

History of the Maricopa Audubon Society 1953-1968

The Maricopa Audubon Society most sincerely thanks Mr. Jack Wetmore for his scrapbook compilation of 1953-1968 documents of the early history of our chapter.

Jack, after living in Phoenix for many years, moved to Prescott, Arizona. However, he has recently returned to the valley and lives in Mesa, Arizona. His thoughtful efforts to compile these MAS documents have made this book a treasure for our members.

Original scrapbook contents, including the handsome Roadrunner cover, were the product of Jack Wetmore. Some format changes and the additions of early newsletters were made by Bob Witzeman.

Printed 2006

Copies of this booklet may be obtained from:

**The Maricopa Audubon Society
P.O. Box 15451
Phoenix, AZ 85060**

HISTORY OF THE MARICOPA AUDUBON SOCIETY

It was in July of 1953 that a group interested in forming a local chapter of the National Audubon Society met at the Phoenix Adult Center. Mr. Malvin Plunkett presided. The official name chosen was The Maricopa Audubon Society.

Officers

Dr. Hugh Hanson, President
Dr. A. S. Margolin, Vice President
Miss Helen Kent, Treasurer
Mrs. Lucy Warner, Secretary

Among the Charter Members were:

Malvin Plunkett	Dr. Hugh Hansen
Dr. A. S. Margolin	Miss Helen Kent
Miss Rachel Buchanan	Mrs. Floy C. Betts
Mr. W. G. Bass	Miss Fannie Fitts
Mrs. Lucy Warner	

History Maricopa Audubon Society

On August 2, 1953 a group interested in forming a local chapter of the National Audubon Society met at the Phoenix Adult Center with Mr Malvin Plunkett presiding.

Mr Plunkett gave a resume of the Constitution and By-laws of the National Society, and suggestions were offered to make it applicable to the new chapter.

There were to be four officers -

President
Vice President
Treasurer
Secretary

the tenure of office being one year. The official name of the new society was

Maricopa Audubon Society

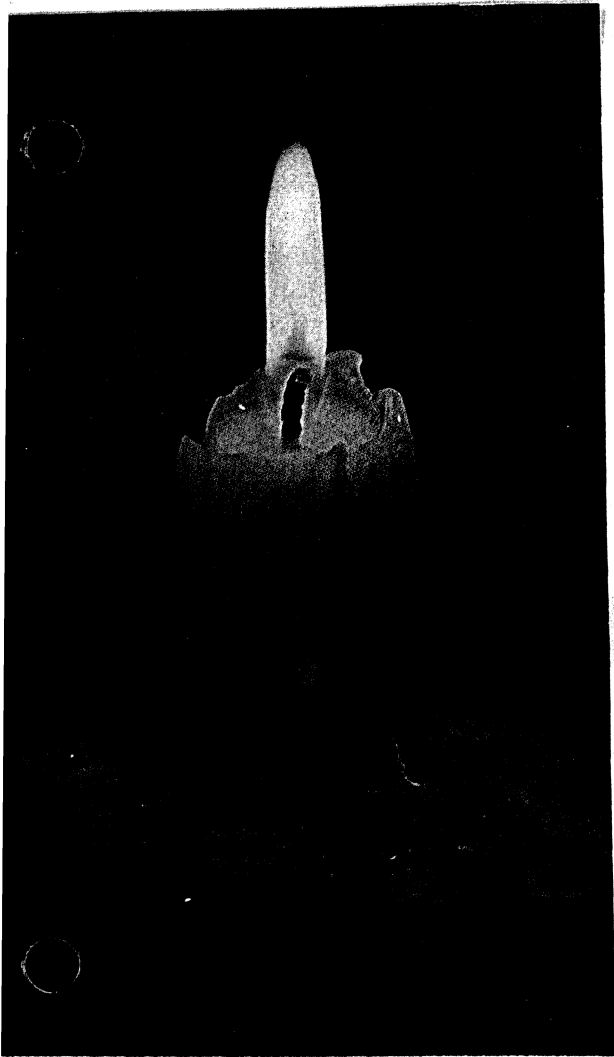
Officers were

Dr Hugh Hanson, President
Dr A S Margolin Vice President
Miss Helen Kent, Treasurer
Mrs Lucy Warner, Secretary

