

THE BRODIE CLUB: Next Speaker: Bill Carrick - Swans, Geese, and Other Topics, at 8 p.m., January 16, 1990, at The Howard Savage Faunal Archaeo-Osteology Laboratory, University of Toronto.

"Practical Uses for Imprinting Birds".

THE BRODIE CLUB

Minutes of the 854th Meeting

Date of Meeting: December 19, 1989.

Place of Meeting: The Howard Savage Faunal Archaeo-Osteology Laboratory, University of Toronto.

Speakers: Bruce Falls, with John Speakman and Ron Tasker, members of the Club.

Subject : Costa Rica, by Itinerant Naturalists.

Chairman: Jim Bendell

Recording Secretary: Paul Aird

The meeting was called to order at 8:18 p.m. Twelve members were present and four guests: Martin McNicholl, guest of Bruce Falls; Yvonne Bendell, guest of Jim Bendell; Margaret Bodsworth, guest of Fred Bodsworth; R. MacIntosh, guest of John Speakman.

The minutes of the previous meeting recorded by Boissoneau were read by Savage. Their adoption was moved by Savage, and seconded by Speakman.

Speakman will write the Dales on behalf of the Brodie Club, in thanks for their organization of the previous meeting.

Announcements: Aird announced the forthcoming seminar organized by the Faculty of Forestry on "Old Growth Forests", scheduled for January 20, 1980.

Loan of the book on "Craigieburn Farm" was requested by Louise Herzberg, and a motion was approved.

Speaker of the Evening: Bruce Falls was introduced by Bendell as a member of the Club.

Bruce and Anne Falls went to Costa Rica twice. The last time with two other couples -- Speakman's and Rideout's.

Birding was the main item on the agenda -- 300 species seen on the first trip, 400 on the second trip. 275 species were new to Bruce. He took tape recordings as well.

Costa Rica is the second country along from South America. Panama is first. A very pleasant, peaceful country. Seven percent of the area is in National Parks [greater than Canada].

Two highlands and a basin, or central valley, extend parallel to the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. One trip started on the lowland, and then up the slope near San Jose. Then up the ridge through Monte Verde (a cloud forest), then to a Lodge on the Pacific side to visit the national parks nearby.

The Lowlands on the Pacific side have dry tropical forests, but become moist in the rainy season.

They travelled by aircraft, bus, car, and boat. Much of the country is denuded by agriculture and forestry, but is well treed in the wetland areas. Steel punts with outboard motors were used to navigate the wetlands through "walls" of forest. Blue herons. Dugout canoes. Howler monkeys. Some small banana farms, houses with thatched rooves. Turtles nested on Atlantic beaches. A small lizard ate the eggs of a hummingbird.

Illustrated a concrete trail through the lowland rainforest. Best book available was "Birds of Panama". Many spectacular flowers.

Leaf-cutter ants were fascinating -- they travelled in parades. Traditional ant trails, a few inches wide, are very visible.

Army ants swarmed over logs, and ant-eating birds and animals were prominent as well.

Numerous tanagers. ^{Scopelogadus} Black birds that built pendant nests. Truckload of very large logs. Dipper in stream.

Confluence of a brown and a blue stream was striking in colour difference, due to two different substrates.

On ridge, a series of volcanoes in a national park, with very striking vegetation. Volcanoes at 9-10,000 foot elevation.

Spectacular toucans, hummingbirds. Lots of insects: "Haven't the faintest idea what that is." Tarantulas.

Misty rain forest had stunted vegetation on tops of slopes. Some spectacularly large trees on Monte Verde.

Laughing falcons. At lower reaches, dry landscape, with lots of erosion. Thickknee. Iguana. Screech owl.

Dry forest at Santa Rosa had epiphytic cacti on trees. Very nice butterflies and moths. Hundreds of daddy-long-legs in a heap on the bark of a tree. Snake of racer group. Arenal Volcano near Lake Arenal erupts every few minutes.

On Pacific side, saw a lot of oil palm plantations. Some rainforests grow right to the coast. Great place for scarlet macaws. Black vultures. "Jesus Christ" lizard - a colloquial name.

Along the coast, black vultures, lizards, katydid, slaty-tailed trogon, rufous-tailed hummingbird, yellow-throated warbler, squirrel, tree ducks, Amazonian parrot, spider monkey, lined woodpecker, caracara, scarlet macaw.

Speakman added that five quetzals, 50 feet off the ground, flying from tree to tree, with their colour and long-plumed tails, was the highlight of the trip.

Tozer added comments on the diversity and beauty of Costa Rica's wildlife.

Falls played tape recordings of green macaws, white-crowned parrots, bay wren, chestnut-mandible toucan, kingfisher, insects and frogs.

Questions and Comments: Where would you visit on next trip? Carara Biological Reserve, and other parks unseen.

Observations on deforestation and effects on our birds? General feeling that it's a problem, but hard to get good evidence. Dave Hussell doesn't see much evidence to distinguish between tropical and temperate migrants. But main victims would be native birds.

Only about 20 - 30% of the area is now forested.

The quetzal is dependent on a valuable tree species, which is being harvested.

The cloud forest isn't as tall as the rainforest.

A few biting insects, chiggers, no-see-ums.

Army ants have poor vision.

Tasker thanked Bruce Falls, followed by hearty applause.

Reference: Stiles, F. Gary, and Alexander F. Skutch. 1989.
Birds of Costa Rica. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.

Members notes:

Riley - Hermit thrush seen on Christmas bird count.

Bodsworth - Grosbeaks, red-breasted nuthatches, sharp-shinned hawks, flicker, and others too numerous to mention were seen on bird count.

Speakman - The pileated woodpeckers "go to bed" between 4:10 and 4:25. He has heard them working inside the trees, on 4 or 5 occasions. They are not nest building, because it's outside the nesting season. Believed to be feeding instead.

Adjourned at 10:26 p.m., for Christmas Cheer.

The mulled cider recipe used by Norma Martin included frozen reconstituted apple juice, cinnamon sticks, cloves, and lemon slices, brewed on a low heat for about three hours.