



EL PASO BIRD STUDY CLUB

THE ROADRUNNER

GEOCOCCYX CALIFORNIANUS AGAIN

MARCH 1942

THE STORIES THAT TEXANS TELL TO YANKEE NEWCOMERS IN THEIR MIDST ARE BLOOD CHILLING....OF ALL THE DESCRIPTIONS OF PRAIRIE CREATURES, THAT OF A CERTAIN BIRD CHARMED ME MOST. THIS BIRD WAS THE ROAD RUNNER, A BLOODTHIRSTY KILLER WHOSE EYES WERE FLAMING RED, AND WHOSE SPEED WAS THE SPEED OF A RACEHORSE. HE WAS KNOWN BY SUCH COLLOQUIAL NAMES AS CHAPARREL COCK, GROUND CUCKOO, AND SNAKE KILLER. HE WAS THE ANCIENT FOE OF THE RATTLESNAKE, ROUND WHOM HE BUILT WALLS OF CACTUS AND WHOM HE FOUGHT TO THE DEATH. WHAT PROWESS, WHAT STRENGTH, WHAT CRAFTINESS MUST BE THE ROADRUNNERS, I THOUGHT, AS I LONGED TO SEE THIS TERROR OF THE SANDY WILDERNESS. I WAS NOT ANXIOUS, HOWEVER, THAT OUR FIRST MEETING SHOULD BE INTIMATE.

GEORGE M. SUTTON

THE FEBRUARY MEETING

LAST MONTHS MEETING OF THE CLUB WAS HELD FEBRUARY 2ND IN THE CLUB ROOM OF THE EL PASO CAMERA CLUB, 504 MILLS BLDG. THE CLUB VOTED TO MEET HERE REGULARLY. TWO FOLDING CHAIRS FOR THE ROOM WERE PLEDGED BY OUR MEMBERS, IN TOKEN OF APPRECIATION OF THE CAMERAMENS HOSPITALITY. MRS LOIS GRAHAM YOUNG AND MRS J OWEN ALLEN WERE ADDED TO THE PAID UP MEMBERSHIP OF THE BIRD STUDY CLUB. MRS MARGUERITE WRIGHT GAVE AN ENJOYABLE ACCOUNT OF A TRIP TO PICACHO, BOSQUE BIRD REFUGE, WHICH IS REPRODUCED IN THIS ISSUE.

THE MARCH MEETING

THE EL PASO BIRD STUDY CLUB WILL MEET MONDAY, MARCH 2ND, AT 7.45 PM IN ROOM 504 MILLS BLDG. DR ANTON BERKMAN, HEAD OF THE BIOLOGY DEPARTMENT OF THE COLLEGE OF MINES, IS SCHEDULED TO TALK ON LIFE ZONES OF THE EL PASO REGION. MRS J OWEN ALLEN WILL GIVE HER FINDINGS ON THE SUBJECT OF ALBINISM IN WILD BIRDS, AND MRS LENA MCBEE WILL LEAD A DISCUSSION OF THE VARIOUS SPECIES OF TRUE SPARROWS OF THE REGION. EACH MEMBER WHO WAS PRESENT AT THE LAST MEETING WAS ASSIGNED A SPECIE OF SPARROW TO DISCUSS AT THE COMING MEETING. IT IS HOPED THAT THESE DISCUSSIONS OF LOCAL BIRDS BY SPECIES WILL BECOME A REGULAR PART OF OUR MEETINGS. STRESS WILL BE UPON FIELD CHARACTERISTICS.

EL PASO SPRING BIRDS

(UNDERLINED ARE BIRDS WHOSE NESTS WE HAVE FOUND IN THIS VICINITY, OR WHOSE NEWLY HATCHED YOUNG WE HAVE SEEN)

THE FOLLOWING BIRDS HAVE BEEN SEEN BY THE BIRD STUDY CLUB MEMBERS AT SOME TIME DURING THE MONTHS OF MARCH, APRIL, AND MAY