Among the charter members were

Mr Malvin Plunkett	Dr Hugh Hanson
Dr A S Margolin	Miss Helen Kent
Miss Rachel Buchanan	Mrs Floy C Betts
Mr W G Bass	Mrs Fannie Fitts
Mrs Lucy Warner	

Above information from Secretary's notes



One year old
51 members

1954 Officers

Dr Hugh Hanson	President
Wm H Patey	Vice President
James Werner	Secretary
Miss Jane Horswell	Treasurer

Roadrunner

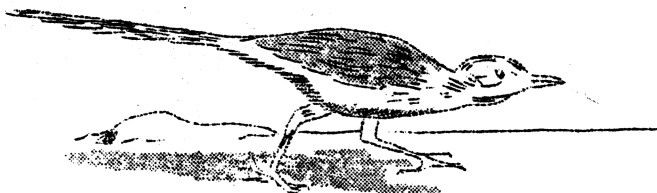
The first Roadrunner was published Aug 1, 1954
Mr James Werner being editor

Information taken from Secretary's notes

Dec 1954
First Christmas
Count

Mr. Abe Margolin directed the first Christmas count. It was made in two areas. The first a $7\frac{1}{2}$ mile circle included Tal-Wi-Wi Pond, McDonald's River Ranch, and Williams Dairy Farm. 71 species and 18,727 individuals were seen.

The second area was a 15 mile circle including Coon's Bluff Granite Reef Dam, Blue Point, Stewart Mountain Dam, and points on the Verde including Ft McDowell 58 species were seen.



ROADRUNNER

THE OFFICIAL MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE MARICOPA AUDUBON SOCIETY

Volume I

Phoenix, Arizona, June, 1954

Number 1

Wickenburg Field Trip Big Success

by Mal Plunkett

The Roadrunner

The ROADRUNNER is published monthly by The Maricopa Audubon Society, a branch of The National Audubon Society, in Maricopa County Arizona.

STAFF

Editor.....James Werner
Field Notes.....Malvin Plunkett
SOCIETY OFFICERS

President: Dr. Hugh Hanson, 12 West 11th. Street, Tempe, Arizona.

Vice-President: Mr. William H. Patey, 5200 North Central, Phoenix, Arizona.

Secretary: James R. Werner, P.O. Box 145, Goodyear, Arizona.

Treasurer: Miss Jane Horswell, 306 East Alhambra Drive, Phoenix, Arizona.

Field Trips: Mr. Malvin Plunkett, 3821 North Third Street, Phoenix, Arizona.

THERE HAVE BEEN some very interesting sight records for the valley during May and early June, of uncommon water birds. See page 2 for complete story.

On Sunday afternoon, May 2, 27 nature lovers made the 40 mile round trip out Vulture Road at Wickenburg to study flowers and birds under the leadership of Mr. William G. Bass and Mr. John Kelly.

Our first stop was to see the Mariposa Lilly, the state flower of Utah, where they call it Sago Lilly. A few of the many other flowers we saw were: Desert Phlox, Blue Palo Verde, Desert Ironwood, Paper Flower, Locoweed, Desert Senna, Prickly Poppy, Blue Lupen, Purple Lupen, Hummingbird Bush, Fiddleneck, Turpentine Broom, Buckwheat, Desert Marigold, and many other kinds of cacti.

That afternoon Mr. Bass has received a call that someone had killed a parent Red-tailed Hawk and that its young were starving. The nest was our goal and we set out. We saw the dead adult and a dead young bird too. However one fellow was very much alive and with hamburger from Mr. Bass and food from the remaining adult who was flying above us we were assured this friend of man had a chance. (Continued on page 2)

June, 1954

ROADRUNNER

Page 2

Society To Hold Birthday Meeting

This July, The Maricopa Audubon Society will be one year old.

