wild America"; its beauty, its variety and its abundance.

Horticultural Therapy Group Sets New Class

The Jan. 13 opening of a training workshop in horticultural therapy was announced this week by Alice Wessels Burlingame, coordinator of the program for the Southeastern Michigan council.

The program of therapy, Mrs. Burlingame said, "is designed to be of assistance to garden club members, hospital auxiliaries and church visitor representatives."

"We work with groups which are interested in having members versed in the technique of presenting a therapy program for the mentally ill and physically handicapped, relative to plant material."

In planning workshops, she explained, the goal is to bring out supplementary knowledge which will help those already active in hospital programs, as well as train new volunteers.

THE JAN. 13 session will include a roundtable discussion on how to handle situations arising in patient relationship.

Mrs. Burlingame, who will suggest a program for the spring months, said reservations for the workshop and luncheon at the Community House should be made with Mrs. Raymond Lane. The meeting will be from 10 a. m. to 4 p. m.

A visiting nurse representative will tell how to work with a patient in the home, while a professional florist will demonstrate work with flowers. Mrs. R. D. Merriam of Northville will tell how patients may develop an interest in birds without leaving the house.

Returns to College

Bill McBride, son of Mr. and Mrs. Russell McBride of Inwood circle, Bloomfield township, left Saturday for the University of Colorado, where he is a sophomore. He drove with Russ Sanders of Ardmore drive.

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With the coming of the new year, holiday entertaining gradually draws to a close, but leaves behind memories of many renewed friendships and happy family gatherings.

New Year's eve brought forth its customary gaiety and among those entertaining that evening were Mr. and Mrs. Paul Trefel of Westland. Their party is an annual one and each year is held in the home of a different member of the group.

Those enjoying the festivities of the evening were Mr. and Mrs. Martin Otto, Mr. and Mrs. Ray Pravel, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Luebke, Mr. and Mrs. Howard Palmer, Mr. and Mrs. Ray Diamond, Mr. and Mrs. Art Hasty, Mr. and Mrs. Roy Lewis, Mr. and Mrs. Herman Prael, and Mr. and Mrs. Ed Kleinschmit.

Also entertaining that night were Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Spiegel of Kirkshire who were hosts to six couples. Among the guests were Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Riddell, Mr. and Mrs. Walker Bagby, Mr. and Mrs. John Dolan, Mr. and Mrs. Percy Guest, Mr. and Mrs. Byron Coats.

Guests of Mrs. Ray Hall are looking back with pleasure on the Swedish party held in her Arlington drive home Dec. 29. The feature of the evening was the hot drink served, which is an old traditional holiday drink from Mrs. Hall's family.

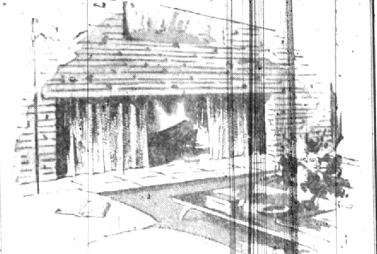
Families who enjoyed the holidays together were Mr. and Mrs. James O. Martin of Dunblain with Mr. and Mrs. Albert Martin of Detroit, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Baker of Marshall, and Mr. and Mrs. Mack Francis of Farmington.

Visiting Mr. and Mrs. O. H. Tipton of Arlington and their two children, Chuckie and David, were Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Tipton and John Tipton of Portsmouth, Ohio.

Mr. and Mrs. Jack Gieck of Kirkshire enjoyed a visit from her sister, Gertrude Vecker of Delwin, Iowa.

Seen to move back into their former Kirkshire road home are Mr. and Mrs. James Fitzsimons with their three children, Betty, Jimmy, and Maureen. The Fitzsimons have been living the past year in Battle Creek.

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1. Babies This year the stork delivered babies at the rate of 10,990 a day. That's enough new people to make a city the size of Akron, Ohio, every single month!

2. Savings This year Americans put more of their hard-earned savings account dollars into insured Savings and Loan Associations than anywhere else. People know insured Savings and Loan Associations give excellent returns on their money. They know these friendly, home-town organizations are safe.

3. Homes In 1954, almost 6 out of every 10 families owned their own homes. And the insured Savings and Loan Associations made one third of all home mortgage loans. Last year they were the nation's largest single source of mortgage loans for home building, buying and alterations.

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