EARED GREBE, PIED BILLED GREBE, WHITE PELICAN, TREGANZA HERON, AMERICAN EGRET, SNOWY EGRET, ANTHONY GREEN HERON, BLACK CROWNED NIGHT HERON, AMERICAN BITTERN, LEAST BITTERN, WHITE FACED GLOSSY IBIS, CANADA GOOSE, MALLARD, NEW MEXICAN BLACK DUCK, GADWALL, BALDPATE, PINTAIL, GREEN WINGED TEAL, BLUE WINGED TEAL, CINNAMON TEAL, SHOVELLER, RED HEAD, CANVASBACK, GREATER SCAUP, LESSER SCAUP, RING NECKED DUCK, BUF FLEHEAD, GOLDEN EYE, RUDDY DUCK, AMERICAN MERGANSER, TURKEY VULTURE, SHARP SHINNED HAWK, COOPER HAWK, WESTERN RED TAIL, FUERTES RED TAIL, SWAINSON HAWK, AMERICAN ROUGH LEG, FERRUGINOUS ROUGH LEG, GOLDEN EAGLE, MARSH HAWK, OSPREY, DUCK HAWK,

TEXAS BOB WHITE, ARIZONA SCALED QUAIL, GAMBEL QUAIL, SANDHILL CRANE, VIRGINIA RAIL, SORA, FLORIDA GALLINULE, AMERICAN COOT, SEMI PALMATED PLOVER, KILLDEER, WILSON SNIPE, LONG-BILLED CURLEW, HUDSONIAN CURLEW, SPOTTED SANDPIPER, WESTERN SOLITARY SANDPIPER, WESTERN WILLET, GREATER YELLOWLEGS, LESSER YELLOWLEGS, PECTORAL SANDPIPER, WHITE RUMPED SANDPIPER, BAIRD SANDPIPER, LEAST SANDPIPER, SEMIPALMATED SAND PIPER, WESTERN SANDPIPER, LONG BILLED DOWITCHER, MARBLED GODWIT,

SANDERLING, STILT SANDPIPER, AVOCET, BLACK NECKED STILT, WILSON PHALARPE, RING-BILLED GULL, FORSTER TERN, BLACK TERN, WESTERN MOURNING DOVE, WHITE WINGED DOVE, INCA DOVE, CALIFORNIA CUCKOO, ROADRUNNER, BARN OWL, SCREECH OWL, PALLID HORNED OWL, WESTERN BURROWING OWL, LONG EARED OWL, SHORT EARED OWL,

WESTERN NIGHTHAWK, TEXAS NIGHTHAWK, WHITE THROATED SWIFT, BLACK CHINNED HUMMER, BROAD-TAILED HUMMER, BLUE THROATED HUMMER, BELTED KINGFISHER, RED SHAFTED FLICKER, RED NAPED SAPSUCKER, NATALIE SAPSUCKER, CACTUS WOODPECKER, ARKANSAS KINGBIRD, CASSIN KINGBIRD, ASH THROATED FLYCATCHER, SAY PHOEBE, BLACK PHOEBE, WESTERN FLYCATCHER, TRAILL FLYCATCHER, WESTERN WOOD PEWEE, OLIVE SIDED FLYCATCHER, VERMILION FLYCATCHER, DESERT HORNED LARK, NORTHERN VIOLET GREEN SWALLOW, TREE SWALLOW, BANK SWALLOW, ROUGH WINGED SWALLOW, BARN SWALLOW, NORTHERN CLIFF SWALLOW, LESSER CLIFF SWALLOW, PURPLE MARTIN, LONG CRESTED JAY, WOOD HOUSE JAY, WHITE NECKED RAVEN, MOUNTAIN CHICKADEE, GRAY TITMOUSE, WHITE BREASTED NUTHATCH, ARIZONA VERDIN,

WESTERN HOUSE WREN, WESTERN WINTER WREN, BAIRD BEWICK WREN, CACTUS WREN, WESTERN MARSH WREN, CANYON WREN, ROCK WREN, WESTERN MOCKINGBIRD, CURVE BILLED THRASHER, CRISSAL THRASHER, SAGE THRASHER, WESTERN ROBIN, GRAY CHEEKED THRUSH, AUDUBON HERMIT THRUSH, CHESTNUT BACKED BLUEBIRD, MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD, TOWNSEND SOLITAIRE, PLUMBEOUS GNATCATCHER, ASHY RUBY CROWNED KINGLET, AMERICAN PIPIT, CEDAR WAXWING, PHAINOPEPLA, WHITE RUMPED SHRIKE, STEPHEN VIREO, ARIZONA LEAST VIREO, CASSIN VIREO, PLUMBEOUS VIREO, WESTERN WARBLING VIREO, GRACE WARBLER, VIRGINIA WARBLER, ROCKY MOUNTAIN ORANGE CROWNED WARBLER, SONORAN YELLOW WARBLER, AUDUBON WARBLER, BLACK THROATED GRAY WARBLER, TOWNSEND WARBLER, GRIN NELL WATER THRUSH, MAGILLIVRAY WARBLER, WESTERN YELLOW THROAT, LONG TAILED CHAT, PILEOLATED WARBLER, AMERICAN REDSTART,