A birthday meeting will be held at 8:00 PM July 1, at the home of Mrs. Lucy Warner, 126 East 14th. Street, Tempe. There will be an excellent program and a short business meeting. Everyone is urged to attend. If you are planning to come, please call Miss Helen Kent at the Phx. Adult Center and make your reservation. Call as soon as possible.

White Pelicans Land; Starlings in Valley

Many interesting and unusual sight records have been made during late May and June. The most important ones are as follows:

Black Tern. A pair were seen at MacDonalds River Ranch.

White Pelican. A single bird and a pair were seen at the Palo Verde Marsh.

White-faced Glossy Ibis. Twelve at MacDonalds Ranch, 5 at Williams Dairy Farm.

American Egret. Parent and two young at Williams Dairy Farm, two at Palo Verde.

Snowy Egret. Six at MacDonalds. Anthony Green Heron. Seen at MacDonalds.

Least Bittern. Two at Palo Verde. Wilson's Phalarope. One to three seen at different times at Williams.

Black-necked Stilt. Two at Williams, 1 at Palo Verde.

Dowitcher. One at Williams.

Starlings. Four at Tempe, 10 at MacDonalds.

Red-eyed Cowbird. Seen at Tal-Wi-Wi Pond, Coons Bluff, Bartlett Dam, Phoenix, and the Black Canyon Hwy.

Long-billed Marsh Wren. Numerous and nesting at Palo Verde.

WICKENBURG FIELD TRIP Cont. p. 1

survive. The Saguaro in which the Hawks had nested was right by the road. The man who killed these birds should be informed that there are only two harmful Hawks, the Sharp-shinned and Cooper's.

Mr Bass had a ladder attached to a platform on top of his car which enabled him to climb to the nest. He showed the young Hawk to all of us.

Mr. Tony Boettch had suggested the excellent picnic supper that was prepared for us that night. We ate in the beautiful remada at Mr. Bass' modern Motor Court in Wickenburg, La Siesta. Mrs. Newt Aldous, Miss Lucie Johnson, Mrs. Paul Corwin and Mrs. Bill Bass were our hostesses.

After the field trip and the picnic we enjoyed three hours of desert movies and slides which certainly equal in interest "The Living Desert". We all agreed to this. Red-tailed Hawks learning to fly, Saguaro in bloom, a flash flood spreading over a parched wash, these are only three of the pictures.

We certainly are grateful to our Wickenburg friends. Ten are now Audubon members and more are joining.

Field Trip To Be Taken To Verde River Sat.

There will be a trip made Sat. July 3 to the Verde River above Fort McDowell. This is really a bird paradise which we located on June 20th.

Phone CR 4-5787 if you want to go and let Mal Plunkett know.

I give my pledge as an American to save and faithfully to defend from waste, the natural resources of my country its soil and minerals, its forests, waters, and wildlife.

Our first newsletter, June 1954, eleven months after formation of the Chapter. Jim Werner was editor. Note the CONSERVATION section on page 4. MAS's conservation legacy has been longstanding.

CONSERVATION: The Echo Park Dam Issue

Reprinted from: The New York Times, June 6, 1954

The repeated revisions and admissions of error in the Bureau of Reclamation's own figures on the Dinosaur National Monument controversy show the absurdity of the argument that this question has been sufficiently studied, that all the facts are in and that the superiority of Echo Park dam over any alternates has now been conclusively demonstrated. It has not been; and the desperation with which proponents of this highly debatable scheme have been working to push it through congress indicates a well-grounded fear that further examination of the whole matter may prove fatal to their cause.

Only a few days before the House Interior Committee approved by one vote, the authorization bill for the Upper Colorado Basin development, which included Echo Park dam, Undersecretary of the Interior, Ralph A. Tudor had admitted that figures that he had supplied earlier in the year to prove the desirability of Echo Park dam were wrong.

