Ozark Society Bulletin

Autumn 1968

~~Spring 1969~~

OZARK SOCIETY BULLETIN

Autumn 1968 Volume 2 Number 4

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P. O. Box 38, Fayetteville, Ark. 72701

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1724 Rockwood Trail, Fayetteville, Ark. 72701

Cover: Diamond Falls, upper Buffalo Area
Photo by Neil Compton
Pen Drawings — Kathrine Winckler

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———O———

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Activity Leaders

Those wishing to participate in the activities are requested to contact the leaders at least one week in advance. This is necessary as there are often last minute changes in plans.

Mrs. Laird Archer, Box 38, 72701 — HI 2-4497
For Bus Tours out of Fayetteville

Everett Bowman, 24 Sherrill Heights, Little Rock 72202 — MO 3-2317

Joe M. Clark, 1724 Rockwood Trail, Fayetteville 72701 — HI 2-2404

John Heuston, 5001 W. 65th St., Little Rock 72206 — LO 2-3910

Richard D. (Dick) Murray, 2006 Austin Dr., Fayetteville 72701 — HI 2-8995

Harold Hedges, Ponca, Ark. 72670

Ozark Society Annual Meeting 1968

Sam Peck Hotel

Little Rock, Arkansas

Saturday, November 23, 1968

9 a.m. Registration

10 a.m. Meeting called to order by Dr. Neil Compton, president
Business session,
Ozark Society members only

1:30 p.m. Business session continued, Ozark Society members only

2:45 p.m. Intermission
Open to the Public

3:00 p.m. Possibilities of Coordination of Local and National Conservation Organizations in the Ozark Area —— Jean Leever, president of Great Lakes Chapter of the Sierra Club

4:30 p.m. Adjourn for dinner

6:30 p.m. Annual Dinner

7:45 p.m. Sierra Club Film: THE GRAND CANYON

ACTIVITY SCHEDULE

Saturday, October 12 — Sunday, October 13

Float Middle Fork Little Red River; Camp on River, John Heuston, Everett Bowman in charge.

(Alternate: Hike old M. A. railroad and bluffs)

Sunday, October 20

Fall Bus Tour, Fayetteville; Orland Maxfield in charge.

Sunday, October 20

Fall Bus Tour, Little Rock; Everett Bowman in charge.

Saturday, October 26 — Sunday, October 27

Float Cossatot River; Lad Bridge SE Gilham to U. S. Hwy. 70; Camp on river; Dick Murray in charge.

(Alternate: Camp and hike at Falls of Cossatot)

Saturday, November 23

ANNUAL MEETING, Little Rock; Hotel Sam Peck; Everett Bowman in charge.

Sunday, December 15

Hike upper Buffalo cliffs and gorges; Harold Hedges by letter or Dick Murray in charge.

The Buffalo In October

Richard Phelan

(R. C. (Dick) Phelan lives near Pea Ridge. His work has been published in several national magazines including the Saturday Evening Post and Sports Illustrated.)

(Parts of this story have been omitted because of the lack of space.)

I suppose that everybody who was looking for Ponca, Arkansas that morning found it. Knowing where to look on a road map helps, for in the Partial List of Cities and Towns, Ponca as a rule does not appear.

People who stay at the pretty little Lost Valley Lodge have come in to see Lost Valley or Hemmed-In Hollow; or to hunt and fish; or to look at dogwood or birds or autumn leaves; or to examine the old log cabins and mills that have been abandoned now for years.

Or to set their canoes in the Buffalo River and start downstream to Pruitt, twenty miles away, where there is another road and canoes can be taken out again. For Ponca is at the head of navigation on the Buffalo, provided the river is full. In dry times you have to put in farther down.

This was not a dry time. "Man,, just look at that river!" one young man yelled to another. He was in his twenties, but for the moment had the kind of delighted grin you seldom see on people older than twelve. They were at the little concrete bridge near Ponca. So were about 58 other persons, 30 canoes, three kayaks, and enough food and tents and sleeping gear for a two-day trip on the river.

And there it flowed, the lovely Buffalo, gray-green and white and silver, fringed with willows and ferns, buried in its own canyon, flowing among forests, and crossed in all its 150 miles by only six bridges—three with paved roads and three with gravel.

Little wisps of vapor hung about on the curly surface of the water. It was October, and early morning. The sunlight was weak but warm enough to be worth standing in all the same. Every minute or two a canoe, loaded and manned, was pushed out into the river and was carried briskly down.

They had been brought in, on the tops of cars, from Oklahoma, Arkansas, Kansas and Missouri. This was the annual October Float of the Ozark Wilderness Waterways Club of Kansas City, with the Ozark Society participating, and anyone else welcome who had a canoe and wanted to come.

The Buffalo is a perfect float stream—tricky enough to allow the exercise of skill by those who have it, easy enough for almost anybody, with a little luck, to get down it without disaster. Still, there is usually an upset on any trip involving thirty or so canoes and we had one, not a mile below the bridge, in the cold October water.

On a sharp bend, an uneasy passenger grabbed a branch and hung on, as she said later, for dear life. (Few women, it appears, have any intuitive sense of the physics of motion. It is one form of intuition which belongs to men. You notice this on subways and buses, where standing women tend to richochet like pinballs.)

Her hanging on tipped the canoe more and more, and it began to fill with water. The lady got wet and burst into tears. In single file, a string of supermarket items floated down on the current—a package of Fig Newtons, a plastic box of safflower-oil margarine, instant Maxwell House, toilet paper. ("That Charmin's going to need squeezing," said a young matron dryly, when others brought the flotsam to shore.)