LILLIAN MEADOWLARK, WESTERN MEADOWLARK, YELLOW HEADED BLACKBIRD, RED WINGED BLACKBIRD, SCOTT ORIOLE, BULLOCK ORIOLE, BREWER BLACKBIRD, GREAT TAILED GRACKLE, COWBIRD, WESTERN Tanager, HEPATIC Tanager, COOPER Tanager, GRAY TAILED CARDINAL, ARIZONA PYRRHULOXIA, ROCKY MOUNTAIN BLACK HEADED GROSBEAK, EVENING GROSBEAK, WESTERN BLUE GROSBEAK, LAZULI BUNTING, PAINTED BUNTING, ENGLISH SPARROW, CASSIN PURPLE FINCH, HOUSE FINCH, PINE SISKIN, ARKANSAS GOLDFINCH, GREEN TAILED TOWHEE, SPURRED TOWHEE, CANYON TOWHEE, LARK BUNTING, SAVANNAH SPARROW, BAIRD SPARROW, WESTERN VESPER SPARROW, WESTERN LARK SPARROW, SCOTT SPARROW, DESERT SPARROW, SAGE SPARROW, SHUFELDT JUNCO, MONTANA JUNCO, PINK SIDED JUNCO, GRAY HEADED JUNCO, RED BACKED JUNCO, WESTERN TREE SPARROW, WESTERN CHIPPING SPARROW, CLAY COLORED SPARROW, BREWER SPARROW, WHITE CROWNED SPARROW, GAMBEL SPARROW, SLATE COLORED FOX SPARROW, LINCOLN SPARROW, SONG SPARROW.

A LETTER FROM DR OBERHOLSER

EXCERPT FROM A RECENT LETTER ADDRESSED TO TOM KIRKSEY

"I AM VERY MUCH INTERESTED TO RECEIVE THE FEBRUARY COPY OF YOUR PUBLICATION, THE ROADRUNNER. IT HAS INTERESTING POSSIBILITIES AND I AM GLAD THAT YOU ARE STARTING SUCH A PUBLICATION FOR THE EL PASO BIRD STUDY CLUB. I WISH THAT YOU WOULD SEND ME A COPY OF THE PREVIOUS NUMBER OR NUMBERS, SINCE I SHALL NEED TO QUOTE THESE IN MY TEXAS BOOK, AND I OF COURSE WICH TO RECEIVE THE FUTURE NUMBERS...

A DAY AT THE PICACHO BOSQUE RESERVE BY MARGUERITE WRIGHT

OLD MR WESTERN RED TAIL STRETCHED LAZILY AND TURNED HIS HEAD TO WARD THE REDDENING EAST. THE SERRATED SKYLINE OF THE ORGANS WAS BLACK AGAINST A BLAZE OF COLOR. AT THE LEFT OF HIS FAVORITE DEAD COTTON WOOD FLOWED THE RIO GRANDE. LOOKING SOUTH ALONG ITS COURSE, THE HAWK COULD JUST DISCERN THE SMOKY HAZE WHICH WAS EL PASO. AT HIS RIGHT STRETCHED THE SANDHILLS WHERE HE AND HIS COUSINS FOUND TENDER YOUNG RABBITS AND OTHER FOUR FOOTED DELICACIES.