The error involved estimates of the greater evaporation loss that would be incurred by an alternate proposal, as compared with the loss at Echo Park and its companion, Split Mountain. This is a matter of great importance in view of Undersecretary Tudor's testimony that "in the final analysis, the increased losses of water by evaporation from alternative sites is the fundamental issue upon which the department has felt it necessary to give any consideration to the Echo Park dam and reservoir." (next column)

REPEATED ERRORS

Mr. Tudor has already informed the House committee that certain figures supplied in his original testimony had been incorrect. Now he states that he has "been advised by the bureau of Reclamation that the figures which they supplied mewere in error" again. In each case the relative advantage of Echo Park over the alternative was cut down. Here is the picture explained by Howard Zahniser, Executive Secretary of the Wilderness Society, one of the many organizations that have been fighting Echo Park dam as an entirely unwarranted invasion on the National Park system.

"In 1950 the Bureau (of Reclamation) claimed that a dam at Echo Park would save 350,000 acre-feet of water a year, compared with... the alternate sight. By 1953 the (Continued on page 4)

Echo Park Dam Bill To Go Before House

Dr. Gordon Bender, chairman of the Committee on Conservation and Education asks that all members review the information on the Echo Park Dam Project (for information see Audubon Magazine, Jan-Feb 1954 pp. 13, 29). After reading these accounts if you feel you can commit yourself, we urge you to write to your representatives and tell them how you feel on the subject.

This bill has passed the Senate and will be on the floor of the House very soon. If you desire to take any action, please hurry!

CONSERVATION: ECHO PARK DAM ISSUE (Cont. from p. 3)

Bureau's figure had changed to an estimate between 100,000 and 200,000 acre-feet a year. In 1954 the figure was placed.....at 165,000 acre-feet. Then it was amended in March to 70,000 acre-feet. Now he is compelled to amend it again down to 25,000 acre-feet. It is no wonder that conservationists have found the Bureau's statements contradictory and have surmised that this evaporation argument is being used as a plausible pretext rather than a sound reason."

.....the opposition of conservationists to Echo Park dam does not imply opposition to water and power development for the west. It merely expresses a demand that the National Park system be preserved intact, or at the very least, that every possible alternative be

thoroughly explored before a final decision is made to destroy it.

This demand is particularly pertinent in view of the fact that it is the people of all the country who would not only lose this unique scenic quality of this great natural wonder if the dam were constructed, but also would be paying an enormous price---in dollars and cents as well as in intangible values---for its destruction!

Organpipe Cactus Nat Monument Trip

by Hal Plunkett

Eight adults and one child made the overnight trip to Ajo, Organpipe Nat Monument and Sonora, Mexico. We left Phoenix Saturday at 1:00 PM and returned about 8 PM on Sunday.

It seemed that all the desert plants were blooming except the rare Senita and Organpipe Cactus. We were a week early for the latter.

This was more of a botany trip (Continued next column)

but a few interesting birds were seen, such as Turkey Vultures, Raven, Crested Flycatchers, Scott's Oriole, Vermillion Flycatchers, and Western Kingbirds.

Mr. Gordon Williams and Dr. Evar Nering drove the two cars. Sat. night was spent in Ajo where we bought all our groceries. We were grateful for the icebox and charcoal burner of the Nerings. They came in very handy.

Granite Reef Dam, Coons Bluff Visited

by Hal Plunkett

At dawn Saturday, April 17, Mrs. Lola Culver, Mrs. Floy Betts, Miss Beulah Beal and I set out for Granite Reef Dam and Coons Bluff. We found the desert in full bloom, especially at the picnic ground.

At the dam we saw a male Red-eyed Cowbird strutting with his comical-looking puff and red eyes, a pair of Vermillion Flycatchers, a pair of Hooded Orioles, several Brewer's Blackbirds, and a small flock of very noisy Ash-throated Flycatchers as well as many others.

Coons Bluff offered even more. There we saw a Swainson's Hawk, a Bullock's Oriole, four Griseal Thrashers, several Phainopeplas, and a few Arizona Cardinals. The most interesting sight was a Bald Eagle carrying a fish in his talons. We watched him eat it and sun himself at the very tip of a tall dead tree.

This was a very interesting and worthwhile trip.

Pres. Hanson Takes Job in Colorado

Our President, Dr. Hugh Hanson, left June 19 for Mesa Verde Nat. Park at Mesa Verde Colorado, where he will work until September 6. We certainly wish him the best of luck and are sorry that he is not here with us for the summer.

