

# Trip to the Pacific Northwest and Rockies

## Spring and Summer, 1987

### INTRODUCTION

Jim and I were married Aug. 13, 1986. One of the things we both wanted to do was travel. We took a trip together that first fall to the Pacific Northwest, during which we stayed in motels at night. (I didn't keep a diary on that trip.) But our days were spent in state parks, on beaches, and in other natural areas--wherever there were birds to photograph and their sounds to record. As we moved around, we found ourselves looking enviously at the folks who were comfortably settled in their RVs, while we had to go back to some motel in town at night. How wonderful it would be if we, too, could awaken in the morning to the dawn chorus of birds right outside our window and just step outside the door and be able to photograph them.

We happened onto a couple whose trailer was parked next to a beachfront motel where we stayed in Ft. Bragg. They happily gave us a tour, along with some advice: "Be sure to get a trailer that's big enough to have a separate bedroom, but don't get one that's any bigger than that." How right they were!

As soon as we got home, we started thinking about buying an RV. We pondered the relative merits of the three kinds of RVs: motor homes, fifth-wheels, and travel trailers. We quickly decided that a motor home was too expensive and would require an additional vehicle if we wanted to drive the gravel refuge roads that we so love. A fifth-wheel would mean that we'd only have a pickup truck as a tow vehicle. Where would Jim store all his photo gear? The only choice for us was a travel trailer with a Chevy or GMC Suburban as a tow vehicle. It would have lots of room for Jim's gear, and its powerful engine would be able to tow whatever trailer we bought.

Our first trailer-shopping venture was to the annual RV exposition at the Anaheim Convention Center in January of 1987. The first trailer we entered was a Prowler model 26G. We both sat down on the couch across the front just inside the front door. To this day, we argue about which of us said to the other, "I think I could be comfortable in this trailer!"

But even though neither of us likes to shop one bit, we know you don't just say, "I'll take it," without at least looking at other options. So we looked at the rest of the trailers in the show. When it was over, we visited a half-dozen other trailer dealers in Orange County. But everything we saw compared unfavorably with that Prowler. So Jim called the dealer and told him we wanted to order one. To his surprise, the dealer told him that the very trailer they'd had at the show was available. Some people had contracted to buy it early in the show, but had failed to qualify financially. So it was ours, if we wanted it. We did!

That trailer has probably been towed close to 100,000 miles by now [written in 1997--and we were just getting started]--and looks it. The gravel roads of northern Canada and Alaska in 1991 probably caused the worst damage, but it also has an assortment of dents and dings from encounters with various tree limbs, campsite boundary posts, eave troughs, etc. It's covered with patching material where Jim has stopped up countless leaks, and I suspect the wood behind the wallboard is rotten in spots from the same leaks. Some of the window mechanisms are broken. The list goes on and on.

We know we need a new trailer, and we've sent for all the brochures on all the new models of all the manufacturers. Nothing is as nice as our old Prowler 26G. No one is using that floorplan any more, and all the trailers today have such tiny windows--in order to provide more storage space, I suppose. When I think of all the wonderful birds we've seen from our huge windows, the thought of giving those up seems impossible.

Just the other day, Jim finally admitted that we just aren't going to find what we want, so he took the old one over to Travelland for an estimate on refurbishing it.

It looks as though we're destined to spend the rest of our traveling days in the very first trailer we set foot in. [And we did!]

For those who don't know us, we are both interested in birds first and foremost, but anything else in the natural world is worth investigating. Jim is an expert photographer, while I record the sounds of nature. We use our photos and sounds in various productions that we prepare for Sea and Sage Audubon--my Birding Skills Workshops, multi-media shows for community groups, and a new series of educational videos that is in production. Duplicate slides are available for purchase or loan from the Sea and Sage Library of Nature Slides. [Some of these were discontinued when digital photography and the internet came along.]

Throughout the text, the reader will encounter comments in square brackets [ ]. These were added when the diary was edited for publication.

For those who might like to retrace our travels, a list of campgrounds is appended at the end of each section.

## THE DIARY

### Buena Vista Lake, Kern Co., CA

Tues., May 5, 1987

We left home yesterday at about 11:00 after the usual last-minute frazzle of trying not to forget anything. So far, we're missing Jim's sunscreen lotion, my Sea and Sage address list and, most serious of all, Jim's Ms PacMan game cartridge! Only the sunscreen has been replaced so far.

We had thought we'd go to Lake Isabella and the South Fork of the Kern River, where there are natural areas. However, it has turned hot and that area is only 2000 ft high. So we decided to come straight to the Bakersfield area and do my Breeding Bird Survey routes, then head for the coast.

This morning we did the Arvin Route. Even it was pretty dry. Only 30 species seems low, although I don't have previous totals with me. By 9:40 when we finished it, the temperature was 85°. Now it is 4:30 p.m. and 98°. Our trailer A/C keeps it to 80° inside. With air stirring, we're comfortable. It cooled off to 57° last night.

Being in the trailer surely beats the motels in Bakersfield. We can look out our window and see Robins and Western Kingbirds cavorting. The lake is close. This county campground is almost equidistant from the starting points of my three routes. Fixing our own breakfast is faster than the uncertain service in Denny's.

### Bodega Bay

Sat., May 9, 1987

On Wed. we did the Maricopa Route. The heat was awful! Temperature ranged from 74° to 92° in the course of the route. Wind almost zero. By late afternoon it was 104°. TV said it was a record for the date and beat the old record by 10 degrees. Also, it was the highest temperature ever recorded this early in the season. Birds were pretty scarce, and we were glad to go back to where it was cool. With the A/C blowing directly on us, we were quite comfortable.

Thursday the temperature moderated slightly and didn't get beastly hot until the last hour of bird-counting.

Jim solved his Ms PacMan problem. He bought a new game, Qix, and was enthralled enough by it to spend 4 or 5 hours Wed. afternoon and evening playing. I could hardly get him to bed in time to get up at 3:30 for the next day's bird count.

Thurs. afternoon we drove north along I-5 until we were tired driving. Spent the night in a tiny county park, Dos Reis, near Stockton. It was out in an agricultural area. A river was just over the levee from our site, but we had no view. Temperature was still pretty hot, but by dark we could turn off the A/C, open the windows and sleep with a sheet. (That was the story all the previous nights,

too.).

There were Yellow-billed Magpies around, but they were chased away by Scrub Jays, so Jim could get no pictures of them.

Yesterday a.m. we drove across the delta, along the north shore of San Francisco Bay and on to Bodega Bay. Had no trouble getting a campsite in Bodega Dunes State Park, where Jim shot pictures of tame California Quail on our Oct., 1986 trip. He still needs a good shot of a male. The campground is in a wooded and shrubby area just north of the bay.

This morning we took a long walk across the dunes to the ocean. It was pretty hard walking--all soft sand, but we needed the exercise. Bodega Bay is nice and cool and foggy. Just right for a little exertion. We found a couple of male quail willing to pose. Jim feels pretty good about the pictures.

The rest of the day was spent with me compiling my Shafter report (38 species may be a record for the route. It's certainly the 1st time Shafter beat Arvin.) and Jim sitting at the picnic table by the trailer trying not to shoot Scrub Jays and Brewer's Blackbirds. They're our main customers. We're getting occasional visits from Red-winged Blackbirds. It's the unusual-looking Bicolored race. Males lack the yellow border to the red wing patch. Females are very dark. Jim is (I hope) getting pictures of them. An Allen's Hummer female makes occasional visits to the syrup feeder.

Last night we had a very good dinner at Lucas' Wharf restaurant. No, Mother, it's not The Tides, where you walked in through the fish market holding your nose. Lucas' Wharf had twice as many cars in its lot, so we tried it. I had the best clam chowder I've ever had in the west, plus poached salmon with hollandaise. Yum! While we were eating, we watched fishing boats unloading salmon on the wharf outside. One boat had about 8 or 9 barrels full of large iced salmon. They've been running for a week now. Boats from Ft. Bragg are down here fishing.

## Bodega Bay

Sun., May 10, 1987

We took a walk around Bodega Head this morning. Unlike yesterday's dune community, which was almost devoid of wildflowers, the headlands' soil supports a rich variety in full bloom. I bought another(!) new flower book on *Flowers of Pt. Reyes National Seashore*. It should have Bodega Bay flowers, too. Let's see how many I can identify:

Buttercup (*Ranunculus californicus* var. *cuneatus*).

Hottentot-Fig (*Mesembryanthemum edule*) - being eradicated.

Field Mustard (*Brassica campestris*).

Beach Primrose (*Oenothera cheiranthifolia*) - on dunes yesterday.

Douglas Iris (*Iris douglasiana*) - large clumps (photos).

Hedge-Nettle (*Stachep chamissonis* or *bullata*).

Coastal Bush Lupine (*Lupinus arboreus*) - usually yellow, but sometimes lavender (photos).

Miniature Lupine (*Lupinus bicolor*) - probable ID.

Cow Parsnip (*Heracleum lanatum*).

Pearly Everlasting (*Anaphalis margaritacea*).

Thrift (*Armeria maritima*) - lavender-pink, long stem w/ ball-like cluster atop.

Coastal Fiddleneck (*Amsinckia spectabilis*).

Paintbrush (*Castilleja franciscana*).

Sticky Monkey-flower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*).

Seaside Daisy (*Erigeron claucus*) - aster.

Wild Radish (*Raphanus sativus*).

Blue-eyed Grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*).

Thurs., May 14, 1987

We moved up the road Monday a little ways to Duncan's Mills, about 4 miles in from the coast on the Russian River. The Casini Ranch RV Park is right along the river, and we had a site with a view of the river area and no neighbors--plus E (electrical) and W (water) hookup! We couldn't quite see the river from our trailer because of a low hummock. But we could see the Ospreys which hunted over it--along with a dozen or so Turkey Vultures. Behind the trailer was a lush tangle of trees, vines, blackberries, etc. Unfortunately no unusual birds came to our seed and Magic Meal. Jim had good luck with a male Allen's Hummingbird at his feeder. It did require an amazing amount of patience, because the bird didn't come in very often to feed. He rigged up his camera with a remote control so he could shoot close-ups from a distance. The shutter and (later) the flash did startle the bird, though.

Traffic from the highway across the river interfered with first-class recording for me. During the lulls in the traffic, the neighboring dogs took up the slack.

The next morning I awoke at first light to the song of what I was pretty sure was Swainson's Thrush. I hastily dressed and went out to record it. I recorded it OK, then played it back to try to get a glimpse of the singer. A glimpse was all he would permit before he flew across the river. I wasn't until later in the day when we took a drive that I heard and saw one well and clinched the ID of what I had recorded earlier.

It reminded me of my first singing Swainson's years ago in Tapia Park in the Santa Monica Mountains. He was singing across the creek--and on and on and on! I couldn't see him and didn't even have an inkling what species he was. At that time, I had a cheap tape recorder with built-in microphone, but I recorded it. Years later I finally identified the song from that old tape.

I found two Chestnut-backed Chickadee nests. Jim photographed the birds coming and going with large juicy green worms, but the nests were both too high for first class photos. We need to find a nest in a fallen log. [We still do.]

Tuesday morning we drove through the back country to Bodega Bay (for mail). Along the way we stopped by a pasture with a row of willows along one side. Red-winged and Tricolored Blackbirds were both calling. Jim found a fledgling Red-wing right beside the road clinging for dear life to a small twig. With his scraggly downy head and wide yellow "lips," he really looked comical. [The photos always get a laugh when we show them.] The parents were complaining loudly about our presence, but would not come down to feed him while we were there.

We bought more fresh fish in Bodega Bay--salmon collars (half the price of regular size steaks) for me and rock cod for Jim, who is not a salmon fancier. Both were delicious. There's nothing like really fresh fish!