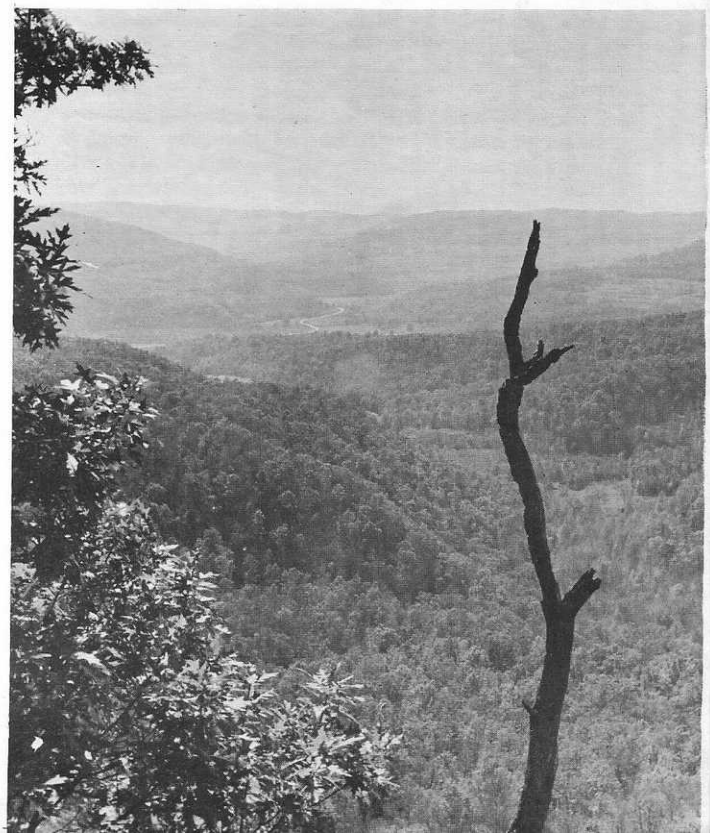
It was a family canoe that had tipped too far. While the father tended to his wet camping equipment and his pretty, frightened wife, their level-headed and competent twelve-year-old son stood waist-deep in the swift, chilly water, bailing the canoe. He had the clear skin of a child and a deep, gentle voice, almost that of a man.

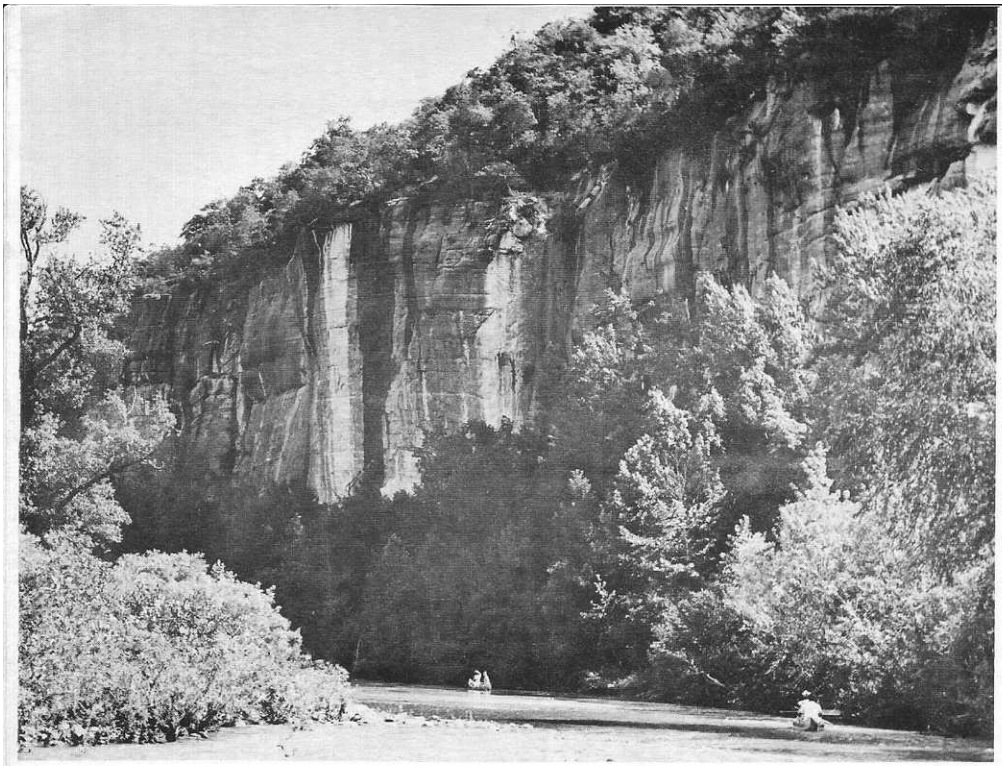
"My mother cried," he told me, in a slow Arkansas drawl. "It's the first time she's come with us." He was not embarrassed for her; he was concerned. Meanwhile he did what had to be done.

In October, in the Ozarks, the earth receives its annual blessing from the sun. One after another, uncertain days climb out of the morning mist, grow warmer, and turn perfect. The series may remain unbroken for weeks. We were in the midst of a series now. The last vapors dissolved and the world came into flawless focus. (Air pollution is unknown on the Buffalo). Some real warmth began to reach us from the sun. Dr. and Mrs. Neil Compton, who had been at Lost Valley Lodge for a week, said the colors had faded off the canyon slopes a little. They were still brilliant — very pure sweet-gum reds and beech yellows; the translucent, springlike green of birches

VALLEY OF THE UPPER BUFFALO AT BOXLEY

NEIL COMPTON





BEE BLUFF

NEIL COMPTON

and alders; the heavier autumn colors of the oaks.

The Buffalo winds and winds through the mountains, passing limestone bluffs up to 500 feet high. People who know say it is the finest, least spoiled float stream in the United States. There are better ones in Canada, but their season is short. You can swim in the deep green pools of the Buffalo from April through September, and catch bass and bream for your supper. You can travel it in canoes every month of the year, though it takes special hardiness and special equipment to do it on a frozen January weekend. The big white gravel bars make perfect camp sites. There are no mosquitoes, even on the stillest summer night.

Our canoes, strung out on the water, made a winding serpent-creature nearly two miles long, twisting slowly down toward Pruitt. On this trip I was bowman for Harold Hedges, who was president of the Ozark Wilderness Waterways Club and knows more than anyone else about canoeing the Buffalo. A few years earlier Justice William O. Douglas had made the same trip in the bow of Harold's canoe. What had Mr. Douglas been like? I asked.

Well, Harold said, he was courteous and witty and physically tough. He would paddle vigorously for a stretch and then stop altogether and look. He had come to **see** the Buffalo and he saw it.

"And I was never so glad in my life to put someone ashore still **dry,**" said Mrs. Hedges, from her own canoe. Not even in the wilderness, apparently, can Mr. Douglas escape the dignity of his position. There had been a certain edginess, a hovering of canoes, throughout the weekend, lest an Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court be accidentally tipped into the stream.

We reached Bee Bluff. In a beautiful book called **The Buffalo River Country**, Kenneth Smith tells how, in 1916, after years of speculation as to how it might be done, local people finally managed to steal the honey from a crevice in this high cliff.

Two boys built an 80-foot ladder. At night they climbed up and killed all the bees with burning sulphur-soaked rags. The next day they enlarged the narrow crevice with dynamite. There was an explosion of rocks and honey. But honey remained—the boys lowered four hundred pounds of it in buckets to a crowd of people below. There are no longer, of course, either bees or honey. But the name Bee Bluff remains.

Where the creek from Hemmed-In Hollow enters the river, we collected noisily for lunch; canoes in clusters at the bank, like hands of bananas; two dozen shades of red, in shirts and jackets and headgear; a drop in the sound level as chatter stopped and the chewing of sandwiches began.

