

# Conservation

. . . with Marie Mellinger

## The Least of These

At holiday time almost everyone is overflowing with goodwill to man, and a little of this goodwill laps over to the birds and animals. Many people follow the charming custom of a Christmas tree for the birds, or give the farm animals special treats in honor of the first Christmas. Pampered pets get holiday gifts just as if they were children. All of this is fine, but special thanks and appreciation, however, should go to those individuals and organizations who devote year-round time to working for the protection of all our birds and animals, and for those who spend their time and money helping the least of these, the waifs of the animal kingdom.

So this column gives special thanks to:

1. all the teen age members of the Kindness Club (called to our attention by Celestine Sibley), of New Brunswick, Canada, whose motto is that of Joseph Wood Crutch, "Conservation is not enough, the thing that is missing is love." Some of their golden rules are: "Respect and protect homes of animals, dens, nests, and food supplies." "Insist that wild life refuges be places where animals are safe or protected — not shooting galleries." "Hunt with a camera, as you would like to be hunted."

2. Hope Sawyer Buyukmichi of the Unexpected Wildlife Refuge, who has started an organization called The Beaver Defenders and a crusade to save the beavers. One beaver dam forming a pond benefits trout and restores ideal living conditions for other animals and birds. Beavers create miniature marshes and ponds suitable for wood ducks.

3. W. G. Duncan who gathers together news of wildlife, from bluebirds to bison, and sends out all this information at his own expense. His motto: "By saving wildlife man may save himself."

4. *The Purple Martin Capital News*, the only newspaper in America that devotes itself exclusively to news of birds and animals and the humans who relate to them.

5. Harold Martin, whose column reflects great feeling for his furred and feathered friends, and especially for squirrels. He reports on the people who love animals.

6. National Audubon Society, Defenders of Wildlife, Save the Animals League, National Catholic Society for Animal Welfare, Canadian and American Wolf Defenders, and to all the Humane Societies who work with little money and much love to cope with the abandoned and unwanted creatures of this world. To the veterinarians who have formed the National Wildlife Health Foundation to provide information and health care of wildlife during an emergency, such as an oil spill.

7. To all the turtle toters who stop to carry a turtle safely across a highway, and to all the members of the save the snake league.

8. To the teen age Y.C.C. boy who brought in this Christina Rossetti poem for inclusion in the Y.C. C. Green Bough.

"Hurt no living thing:  
Ladybug and butterfly,  
Nor moth with dusty wing,  
No cricket chirping cheerily,  
No grasshopper so light of leap,  
Nor dancing gnat, no beetle fat  
Nor harmless worms that creep."

### **An Appropriate Way to Celebrate?**

In this year of the 100th anniversary of the celebration of the establishment of our first national park, there is legislation before the House of Representatives that is an ominous threat to national parks, refuges, seashores, forests, and the entire national domain. This is H.R. 7211, sponsored by Representative Wayne Aspinall. The bill would dilute protection of public lands and expose them to pressures to have land sold off, push commercial use, and make possible withdrawals up to 25,000 acres. This would leave the majority of public lands unprotected from mining and logging. Write your Congressman in Washington and let him know what you think about this bill. Do it now!

### **Footnote on the Chattooga River**

Visited the Chattooga River with the idea of taking some pictures of the pristine river, on 29 October. This was where Hwy 76 crosses from Georgia to South Carolina. A large float convoy was preparing to embark, and there were innumerable sightseers. The river itself was almost a chocolate brown color, and the amount of filth, trash, and litter on both banks was appalling. People don't use the river, they abuse it!

### **A New Arrival**

A flock of Monk Parakeets escaped from a cage at Kennedy Airport in 1969 and now appear to be well adapted to living conditions in North America. Birds of this South American species have been reported from Connecticut, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, North Dakota, Michigan, and Virginia as well as in the New York-New Jersey area. Photographs taken in Buncombe County, N.C., and circulated by Bob Ruiz at the fall CBC meeting in Wilmington have been tentatively identified as being pictures of nesting Monk Parakeets. We hope to have a full report from Bob in the next issue of *Chat*. Meanwhile, keep your eyes open for these new arrivals at your feeder. They are medium-sized parakeets, greenish gray above with a lemon yellow belly. Flight feathers are blue-gray, tail bluish green, bill rosy flesh color.

### **For Holiday Reading and Giving**

*A Lifetime with the Birds, an Ornithological Logbook.*

Earle R. Greene. Edwards Brothers Inc., 2500 South State Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan, \$6.00.

*Memoirs of a Naturalist.* Herbert L. Stoddard Sr. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Oklahoma, \$6.95.

Delightful reading and the perfect gift for anyone interested in birds, birding, or the all-time great naturalists of our area, these books are fine additions to any library. Earle Greene has over 600 birds on his life list, and his fascinating tales of quests after rare species make good reading. At one time he was manager of the Mattamuskeet National Wildlife Refuge, a member of the early Georgia Naturalist Club, and a founder of the Georgia Ornithological Society. The late Herbert Stoddard Sr. was an outstanding naturalist and wildlife expert, and his memoirs include very interesting accounts of a lifetime spent in the out-of-doors.

### **TVA Drops Plan for Dams on French Broad River**

In mid-November 1972 the Tennessee Valley Authority announced abandonment of a plan that would have built 14 small dams on the upper French Broad River in western North Carolina. The brief statement attributed the decision to a lack of local government support, but the budget squeeze in Washington and mounting opposition from conservationists were also factors working against the project. The earthen dams would have created lakes ranging from 250 to 1,030 acres and would have flooded nearly 7,000 acres of bottomland, about half of it rich farmland.