THREE BELATED BLACK CROWNED NIGHT HERONS, RETURNING FROM DOWN THE RIVER, NOISILY SETTLED THEMSELVES WITH THEIR FAMILIES IN THE COTTON WOODS THAT BORDERED THE PICACHO BIRD REFUGE AT HIS BACK. AS THE RISING APRIL SUN CHASED AWAY THE SHADOWS, A PAIR OF RED SHAFTED FLICKERS FLASHED PAST TO LIGHT ON THE ROUGH BARK OF A WILLOW. A MOCKINGBIRD BURST INTO SONG, ACCOMPANIED BY A CHORUS OF TWITTERINGS AND CHIRPINGS THROUGHOUT THE BOSQUE. A MEADOWLARK ACROSS THE RIVER SENT HIS CLEAR JOYOUS NOTES TO HIS NESTING MATE.

MR REDTAIL SAT ENJOYING THE INCREASING WARMTH OF THE SUN, LISTENING TO THE FLUTTER AND STIR OF SMALL WINGS ABOUT HIM. THEN HE FLEW DOWN THE RIVER FOR HIS BATH, THEREBY STARTLING SOME MALLARDS AND BALDPATES THAT HAD BEEN SWIMMING AGAINST THE CURRENT. KILLDEER CRYING SHRILLY, RAN ABOUT ON THE SAND. RED TAIL SOON DISCOVERED FOUR SPOTTED EGGS IN A SMALL DEPRESSION. THERE WAS A DISTRESSED CRY FROM THE MOTHER AS SHE FLUTTERED ALONG. TURNING HIS HEAD, HE DISCOVERED A PROWLING DOG SNIFFING AT THREE FLUFFY KILLDEER BABIES. HOW SWIFTLY THOSE

DRIPES RAIN/ THEY COVERED THE GROUND WITH INCREDIBLE SPEED, AND SQUAT
TED, TO BECOME AN INVISIBLE PART OF THE BAR.

NINE SHOVELLERS PASSED OVERHEAD, A PAIR OF BLUE WINGED TEAL AND FOUR PAIRS OF CINNAMON TEAL FOLLOWED THEM UPSTREAM. MR RED TAIL, BE GINNING TO FEEL THE NEED OF BREAKFAST, FLEW ACROSS THE RIVER AND DOWN OVER THE SANDHILLS THAT PARALLEL IT ON THE WEST. A MOUSE SCURRIED FOR COVER BENEATH THE ROOTS OF A MESQUITE. SMALL FRIGHTENED EYES PEERED FROM CREOSOTE AND YUCCA. HE SAILED ON, PASSING SOME SPARROW HAWKS IN TENT UPON THE SAME QUEST AS HE. FROM CAT CLAW AND DESERT WILLOW HE NOTED THE FLUTTERINGS OF DESERT SPARROWS, ARKANSAS GOLDFINCHES; AND SAY PHOEBES. SWOOPING DOWN ON A CARELESS YOUNG JACK RABBIT, MR RED TAIL FLEW ON DOWN TO THE RIVER TO MAKE A LEISURELY MEAL. FROM HOLES IN THE BANK ABOVE HIS HEAD, CURIOUS EYES OF NESTING SWALLOWS PEERED OUT AT A FLOCK OF RED WINGED AND YELLOW HEADED BLACKBIRDS ON THE TULE. THREE RING BILLED GULLS WALKED WITH SWAYING BODIES AND JERKING HEADS DOWN A SANDBAR. A MARSH HAWK FLEW PAST, SEARCHING THE SHALLOW WATERS FOR FROGS.

MR RED TAIL NOW CONTINUED HIS LEISURELY FLIGHT DOWNSTREAM. EIGHT TREGANZA HERONS AND AN AMERICAN EGRET STOOD MOTIONLESS IN ONE OF THE OVER FLOW PONDS. HIGH OVERHEAD, THREE LONG BILLED CURLEW FLEW AT FIVE MINUTE INTERVALS, THE LAST UTTERING A HIGH PITCHED TRILLING CRY. ON ANOTHER MARSHY STRIP TWELVE SNOWY EGRETS WADED AND A PAIR OF OSPREYS CIRCLED ABOVE THEM, INTENT ON THE BUSINESS OF FISH. TWO PAIRS OF NEW MEXICAN BLACK DUCKS AND SOME GREEN WINGED TEAL WERE GOSSIPING AT THE JUNCTION OF A DRAINAGE DITCH WITH THE RIVER. TIRING, HE CAME TO REST ON AN UPENDED ROOT OF A WATERLOGGED TREE, AND WATCHED FOUR SCAUP HENS AND SEVERAL AMERICAN MERGANSER HENS, UNDOUBTEDLY EXCHANGING REMARKS ON THE SHORTCOMINGS OF THE MALE.