Wed. we drove up Hwy. 1 to Russian Gulch SP, just north of Mendocino. Along the way we stopped at Ft. Ross, an old Russian fort, which has been reconstructed and restored as a state park.

Russian Gulch SP is right along the coast, but also extends inland several miles. The campground is long and narrow in a dense woodland along a stream. We're three sites from the back end, and it's very quiet and beautiful. They would only let us have the site for Wed. and Thurs. nights. We're on the waiting list for Fri. and Sat. because of reservations. Today we took a long hike (2.3 mi.) up to a waterfall. The first 1.6 miles was a bike trail, the rest a foot trail. All along the stream Wilson's Warblers, Western [now Pacific-slope] Flycatchers and Song Sparrows were singing. We wondered if such a small creek could produce a very nice waterfall, but it was lovely--a white veil on the blackish rock cliff.

The foliage was so thick that Jim couldn't get any birds out in the open for photos, but I got some nice sounds.

## Russian Gulch SP

10:30 a.m., Fri., May 15, 1987

I'm sitting at the picnic table in our Russian Gulch campsite. Jim went down to the ranger station and was told we could stay over tonight at least. So we decided to sit around the campground today and rest our aching feet. Yesterday's 4.6 miles, mostly on blacktop, was hard on them.

I just heard a Pileated Woodpecker drumming and calling high on the hillside. Yesterday I saw two--one up the trail and one right behind the shower building. Jim is aching for a photo. I keep telling him his time will come, for I've seen some pretty tame ones over the years. But so far, these have been easily spooked. [He's gradually improved on the bird over the years, but still awaits the ultimate shot.]

Last evening at dusk, when I had just about despaired that the Swainson's Thrushes would ever do anything but call, the entire campground erupted into Swainson's song. I was finally able to get a good recording of one with others in the distance--and no human disturbance.

Our weather has been delightfully cool, but sunny. It was a bit warm and humid on our hike yesterday at mid-day. Mosquitos are not a big problem. They hover around, but don't seem to bite. A few dabs of insect repellent sends them away.

## Williams Grove, Redwood Highway

Sunday, May 17, 1987

I'm sitting here in our trailer in Williams Grove at 8:45 p.m. We're all alone in this "day-use" park, because our trailer was declared too long for the only open campground. What luck! They sent us to this day-use area in the Redwoods not far from the Eel R. and we have it to ourselves. There were picnickers this afternoon, but they've departed.

The last bits of daylight are still lingering in the treetops, but the lone songster here, an American Robin, called it a day a good half hour ago. Jim has gone to bed.

On Friday afternoon, after a brief trip to Ft. Bragg, where I bought a couple more little field guides to complete my set (Berries, Ferns, Trees, Wildflowers), I wandered around the campground learning about the ferns. Jim gave me a tiny 30x microscope for Christmas, and I had lots of fun looking at the various parts of the ferns, as described in my little book. I could even see the tiny spores.

We were permitted to stay over at Russian Gulch Friday night. Sat. morning, while Jim stayed in the campground because he was fighting a slight respiratory infection, I strolled a ways up the trail which we had taken two days before. This time I just pattered along, stopping to identify all the ferns, trees and flowers I could. The weather had turned cool, with a brisk wind, so I was glad to stay in the sun.

Our luck ran out Saturday: no cancellations, so we had to move on. Since the reason for the crowding was abalone fishermen taking advantage of an exceptionally low tide this week-end, we decided to move inland. So we cut straight across the coastal mountains to Willits. For about the first 10 miles the rhododendrons were in full bloom throughout the forest. That coarse scraggly shrub certainly changes for the few weeks it's in bloom. What a showy wildflower.

We stayed at the Golden Rule Trailer Park about 6 miles south of Willits. It was set in an attractive rolling oak-savannah area, but the place itself was rather crowded together. There were a number of permanent residents in scroungy trailers around the edge. One young man came in about 5:00 p.m. and turned his radio on loud, and we thought, "Oh no!" But he only kept it on about ten minutes. The rest of the sound was just the subdued murmur of people talking and children playing in the distance. Everyone was quiet at night, although there were some annoying lights. We only paid \$9.00 and had EWS (electricity, water and sewer) + cable TV. No freeway noise either, because we were far below it in a little valley.

This morning we drove up here to the redwoods, arriving about 1:00. The rest of the day was

spent relaxing, napping, fishing (Jim was unsuccessful), etc. [This was the one and only time Jim ever tried fishing in all the years I've known him. He claims he used to do it all the time in his younger days.] I've always liked Williams Grove and to have it to ourselves is a real treat. There's a good wind now, but I hope it will go down by morning. Maybe I can record the Western Flycatchers which I could hear singing this afternoon. I wonder if we'll hear any owls tonight. We've only heard them at Duncan's Mills so far on our trip, and then only one night.

Myers Flat, CA

Tues., May 19, 1987

Yesterday morning, while Jim was out "fishing," I drove down to Myers Flat--about 2 miles from Williams Grove. As I was leaving the grocery store, I noticed a "Campground" sign and went about 1/4 mile toward the river and found a lovely RV park nestled in a bend in the South Fork of the Eel River. So we got our money back for the 2nd night at Williams Grove and moved down here. We have full hook-ups and have decided to stay here through the upcoming Memorial Day week-end.

By the time I got our clothes washed in the campground laundry yesterday, it was 2:00, so we just lolled around the campground the rest of the day. There is a small redwood grove, and some of the EW (electric/water) sites are in it. All the EWS (with sewer) sites are interspersed among deciduous trees--Oregon Ash and Myrtle mostly. There are lots of nice shrubs around, too, so the bird life is much more varied than in a pure stand of redwoods. In the early a.m. today I got nice Black-headed Grosbeak and Warbling Vireo recordings.

Will finish tomorrow. I'm tired.

Same place

Wed., May 20, 1987

I'm sitting in the trailer window watching Jim photograph an Allen's Hummingbird male who has taken over our feeder. Jim has two flash units and is hoping to capture the bird in all his glory. He's an extremely feisty little guy. It seems as though the more equipment Jim sets up, the more assertive the bird becomes about coming in to drink. While we ate breakfast, only the feeder was there. Jim went out to move it, and the bird flew under his arm and drank while he had his hand on it. Now there's a flash unit three feet from the feeder, and Jim is sitting at a picnic table six feet away with his big camera and another flash. The bird is in and out all the time. Up until this morning we had seen only females, plus a few males at flowers over by the office. Now our bully won't let anyone else come in.

Yesterday we took a drive in the truck over to Shelter Cove. There is a 23-mile spur road west from Redway, which takes a good 45 minutes to drive. At first the road travels through redwoods, then through mixed forest. The last ten miles it surmounts the steep King Range, covered with chaparral and young trees (Logging and/or fire cleared the land.), and drops as steeply to the ocean.

The road for the first two-thirds of the way bristles with NO TRESPASSING signs. We suspect the residents don't want authorities to happen onto their marijuana farms. I was out with my tape recorder beside the road. Jim said everyone looked at me with great curiosity as they drove by, wondering if I had a new-fangled marijuana detector. (I never make eye-contact with passing people, because it makes them more likely to stop and talk and interfere with what I'm doing.)

In the bookstore back in Ft. Bragg, they had several books on marijuana cultivation. One was beautifully illustrated in color, attractively laid out, and looked like many modern gardening guides. Another was an extremely fat scholarly tome on the subject.

Foxglove and iris, as well as other less spectacular flowers, were in bloom in open spaces along the road.

Shelter Cove is at the only place between Eureka and Westport (on Hwy 1 north of Ft. Bragg) where there is a paved road to the coast. The rest of this stretch of coastline is either in the King

Range National Conservation Area or the Sinkyone Wilderness State Park. Up until recent years it looks as though there was only a small community with a trailer park and motel of sorts in Shelter Cove. Now the rest of the moderately level land has been subdivided and roads laid out. Luxury homes are being built. There's even an airstrip. Thanks most likely to the Coastal Protection Act, there are still lots of places where one can park next to the coast.

The rocky coastline was incredibly beautiful, with aqua blue water and white foam contrasting with black (lava?) and reddish rocks. We discovered a blowhole, which we photographed and recorded. The sound was a hollow, whooshy roar. [This segment starts Part 3 of our 3-projector Northwest Program, Shaped by Fire and Ice.]

The bluff-top was a carpet of spring flowers--a rug of Goldfields, accented with Seaside Dandelions, contrasted with the tall stems and lavender flowers of Sea Thrift. Down on the steep cliffs Dudleya was abloom bright yellow. Lupine and Blue-eyed Grass completed the scene.

Off in the distance we could see the steep mountains of the King Range descend abruptly to the sea. There was a slight bit of fog in the air, but it only lent an other-world quality to the scene and did not detract.

After a lunch at the deli in the trailer park's general store (The regular restaurants are only open Thurs.-Sun.), we drove down to the "harbor." It's really just a cove tucked in on the south side of Pt. Delgada. It has been augmented by a short breakwater--really a rock groin. A sandy beach (black sand) runs around the bend in the lee of the point for perhaps a half mile. It looks as though it's covered with water at high tide. The boats are anchored out in the water. Outboard motored skiffs go back and forth to shore. There their owners climb out in their waist-high waders, attach the boat to a bright red tractor and haul it ashore on a concrete ramp.

Gulls--a couple hundred Westerns plus one or two worn first-winter Glaucous-winged--squabbled over the fishing offal. One of the Westerns--approaching 2nd summer--was banded, and it was so tame that I was able to approach within about 12 feet and by walking all around the bird read the number on the band with my Questar (telescope). [I sent the number to the Bird Banding Lab, Laurel MD, and in due course I received a reply. The bird had been banded as a juvenile on the Farallons.]

As we approached the edge of the water, we discovered a dozen or so brightly colored little Red-necked Phalaropes twirling in the water's edge. The red tractor, the boats coming in, even Jim standing boot-clad in the edge of the water photographing them, did not flush them. At first the shutter click startled them, but they later got used to it and went to sleep. They acted like hungry, tired migrants, and probably were.

It was 7:00 p.m. by the time we got back to Myers Flat.

## Myers Flat

Fri., May 22, 1987

Our male Allen's Hummer has a rival now, another male Allen's. Last evening during their active feeding time just before dark, the two were really chasing each other around. They seemed pretty equally matched, and both got their slurps of syrup--when they could take time out from the fray, that is. Meanwhile the female sneaks in for a drink when the two males are chasing each other.

Yesterday we drove via U.S. 101 to Arcata to get our mail. A nice letter from Mother was waiting--enclosing a few recipes which I asked her to send. I forgot my recipe file box--a major tragedy! I baked the cheese pie just now and am guarding it from Jim.

The entire Eureka area was socked in with a high marine layer and was pretty gloomy. We drove north a few miles to look over possible campsites in the vicinity of Patrick's Point State Park. The state park itself looks quite nice, but none of the private campgrounds were very inviting--too crowded and/or close to the freeway. We may go up there for a day or two when we leave here. (We've taken to scouting ahead when possible for nice campgrounds, because it's much easier to drive around when we're not dragging the trailer.)

We didn't spend much time at Patrick's Point, but Jim did photograph some appealing tame does nibbling fern in a meadow and also an azalea bush in full bloom. He caught a snake, which he later identified as a sharp-tailed snake. He brought it over to the car to show me--and it reeked! Many snakes have musk glands that emit a disagreeable odor when in danger, and this snake definitely was one of them. Anyway I told Jim I'd photograph it in his hands, not vice versa. We released it afterwards, and Jim was able to remove the stench with good strong restroom soap.