Hemmed-In Hollow lay half a mile up the little creek. A few people made the hike, to the head of the box canyon where a 200-foot waterfall glitters down the air and explodes on limestone ledges.

"I bet if you tried to take a shower under that it'd knock you down and beat you to death," somebody said. Someone else said, "No it wouldn't, but you'd sure wish it had a hot-water tap to it, this time of year."

Among the canoes, as sedate as swans, skimmed a one-man kayak owned and operated by Bill Henry of Asheville, N. C. He had read somewhere of the Buffalo float and had driven 800 miles to join it. Mr. Henry (a KOMING business man) bought a kayak after his children grew up and left home. Now, he was a veteran of the Colorado, the Salmon, and other tough rivers in the West.

The Buffalo was tame to him, offering small danger and excitement. But, he said, it was fine to look at. His kayak moved so easily that he had to keep throttling down so as not outdistance everybody, and in fact, the day before our two-day trip began, he had covered exactly the same stretch of river alone, racing from Ponca to Pruitt in eight hours, just for amusement.

Among us, too, were teen-agers. They came mostly from the University of Kansas at Lawrence, Kansas—both boys and girls, separated in their various canoes but somehow linked, as if by lines of magnetic force. They were chaperoned by a brisk young couple who gave an order occasionally and were obeyed. The boys, at the day's end, helped the girls put up their tents and gather wood.

Teen-age boys make amusing canoeists—all energy, little skill, and much skylarking. If a rope hangs over a swimming hole, they must go ashore and swing on it. One of them, swinging back, smashes into a limestone bluff and cracks a shinbone, which hardly slows him down at all. If they pass a leaky old johnboat they pile into it, three or four of them, and paddle it till it sinks beneath them.

They come ashore at the day's end sunburned, waterlogged, and bleeding, all the things that their sensible elders are not. Then they set up an outlandish camp and prepare inedible and undrinkable food, which they nevertheless eat and drink.

"Hey, Eddie—you think we ought to throw this out, or eat it?"

"Eat it, man."

There are people who love the Buffalo as some love the Great Plains, or **Don Giovanni**, or their country. It is something we are fortunate to have. And, though it may seem incredible that all the other major streams in the Arkansas Ozarks have been dammed, it is true—the Buffalo is the last big free-flowing river left.

The once-magnificent White River is now a string of lakes. The North Fork, which was the best brown bass fishing stream in the **world**, is dammed. The Little Red River is dammed. In the Ouachita Mountains, in western Arkansas, all of the major free-flowing streams except one have been dammed.

Dr. Neil Compton did not organize the Ozark Society in 1962 merely so that its members could float the Buffalo. He founded it so that they could help **save** the Buffalo. And he himself has done more, perhaps, than any other one man to save the river.

And it may yet survive, by being made a National River — that is, taken over by the National Park Service and kept pretty much as it is for people to boat and swim and fish in.

If this is done, there will be primitive camps, accessible only by boat, and other camps with roads leading in to them, so that people can launch their canoes and johnboats. There will be hiking trails, sometimes following the high bluffs, sometimes near the water.

Meanwhile, the great danger is not that the Buffalo will be dammed, but that it will be butchered by private speculators, with chain saws, bulldozers, promotion schemes, and Day-Glo billboards.

A canoe is simple, beautiful, and efficient, like a spoon, an egg, or a bow. So is a paddle. I grew up in dry country believing that canoes were dangerous—unstable and easy to turn over. They are not. They have broad, flat bottoms, so flat that people prop canoes upside down in camp to make tables on which food for twenty can be spread out. A 17-foot aluminum canoe weighs 68 pounds and can carry 1,050 pounds—two adults, a small child or two, and all their food and equipment. Some of the pleasure of canoeing is in the shapely implements you use.

And some of it is in the helpful river. You find out how much it does for when, at a long, deep stretch, it stops doing it. The current dies; then you **work.** Certain arm and back muscles light up like Neon with oxygen debt. But most of the time, feeling immensely skillful whether you are or not, you just make clever touches with your paddle to keep the canoe where you want it, and ride on the enormous, seemingly gentle power of the stream.

It's a fine feeling: you are plugged in to a great force of Nature, getting seventy per cent of your motive power free of charge. On a long, fast chute, the waves slap the canoe bottom with a loud, satisfying sound, and you ship a little water.

On every mile of the river are submerged boulders, their tips just an inch or two beneath the surface, streaked with red or green or white paint scraped from canoes. If you hit one of these rocks yourself, you are consoled by the evidence that others, too, have failed to see it in time. If you miss it, you watch it go by to right or left and feel contentedly superior to those who left some paint upon it. No rise or fall of the river will solve this problem. There are always rocks of just the right height to lie an inch or two beneath the shiny water.

Here is a brief scene, as formal as a minuet: four canoes in a quiet late-afternoon stretch, three of them backpaddling gently while the one in the lead—it is Margaret Hedges, alone in a 15-footer—enters a narrow rapid. When she has got down it safely, the next canoe enters, and so on.

Nobody speaks. The high bluffs and the vulture overhead are silent, but the river makes a little noise. The trees are fanfares of red and gold.

You take rapids one craft at a time because, in those swift, narrow places, a canoe is hard to stop. If the one ahead of you gets lodged crosswise, you will ram it. And ramming is just as destructive now as it was in the time of the Roman galleys.

A camp develops slowly as the canoes arrive at the chosen gravel bar. Tents appear—everything from shelter halves to the kind of peaked pavilion favored by King Arthur. There is the ringing bang of metal stakes being driven.

Some people build splendid big camp fires which they cannot approach with a skillet because they lack asbestos suits. Some make tiny cooking fires out of twigs no bigger than your finger. A few pump and flinch at their gasoline stoves.

Dusk is a pretty time in a camp of this sort. Smoke rises from many fires and thins into the greenish sky. The river is louder, suddenly, in the denser air. There are rich, meaty smells from cooking pots, and you hear a general mumble of talk and contentment.

Always, in big float camps, I think of nights I have spent on these gravel bars alone, or in a group of two. **Then** horned owls and screech owls make their dissertations, and beavers romp in the river. One small campfire lets you keep track of the stars, as the Big Dipper strikes midnight and you feel more and more remote from man and his messes.

And in fact most canoeists do go it alone, or in small groups, more often than they go in grand flotillas. The big trips—Memorial Day, Thanksgiving, some choice weekend in October—are exceptional.

Bill Henry lay relaxed in the snug little camp he had made with the minimal equipment that can be put into a kayak. Arms behind his head, a campfire glittering in his glasses, he watched the movement of shadow-people and listened to what they said.

