

L. Miller (1922)

Santa Cruz Id. - 1922

Aug. 18.

First landing at 1:30 in sunshine after 4½ hrs. from Santa Barbara wharf. Turtle Dove, Linnet, Blk. Phoebe, Island Shrike, Raven, Island Jay, Barn Swallow, Coot, greeted us at once.

We drove up the Cañon three miles in a two-wheeled cart to call on the overseer, a very blond Italian by name of Ravel and presented our credentials. We were treated very courteously and given the freedom of the island. Camped in a nice group of pines on the edge of the water at Prisoner's harbor. Santa Cruz Jays are all about us and not at all shy. They are almost as big as Magpies. The largest acreage of vineyard and walnut trees is at the opening out of the canon three miles up. Here is the old residence of the Caire family. Justinian Caire of San Francisco being the best-known member of the old Spanish-French family that has owned the island for the last 100 years.

Aug. 19.

Spent the morning in a hike up into the pines above Pelican Bay looking for Crossbills of which we found none. Bird life is extremely quiet at this time. Ravens, Jays, Linnets, Vigors Wrens and Turtle Doves are about all there is to be seen. Barn Swallows, Spurred Towhees, Chipping Sparrows, Milton Sirees, Antat Allen Hummers also occur. One Rock Wren, one Rufus Crowned Sparrow and a couple of flocks of Bush Tits, two Mocking Birds, and one Red Tailed Hawk were seen also.

The Pines here are a two-needle species with very small cones that are borne in tremendous numbers and persistent for life. The soil is shallow and much down timber results from each heavy wind.

Spent the P.M. skinning Blue Jays and setting fox traps. Shot a Bald Eagle at the slough where he had come for a bath and drink. I watched him for a while gulping the water and waddling about. It was a young bird in black plumage, measuring 84 inches in expanse and 33 in length. ○

Aug. 20.

He drank an enormous amount of water all of which drooled out when I picked him up. The bill and cere are entirely black and the feet chrome yellow. The iris is dark brown.

This morning the bait had been taken from one trap and the other had an old dog fox in summer pelage. Such a tiny fox! He is little larger than a gray squirrel or a small cat and quite highly colored. The Sheath was filled with long awned seeds of Bronco grass. There were at least two dozen that had been there for some time. Body very fat.

Spent the morning in a trip to the grain fields in search of Horned Larks of which we obtained a dozen. They are a very dark variety but these were in poor plumage. Another young Eagle was seen, probably of the same brood as

as the one shot yesterday. Spent the remainder of the day in skinning Fox, Eagle, Raven and an Island Shrike. Felt that I had done a day's work when I got some traps out and washed up for supper at dark.

The boat is going back tomorrow and not again till Aug. 18th so I must go tomorrow (Aug. 21).

An adult female Fox in my traps this morning which makes a nice pair now. We got up before 5:00 and packed the camp kit and moved out to the little dinky tram car that goes to the end of the wharf. We went on board at about 7:00 and the engine would not crank even with aid of the hot language of the skipper so we got away at 10:15 for a late start, but with both sails and a jib, we should make good time and the sea is perfect. We get a much better view of the island than when we landed.

Arrived in Santa Barbara and spent p.m. at the Museum of Comparative Zoology where we saw some wonderful eggs and nests and heard some wonderful biological and metaphysical dissertations by Dawson in explaining the parasitic habit of cuckoos.

Camped near Dawsons and came down to Carpenteria to Ralph Hoffman's.

Personnel:

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