We drove back to Myers Flat via the Mattole Road. (Mother and I took it once years ago--in the opposite direction.) It's a very slow, narrow, steep road (68 miles), but lovely. It starts out in the well-restored Victorian town of Ferndale, ascends abruptly into the wooded hills. This part is the narrowest, and of course that was where we met several logging trucks.

The higher reaches of the hills were quite foggy, but as soon as we were south of Cape Mendocino, the weather improved. Cape Mendocino is the westernmost point in the lower 48 states. The road follows the coast for several miles south of the Cape. Rocky shoreline with occasional dunes made for a lovely scene. On one off-shore sea-stack, large numbers of Common Murres and Brandt's Cormorants were nesting. Also Western Gulls and perhaps Pelagic Cormorants.

Inland are the high hills covered with a complex matrix of trees (deciduous and coniferous), chaparral and grassland. After just reading Elna Bakker's *An Island Called California*, it's fun to speculate about why each bit of land is clad the way it is. It has to do with orientation with respect to wind and sun, availability of water, soil type, etc.

When the road turns inland, it soon comes to the Mattole Valley--a charming area both when descending from the high hills and looking down and when driving through. Trim farms, sheep in pastures, a couple of microscopic towns. [One of these, Petrolia, was close to the epicenter of a severe earthquake since we were there and suffered severe damage.]

Finally the road ascends once more into the forested hills: noble fir and miscellaneous trees, especially Golden Chinquapin, at first; then as it gradually descends to the South Fork of the Eel River, redwoods.

We made very few stops along the road, and it probably took three hours to drive the distance. We got back around 5:30.

Today we're staying around the campground. Tomorrow is the start of the long week-end, so it may be we'll want to get away then from the people who arrive tonight.

### Myers Flat

Sun., May 24, 1987

Our Allen's Hummers have gotten so confident now that if Jim sits for a long time beside the table with one finger under the feeder, a bird may occasionally perch on it. His other hand is on the trigger of his camera's remote control, of course. Once the female sat on his finger for about 5 seconds drinking, was photographed (with flash) and remained for about 10 more seconds. Jim was absolutely thrilled, as he always is when he can gain the confidence of a wild creature. If anyone deserves that, it's Jim, for his patience is amazing. He can sit perfectly still for an hour or so, if necessary.

Yesterday we drove to the Rockefeller Grove Big Trees area and hiked up the trail through the trees. I'd taken it twice before, once with Jim last October, and knew it to be one which few people use. Deep in a redwood grove there are few birds. I did hear again the mysterious almost inaudible "tik" which had puzzled me at Russian Gulch. After making kissing-type squeaks for some time, the tiks came closer. It was a Western Flycatcher. [Now called Pacific-slope Flycatcher.]

The highlight of the walk was a pair of Winter Wrens feeding two or three fledglings. I recorded adult song and call plus the high feeding cries of the juveniles. Most of our walk was very quiet, though: an occasional Raven or Steller's Jay in the distance, once a Junco's loud alarm tiks--that was about all.

The redwood groves' understory is not nearly so lush as I remember it from previous visits in



October. The mosses are somewhat withered, and the wildflowers are scarce. It's been a dry spring--at least lately. The RV Park owner said they had 100°+ heat two weeks ago--same time we had it in Kern Co., I guess. Despite their scarcity, I try to find and identify all the plants I can. (Yesterday I had a time with a saxifrage family member, which I mistakenly called a dicot, not a monocot. I finally found my mistake and ID'd it as *Boykinia*--no common name.)

After our long walk, we stopped for lunch at a little coffee shop in Redcrest where we ate breakfast last fall. It's run by three generations of ladies. Grandma sits in a wheelchair and runs the cash register. Mother does the cooking. At least one, if not both, waitress was her daughter. I had a delicious cinnamon roll last fall (all gone by the time we got there this time, or I'd have bought some for breakfast). So I decided to try the pie. Jim and I both chose rhubarb. It was outstanding.

I think every site in the RV park was occupied when we got back. Friday night the three spots near us had been empty, awaiting their week-end reservations, I guess. It was pretty noisy last evening, what with Raiders of the Lost Ark on the TV by the campfire and hilarious giggles--including one loud cackler--from a nearby site. I finally put in my ear plugs, and it was all quiet when I roused up at 11:00. This morning most everyone slept in until at least 8:00. We usually get up at 6:00.

### Pinewood Cove RV Park, Trinity Lake.

Mon., May 25, 198

When we awoke this morning, there was a foggy drizzle--the first we've had. We left Myers Flat about 8:30, drove north to Arcata, then east across the Trinity Alps to Trinity Lake, actually a large reservoir. For the first part of the drive, the fog and clouds hung low over the mountaintops, with little wisps dangling lower in some of the draws. A typical Pacific Northwest morning, it made Jim nostalgic for his Oregon childhood. It really is beautiful in its own quiet way.

Hwy. 299 is the best road across the mountains for many miles north or south. All the people in their RVs were on the road, traveling home in one direction or the other from their Memorial Day holiday.

I stopped along the road where there was a patch of pink flowers and picked one. Later I identified it as Lovely Clarkia (*Clarkia concinna*), one of the prettiest and most intricate wildflowers I've ever seen. It has four petals, each with three lacy lobes. The sepals are long and pink, too, and they're folded under, so it looks like a bow-knot in the center. Even the leaves are trim and neat. Jim photographed it for me. I have it on the table in front of me as I write this. In the campground later, I found two interesting flowers:

Prince's Pine or Pipsissewa (*Chimaphila umbellata*), a trim little flower that hangs up-side-down.

Hooker's Indian Pink (*Silene Hookeri*, ssp. *Bolanderi*). This one gave me all sorts of trouble figuring it out. It turns out it's a white flower when it blooms in late afternoon, turning pink the second day, and this particular subspecies is not ever really white and has slightly different shaped petals from the usual form. Of course, only the usual form was in "the book," and it was in the "white" section. I had to ID it as a Silene, then key it out with the big Munz, *Flora of California*.

We're staying in a lovely private campground among the pines--full hook-ups. It's quiet. Most folks have left. The sites are level, but the roads are narrow and so is our site. Jim had an awful time getting into our supposedly pull-through site. He finally had to go around to the exit side and back in. So far we've not had a great rush to our bird feeding station. Western Tanagers are in the treetops and I can hear Steller's Jays far away. Usually they're wonderful customers.

The weather here since we arrived around 3:00 has been intermittent light rain, but it seems to be nearly clear now (8:00 p.m.).

Lake Siskiyou RV Park, nr. Mt. Shasta

Wed., May 27, 1987

I'm sitting at the picnic table by our campsite watching the clouds play hide-and-seek over the peak of Mt. Shasta. Right now the top is pretty well socked in, but the snow-clad lower flanks are clearly visible.

Although we can't see Lake Siskiyou from the campground, it is within walking distance through the trees. Jim wanted to come here to add another of the Cascades to his collection of beautiful photos.

When the weather in the Trinity Lake area, where we were the last two nights, cleared up, the birding improved enormously. Yesterday we drove out on a gravel road with no traffic and found several beautiful areas. At one place MacGillivray's, Nashville and Hermit Warblers were all singing, but they were too coy to have their pictures taken. I recorded two warblers and hope I'll be able to figure out who said what. At no time was the singer visible as I recorded him. [I never did figure out that recording and have since learned that some western warblers sometimes mimic each other.]

We got back to the campground around 3:00. It was warm enough to sit outside with a sweater on. Western Tanagers and some exasperatingly invisible warblers were singing constantly in the tops of the tall pines. It was too noisy to record--wind, other campers, boats, traffic, road construction.

While we were getting ready to eat dinner, I caught sight of a female Hermit Warbler on the ground gleaning insects under a log. She flew all over the area and inspected faucets, electrical boxes, tree cavities, etc. Unfortunately Jim's camera was in the truck, and dinner wouldn't wait.

This morning I awoke at first light to the songs of Western Tanagers all around. All of last evening's noise-makers were still in bed, so I got up and went out with my tape recorder for 1½ hours. I got the Western Tanager plus a Hammond's Flycatcher and Hermit Warbler very well. The latter two were coaxed closer by playback and recorded at close range.

The Hermit Warbler was especially cooperative (or inquisitive), and I finally was able to figure out what his song sounded like. After breakfast Jim and I went out, and I lured him down for some nice close-range photos. As warblers go, he was a pretty good subject and didn't hide behind foliage or flit around all the time--just part of the time. He was the first bird on this trip to come to my playback and be photographed. I was beginning to think I'd lost my touch. Later a Western Tanager came in fairly close.

Around 9:00 a huge Pileated Woodpecker arrived and called and drummed loudly in the treetops. I got one fairly good recording of his drumming, but his calls only came every few minutes and he only would give one short burst at a time. So I never had my microphone on at the right time. There was a lot of noise by then, so it wouldn't have been first rate anyway. I might have left the recorder on for an extended period if conditions had been better.

We left that campground around 10:00 and drove east to I-5, then north to near Mt. Shasta, arriving about 2:30. It's a beautiful place here, which we'll enjoy exploring the next 2 days.

Lake Siskiyou RV Park.

Thurs., May 28, 1987

Jim has developed a fetish about fondling squirrels' tails. Last evening he encouraged the tame California Ground Squirrels to eat goodies (peanuts, sunflower seeds, bird seed, Magic Meal, etc.) from the picnic table right in front of him. (We eat in the trailer.) While they were eating, he'd pet their tails.

Later, he rigged up his camera with remote shutter release so he could fondle their tails with one hand and photograph them with the other. He has pictures to prove it.

Now he has just come in with a swatch of tail fur between his fingers. The way he tells it is: There was a deer fly on the poor squirrel's tail and he was trying to pick it off so it wouldn't bite the

animal. Just as he was about to snatch the fly, the squirrel jerked his tail, and out came the fur. Apparently the squirrel holds no grudge, for he and all his buddies are still enjoying Jim's largess--and tolerating his caresses. [I still have that swatch of squirrel fur--in a plastic bag taped to the original hand-written copy of this journal. It's really pretty. Each hair alternates between gray and white about every 3/8 inch.]

Today we drove up the 14-mile spur road to about 9000 ft on Mt. Shasta's southwest flank. It was a beautiful drive and passed through several different habitat types--chaparral, mixed forest, and several types of conifers, ending with Red Fir. I think you could make a nice show just on that road alone and what you could find along it.

Jim photographed some Pine Siskins at the top, but unfortunately he discovered afterwards that the film hadn't been feeding through his camera. He was really disgusted with himself, but he feels better now; a Chipping Sparrow responded to its recorded voice and posed for pictures--right near our trailer.

I recorded Solitary Vireo [now Cassin's Vireo] and Cassin's Finch very well--at least I think so having not yet listened to the tape. There was no wind.

When we got to the top of the road, the peak above us was entirely cloud-clad, and has been so the rest of the day. Jim did get some nice pictures of Mt. Shasta last evening and this morning from near Lake Siskiyou.

My pretty Lovely Clarkia from last Monday is still looking pretty on the table. I've added a Forktooth Ookow (an awful name for a lovely Brodiaea-type flower) and a Mountain Pride (a type of penstemon), the latter collected today. (I only pick one flower of a kind, and then only from a sizeable patch.)

### Lake Siskiyou

Sat., May 30, 1987

This campground has proven to be a treasure-trove of nesting birds. Around 10:00 yesterday Jim came back, all charged up, to get his camera. He's found a White-breasted Nuthatch nest at the feeding-young stage. It's just across the street from our part of the campground in an old apple orchard.

A brief diversion on the campground itself is in order: Although most private campgrounds consist only of the land actually laid out in campsites, this one is huge. Despite its 299 campsites (mostly empty now), there are many acres of yellow pine forest, the lake front, and the old apple orchard, nearly every tree of which is full of natural cavities.