I looked with some dismay at the rocks of the gravel bar, fist-size and bigger. Apparently everybody had an air mattress but me; as a rule I camp on sand. Here there was none. I cleared a space of all rocks bigger than a butter bean, then dug a hollow like the one a mattress takes when you lie on it. I set my tent on this—it has a canvas floor which sagged into the hollow—and inside it unrolled a foam rubber pad and a sleeping bag.

According to the **World Almanac** the moon, three days past full, rose on that October evening at 7:17. We missed it. It did not appear above the canyon rim until hours later, when our fires were banked and dull and we were asleep.

We saw it the next morning, though, when the early risers, talking in thoughtfully lowered voices, woke us up by moonlight. And by the light of Venus and Jupiter as well, for they looked like the headlamps of trains in the morning sky.

There was a beautiful and unearthly interlude as moonlight faded out and daylight in. Smoke from all campfires went straight up. The river steamed until it was covered by a six-foot blanket of vapor, but none of it drifted ashore.

We heard a splash in the river, then whoops and yells. They came from a young man named Leonard Heman, of Independence, Kansas, who had gone for his regular swim. People went to the bank to peer into the mist and marvel. The air temperature, according to Harold Hedges, was 36 degrees just then; the water temperature 54. For several years now Mr. Heman has gone swimming on every float trip, even on a New Year's Day when the temperature was five degrees.

For the first hour on the river I wasn't aware of anything much except that I was cold. Wading in 54-degree water isn't bad. But then you get back into the canoe with wet shoes and pants legs in 37-degree air, and it isn't good. Both Harold Hedges and I were of the wet-foot school which gets along without fishermen's waders until December. We kept assuring each other that it wasn't bad at all. After an hour, the air warmed up to operating temperature.

"That's a Carolina wren," said Harold, as we passed a bit of music on the left bank. We saw a pair of wood ducks. (This is an advantage of being among the first canoes in the string—you get to see the white ibises and mallards and great blue herons, raise them from the water. Those farther back have to settle for blue jays and squirrels.)

In summer time, the people from the nearby hills come down to the river to fish. It is common to find an old couple—he in overalls, she in a Mother Hubbard and a sunbonnet—drifting placidly in a little homemade boat, fishing and lowering cane poles. Boys come to swim. And, farther downstream where the river is bigger, business men from Little Rock, St. Louis, Memphis, and Kansas City, sitting in folding chairs in long, narrow johnboats, cast for largemouth and smallmouth bass. They are elaborately cared for by the people who run commercial float-fishing trips. At noon, ashore, they sit in the shade of canvas flys and eat hot fried chicken prepared by the float-trip cook.

In October, though, none of these people turn up on the river.

Except in the deepest pools, you can see to the bottom of the Buffalo. For generations people have marvelled at the cleanness of its waters. No factories pollute them. You see bass, bream, minnows, turtles, crawdads; and, occasionally, old tires, beer cans, scrap iron, crankshafts, bumpers. It is curious how many people regard even the prettiest river as a good place to throw junk.

Nothing announces Pruitt. The banks of the river look like wilderness still; and then up ahead is the high bridge, with cars going over it slowly, so people can look down at the Buffalo. Perhaps a string of canoes on it gives it extra interest.

Pruitt has four houses, a gas station, a restaurant which has gone out of business, a tiny post office, and the Shady Grove Trailer Park, on whose "beach" we landed. A sign said: Help Keep Our Beach Clean of Rubbish Cans, Glass & Illegal Acts. It was clean of all these things when we arrived.

The trailer park is owned by Mrs. Pearl Holland ("I've been here five generations") who paints the signs herself. Today she sat outdoors on an overstuffed sofa in the shade inviting canoeists to pick their own car keys from the pile on a table before her. The cars, brought over the mountain road from Ponca by local people for five dollars per car, were parked on her land.

We had floated twenty miles in a day and a half—it was noon—and were about two hundred feet closer to sea level than we had been at Ponca.

Bill Henry let me try out his kayak. You sit in one with your legs straight out in front of you, like a small child deposited on a floor, and are a little confused by the extraordinary speed you achieve with the double-ended paddle. I went sliding unskillfully downstream a little way, and back. Then Mr. Henry collapsed the kayak into a package no bigger than a suitcase, and prepared to drive the 800 miles to Asheville, N. C. nonstop.

The mood at the take-out point is one of let-down. It is chore time—gear to be hauled and stowed, canoes to be lashed in place. People are thinking of home and comfort, of showers and fresh Band-Aids on their scratches. There are a few farewells, but in general a float trip disintegrates as casually as a trainload of computers. Still, the river has been stored away. It comes out later in memory, and projected in color on walls and screens.

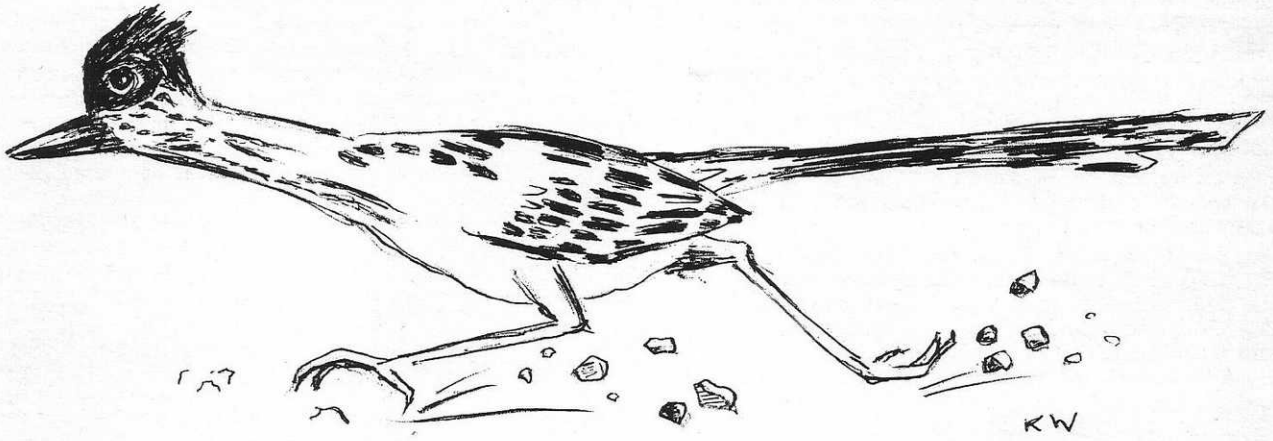
Mrs. Holland gave up the last set of car keys and took in the final $1.50, the price of leaving a car in her parking lot overnight.