1955 Officers

Mrs Agnew Hawkins	President
Malvin Plunkett	Vice President
Miss Jane Horswell	Treasurer
Mrs Hugh Hanson	Secretary

First field trip to Madera Canyon
was in May of 1955



Roadrunner chicks in nest.

We leave the shell



2 BLACK HAWKS, YELLOW WARBLER AT GRANITE REEF

ROADRUNNER

The ROADRUNNER is published the latter part of each month by the Maricopa Audubon Society in order to promote the program of the National Audubon Society to which this branch is dedicated, and to inform members and those interested of the aims and activities of the local Society.

*

Editor.....James R. Werner
P.O. Box 145 - Goodyear, Arizona
Phone: WE 5-3700

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SOCIETY OFFICERS

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Phone, YE 7-8434.

Vice-Pres: Mr. Malvin Plunkett,
3821 North 3rd. Street, Phoenix,
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Secretary: Mrs. Thelma Hanson,
12 West 11th. Street, Tempe, Arizona.
Phone: WO 7-4245.

Treasurer: Miss Jane Horswell,
1809 North 18th. Street, Phoenix,
Arizona.

Field Trips: Dr. Abe Margolin,
5631 North 13th. Drive, Phoenix,
Arizona. Phone, AM 6-4072.

FOR INFORMATION DIAL: AL 8-8863
and ask for the Phoenix Adult Center,
Miss Helen Kent.

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CONSERVATION:

Wichita Wildlife Refuge Bill

Allan R. Phillips, noted Arizona Ornithologist, has called the following to my attention:

On April 20 the Army made a move to take over part of the Wichita Nat'l Wildlife Refuge for a target area for Fort Sill Oklahoma.

It is believed that this bill is now before the House Armed Services Committee. The Chairman of the Subcommittee on land purchases is Rep. L. Mendel Rivers (D.--S. Carolina).

I urge every society member to write IMMEDIATELY on this matter,

-The Editor-

Five people made the society trip to Blue Point June 26. Unfortunately, we were not able to reach the Cottonwood area described by Dr. Allan Phillips. However, the areas covered were very good.

Along the north side of the Salt River below the sheep bridge the following were some of the more interesting birds seen:

30 Texas Nighthawks, 2 RED-SHAFTED FLICKERS, 2 adults and 2 juvenal Crested Flycatchers, 2 SAY'S PHOEBES, 2 Crissal Thrashers, 10 Bell's Vireos (one nest with 1 egg), 2 adult and 4 juvenal Lucy's Warblers, 2 Chats (nest with 1 egg), and 15 Cowbirds, one of which had layed an egg in the previously mentioned Chat nest.

Later at Coon's Bluff, four Plumbeous Gnatcatchers and a Bronzed (Red-eyed) Cowbird were seen.

The group then stopped at Granite Reef Dam and birded below the dam. Here the following were seen:

3 adult and 1 juvenal Great Blue Herons, 2 Mexican Black Hawks, 50 Cliff Swallows (many feeding young in nests on dam), 1 YELLOW WARBLER, and 2 Chats (nest with eggs).

These are not complete lists of the birds seen, only a few.

James R. Werner was in charge of the trip.

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Trip Slate Clear 'Till Sept.

Due to the fact that so many members have left for the summer months and the hot weather makes field trips impossible for some, there will be no further SCHEDULED TRIPS until late August or Sept.

However, members are urged to get out birding themselves as it is vital ornithologically for studies to be kept up during the summer period.

Unfortunately, it is not worthwhile to schedule regular society trips when only a few can attend.

Anyone wishing directions to any of the valley areas is encouraged to call the Editor, for this information.

THE OFFICIAL MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE MARICOPA AUDUBON SOCIETY

Volume II

Phoenix, Arizona, June, 1955

Number 1

Maricopa Audubon Society Two Years Old; Birthday Meeting To Be July 11th.

PALO VERDE TRIP YIELDS
STILT SANDPIPER, VA. RAIL

Five members of the society met at Phoenix College at 6 a.m. June 12 and made the trip to the Palo Verde Marsh south of Palo Verde, Arizona.