As Jim was standing waiting for the nuthatches to come in with food, he saw Red-breasted Sapsuckers at workings nearby. They proved to be cooperative subjects, and he's very happy about the shots they gave him. I wandered over there later and found both a Mountain Chickadee and a Northern Flicker nest in neighboring trees.

The flickers are apparently incubating, with hourly "changes of the guard" between male and female. (This hourly schedule holds when they're feeding young, we discovered once at a nest in Santiago Oaks Regional Park near home.) The relieving parent flies casually from tree to tree getting closer and closer to the nest, all the while making quiet churring calls. When s/he's really near, the incubating partner bursts out of the hole as if propelled by dynamite and flies far away. The incoming parent fiddles around a bit more (quietly now), then slips into the hole. Pretty clever, eh?

I discovered the nest because I had been sitting quietly for 10 or 15 minutes at a nearby picnic table and had seen no flicker activity. Suddenly a flicker burst out of the tree right in front of me. I figured it must have been in its cavity to be quiet so long. (This time its replacement arrived a bit later.)

We've been seeing White-headed Woodpeckers flying around our trailer and also over in the pines next to the apple orchard. After feeding quietly for some time, they fly off--always in the same direction. I figured they might have a nest, too. So late yesterday afternoon I set out to look for it in

the woods across the street and around a curve. I wandered around a while fruitlessly, was distracted by a noisy pair of Ospreys courting overhead, as well as a pugnacious (to playback) Fox Sparrow. It was 6:00, so I decided I'd better get back to fix dinner. I re-entered the trailer area at a different point and was a bit disoriented. (All the roads here are curved.) As I was walking along, out of a hole, four feet off the ground and right next to a main campground drive, shot a White-headed Woodpecker. There was a trailer not thirty feet from the nest. Jim is over there now photographing it.

Deer--semi-tame--wander all around the grounds at dusk and dawn. As we were eating dinner last evening a doe and nearly grown fawn came very close to our window. The fawn even sniffed the picnic table, but the food was all gone. A sudden head movement by Jim sent it skittering off. Our only feeding-station customers have been Steller's Jays, one Anna's Hummer, California Ground-Squirrels and Yellow Pine Chipmunks.

We had planned to leave here yesterday, but decided another night was in order. We'll leave today before the 1:00 check-out time for the 50+ mile drive to Burney.

Near McArthur-Burney Falls State Park (ca. 60 miles northeast of Redding)

Mon., June 1, 1987

I'm sitting on the sun couch outside the trailer looking over the split-rail fence at the back of our site into the pine woods--mostly youngish yellow pines. [We were in a commercial RV park whose name I forgot to note.]

An adult robin just came in to gather some Magic Meal from the crevice of the tree. (The stuff on the post is all gone!) Robins aren't very good wood-peckers and have to flutter constantly in order to hold onto a vertical surface. These are the first robins that have ever taken any of the food we have to offer. Apparently it goes over big with the youngsters, for the two adults are feeding two big-mouthed fledglings on a branch near here.

Yesterday morning it was overcast and intermittently drizzly. Our plan was to visit Mt. Lassen 40 miles away, so we set out in the truck with some apprehension. But we decided even if it was foggy on the mountain, we could probably entertain ourselves on the flatland.

As luck would have it, as we approached the mountain, the clouds started to part and in a matter of about an hour it was clear except for a few puffy clouds. An altogether perfect day.

The road through the park goes around the peak on three sides, north east and south--then continues out on the south side. We retraced our steps, because any other route would have been much longer.

Mt. Lassen is a plug-dome volcano, which last erupted in 1916. It's quite craggy in places with other slopes smooth and covered with loose material. The road goes above 8000 ft on the 10,000-ft mountain, and much of it was above the snow-line. The snow wasn't very deep. Even the plowed drifts beside the road were rarely over three or four feet high. The higher meadows and lakes were frozen and snow-covered, but melty. The lower ones were clear and sparkling.

We found a Spotted Sandpiper nest beside one, but Jim tried in vain to approach the adults closely as they foraged for food. He came closer than he ever has before, though. The pond is a popular stop on the tour road, so the birds are probably used to people.

Not too many flowers. Most impressive were the Marsh Marigolds. Large patches of them grew with their feet wet where water was sheeting down slopes below snow patches. Creamy white bracts that look like petals surround the lemon-yellow centers.

There is some thermal activity on the south side of the mountain. One area was still snowed in, but a lower one had a short board trail through it. Mud-pots and fumaroles are present--with the usual odor, but on a rather meager scale compared with Yellowstone.

Birding wasn't too successful. Besides the Spotted Sandpipers, we chased, but never saw, some Mountain Quail around one area. Every time we got close to where the sound was (or seemed to be) coming from, we heard the bird (or another one) equally far off in some other direction. The only one we've seen was one we and a truck we were meeting almost ran over on the road by Trinity

Lake. That one barely escaped with its life.

This morning we did chores--laundry, errands to Burney to the store, gas station and P.O.

After lunch we went over to McArthur-Burney Falls State Park. I had visited it with Mother in 1975--on our way to Seattle for a tour to Alaska.

Its main claim to fame among birders is the easily-visible Black Swifts, which nest behind the veil of falling water. What a thrill to watch these aerial birds dart through the spray to some nearly invisible niche or ledge behind. Most nests are impossible to see, but I was lucky enough to spot a bird going through to a nest on a little ledge and settle down to incubate. I even went back up the long trail for my scope to observe it better. The bird lies almost horizontal on the nest.

Lots of American Dippers nest there, too. I saw several go through the spray at different places. It was easy to see them on the rocks beside the falls and along the stream below them.

Burney Falls itself is an absolute gem of a scenic spot. This place is almost unknown to Southern Californians, but is obviously popular up here. Lots of people were camping in the park campground--mostly for fishing, I think.

The falls are unusual because not all the water flows over the top. Lots of it comes out about 1/3 of the way down. This is because a hard layer of basaltic lava overhangs a softer, but nonporous, sedimentary layer. The water penetrates down through the cracks in the basalt, then flows along underground to the brink. This sedimentary layer wears back until the basalt has to break and fall into the gorge. Downstream the gorge walls consist of broken-up chunks of black rock. Soil has filled in many of the cracks and there are lots of trees, shrubs, etc.

Right above the brink of the falls were some large patches of tiger lilies in full bloom. I wouldn't consider going anywhere near them, but to Jim they were an irresistible photo-op. He loves to stand on the brink of anything!

The weather today was lovely, too. It's probably about 75° right now--5:30 p.m. Last night, the first clear one for some time, got pretty cold--probably 40°, if not lower.

Near Tulelake, CA

Wed, June 3, 1987

Our RV park here in the Klamath Basin is Sheepy Ridge RV Park [now called State Line RV Park] and is at the north end of Sheepy Ridge, which separates Tulelake and Lower Klamath National Wildlife Refuges. North of here is the farmland of Oregon. (In fact, Oregon starts right across the road, Stateline Rd.) Directly south of us is sagebrush-covered Sheepy Ridge.

Last evening and this morning a Pronghorn wandered over the hill to partake of the watered grass on the edge of the campground.

This park is a barren gravel plot, but the people who bought the place three years ago have planted 500 young trees and are working very hard to improve the place to attract wildlife. They, especially the wife, are birders, and very anxious to direct their guests to the best birding spots in the area. However, I've visited this area three times before, so know pretty well where to go.

Yesterday when we left Burney, we drove east first, through increasingly scrubby habitat (small conifers, oaks, shrubs), interspersed with idyllic farming valleys and tiny towns.

The largest town along the way was Fall River Mills. To our surprise, right in the middle of town, surrounded by gas stations, markets, houses, community halls--and with many log trucks and pickets patrolling the nearby bridge construction site, etc.--was a huge colony of Bank Swallows. There were hundreds of birds flying in and out of nests only inches apart in a crumbly dry dirt bank. The bank was perhaps 150 ft long and 20 ft high--and was right beside the road.

I tried to record the birds above the hubbub, and Jim tried to catch them on film as they darted in and out of their holes. Whenever one went into a reasonably close hole, he'd focus on the entrance, hoping to stop the motion of the bird as it came hurtling out. Unfortunately they never spent the same time interval inside the hole. Sometimes they came out before he could get focused. Other times he had to give up because his arms were aching from holding up that heavy camera. Only

rarely would a bird perch on the sill of the nest or a chick peer out. Shooting them in the sky was hopeless, for they darted around too fast. Anyway, he spent a good two hours at the task, and we'll just have to wait to see if any of the pictures are any good. [A few of them were OK, but none excellent.]

We arrived in Tulelake about 3:00 p.m. and rested the remainder of the day. It was hot--record heat in nearby Klamath Falls, they said.

Today we spent the entire morning and until about 3:00 p.m. (when a strong hot wind and dust storm came up suddenly) at Lower Klamath NWR--the short auto tour route. Nests, chicks, courtship displays, etc., were all around us--many too far away to photograph. No real rarities, but we did fill some gaps in our photo collection and found Barn Swallows and Marsh Wrens to be most cooperative photo subjects. I got nice sound from both, too. There was almost no wind most of the time. We also found and Jim photographed nests of Clark's Grebe, American Coot, Red-winged and Brewer's Blackbirds.

The Clark's Grebe nest was right next to the main highway which crosses the refuge, not by one of the graded refuge roads. It was on a raft of floating vegetation about 2-3 ft in diameter. When we stopped the truck beside it, the adult slipped off the nest into the water and skittered away quickly. We thought she might come back if we waited quietly in the truck, but she only swam arcs around the nest and looked at us worriedly for the few minutes we waited.

Then a Coot approached the nest, actually climbed onto it, and started hammering an egg with its bill. This brought the adult grebe in with a great rush, and the coot departed. But she (I guess it was a female.) still would not get back on. So we drove off.

We were planning to take the longer tour route, but the dust storm and heat chased us back to the shelter of our nice air-conditioned trailer.

#### Same place

Thurs. evening, June 4, 1987

This morning we decided to spend "a couple of hours" in Lower Klamath, then go on. It proved to be so interesting that we stayed all day--until the wind got too strong around 2:30.

We took the longer auto tour route this time. Almost immediately after we left the part we traveled yesterday, we came upon Yellow-headed Blackbirds right beside the road. A little farther on there were Tricolors. Both were species we've wanted pictures of for some time. They weren't easy to photograph, because they tended to desert the area right beside the truck for quite a while after we parked. Then they would gradually forget our presence and fill in the gap. Their perches were a maze of dead stalks from last year's tall plants (species?). Invariably, there would be a number of twigs between the perched bird and the camera. We'd have to wait until a bird chose a twig with a clear line of sight. Alternatively, I'd drive forward slowly and try to stop at just the right place so Jim could get the picture. This meant turning on the engine and risking spooking the birds. The engine had to be off so its vibration wouldn't ruin the picture. Despite these difficulties, Jim feels he got good photos of both species, especially the males. We had a few chances at females, too, but they tend to stay down in the cover more.

That's only part of the richness we encountered today. The refuge is absolutely teeming with breeding birds. The casual birder could easily confirm, or at least place in the probable category, nesting of a score of birds. Here's a list of what we photographed yesterday and today:

Barn Swallow - perched near nests.

Am. Robin - nest w/ eggs.

Cinnamon Teal--chicks on water. (Adult had flown when we approached.)

Brewer's Blackbird - 2 nests, varying aged chicks.

Am. Avocet - chick, nest with eggs.

Am. Coot - nest with eggs, adult on nest.

Canada Goose - adults with chicks, several groups.

Forster's Tern - adults on nests.

Marsh Wren - adult defending nest site, nest.

Mallard - female w/ chicks in water and on her back.

Gadwall - 2 nests with eggs (Female flies off nest when truck goes by, so we just stop and search the nettles(!) for the nest. We could have found lots more.