"I think I'll go up to the bridge," I said.

"See that little trail yonder?" said Mrs. Holland. "Foller it up the bank there and it'll save you walkin' out to the road."

I stopped in the middle of the bridge. Upstream, where there were no more canoes, a kingfisher had taken charge. He flew over the water calling with the voice of an electric buzzer. Downstream, the river passed a bluff and curved away to the left, into its hundred remaining miles of rocks and riffles and autumn leaves.

The Roadrunner



The Roadrunner is a newcomer to the Ozarks. Nearly unknown in this region ten years ago, it is now a well established permanent resident bird and shows every sign of increasing its numbers in the future. It may be seen in farmland, in cedar glades, in dry woodlands, and even in some suburban neighborhoods.

And what a strange creature, entirely unique in the bird world! It belongs to the family of cuckoos, slender birds with rounded wings, graduated tails, and curved upper mandibles. But the cuckoos are generally smaller secretive forest birds that are rather sluggish by nature. Somehow in the course of evolution a cuckoo-like ancestor of the Roadrunner became adapted to the open desert and scrub areas of the southwestern states and Mexico. The legs became larger and stronger, the size increased, and the alertness that characterizes highly predatory animals became incorporated into the Roadrunner's personality.

I have a specimen of an adult male found on U.S. Hwy 71 south of West Fork last January. It is more than twenty inches long, ten of which is the tail that is so expressive in life. The entire back has an iridescent sheen rarely mentioned in descriptions of the species. The ragged crest and the tail have a metallic blue cast, whereas the back is suffused with bronze. The rather coarse feathers are streaked with white, brown and black. The Roadrunner is not adapted to eating any specific food. It can catch snakes, lizards, small birds and grasshoppers one week and then subsist on fruits and seeds the next. The digestive apparatus must be very powerful, since bones, hair, and feathers go right down. It is the most opportunistic and the most nearly omnivorous of all of our birds. The stomach of my specimen contained a mouse and several grasshoppers.

Folklore has attributed astonishing feats to the Roadrunner. According to one of the more familiar tales he "builds a fence of cactus spines about a sleeping rattler, letting the doomed reptile buffet itself to weariness until finally, in desperation, it is impaled on the spines or bites itself to death! (G. M. Sutton in Bent, 1940, U.S. Nat. Mus. Bull. 146, p. 38). But it is not necessary to resort to fabrications to be impressed with the bird's unusual antics. Dr. George M. Sutton once witnessed courtship behavior between a pair in Texas that involved a series of bowing movements with alternate head-raising, wing-drooping and tail spreading Others have watched a sort of sunrise parade that consists of strutting in a prominent place at sunrise with the head held stiff and high while the wings and tail droop. And several people have observed Roadrunners sunbathing as they stand motionless for many minutes with feathers "loosened" in an apparent attempt to "catch all the grateful warmth possible" (ibid. p. 48).

Although they are known as secretive birds in the desert, some of our Arkansas birds frequent yards in town. One winter at Fort Smith a Roadrunner made a habit of preying on smaller birds at Bill Beall's feeder and it became such a nuisance that Bill trapped it, banded it, and released it in another part of town. Dr. Sutton describes how his two pet Roadrunners used to capture English Sparrows in mid-air. They walked "with a noncommital air that was comically suggestive of the chickens that fed nearby, growing nearer and nearer to a sparrow. Then with a dash to one side and a tremendous leap they would snatch the fleeing victim from the air" (ibid. p. 45).

When a Roadrunner has a nestful of hungry young to feed, he must wear himself ragged supplying their needs. Last summer one adult discovered a bed of earthworms belonging to a neighbor of mine, and it made hundreds of trips carrying the worms to its brood until the supply of worms was seriously depleted.

The Roadrunner nests that have been reported in Arkansas have been crude stick structures in small cedars and elms. The eggs hatch on different days and the naked black young are uglier than you could imagine. A nest that I examined in Fayetteville in

(Continued on Page 11)

The 1968 Cleanup Float

Greg Gilbert

(Greg is a senior in Fayetteville High School and kept score during the float)

"Look, a tire!" The cry was followed by a flurry of movement as the canoeists paddled furiously toward the 7.75 x 15 that lay ahead.

Actually, the whole story started when Dick Murray, the Vice-President in charge of outdoor activities for the Ozark Society, called and asked if I wanted to go along on the Ozark Society Cleanup Float. Naturally, I accepted, and at 1 p.m. Friday, August 23, we were on our way to the Buffalo River. We arrived at Gilbert in good time, and waited for the other canoeists to arrive. Gilbert is typical of the Buffalo River country. Everyone there is easy going and very friendly. Some children were chasing a loose calf down the muddy road as we drank a soda and waited.

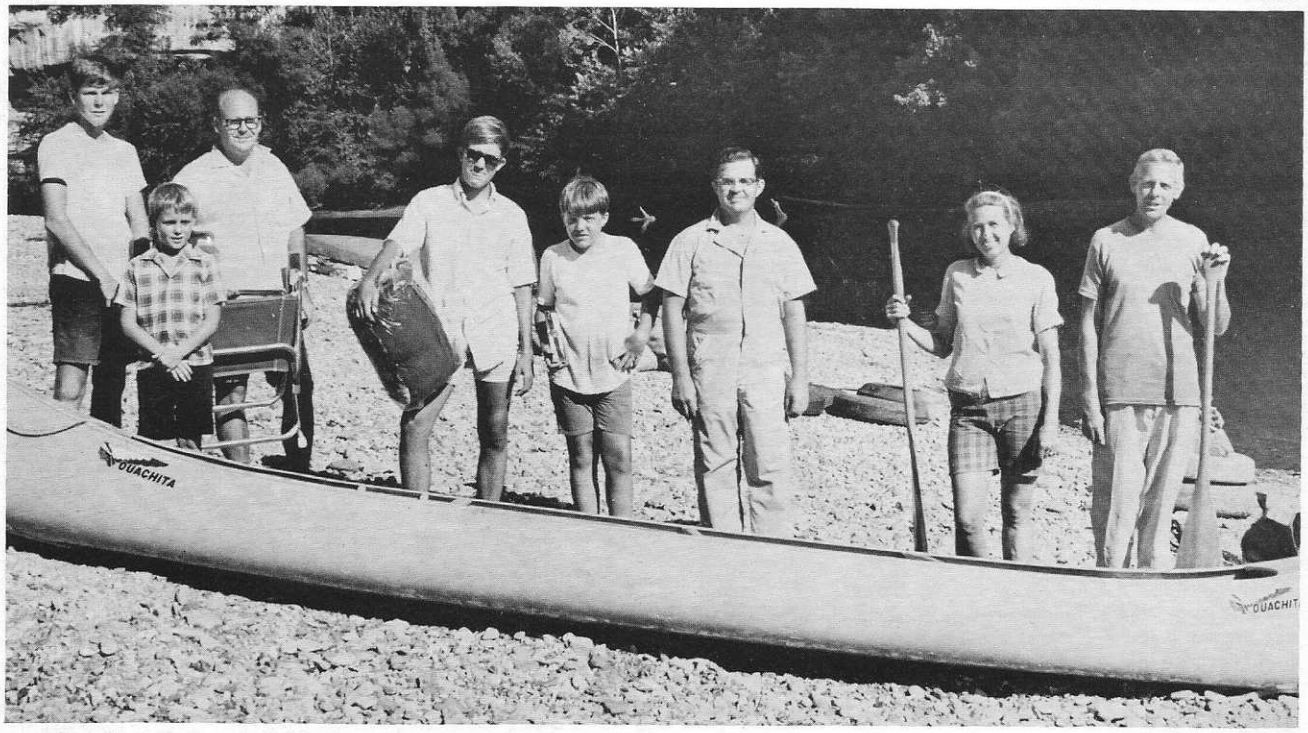
Soon, a carryall with a canoe on top pulled up. It was the Hedges from Ponca. We decided to go on down to the gravel bar and set up camp. Slowly, as evening drew near, several other campers arrived, and we decided that it was time to eat.