The marsh was very dry, with only a few shallow spots of water.

Seen there were: 1 Va. Rail, 4 Killdeer, 1 Texas Nighthawk, 1 STILT SANDPIPER, 50 (est) Marsh Wrens, 2 Yellow-headed Blackbirds, and 1 Yellowthroat, to mention only a few.

Following this, the group went on to the Arlington Game Refuge, but found it very disappointing, for it was dry except for a few puddles. Seen here were 1 Great Blue Heron, 1 Green Heron, and about 15 Killdeer including 2 juvenals.

The trip was under the direction of temporary Field Trip Chairman, James R. Werner.

Program On Nests Set

This July, 1955, the Maricopa Audubon Society will be two years old. It was just two years ago that interested people got together and formed the society.

Monday, July 11, the second annual Birthday Meeting of the group will be held at the home of Mr. & Mrs. B. B. Hawkins. Mrs. Hawkins is President of the society.

The Hawkins' home is 3/4 of a mile north of Indian School Road on the west side of 75th Avenue (Lateral 20).

The meeting will open at 8 p.m. with business to be handled first. Following this Mrs. Hawkins has an excellent program planned including a talk and explanation of the many bird nests she has.

This will be an excellent program, and an IMPORTANT meeting.

Every member is urged to attend. Let's have our full membership here to celebrate our second birthday!

Valley OBSERVATIONS:

◦ Waterfowl Remaining Late; C.T. Grackle Seen

PIED-BILLED GREBE. Eight at Bennett's Marsh June 3 (J.M. Simpson, J.R. Werner), and 3 juvenals there June 22 (JRW).

AM. EGRET. Five seen flying at Palo Verde Marsh June 17 (JMS, JRW).

SNOWY EGRET. Five at Bennett's June 3 (JMS, JRW), and one there June 22 (JRW).

GREEN HERON. One at Tal Wi Wi June 3 (JMS, JRW).

B.C.N. HERON. Four immatures at Tal Wi Wi June 22 (JRW).

LEAST BITTERN. One found in cattail marsh on the Salt River at Lateral 23 June 25 (JRW).

W.F.G. IBIS. One at Palo Verde June 6 (JRW), four at Bennett's June 9 (JMS, Ben Clark), 16 at Bennett's June 15 (JMS, JRW), and two there June 22 (JRW).

BALDPATE. Two at Bennett's June 3 (JMS, JRW), and 11 there June 22 (JRW).

PINTAIL. Two at New River Pond June 12 (Mal Plunkett), one at Bennett's June 15 (J.T. Bialac, JRW).

G.W. TEAL. One at Bennett's June 15 (JRW, JTB).

B.W. TEAL. Three at Bennett's June 15 (JRW, JTB), and one male there June 22 (JRW).

CINNAMON TEAL. Two at Bennett's June 3 (JMS, JRW), two at New River Pond June 12 (MP), and six at Bennett's June 22 (JRW).

SHOVELLER. Two at Bennett's June 3 (JMS, JRW), two at New River Pond June 12 (MP), 12 at Bennett's June 15 (JTB, JRW), and nine there June 22 (JRW).

REDHEAD. One male at Ramsey-Hazlitt Pond June 15 (JTB, JRW).

RUDDY DUCK. Three at Bennett's June 22 (JRW).

AM. ROUGHLEG. One in the light phase chased by Western Kingbird over marsh on Salt River at Lat. 23 June 25 (JRW).

C. GALLINULE. Several seen on each trip to Bennett's, three juvenals there June 3 (JMS, JRW).

VA. RAIL. Palo Verde: two June 6 (JRW), one June 12 (Maricopa Audubon Society), 6 there June 17 (JMS, JRW).

B.N. STILT. One at Bennett's June 3 (JMS, JRW), and two at Palo Verde June 6 (JRW).

BL. TERN. One at Bennett's June 3 (JMS, JRW), six immatures at New River Pond June 15 (JTB, JRW).

W.W. PEWEE. One at Tal Wi Wi June 3 (JMS, JRW), and one there June 12 (MP).

WESTERN BLUEBIRD. One at Talo Verde Marsh June 6 (JRW)!