Canvasback - chicks on water, adult had flown.

Calif. Gull - nest colony. (Refuge has built raised hummocks about 100 yd apart for several miles. All were covered with incubating or brooding adults. Chicks were visible through scope, though they were very hard to tell from the droppings-spattered rocks.)

Yellow-headed Blackbird - already described.

Tricolored Blackbird - already described.

Clark's Grebe - already described.

In addition to these obviously breeding birds, Jim also photographed

Am. White Pelican.

Common Merganser.

Yellow-bellied Marmot.

Mule Deer - both male and female in marsh, the female wading.

All told, we've seen 54 bird species the past three days, probably all breeding or they wouldn't be here this time of year. Right now Jim is off stalking a Pronghorn with two still-spotted fawns, which the camp-owner just spotted on the hill. He took the truck up the road and has been gone almost an hour. (I see him driving in now as I glance up.) He says he couldn't find the Pronghorns, but he found a Loggerhead Shrike's nest--not yet occupied by eggs--and an old Red-tailed Hawk's nest.

The weather is much cooler today, but still warm. It's overcast; high thin clouds gave even light for photography--no hard shadows.

Wind was moderate this morning, increasing to strong this afternoon. I did record some birds by sitting in the truck, closing all but one window and aiming out the open one. This cuts down a lot of wind noise, but is not totally satisfactory.

Rocky Pt. RV Park, Upper Klamath Lake, OR.

4:00 p.m., Sat., June 6, 198

Everywhere we stay it seems impossible to tear ourselves away. Yesterday we drove the 50± miles through Klamath Falls, did some shopping, then came up to Rocky Point, a trailer park/marina nestled in the tall firs and pines, overlooking the Upper Klamath National Wildlife Refuge. This refuge is more what we think of when we hear north-woods lake. It has water lilies and willow islands, as well as the cattails and sedges found at Tulelake, Lower Klamath, and the Sacramento Valley spots. Being surrounded by coniferous forest instead of sagebrush enhances the north-woods feeling. The altitude here must be higher, but I don't know by how much.

We had a choice of a couple of trailer sites, the rest being occupied by fishermen. One was a nice easy level site surrounded by other trailers. The other was tucked back on a hillside at the back corner of the park. Naturally we selected the latter! Jim had to back the trailer about 75 yards, around a couple of tight turns to get into the fairly narrow spot, but the promise of wildlife made him tackle the task. Fortunately a neighboring camper was an expert director, so I was relieved of a chore I'm not very good at.

The effort is being rewarded right now. We're getting birds at our feeding station--on some beautiful moss-covered rocks--which we've never had before: Black-headed Grosbeak and Rufous-sided Towhee. I can lie on the bed and look out the window at these plus Western Tanager and Northern (Bullock's) Oriole [That was its name then.] and perhaps others. All are within ten feet.

We'll probably end up spending three nights here, too, instead of the two I planned.

After we checked in yesterday and had lunch, we set out to check the Pileated Woodpecker spot we discovered on our trip last October. We did find evidence of active feeding, but the tree with

old nest holes showed no signs of a new one, and the bird didn't seem to be around.

Then, since it was a beautiful, clear day, we drove up to Crater Lake, about 50 miles away. Jim got some blue-lake photos to go with the silvery ones he got last October. I still think the lake was more spell-binding than it was yesterday.

Of course, the real reason Jim wanted to go to Crater Lake was to fondle the tails of the panhandling Golden-mantled Ground-Squirrels. They were hibernating last October, but were duly photographed this time. Clark's Nutcrackers were also very tame. Jim dearly loves to feed wildlife and could spend hours inducing the creatures to come ever closer.

This morning was one of the highlights of our trip. We rented a small boat with an outboard motor and set out to explore Upper Klamath National Wildlife Refuge. We left at 5:45 a.m. and got back at noon. It was a beautiful clear morning, and the early-morning chill soon gave way to just cool.

We didn't find any of the large mammals (moose, deer, otter, etc.), which the office had said were there, but we did see lots of Black Terns and Willow Flycatchers. There was no wind, and no other boats came along until around 11 a.m., so recording conditions were absolutely perfect. When we shut off the boat, I could record these birds at close range. The boat did creak a little, so I'll have to listen to my tapes before I declare them A+.

We were disturbed by the numbers of Brown-headed Cowbirds. They seemed almost as numerous as the Willow Flycatchers and were much less vocal. The Willow Flycatchers were sitting on song perches high atop willows and calling their sneezy "fitz-bew" all the time. Those birds plus Yellow Warblers are still abundant here. I certainly hope it remains that way. (The cowbirds have decimated the populations of those two species in Southern Calif.)

Jim had some trouble with his photography--another roll not feeding through the camera--so his best shots of Black Terns are lost. He did take others later in the morning; they may be OK. [They weren't.]

The last hour afloat we spent pursuing the Red-necked Grebe, which I had seen from shore several times yesterday. I think Jim got good pictures. My sound may be OK, too, but by then there were other boats audible most of the time, plus people talking on shore. We were probably 200 yd out in the water most of the time, but sounds do carry.

The Red-necked Grebe's voice is an awful choking, raspy noise: the raspy first part seems to induce the choking conclusion. Unfortunately he didn't call very frequently, so it took a lot of patient maneuvering, starting and stopping the boat engine, and voice play-back to record his voice when there were no extraneous noises.

After a quick lunch and shower, we were both so exhausted, we slept for nearly two hours. Sitting in an uncomfortable rowboat at attention for over six hours had taken its toll.

Mosquitos were a very minor annoyance out on the water this morning. We didn't even apply any repellent. They are lurking outside all our trailer's screens now, and every once in a while one manages to find its way inside. Jim is sitting outside at the picnic table photographing, and he says the insect repellent he has on is keeping them at bay.

Pine Springs KOA, near Langlois, OR

Tues., June 9,

We had to leave Upper Klamath Sunday around 1:00, because someone else had reserved the site we were in. We could have had a different site, but it was nearer the center of the campground and didn't have the wildlife the one we were in had. So we decided to head for Crescent City. It was 160 miles over 2-lane roads, which turned out to be faster than they looked like they might be on the map.

We stayed at the Hiouchi Hamlet RV Park near Crescent City--4 miles N on US 101, then 5 miles east on US 299, in a region surrounded by redwoods. It was a large campground, mostly open, but with widely spaced pull-through sites. Jim asked for a site on the edge, and they gave us the best one in the whole camp--on the back corner with a beautiful native azalea bush in full bloom right



outside our dinette window.

We were amazed at a huge camping vehicle also present in our campground. It was German and full of German tourists--21 of them! It was as tall as a double-decker bus and very long. In the front high up were luxury coach seats looking out huge windows. Below those were huge lift-up doors, which exposed food cookery and serving equipment. (They ate at small picnic tables, which they also had with them.) In the rear were 21 windows in three tiers. On the opposite side was a stairway behind a canopy which apparently accessed 21 sleeping cubicles. They couldn't have been more than 3 ft wide at the most and maybe 4 feet high. The people used the public showers. [Since then on our travels, we've seen this vehicle, or another like it, several more times.]

Not much wildlife visited our campsite--just an occasional Steller's Jay or Allen's Hummer. However, there were two huge hummingbird feeders by the office door aswarm with Allen's Hummers, plus an occasional Anna's.

I had accidentally erased my best piece of Allen's Hummer tape from Myers Flat (Redwood Highway), so resolved to remedy that first thing in the morning before the campground came alive and the traffic on the highway was too thick. I hadn't bargained with the Pepsi machine, though. Fortunately, I found a large bottlebrush bush at a respectable distance, and the little birds were zinging all around it when they weren't at the feeders. I know I got some good tape, although I haven't evaluated it yet.

The next morning, after some routine errands in Crescent City, we headed for the rocky coast west of town and slightly north. This is a little-known gem of coastal habitat south of Point St. George. Even the "Things to See in Crescent City" list put out by Hiouchi Campground doesn't mention it. I had been there with Mother on previous trips. Unfortunately it was overcast--high fog--but it still had a lovely quality. Jim took a few scenics.

There are some large sea-stacks--some almost islands--which are covered with nesting sea birds: Western Gulls, Pelagic and Brandt's (maybe) Cormorants, Common Murres and Pigeon Guillemots, and probably others we couldn't see, even with the Questar. Elephant Seals and California Sea Lions were there, too.

The fence where Mother and I had seen Tree Swallows nesting in the knot holes in the fence posts had been replaced by a new board fence. However, on another part of the road someone had put up bird houses at intervals, and one box had Tree Swallow activity.

A visit to a dock-side fish market for fresh sand dabs and salmon concluded the morning. The farther north we go, the nicer-looking the fish seems to be. It's less expensive, too.

We hooked up the trailer and drove on up the coast. Around Brookings, OR, the sun started to break through the low clouds, and it was partly sunny, but windy the rest of the day. Today has been clear, but windy all day. Sort of chilly, too, although I don't think the temperature is really low.

We're in a lovely KOA (site E-12) between Port Orford and Bandon. It has secluded sites and quite a bit of undeveloped land behind the sites. The land is covered with emergent second growth. We were told that a hurricane(!) in 1981 felled the pines, because a neighbor to the west had cut his down for a cranberry bog, leaving these trees unprotected.

Anyway, the plot is covered with snags, shrubs, young deciduous and coniferous trees--and abloom with gorgeous foxglove. This introduced species is a pest, because it poisons livestock, but it certainly is beautiful!

The property on one side is bordered by a plant-choked ravine with a stream in the bottom. We couldn't see the stream, but heard it and saw its ripply reflection on a tree trunk, so know there's one there. In this area Jim remarked casually, "There's a Mockingbird." I was skeptical at first, because I didn't think there were any around here. It turned out we were both right. It was a Mockingbird, but there weren't supposed to be any there. I looked it up in Ramsey's Birding Oregon and found it listed as "occasional" farther north on the Oregon coast, but unreported on the southern coast.

We went back to the spot this morning to look at the bird better and try to photograph and record it. We got good looks, but at 50-75 feet it was too far for pictures. I did write up a complete

description to sent to American Birds. It seemed funny to describe such a familiar bird as a rarity, but I studied it carefully from stem to stern, just as I would a totally new bird. It had found red elderberries to its liking, and that's probably why it was there.

This place is so nice, we decided to spend two nights. I did the laundry. Jim tried to get some pictures from the picnic table, but the Steller's Jays wouldn't perch on the pine boughs where they looked the best. No other birds came to our feeders, and we have lots of nice Steller's Jays pictures in other settings.

Jim just came back and reported he was able to photograph the Mocker from about 35 ft. I'll enclose a slide with my report when I send it in.

Troutdale, OR

Sun. eve., June 14, 1987

I usually start each writing session by describing the lovely setting where we're parked. So here goes: We're in an RV park [name not recorded in this log] in rolling farmland about ten miles east of Portland. The place sounded merely OK when I read the description in Woodall's Guide, but the rolling truck-gardening in the vicinity got my hopes up as we approached the place. We got here at 10 a.m. yesterday and got the last site on the grounds. All sites are close together. The trains go by just north of us. The planes fly low overhead. And, to top it off, we're downwind from the sewage plant right next door. We took the place for two nights, and it seems full tonight, too. Lots of folks seem permanent residents. I guess there's nothing else near.

Last Wed. we left Langlois and drove about 100 miles farther up the Ore. coast to Washburne State Park. It's a lovely campground with each full hook-up site secluded from its neighbor by natural trees and shrubs. The birds were not too exciting, though. Crows plus the usual Steller's Jays attended our site. The wind was blowing a gale, even in the sheltered campground.