The nicest thing about getting out and camping is sitting around a campfire watching the flames and telling stories about your last outing.

Not wanting to go to much trouble preparing supper, we ate a meal of canned stew, green beans, bread, and iced tea. It may not sound like much, but believe me, food always tastes twice as good on the river bank.

The dew was heavy the next morning. Everything that had been left out the night before was dripping wet. The only bad thing about sleeping with Mr. Murray was the fact that he gets up at 5:30, or some ridiculous hour. I felt pretty miserable until I drank some of his good coffee. Only then did I think that I was going to make it through the day. We ate breakfast on the bottom of the overturned canoe; and never did bacon and eggs taste better. We broke camp and made ready to ferry the cars down to the Maumee landing, our next night's camping ground. After everyone had departed, some more people arrived with their canoe. It was last year's Cleanup Float winners, the Byrds of Little Rock. They would have to get a ride from Maumee to Gilbert to get their car that evening. The men returned, and we all hopped into our canoes with a supply of tow sacks, and the race was on. The purpose was to clean up the river, and you never saw a cleaner bar than the one we left at Gilbert. Even the bugs had to leave because of the lack of food.

Around eleven the sky clouded up and by lunch time the rain was pouring down like proverbial "cats and dogs". The scene was similar to a "Frankenstein" movie, with flashing lightning and thunder, the wind howling as we cowered with our cold bread



Reading left to right the winners, prizes and donors were:

Dick and Richard Ourand; yacht chair, by Art's Continental Warehouse, North Little Rock.

Dick Murray and Greg Gilbert; sleeping bag, by Pfeifers of Arkansas. (Dick Murray not pictured)

Dick and David Byrd; Scuba Diver's wrist watch, by Stanley Kahn, Kahn's Jewelry, Pine Bluff.

Harold and Margaret Hedges; Ouachita canoe, by T. V. Sharp, Ouachita Marine Corporation, Arkadelphia.

THE SHOES THAT BROUGHT IN THE WINNER
JOE CLARK

and Vienna sausages under the willows.

We were glad when the rain slackened so we could get rid of some excess tires. I guess you think that a pile of old soggy, wet tires won't burn. After they get started they will burn like a bucket of gasoline. Cans were the main thing though, and we had to keep them. We pushed on and as night drew near, and Maumee rose in the distance, we breathed a sigh of relief. Once there, we piled about twenty-five sacks of junk into an old dump truck and shuffled off to find a place to set up tents. Mr. Murray had to take Mr. Byrd back to get his station wagon, so we didn't eat until late that night. Vienna sausages were beginning to sound pretty good by now. In fact, I was so hungry and pathetic looking that Joe and Maxine Clark of Fayetteville took me in and fed me a ham and cheese sandwich. That night, sleep came easy.

We slept late the next morning, lounging around in our bedrolls until six thirty. However, when we got up, people were already running around cleaning the Maumee gravel bar. This bar, I might mention, needed a lot of cleaning up.

After the cars were ferried down to Buffalo River State Park, everyone jumped in his canoe and headed downstream. Now, too, we had some more people in our group, the R. C. Ourands from Fayetteville.

Lunch time came quickly, and again we burned tires. (You know, I think I'm beginning to like Vienna sausages.)

At this point, Mr. Murray had dropped out of the competition, and we were enjoying the scenery that the Buffalo River is so famous for.

The real race was between Dick and David Byrd, the 1967 winners, and Mr. and Mrs. Harold Hedges of Ponca. When it comes to real energy and drive, these two families are tops. It made us tired just watching them. Even though everybody was competing for prizes, there was always laughter, and everyone was in good spirits.

The section between Maumee and the State Park was pretty clean compared to the part we had floated the day before.

When we went around that last bend, where first the State Park comes into view, you don't know how relieved I was! Now all that remained was to figure out the winners. It was close.

When the final count of tires, sheet tin, bed springs, sacks of junk, and old tennis shoes was in, the winners were announced: Harold and Margaret Hedges of Ponca, first prize; David and Dick Byrd of Little Rock, second; Dick Murray and Greg Gilbert of Fayetteville, third; and Dick and Richard Ourand of Fayetteville, fourth.

One look at Harold Hedges shoes and you could tell that he really worked hard; one look at his smile and you could tell that he was really happy with the handsome Ouachita canoe. Even though the Byrd's didn't get the canoe, they were pleased with the skin diver's wrist watch.

All in all we found 74 tires, 50 or so sacks of trash, and several hundred pounds of junk. This was the second annual Cleanup Float that the Ozark Society has held. It was not only successful but a lot of fun. Why don't you join us next year?