HE STRUCK AT A SLITHERING SNAKE INDIFFERENTLY, AND CIRCLED OVER GREEN FIELDS OF ALFALFA ON HIS WAY BACK TO THE REFUGE. FROM ONE OF THE BORDERS HE SNATCHED A FIELD MOUSE. WHAT WAS ALL THE ACTIVITY ON THE BIG POND? TEN AMERICAN COOTS SWAM HAPPILY IN THE BRACKISH WATERS. SIX BAIRD SANDPIPERS AND A SCORE OF LONG BILLED DOWITCHERS HUNTED FOR SNAILS AND INSECTS. STILTS AND AVOCETS WERE SUNNING ON THE SANDS. A FORSTER TERN FLITTED ALONG, SHARP BILL POINTED DOWNWARD AS HE SEARCHED THE SURFACE OF THE WATER. BARN SWALLOWS AND EIGHT WHITE NECKED RAVENS FLEW OVER A FRESHLY PLOUGHED FIELD. GREAT TAILED GRACKLES SWAYED ON THE REEDS. THREE BREWER BLACKBIRDS FLEW INTO A FARMYARD. NEVER HAD HE FLOWN SO FAR. AND PROBABLY TOMORROW, MRS RED TAIL WOULD PRESENT HIM WITH FOUR HUNGRY MOUTHS TO FEED.

ONCE MORE BACK IN THE DEAD COTTONWOOD, HE SETTLED HIMSELF FOR HIS AFTERNOON SIESTA. SONGS WERE NOW MUTED, BUT SMALL FOLKS STILL PURSUED SMALL AFFAIRS IN THE COOL SHADE OF THE GROVE. A WESTERN MOURNING DOVE SAT PATIENTLY ON TWO WHITE EGGS ON A CARELESS NEST OF TWIGS IN THE FORK OF A SMALL SAPLING. BLACK CHINNED HUMMERS ZOOMED SKYWARD IN COURTSHIP MANEUVERS. SIX CACTUS WOODPECKERS WERE INVESTIGATING TREE TRUNKS. AN ARKANSAS KINGBIRD WAS TAKING MOSQUITOES FROM THE AIR. IN AND OUT AMONG BOUGHS OF WILLOW AND SALT CEDAR FLITTED RUBY CROWNED KINGLET, TOWNSEND AND PILEOLATED AND AUDUBON WARBLERS, STEPHEN VIREOS, HOUSE FINCHES, ENGLISH SPARROWS, AND A FEW WESTERN VESPER SPARROWS AND SISKINS.

AS THE EVENING SHADOWS BEGAN TO LENGTHEN, THE BOSQUE WAS ONCE MORE FILLED WITH SONG. THE SETTING SUN TURNED THE WISPS OF A WESTERN CLOUD INTO VIVID MASSES OF COLOR, WHICH SLOWLY FADED TO GRAY AND BLUE AND PURPLE. WITH A GREAT FLAPPING OF WINGS, BLACK CROWNED NIGHT HERONS LEFT THE GROVE BY TWOS AND THREES. A ROADRUNNER HURRIED ACROSS AN OPEN SPACE. A WHITE RUMPED SHRIKE SETTLED ON A FENCE. ONLY A FEW DROWSY TWITTERINGS WERE TO BE HEARD IN THE TREES. MR RED TAIL RETURNED FROM HIS EVENING MEAL TO PERCH IN THE DEAD COTTONWOOD. NIGHT LAID A BLANKET OF DUSK OVER THE SLEEPING REFUGE.

NEW TEXAS COLLECTING REGULATIONS

HOUSTON TEXAS FEBRUARY 13 1942

MY PERMIT (TO COLLECT BIRD SPECIMENS IN THE STATE OF TEXAS) HAS THIS NEW CLAUSE IN IT "...DOES NOT AUTHORIZE THE TAKING OF MEARNS QUAIL, COLIMA WARBLER, VIRGINIA WARBLER, GOLDEN CHEEKED WARBLER, APLA MADO EALCON, LUCIFER HUMMINGBIRD, OR PAINTED REDSTART, OR TO TAKE ANY SPECIES OF BIRDS IN CAMERON, HIDLAGO, AND WILLACY COUNTIES..."