We walked the half-mile path to the sandy beach. There the wind was impossible, so we quickly turned back. I had fun identifying plants along the trail. They don't dive for cover in the wind, although any shoot that dares stick its head above the rest soon gets desiccated by the salty blast. The entire line comprising the tops of the trees and shrubs along this piece of coast looks as though a giant hedge-clipper has been over it.

The plant which caught my fancy on this little walk was twinberry--two little blackish berries nestled where two stiff, fused red leaves come together. The berries are not edible--at least by people--but Purple Finches, Song Sparrows and Robins were enjoying them.

Thursday we drove on up the coast another hundred or so miles to Cape Lookout State Park in Tillamook County. We stopped at a beautiful stretch of rocky coast near the town of Seal Rock, where Jim photographed Pigeon Guillemots perched on the rocks outside their nest crevices.

Cape Lookout is a state park I've visited twice before. This time we got the last full hook-up available, but only for two nights. We had planned to stay three. This park is one of the few which take reservations, and they were all booked up for Saturday night. Since only mail-in reservations are accepted, there was no way we could have had one. As it was, we weren't too unhappy to leave. The coastal birding hasn't been too exciting. We could have moved to a non-hookup site, if we had wanted it, but, since it takes three or four days to get birds coming to a site and there weren't any we particularly wanted to attract, we decided to move on.

This brought us across the coast range to the Portland area. Jim wanted to visit a large photo store there, but was not entirely successful in getting what he wanted on Saturday. He'll try at one other place tomorrow (Monday).

Today we took a drive with just the truck up into the Columbia River Gorge and back. I wanted to look for wildflowers. There were some, but again the dry spring has taken its toll. Unfortunately I forgot to take my flower ID guides, but brought back copious notes on what I saw, plus samples of three of the most abundant species. I'll have to figure them out tomorrow, though, for it's 9:00 p.m. now.

We had a nice dinner at a nearby Mexican restaurant with Jim's friend Bill Jennings, with whom he worked on the LAPD. Bill lives up here now.

River Bend RV Park, Twisp, WA  
Thurs. a.m., June 18, 1987

The past week or so has made me think I was jaded from too many sights and too many crowded campgrounds and maybe we should go home. This place has changed everything. It's wonderful! But let's take things in chronological order.

Monday morning we spent in Portland. Jim found a photo store which promised "In by 10:00, out by noon" processing for his 6 cm x 7 cm film. It was "out by 1:00." The pictures turned out fine. Some were of Allen's Hummers in flight that he had taken at Myers Flat (Redwood Hwy.). He had stopped the wing motion perfectly and the exposure was right. The gorgets were not aglow, so he'll have to rearrange his flash units. The background was black, because he was shooting off into space, so he'll have to experiment with a close-up, but still out of focus, background. And that's what he's doing now. The potential subjects are Calliope and Black-chinned.

While we were waiting for the photo processing, we went to a large shopping center. I bought a new purse (my old one was becoming embarrassing) and a bread-slicing knife. I was surprised to find that this mall near downtown Portland was out-of-doors, although covered. An interesting feature was a large ice-skating rink, apparently free. About a dozen people were on the ice.

It was 2:00 by the time we were hooked up and on the road. We drove east along the freeway through the Columbia Gorge. I'll never tire of that scenery--tall basalt cliffs towering above the road on our side, the broad river, and the more gently sloping terraced land on the Washington side. The Roadside Geology of Oregon book explains it all: All the alternating lava (basalt) and sedimentary layers were raised and tilted by tectonic action. A given layer is higher in the north than in the south. As this was happening, the river cut through them. On the Washington side, the basalt layers could slide southward over one another due to lubrication of water in the sedimentary layers. Where the river cut through, they slid right into the river, forming the terraces. Lots of slides can be seen across the river.

At Biggs, OR, we crossed the river and drove north about 20 miles to a small state park (Brooks Memorial), which had nice full-hook-up sites, but no particularly interesting birds.

The next day we drove through the eastern foothills of the Cascades--high rolling sagebrush-covered plateaus alternating with lush orchard-filled river valleys. Practically all of the river mileage--both the Columbia and its tributaries--is one dammed (damned?!) lake after another. A free-flowing river is hard to find.

We finally settled for the night at Chelan RV Park--a city park just above a dam which forms "Lake Chelan"--really a 50-75 mile long string-bean of the dammed-up Chelan River. We could just imagine the lush riparian woodland which was destroyed in the process.

The place was popular--over half full of RV's with people who like boating, swimming, water skiing, fishing, as well as tennis, volleyball and partying. Not our kind of place, though--grass, trees and organized fun.

Yesterday we drove only about 60 miles and found this place! I'd read in the Washington Bird-finding Guide that North Cascades National Park was a good spot for birding. Unfortunately in this new park there are only old US Forest Service campgrounds (no trailers over 22 ft, ours is 26 ft) plus some on a lake with boating. Our only choices were on the eastern and western slopes. We (or rather, I; Jim prefers to leave all the planning to me) chose the east side. The Winthrop-Twisp area had about 6 or 8 nice-sounding places listed in "the book" (Woodall's Guide), but we fell in love with the first one. The others may be lovely, too.

We're in a campground with scattered tall deciduous trees and grassy sites. It's right next to a free-flowing (finally) river, the Methow (pronounced Metow, rhymes with now). We're on the inside of a curve in the river, so there is a sand and gravel bar about 50 ft wide between us and the river,

which is about 100 ft wide. Across the river is a cow pasture and much woodland--apparently no road over there.

We were so excited by the beauties of the area and the wonderful birds that it took us an hour or more to get set up--truck unhooked, utilities hooked. Jim even managed to "light" the water heater with the propane not turned on! He swore it was lit, but when I tried to light the stove, there was no gas on. We spent the rest of the day right here, and it went like a flash. Some of the highlights, in the order of my bird list:

Robins - singing, fighting, eating all around us.

Red-shafted Flicker - nesting in a tree near by, high up.

Bullock's Oriole - nesting in another high tree, feeding young, which I occasionally hear.

Kingfishers - flying up and down river. I keep checking the bank across the way to see if they are nesting.

N. Rough-winged Swallows - nesting across the river for sure, have a favorite perch on our side which Jim wants to "stake out."

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (*S. v nuchalis*) [now Red-naped Sapsucker]. A pair is apparently nesting across the river, but feeds in the campground. They don't seem to be sucking sap from workings. Instead, they work the trees creeper-fashion for insects. Sapsuckers are sort of bull-headed and these are no exception. When they want to work a particular site, the fact that there is a human ten feet away makes no difference. Jim took pictures, of course.

Tree Swallows swooping around all over the river's surface.

Spotted Sandpipers. A pair down on the weedy gravel bar are courting with a strange slow helicopter-like flight. Jim saw them copulate. A nest in the area is undoubtedly in the offing.

Cedar Waxwing--an abandoned nest in a nearby tree.

Common Nighthawk - flying around and calling all day and evening, not at night, despite the name.

Lewis's Woodpecker - seen occasionally fly-catching over the river.

Barrow's Goldeneye, chick. A single downy fluff-ball with charcoal gray plumage except for four white spots on each side (wing/back) and a white cheek. Bill tip reddish clinched the ID, according to the book. This little bird is all alone, but seems OK. It works its way upstream along the slow-moving inner side of the river bend, dabbling constantly. Then it shoves off and floats rapidly downstream and starts all over. It's hard to see where it goes, but there is perhaps 1/4 mile of sand-bar beach before it gets swift on this side. I hope the little thing makes it. I wonder if it's normal for a chick this young to be on its own. Will have to leave space here to look it up when I get home. [Later: no info. in Bent]

Black-capped Chickadee (Jim's first) feeding a fledgling.

Common Merganser - mother and ten half-grown chicks swimming and diving their way up the far side of the river. It took considerable effort to count them, they spent so much time under water.

Canada Goose - raft of 20, mostly immatures. Floated rapidly by this morning.

Long-eared Owl. Three or four birds (parents & young?) were flying around the meadow and perching on low places on the edge of the forest across the river. They became active last evening long before dark, and we could watch their hunting techniques and observe them in the scope at leisure. They swoop back and forth low over the meadow almost like Northern Harriers. They seemed to have browner faces than I remembered from Southern California birds.

In all we've seen 29 species right on the grounds of the camp.

Our neighbors in the campground are also interested in birds. One man has traveled and birded extensively and is quite knowledgeable. The man on the other side is an interested novice,

has binoculars but no bird book. I say "neighbors," but actually there's a free site between us on either side, so we don't feel crowded at all.

Forgot to mention the feisty Brewer's Blackbird in my list. He chases everything which deigns to move within 100 ft of his home base, which seems to be right next to the rest room! You can walk along toward the office past the rest room, and he'll buzz you three or four times along the way with long swooping glides, accented by raucous "chacks." He barely misses your head on each flight. I've never seen a Brewer's behave this way before--more like a Mocker. Even when we photographed and recorded their nests at Lower Klamath NWR, the adults just perched a ways off and fussed.

Same place.

Sun. eve., June 21, 1987.

This is our fifth night in this lovely place--one of our favorites on the trip. Only the mosquitos mar its loveliness. They're extremely tiny, so small they are hard to see against a busy background. So they sneak up on all parts of us, and usually we're not even aware we've been bitten until a bit later when a tiny bump forms, which itches like fury. A couple of days were still and a trifle muggy; then they were bad all day. Today it's cool and windy, so they're little trouble.

Friday we took a short drive to Buck Lake, a small lake about 15 miles west of here. It was off a dirt road, so not many people were there, and none had motors, just rowboats or canoes. It was pretty windy, so recording was poor. We did get a few shots at a MacGillivray's Warbler, who took offense at the playback of his song, but Jim's afraid he had his camera set wrong.

Jim spent an hour sitting by what seemed to be fresh Pileated Woodpecker workings, but no bird came in. I did hear one in the distance calling briefly.

I spent that same hour sitting by the marshy end of the lake. I got several glimpses of tiny fluffy chicks with reddish-gray bills and a glimpse of white somewhere below the topside: I thought it was the belly. They were clambering over last year's fallen reed stems. (This year's are only starting to grow.) They seemed a bit strange for ducklings. Soon the mystery began to be solved, for I heard the mush-mouthed call of a Virginia Rail about 30 ft away from where I'd seen the 2 or 3 chicks. To confuse the issue, I later heard a Sora. Colin Harrison's book on eggs and nestlings solved the problem that evening, though. Only Virginia Rail chicks have reddish beaks and an occasional bit of white under the wing. The bird which showed white must have flapped its tiny wing to maintain balance. I was surprised that both Sora and Virginia chicks were black. It's very good camouflage, though, for when I was trying to see them again after my first glimpse, I was forever focusing my binoculars on a tiny patch of blackish-blue open water.

We ate a picnic lunch by the lake. Just before we were ready to eat, Jim suddenly set off galumphing through the rose thicket. He'd seen another snake and was trying to catch it. After the first foray, he set his camera down and tried again. It seemed a lost cause, so he gave up and clambered out. There was the snake, right in the open on the drive. So he snatched it with the aid of a stick (not forked). The thing immediately coiled its tail around his hand and deposited the worst-smelling excrement on him. We did our best to get it off with moistened towelettes and water, but I've vowed that we're carrying soap with us from now on if he won't leave snakes alone. Anyway, I took its picture as he held it. We later confirmed our preliminary ID--Valley Common Garter Snake.

Saturday we remained here in the camp. Jim photographed hummers, sapsuckers, Spotted Sandpipers. I planned, at least tentatively, the rest of our trip, so we won't find ourselves still in British Columbia when we ought to be home. It was an overcast day, and we even had a short, but respectable, bit of rain.

We hadn't seen "Scooter," which is what we now call the little lone Barrow's Goldeneye chick, since our first day, and I was worried about the little mite. Late that afternoon a bunch of people had paraded all over the gravel bar and sent him *really* scooting. But last evening we saw him (or her) again, and he's there now. It's amazing that a chick so young can succeed on its own. We talked to some local birders today, and one man said he had seen goldeneye chicks by themselves.