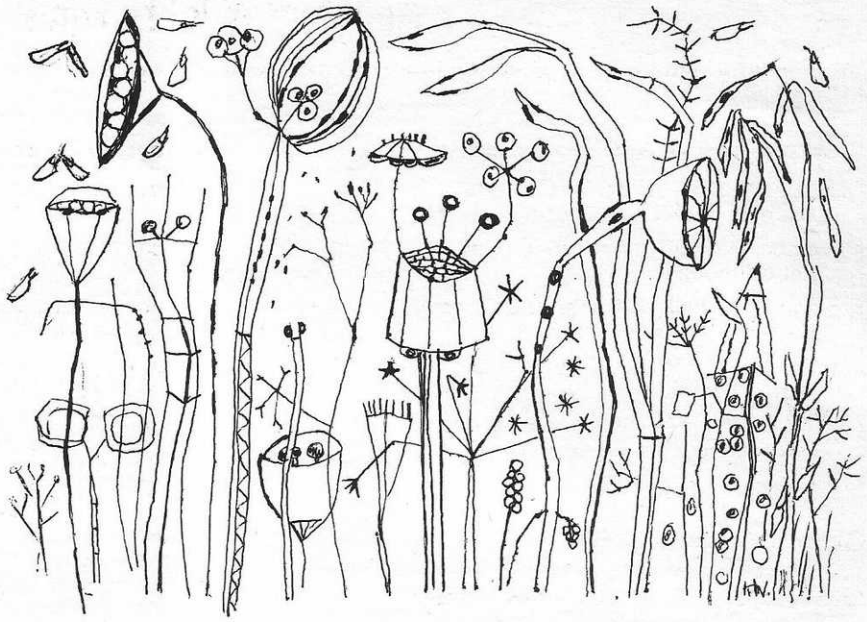
Quoting from a recent letter from the Hedges,

"The new Ouachita performed beautifully on the Current River clean up float even though we were a long way from the first place winners in amount of trash picked up this year. To make it even harder the National Park Service (which has taken over part of the river already) claims to have cleaned the river three times a week all summer. Some of our people who have been floating the river all summer rather doubted that they had been that constant in their clean up efforts but there is no doubt that it was a little cleaner than last year. However, we rather surprised them by cleaning 3 enormous truck loads in the 3 days.

There was a great deal of interest in our new canoe and many asked the price, etc."

ANOTHER LOAD OF JUNK JOE CLARK

Botanical Notes



Last October at the height of the autumnal color display we spent a week on the upper Buffalo in the Ponca area. We explored and photographed the rim rock above Moore Creek; hiked the entire length of the south branch of beautiful Whitely Creek, from the first waterfall that plunges down over the Atoka to its disappearance into the gravel before entering the Buffalo. On the last two days we canoed from Ponca to Pruitt.

Never have we seen shrubs and trees more heavily laden with fruit, and were reminded of the Biblical passage, "Ye shall know them by their fruits."

Fruits of dogwood may be red, white, or blue according to species. All are familier with the shiny bright red fruits of the white flowered dogwood, **Cornus flor'da.** This beautiful tree is showy at every season of the year. Other species of dogwood in our area are inconspicious in the spring; the small greenish flowers are borne in loose clusters, but those of **C. florida** are crowded in small clusters surrounded by four large white bracts and give the impression of a single large flower.

Silky or swamp dogwood, **C.obliqua,** bears blue fruits. It is still known as Kinnikinnik, the Indian name for tobacco. The Indians used the bark for smoking.

It is very difficult to investigate the bank vegetation when canoeing in fast water. We pulled ashore after running a particularly wild rapid, narrowly missing a huge submerged boulder, which came as a surprise, just when we were congratulating ourselves upon our skillful maneuvering. It would be fun to watch the next victims, and possibly Joe could get a picture. My attention was distracted by what looked like the white blossoms of wild plum. Instead they were clusters of the white fruits of rough-leaved dogwood, **C. drummondi.** This species can survive in spite of extremely adverse growing conditions.

Perhaps you too have wondered about the name dogwood. Gray's Manual gives much information other than plant keys. The Latin name, Cornus, comes from cornu, a horn, alluding to the hardness of the wood. In England the species **C. sanguinea** was called skewerwood since it had long been used for skewers by butchers. Dagwood, now dogwood, came from the Old English dagge, a dagger or sharp pointed object.

Two of my favorite shrubs belong to the bittersweet or stafftree family, Celastraceae. They grow on rich wooded slopes and alluvial soils along streams. Strawberry bush, **Euonymus americanus,** locally called hearts-a-bustin' with-love, has crimson warty capsules which open, exposing the scarlet seeds. The leaves are opposite on the stems and the branches remain green all winter. Wahoo, **E. atropurpureus,** is also called burning bush because of beautiful color of the autumnal foliage. It has smooth purple fruits with scarlet seeds. Both shrubs may be started from seeds.

Cocculus carolinus, the redberried moonseed, is a high climbing vine. The leaves are a lustrous green and vary from triangular to heart shaped. The long panicles of fleshy red berries are beautiful but not very durable. If you remove the pulp from the seed, you will see the seed has a depression in the center, a rough rim around the edge, and is shaped like a three-quarter moon.

Have you ever heard of a plant called doll's eyes? We found it growing in the dense shade of the upper Whitely Creek gorge. The fruits are rather startling in appearance; the round white berry is centered by the persistant stigma and is held upright on a bright red stem. White baneberry is **Actaea brachypoda.** Many you are too young to remember white china doll's eyes.

A canoeist from Kansas City had a twig of beauty bush which she wished to have identified. **Callicarpa americana,** also known as French mulberry, is, surprisingly enough, a member of the verbena family. We know it as a common shrub in the Boston and Ouachita mountain areas. Close clusters of purplish berries occur at the axils of the large opposite leaves. To quote Steyermark, Flora of Missouri—"Ranges from Florida to Texas, north to Maryland, North Carolina, Tennessee, Missouri, Arkansas, and Oklahoma, and in northern Mexico. The only station known in Missouri and reported by the author—has now been exterminated by the impoundment waters of Table Rock Dam. This is undoubtedly the shrub having the most unusual colored fruit of any of the native species, the fleshy fruits varying from violet to ultramarine, bluepurple or pink."

Maxine Clark

Audubon Wildlife Films

For information about showing time and cost, contact the person or organization whose name is below each listing.

Conway Series — ASC Auditorium

October 10, 1968, Allan D. Cruickshank
Land of the Giant Cactus

November 12, 1968, Wilfred E. Gray
Four Seasons

February 11, 1969, William J. Jahoda
Nature's Ways

March 21, 1969, William Ferguson
High Horizons

April 22, 1969, William A. Anderson
Our Unique Water Wilderness - The Everglades

Dr. Jewel E. Moore
ASC, Box 915
Conway, Arkansas 72032

Little Rock — U. of Ark. Med. Center

October 14, 1968, Dee Jay Nelson
Three Seasons North

November 11, 1968, Wilfred E. Gray
Four Seasons

February 10, 1969, William J. Jahoda
Nature's Ways

March 24, 1969, William Ferguson
Once Around the Sun

April 14, 1969, William A. Anderson
Our Unique Water Wilderness - The Everglades

Mrs. Marguerite Batterton
1700 South Taylor
Little Rock, Arkansas 72204

Fayetteville-Science-Engineering Auditorium

October 9, 1968, Allan D. Cruickshank
Land of the Giant Cactus

November 20, 1968, Hugh C. Laud
Out of the Selva

February 12, 1969, William J. Jahoda
Nature's Ways (Aft. and Eve.)