IT IS MORE THAN I HAD EVER HOPED FOR. MUCH THANKS TO YOU ALL THERE. (FOR PETITIONING THE STATE COMMISSION TO SUCH ACTION)

MRS JOHN WHITTAKER

OUTSTANDING BIRDING AREAS OF THE SOUTHWEST (TO BE CONTINUED)

THE BLACK RANGE OF NEW MEXICO IS AN AREA OF WOODED MOUNTAINS LY WITHIN THE BOUNDS OF THE GILA NATIONAL FOREST. THIS FOREST WAS CREATED BY PROCLAMATION OF PRESIDENT MCKINLEY IN 1899. IT IS LOCATED IN THE

SOUTHWESTERN PART OF NEW MEXICO, AND TAKES ITS NAME FROM ITS PRINCIPAL DRAINAGE SYSTEM, THE GILA RIVER. BESIDES THE GILA RIVER IT ALSO EMBRACES THE HEADWATERS OF THE MIMBRES AND SAN FRANCISCO RIVERS. FOUR MAJOR MOUNTAIN RANGES, THE MOGOLLON, PINOS ALTOS, BLACK RANGE, AND BIG BURROS, ARE INCLUDED WITHIN ITS BOUNDARIES, WHICH ENCLOSE AN AREA OF 2,393,609 ACRES. THE GILA NATIONAL FOREST IS PREEMINENT IN THE SOUTHWEST AS A BIG GAME COUNTRY. THE GAME CENSUS FOR THE YEAR 1932 ESTIMATED APPROXIMATELY 27,000 DEER AND 2650 WILD TURKEYS IN THE FOREST. BESIDE WHITE TAIL AND BLACK TAIL DEER ARE A FEW HEAD OF GRIZZLY BEAR, AND FAIRLY NUMEROUS BLACK AND BROWN BEARS AND MOUNTAIN LIONS.

A BLACK RANGE PRIMITIVE AREA OF APPROXIMATELY 170,000 ACRES HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED FOR THE PRESERVATION OF NATURAL CONDITIONS SO THAT FUTURE GENERATIONS MAY SEE, AS NEARLY AS POSSIBLE, WHAT THE COUNTRY WAS LIKE IN THE PIONEER DAYS. THESE AREAS ARE ACCESSIBLE ONLY BY PACK OUTFITS, AND HERE HUNTERS, FISHERMAN, AND NATURE LOVERS MAY SPEND WEEKS IN THIS KIND OF TRAVEL. TRAILS AND OTHER IMPROVEMENTS WILL BE CONSTRUCTED IN THESE AREAS ONLY AS THEY ARE ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY TO TO PROTECT THE AREA FROM FIRE AND TO PROVIDE FOR PUBLIC SAFETY. NO ROADS WILL BE BUILT. IN THIS AREA, ONE OF THE VERY FEW OF ITS KIND IN THE UNITED STATES, IS FOUND STRIKING MOUNTAIN SCENERY, CANYONS, GORGES, BIG TIMBER, RUGGED PEAKS, GAME AND FISHING STREAMS. ENTRY TO THE WILDERNESS MAY BE MADE FROM SILVER CITY OR HILLSBORO

MAY IN THE BLACK RANGE
BY MARY ELIZABETH HARPER

IT IS A TRIP OF ABOUT 150 MILES TO THE CREST OF THE BLACK RANGE FROM EL PASO BY AUTO, THE ROUTE BEING VIA LAS CRUCES, HATCH, HILLSBORO, AND KINGSTON. AFTER YOU LEAVE HATCH, YOU START CLIMBING THE FOOTHILLS. WHERE DESERT WILLOWS PURPLE THE ARROYOS, BIG WHITE POPPIES ON SILVER STEMS, AND BRINGT VERBINAS ARE ALONG THE ROAD, BLUE BIRDS SWING ON THE WHITE FLOWERED APACHE PLUMES AND COLLECT ON THE FENCES TO SING OF MAY

HERE YOU BEGIN TO CATCH THE WHIR AND FLIGHT OF TWO HAWKS, THE SWANSON, THE HANDSOME BIRD IN FLIGHT OR STANDING ON SOME HIGH POST, AND THE REDTAIL, SEEMING HEAVIER IN HANDSOME SPRING PLUMAGE. PRAIRIE FALCONS ON TOP OF YUCCAS SIT AND STARE AT YOU QUITE UNAFRAID.