The local newspaper announced a bird walk every Sunday from 7:00 - 9:00 a.m. We decided to go. There were about ten people, mostly local folks who get together every weekend. No one in particular was the leader, and most of them confidently misidentified the birds. Only one person seemed really competent. Anyway, we went to a couple of nice places nearby:

Twin Lakes had Black Swifts soaring overhead. I was terribly curious about where they might be nesting, but no one knew, nor had they apparently ever wondered. They did know they were Black Swifts. (I had thought they were Vaux's Swifts at first.)

Patterson Lake had a little deciduous glade at one end--with many nice, but not earthshaking species.

The group quit about 9:00 to go back into Winthrop for breakfast, as is their custom. Since we'd eaten before we arrived, we took the suggestion of one man and drove back via Elbow Coulee Rd. We had planned to leave here today, but the habitat along the road was so rich, it was 2:00 when we got back. One place had a 1/3-mile-long swale (meadow overgrown with willows and trees) with beaver channels. Jim photographed Tree Swallows at their nests. I found Dusky Flycatchers and Nashville Warblers in perfect nesting habitat, but couldn't find the nests. In fact, the birds themselves were hard to keep track of. Neither species would pose for a picture. Wind was strong, so recording was poor, but as a day of birding in a beautiful setting, it was very nice.

We ate a late lunch/early dinner in Winthrop--BBQ spare ribs cooked on an outdoor smoker. They had a wonderful flavor, but unfortunately had been cooked until they were all dried up and hard.

Total number of species at River Bend RV Park: 34. Not bad!

### Manning Provincial Park RV Park, BC

Thurs. a.m., June 25, 1987

We left the Twisp/Winthrop area Monday morning and drove west on SR-20 across the North Cascades. We hadn't gone very far before we encountered clouds and intermittent rain. This obscured some, but not all, of the beautiful mountain scenery, so we moved along fairly fast, with only an occasional brief photo stop for scenery. There is a new North Cascades National Park in the area, but it looks like the only access is to the edges by gravel road and on foot to its heart. The highway mostly goes through Ross Lake National Recreation area--another long string bean of a lake which buried a river course. Seattle Light ("Your Seattle Light" on their trucks) is obviously very sensitive about criticism from environmentalists. They take every chance they can on signboards at viewpoints to point out how little impact their project has had on the environment. I still wonder what the river looked like before it was dammed.

In Newhalem, the Seattle Light company town, from which the project is run, we took a couple of nature trails. The first was through the woods, where a few trees and plants were discussed on the signs. The other was an old rock garden, which an earlier man (possibly a company manager, I forget) had planted. The trail went up to an interesting waterfall, which had carved a convoluted path through the rocks. The rock garden was fairly nice, but doesn't seem to be getting the TLC it should; or perhaps it's early in the season. It was merely intermittent light drizzle while we took these walks. Rain has certainly not been a hindrance on this trip.

Since we passed through the mountains faster than I thought we might, we went all the way to British Columbia that day, stopping in Sedro Woolley for mail and Canadian money.

The only bank in Sedro Woolley which handled Canadian money closed at 3:00, except for the automated drive-up window, and we arrived at 3:30. I walked up to the door to check their hours and see if they were open. (Some banks stay open till 4:00.) As I turned back, a clerk, who had seen our trailer, came bursting out the door and called to me to come inside. She said she knew we couldn't use the drive-up window. So in I went and she found a teller who hadn't closed her books yet and could give me the cash I needed. I can't imagine a California bank doing that. This was a branch of Seattle First Bank--a pretty large bank, too, probably the largest in Sedro Woolley.

From there we drove north on SR-9, avoiding I-5 and saving a few miles, if not minutes. It was

a narrow winding road through idyllic green farms. They looked prosperous--nice houses, few for-sale signs, big barns and silos.

We crossed into Canada with only a minor hitch; Jim had to mail his .22 target pistol home, but a (retired?) policeman in the Washington border town had a little business going of doing it for \$15.00

The "Abbotsford and District RV Park" (funny name, might have been local government-run) was perched in a wooded setting high above the valley through which the Trans-Canada Hwy (freeway here) runs. We could see the lovely valley through our bedroom windows as the last light of evening illuminated it. No new birds there. Several folks had hummer feeders, but we saw no customers. Ours drew none either. The Robins just walked right across the Magic Meal that Jim put on the log beside the trailer. They were getting worms with ease.

Tuesday we drove east to Manning Provincial Park, stopping in Hope for groceries. I finally found some nice cherries, even though I had to pick out the ripe ones from the lug boxes one by one.

Dumb luck was really with us at Manning Park. The books all said the campgrounds had no hook-ups, so we were prepared for that. Besides, we had no map of the park, and it's huge. The main highway runs through the middle of it, and we had no idea where along the road the headquarters was. Finally we saw the lodge-restaurant-grocery store sign, and thinking it was headquarters, we pulled into the lot. Signs all over said, "No Overnight RV Parking. Register in Lodge for RV Park." Not knowing it wasn't the park lodge, I sent Jim in to register. He came out with a site with EW and said the clerk was amazed that he wanted to be in the RV park.

We were sent across the highway and past the employee housing on a service road to an almost abandoned area. There were eight sites--two of them unusable because of squirrel mounds. The sites were gravel being taken over by plants, but big and flat. No one else has been here, and even the animals and birds are totally wild. Only today, our second morning here, are they beginning to creep warily out of the woods while we're here. (Yesterday while we were gone, the Red Squirrels cleaned up the birdseed and Magic Meal.) This morning Jim had to try three other sites before he found one where the water faucet was not buried by squirrel digs. (He wanted to wash the truck.)

So we really lucked out when we parked here. They even have cable TV hook-ups, though our site is non-functional. There are no rest rooms, and Jim has to go to the lodge a mile away for a shower. He hates the tiny trailer one. There are remnants of landscaping even--rock rings around the trees, a clump of domestic iris. (Canadians don't have any hesitancy about landscaping their rural parks with introduced plants.)

Funny! Why did they build this little RV park? Why did they abandon it? If they abandoned it, why are they still renting sites? If they're still renting sites, why don't they publicize the eight sites and keep them up? Anyway, we're thoroughly enjoying the solitude for a change.

After we registered and had lunch, we went over to the Visitors Center--one km farther east along the highway and as it turned out when we got there, only about 200 yd from our trailer, but the road was blocked preventing direct vehicular access. We wanted a map of the park and got that plus a bunch of excellent regional maps of British Columbia, which showed all the parks in detail.

In the headquarters building we ran into a group of birders whom we had chatted with along the highway earlier. They told us of a Three-toed Woodpecker nesting in a tree beside the shower building in the Lightning Lake Campground. The nest was only ten ft high, and the birds were extremely unconcerned in their comings and goings. It was a cinch to photograph both parents. I recorded the chicks, who called constantly, even when the parents had been gone 10 or 15 min. What a treat. It's only the second time I've ever seen that bird. The first was in Colorado in 1976. For Jim it was a "lifer"--and it really counted because he got a picture of it. (He only counts birds he gets pictures of.)

The Lightning Lake Campground was 2/3 full and no sites had any lake view, just woods as we have. So we're doubly happy about our site. An added bonus is fewer mosquitos here. In fact, they're very few, and big enough to see, for a change.

Yesterday we took the nine-mile road which goes up to a sub-alpine meadow ("sub-" means "a

few trees"). Part way up was a look-out point over the range of North Cascades. Our day was crystal clear and totally cloud-free, so we could see all the mountains, which still have large snow patches. Manning Park is the north end of the Cascade Mountains, which started at Mt. Lassen in Calif.

No sooner had we halted our truck than up ran Townsend's Chipmunks and Golden-mantled Ground Squirrels. As soon as Jim could break out the peanuts and sunflower seeds, they were all over him. With Clark's Nutcrackers descending from the trees, he was in his element. All tails were duly fondled.

A little farther up the road, we found a colony of Yellow-bellied Marmots in a rocky road-cut. While Jim was photographing them, I wandered off and soon heard a very low-pitched series of five notes all on one pitch. I immediately thought "grouse" and when I looked it up, decided they were probably Spruce (Franklin's) Grouse.

So I set out to find one and record it. That was not easy! Their direction and distance were both very hard to decide. Here my microphone didn't work very well, for it's not nearly as directional for low frequencies as it is for high. (That's why airplanes are such a problem.) I'd point high in the trees, in the shrubby undergrowth, left, right. It was hard to tell any difference in volume or needle deflection on the VU-meter. I finally decided my ear was a better detector. The call was so soft that I'd think they were far ahead of me and walk a ways, only to find one calling from where I came from. The problem was compounded by the presence of a sizeable number of the birds. First one would call several five-note sequences and subside, then another. Finally, after much clambering over steep rocky slopes, I narrowed a bird down to the tree right above where I was standing. Of course, it was a 40-ft-high spruce (?) tree! I got a fairly good recording, for there was little wind. Audubon's Warblers were the only competing birds.

Then I decided to try to see it, so I clambered up the slope a bit to get a view of the tree. It was against the sun unfortunately, but I finally decided I was seeing a bit of breast and an undertail tip. When I maneuvered around to get a better vantage point, it was nowhere in view where it had been before. I decided it had moved out of sight deliberately.

After that, I went back for my scope. I thought if I stood farther away, it might not be so shy. Even with the scope, it wasn't easy to find the mottled dark gray bird in the thick tree-top shade. But I finally located the smooth breast. Just then Jim slammed the door of the truck. Up popped a red eyebrow! I finally had my look at the bird's head and upper breast. The bird finally relaxed and started calling again. Jim came out and looked at it, too, but photography would have been impossible.

On up the road we went. Just before reaching the top, we found another marmot colony. These weren't as yellow as the others. A glance at the mammal guide told us these were Hoary Marmots--two species on the same road, different altitudes.

I took a 1+ hour nature walk through the meadow with the ranger. Lots of early wildflowers were in bloom: Spreading Phlox, Fleabane (a large dandelion), Western Pasqueflower (Anemone), Alpine Lupine, Cinquefoil, Pussytoes (apt name), Spring Beauty, and most beautiful of all, large patches of yellow Glacier Lilies.

Jim remained behind and tried to photograph Mountain Bluebirds, which were nesting in the interpretive sign board. Moderate success only, he reported.

After I got back, I made him come with me and photograph a few of the loveliest flowers--especially Anemone and Glacier Lily.

Later same day.

This morning we took a walk along Strawberry Flats, but didn't go too far, because the day warmed up. Besides, there weren't many birds. We decided to check out the picnic grounds by the lake.

Here we sit right now. It's pretty and grassy--and cool under the trees. Jim is content, having photographed and fondled the Columbian Ground-Squirrels. After a nap, he'll try harder for the Red



Squirrels, which seem more nervous.

## Tete Jaune Cache, BC

Early morning, Mon., June 29, 1987

Campgrounds as we move farther north seem to be getting more and more primitive. Friday night we stayed in the Overlanders RV Park near Little Fort. The place had full hook-ups, but like everywhere up here, only 15 amp. But more strange was the haphazard layout and plumbing in the campground. We couldn't figure where we were supposed to park for our site number. The electric outlet was in a little box and the plug holes were sideways and so close to the wall that I had an awful time plugging in. I finally used the outlet for the site next to ours, which was unoccupied. The water was on the opposite side of the trailer from the other two hook-ups. Most places they're all together. Jim said the shower was equally strange. They did have a laundry with one washer and one dryer, which was why we stopped there. They were old, but worked fine.