YELLOWTHROAT. Two at Palo Verde June 17 (JMS, JRW).

PILEOLATED WARBLER. One in Phx June 3 (MP).

Y.H. BLACKBIRD. Eight at Bennett's June 3 (JMS, JRW) and 30 est there June 22 (JRW).

GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE. A male was found at Ramsey-Hazlitt Pond June 9 (JMS, BC), and was seen there again June 15 (JRW, JTB).

An unusual May record.

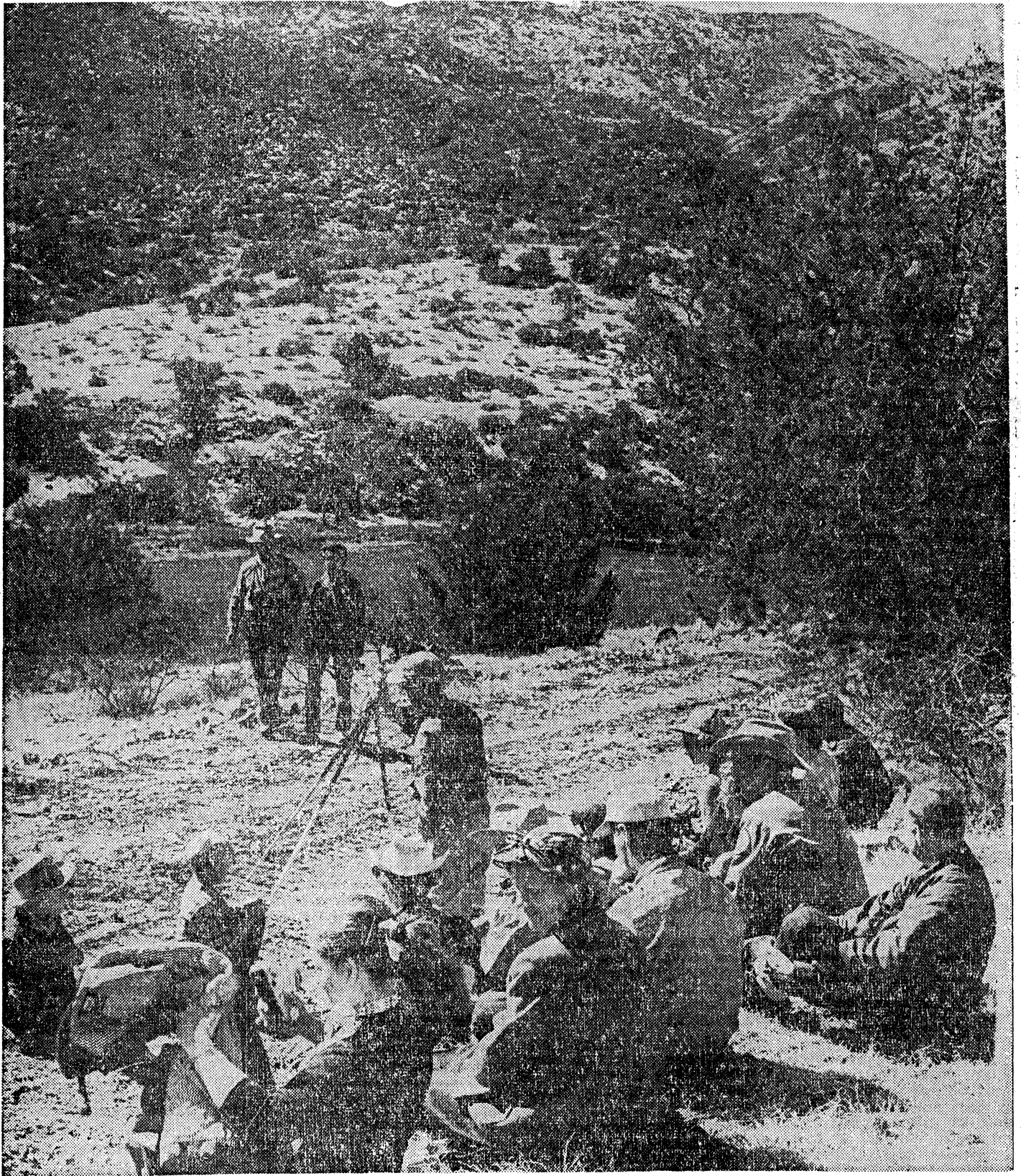
SOLITARY SANDPIPER. One at New River Pond May 3 (R. Roy Johnson)!
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Crocketts Show Slides

The June meeting of the society convened at 8 p.m. June 6 at Verde Park in Phoenix.