WHERE THE TIMBER BEGINS, SCRUB OAKS, BLUE SPRUCE, PINONS, DOUGLAS FIR EVERYWHERE. WRENS COME AND GO, ROCK WRENS CALLING FROM AMONG THE THE BOULDERS, HOUSE WRENS BUSY ALONG THE STREAM THAT RUNS BY THE ROAD, AND CANYON WRENS PRACTICING THEIR REMARKABLE SCALES. WE ARE LUCKY ENOUGH TO SEE A NEST OF THE CANYON WREN HIGH IN THE CLIFF OVER THE ROAD. VIREOS, GREY WITH YELLOW BREASTS, HANG GARLANDS OF SILVERY NOTES ALONG OUR WAY.

THREE SPARROWS CHIP AND CHURP AND WORK OVER THE GROUND, WESTERN CHIPPING SPARROW, DESERT SONG AND DESERT. SHRIKES, BUTCHER BIRDS, PROUD, STRAIGHT, BLACK AND GREY SIT ON THE WIRES WAITING THEIR MOMENTS, BOLD UNWINKING TOTALITARIANS. GAMBEL QUAIL, TWO BY TWO, VERY CLEAN, TIDY BODIES WITH HIGH CURVED HEAD FEATHER AND ORANGE TOP-PATCH, HURRY AWAY AS WE COME ALONG. ROADRUNNERS, THOSE CLOWNS OF OUR BIRD TRAILS, RUN AND SKID AND LIFT THEIR CRESTS, AND PRETEND TO BE AFRAID AND PRETEND TO BE UNAFRAID AND LEAVE TO RUN AHEAD AND WATCH US COME US.

AS WE CLIMB HIGHER AND HIGHER, WARBLERS, AUDUBON, GRACE, ORANGE CROWNED, VIRGINIA, AND THE RARE REDFACED, CUNNING AND LIVELY, SING AT THE TOP OF THEIR VOICES AT HIGH NOON AS WE REACH THE CREST. TWO WOOD PECKERS COME TO LUNCHEON WITH US, THE MEARNS AND THE WHITE BREASTED, HUNTING AND FEASTING OVERHEAD WHILE WE MUNCH OUR SANDWICHES AND DRIED APRICOTS BELOW. IT IS AMUSING TO WATCH THEM SCOOT UP A TREE FLAT AGAINST A TRUNK AS IF THEY HAVE AN ESCAATOR OR SLIDE.

THE CARPET OF THE WORLD IN THE MAY NOON IS OF WHITE VIOLETS AND THE BLUEST OF LUPINES SWAYING THEIR RHYTHMIC SPRAYS WITH MOUNTAIN CHICHADEE SAYING THEIR SAY, AND GREY TITMICE TEETERING FULL OF CURIOUSITY ON THE TIPS OF TWIGS, TALKING CONFIDENTIALLY TO THEMSELVES OR LISTENING TO PASSING FOLKS. LITTLE GROUPS OF PINE SISKINS FLUTTER AND CIRCLE AND SING THIN, FINE AIRS THAT SEEM TO SWING FROM BRANCH TO BRANCH. THE RED NAPE SAPSUCKER HAMMERS ON TREES, AND LONG CRESTED JAYS SQUAWK AT US. GREY HEADED JUNCOS CLIK OUT HIDING, SHOW THEIR WHITE TAIL FEATHERS, AND ARE AWAY.

ALL TOGETHER A TRIP OF A LIFETIME.

NEVER ASK ME TO WRITE ANYTHING AGAIN. I FEEL TOO DUMB.

THE FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE ADMINISTERS MORE THAN 260 NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES FOR THE RESTORATION OF ALL FORMS OF WILDLIFE.

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THERE ARE ABOUT 1500 KINDS OF BIRDS IN NORTH AMERICA, NORTH OF MEXICO,

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CAREFUL ESTIMATES SHOW THAT 120,000,000 ACRES OF FORMER WATER FOWL HABITAT HAVE BEEN TAKEN FOR USE BY AGRICULTURE, MANUFACTURING, AND OTHER INDUSTRIES.