March 20, 1969, William Ferguson
High Horizons

April 23, 1969, William A. Anderson
Aft. - Designs for Survival
Eve. - Our Unique Water Wilderness - The Everglades

Mrs. Douglas A. James
Route 3
Fayetteville, Arkansas 72701

Texarkana — Texarkana College Auditorium

October 11, 1968, Dee Jay Nelson
Three Seasons North

November 7, 1968, Wilfred E. Gray
Four Seasons

February 7, 1969, William J. Jahoda
Nature's Ways

March 25, 1969, William Ferguson
This Curious World in Nature

April 21, 1969, William A. Anderson
Our Unique Water Wilderness - The Everglades

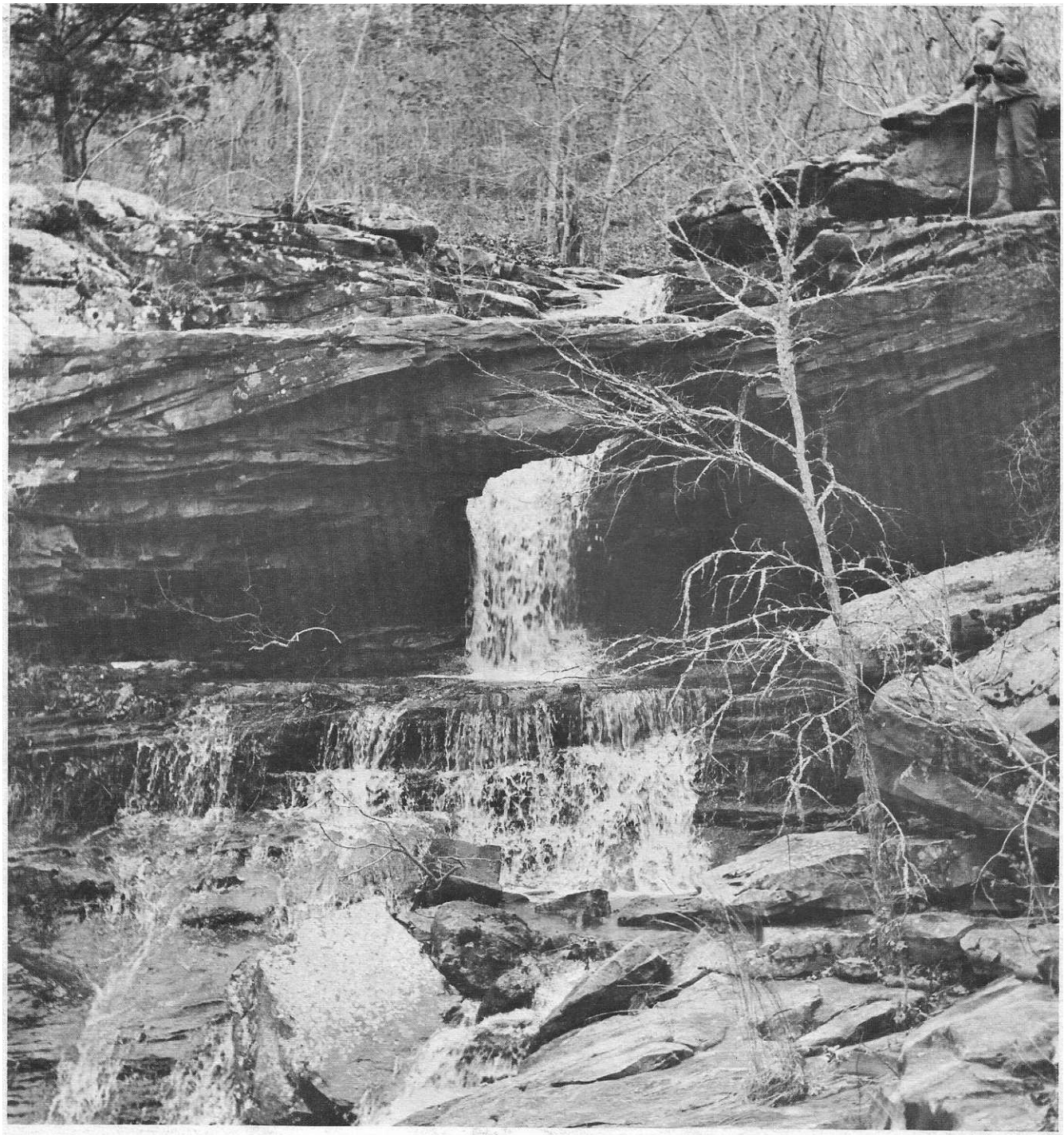
State First National Bank of Texarkana

THE ROADRUNNER–

September, 1964 contained three young. One had just hatched, one larger, and the third larger yet and beginning to get feathers. It is interesting that the nesting dates for Arkansas nests are later in the season than all other published records. This suggests that the conditions which favor reproduction in April and May in the southwestern states occur here in July and August. Certainly it is drier in Arkansas in late summer.

Sight records of Roadrunners show how its range has expanded eastward from northeastern Texas and southwestern Oklahoma into the mountainous regions of our state. The earliest Arkansas record is from Hemstead County in 1936. At the time of publication of Dr. W. J. Baerg's revision of his **Birds of Arkansas** in 1951, Roadrunners had been recorded in five Arkansas counties, all south of Crawford Co., and all in the western two tiers of counties. By 1960 it had pushed northward through the northwestern section of the state (Benton, Washington, Madison and Carroll Counties) and even into Missouri (L. N. Brown, Condor 65:242-243), eastward in the Arkansas River Valley (Logan, Pope, Conway and Pulaski Counties), and eastward to Union County in the south. But the most rapid range expansion has been in this decade. Now Roadrunners may be seen in the entire western half of the state. This past summer Ben Coffey of Memphis sighted one in Randolph County at the northeastern extremity of the Arkansas Ozarks. And last fall one was seen near Augusta in Woodruff County, the first occurence of the species in the Mississippi River Basin of eastern Arkansas. The reasons for this rapid eastward expansion are not clear. Roadrunners are not less common now in their desert and scrub habitat in the southwest. It is a welcome addition to the avifauna of Arkansas and it will be interesting to see how far east the species will move.

Frances C. James



HOLE IN THE ROCK FALLS, UPPER BUFFALO CLIFFS AND GORGES

NEIL COMPTON