Agnes Hawkins, President, handled the business matters. It was decided at this time to send \$10 to the Audubon Center of Southern California to help with reconstruction of the recently burned-over wildlife sanctuary at El Monte.

Following the business Harry L. and Ruth Crockett showed their collection of color slides on Arizona birds entitled "Kodachromes of Arizona Birds" to the group. Many of the Crocketts' pictures have appeared in the Arizona Highways Magazine, and we were certainly fortunate to have this program.



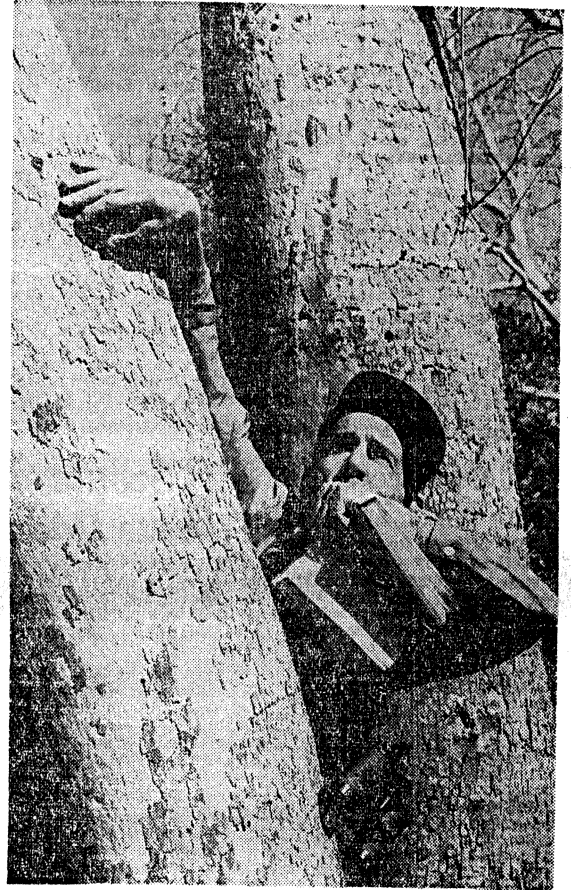
Audubon Society Members Take Break On Trip To Bronco Canyon

Republic 4-22-56



Nests Are Examined By Dr. Hugh Hanson And Ross Martin
—(Republic Photos, Willis Peterson)

4-22-56



Bialac Utters Squawks To Attract Birds

Phoenix Gazette, Feb. 13, 1956

UNDER THE SUN

Cold Snap Can Come This Late

By BERT FIREMAN

Every little ol' sweet bird that sings in an Arizona tree helps us sell our attractiveness to the nation. Recently the Maricopa Audubon Society took part in the Christmas Bird Count. When only 22 local bird watchers identified 104 species of birds and 81,592 individuals in daylight hours, they didn't quite match the record of the day set at Cocoa, Fla., with 155 species. But they counted more individual birds with fewer watchers and in much less time.

Local bird fans believe that the Valley of the Sun shouldn't be thrown in direct competition with coastal areas where amphibious birds (gulls, terns, etc.) are so numerous. When the national results are compiled we may well stand near the top for number of species in non-oceanic areas.



Comes now Mrs. Frank Heamer, 3437 N. 21st Ave., with information that bird watchers at Youngstown, Ohio, are envious of the greater bird population in our Valley. Her brother, Vincent P. McLaughlin, was among the observers who counted birds there on Dec. 31. Compared to our 104 species they found only 55 species and 42,623 individuals, this total including about 35,000 noisy old crows at two established rookeries.