Saturday night we stayed in Spahats Creek Provincial Park--a lovely spot without hookups. Nice widely spaced large sites which put some, but not all, California state parks to shame.

Last night took the prize for frontier makeshift. The sewer hole is a good six inches higher than our holding tank!

We're located among the most beautiful snow-capped mountains you could ask for--between 2 ranges. But the outlook I see right now consists of a bright orange skip-loader in the foreground, surrounded by 5 other smaller vehicles in various stages of decay. In between these gems is the woodpile, partly stacked, partly not. Behind that are various grayed pieces of old wood, coils of rusty wire, plastic covered this-and-that, sheds, the satellite TV dish, etc. The water hookup is a long piece of garden hose with tiny faucet-like connectors. It emerges from under the woodpile, having started from over by the people's house. The electricity is from an almost-as-long extension cord from a box this side of the woodpile. I guess there's so much natural beauty ("Supernatural," the BC tourist department says) up here that a little clutter couldn't possibly matter.

We took a drive out a back road last evening and found quite a few homes along the way. Without exception, they were surrounded by the same array of "treasures" as this place is. Jim said they've kept it all because they intend to fix it "someday."

Friday we drove from Manning Park up through some beautiful mountains and farmland, some lush and green, some as dry and sagebrush-covered as Wyoming or northern Arizona. We passed lots of lakes and ponds with a few waterfowl on them. One place, we could hear loons calling out in the middle of the lake.

One pond--not over 200 yards in diameter--was absolutely loaded with birds: Pied-billed Grebe, Coot, Ruddy Duck, Bufflehead, Lesser Scaup, Blue-winged and Cinnamon Teal, Mallard, Red-winged and Yellow-headed Blackbird, Marsh Wren. Most ponds would have only one or two pairs. Why this was loaded is an interesting question. The edges were surrounded by reeds with lots of nice channels, so that's probably the reason.

The campground at Little Fort had a piece of deciduous forest in the back, and we spent a couple of hours there the next morning. I recorded my first Least Flycatcher. Also common were Lazuli Bunting, Dusky Flycatcher, Red-naped Sapsucker, plus several others. We couldn't get anything to perch for pictures. They either ignored the playback or went into the "fly-by's."

Saturday we drove just a few miles up the road to Spahats Creek Provincial Park, a small park along the short spur road to Wells-Gray Provincial Park, a huge piece of land. Jim had had the area recommended by a man a few days earlier, because of its waterfalls.

Sunday morning we toured Wells-Gray Provincial Park. Dawson Falls was the first one we saw. It's a no-nonsense waterfall: Here's the river--the Myrtle. Here's the cliff. Over it goes in one smooth drop--wide (91 m), but not too high (18 m). Impressive, but not the most beautiful I've seen.

It was a hot day, so we wondered whether it was worth the effort to go see Helmcken Falls. What a difference. This one was a few miles farther down the same river. Here the drop was 137

meters. It came out of a river-cut groove in the basalt which was about 50 m high. It plunged into a pool at the bottom, raising spray almost half-way back up again. The gorge below the falls was absolutely vertical, and the layers of lava were clearly distinguishable. This was a truly impressive sight.

Spahats Creek, where we camped, also flowed over a sheer cliff. This fall was also lovely, a somewhat smaller version of Helmcken.

Yesterday we drove about 150 miles, the rest of the way up the valley of the North Thompson River. The scenery became more and more beautiful the higher we climbed: beautiful gentle glacier-cut valley full of green trees, surrounded by high peaks covered with snow and the remnants of the glaciers. We ate lunch in Blue River, where Mother and I spent the night at the Sandman Motel on a trip a few years ago.

Jim has been dying to see a moose. I told him late evening or early morning are better than mid-day, so he had the camp owner recommend a back road. After dinner last evening we drove by what looked like good moose habitat in marshland near the Fraser River, but no moose. We did see our first bear on the trip, skedaddling across the road. A mother Common Goldeneye was just settling her seven offspring for the night on a log fallen across the water. We disturbed her, and she took them back into the water. However, when we drove back almost at dark, we saw they had settled down again in the same spot--all huddled together in a line. Two rabbits and a vole or shrew completed the wildlife list. No moose.

#### Jasper NP, AB

Wed. afternoon, July 1, 1987

This week is one long weekend here in Canada, because their Canada Day, much like our July 4, comes on Wednesday. We wondered if we'd have trouble getting a campsite here in Jasper National Park, but we didn't. All the hookups were taken, of course, but they had very few to begin with.

Monday we drove the 65 miles across from Tete Jaune Cache to Jasper. Spent the afternoon shopping and getting the truck's oil changed and tires rotated. It was a hot, muggy day with high thin clouds. Yesterday it cooled off quite a bit, but today is warm again (87° a few minutes ago). Fortunately there are thunderheads building up over the mountains to the west and drifting over. I doubt they'll produce any rain, though.

Yesterday morning dawned overcast, but turned into a lovely clearing-up day with those puffy clouds Jim so loves in his pictures.

We drove that morning down the spur road past Medicine Lake to the north end of Maligne Lake. Medicine lake is only full of water in the spring, because it drains out underneath faster than it can fill the rest of the year. The Indians feared Bad Medicine (black magic) was robbing it of its water, hence the name. It was about half full when we saw it--a beautiful long, narrow body.

We did some wandering on the trails near the head of Maligne Lake, but nothing special appeared.

After a mediocre lunch at a Jasper restaurant, we set off south of Jasper on the old Icefields Highway, then took the spur road up to the base of Mt. Edith Cavell. The mountain was named for a Canadian World War I nurse who refused to leave her patients when the Germans captured her hospital. They captured her and executed her two months later.

At the base of the mountain is a one-mile trail across the moraine of a recently receded glacier to the lake at the foot of its present position. It was a pleasant walk, and we learned a lot from the interpretive signs.

After dinner, around 9:00, Jim said, "Let's go moose hunting." He'd been talking all day about it, but I thought he was kidding. (After all, 9:00 is his usual bedtime!) We had seen some promising moose habitat along the road from Tete Jaune Cache the day before. He thought it was only about 20 miles back, but it turned out to be 40. But we found the moose--two cows feeding on willow in a

marshy meadow not too far from the road. The sun, which doesn't set until after 10:00 here, was still shining on them. Jim was really happy. [The slides are one of the highlights of our "Shaped By Fire and Ice" show.]

As a bonus, on the way back we encountered a group of 4 or 5 elk males with their antlers in beautiful velvet. I drove toward them carefully while Jim took a few pictures. They continued grazing, so he cautiously got out so as not to spook them. They continued grazing. So he walked up closer. They continued grazing! He finally had to resort to imitating their snuffling noises to get them to raise their heads, even briefly, for a picture. By then it was pretty dark, the sun having set some time ago, but he was using fast film (ASA 1600). The main problem was not being able to see through the view finder to focus. [The slides were in focus, but the horribly grainy 1600 film made them unusable. The film was an experiment, and he's never used it since.] At breakfast this morning he said all he needed was some elk in the sunshine.

What did we find as we drove from the campground into Jasper, but a herd of 30 or 40 cows and calves (elk) feeding calmly beside the road, with tourists wandering all over photographing them. His wish was granted. He shot them from every angle and distance, including some nice ones of them partly back in the woods, instead of milling around with the tourists.

After that, we drove a bit farther down the Icefields Highway that we took yesterday, found a dirt road that said, "Moab Lake, 7.5 km," and took it so as to get away from the people who stick to the paved main highway. At the end of the road was a short trail through the woods to the lake. Very few people, so our wish was granted. A Pine Siskin finally sat still for a photo. Jim's been stalking that bird ever since he had his camera set wrong (or not feeding film, I forget which) at Mt. Shasta. This time everything went well.

After a late lunch in the trailer, we decided to rest in the afternoon, for it was hot and we had had a long day yesterday.

#### Lake Louise, Banff NP, AB

10:00 a.m., Sun., July 5, 1987

The rain has finally caught us--after two months. It rained off and on all day yesterday, partially cleared around 7:00 p.m., and started again before dawn today. We went to the laundry yesterday morning, sat around the trailer all afternoon, then took a walk along the river which flows by the camp in the evening. This morning we're sitting around again.

The laundry--in the village of Lake Louise--was an unsatisfactory experience. It was the most expensive we've encountered (\$1.25/wash). Worst of all, their hot water was not functioning and they didn't have the decency to post a note to that effect on the window. Here they were, collecting money hand-over-fist from all comers, most of whom didn't even know they were getting a cold wash. I wouldn't have discovered it if I hadn't lifted the lid to rinse my measuring cup. If I had known they had no hot water, I might not have washed at all, and I certainly wouldn't have added powdered bleach, which caked up terribly. Anyway, I complained firmly to the management and told them I wanted my money back--\$5.00 for 4 machines, for I had washed the throw rugs, too. This I got without too much back-talk. I noticed they continued to fleece the unsuspecting--no note on the window.

All the stores in Jasper and Banff are high-priced and poor quality. I'm glad the U.S. government keeps track of concessioners in its national parks. Here in Canada the service communities in their parks seem to be little islands of nearly monopolistic free enterprise.

On Thursday we left Jasper and drove south along the Icefields Parkway to the Columbia Glacier area, stopping at all the viewpoints along the way. It was a beautiful day, cooler than it had been and with a few clouds here and there.

After leaving our trailer in a campsite at the Wilcox Creek Campground, we visited all the view sites in the vicinity and took the requisite walk up to the toe of the Athabasca Glacier.

Friday dawned cold and cloudy, much to our surprise, for the forecast had been for more of the same. The mountaintops were in the clouds, but fortunately we could see most of their lower slopes.

Again we drove south, stopping occasionally for the short walks to the viewpoints.

[Note added from memory as I type this in 1993: I don't know why I didn't include the following anecdote in the log at the time, but I've told the following story so many times over the years that I still remember it:

At one of the viewpoints there was a platform which extended out over a beautiful glacial lake. It was one of the stops on all of the bus tours. We had the "fortune" to be there at the same time as a group of Japanese tourists and a group of Canadian teenagers were there. Jim managed to thread his way through the crowd to the edge and take some of the most beautiful pictures we have in our show. Everyone else, especially the Japanese, was busy taking pictures of each other. Usually the photographer stood with his back to the scene and took pictures of his companions with the crowd of other people in the background.]

We arrived in Lake Louise shortly after noon and got a campsite with electricity. (No other hookups exist here.) By then it had started to sprinkle, so we sat around all afternoon.

I'm glad I built a few "extra days" into our schedule for the rest of our trip. We seem to be spending a couple of them waiting out the rain.

### Black Diamond City Park, AB

Tues., July 7,

It rained most of the rest of the day Sunday, so again we sat around in the trailer. I got caught up listening to my tapes [I don't listen to them on the road any more, for I've discovered I can't evaluate them properly there.], and Jim wore out his hand playing Ms PacMan on his Atari.

Late in the afternoon the clouds lifted a bit, so we drove up to Lake Louise, always a lovely sight. They have one wing of the hotel, Chateau Lake Louise, all covered with scaffolding--evidently giving the old girl a face lift. It is an elegant hotel, and I'm glad Mother and I stayed there once, but there's nothing better than the way we're traveling now--in our trailer. Even in an awful campground, we can always be sure of a clean, comfortable place to eat and sleep--and most camps we've been in have been quite nice.

After dinner that evening the rain was still in remission, so we decided to drive to Moraine Lake, about ten miles away. As we were driving along the road, we came upon a small car stuck in a ditch beside the road. Since a full-size pick-up truck seemed to be aiding the kids in the car, we didn't stop. But when we came back down later, they were still there, so we stopped. Jim had tossed a heavy chain in our truck before we left home "just in case." We lent it to them, and the pick-up truck had them out of the ditch in no time. They said no gas station in Lake Louise would lend them one. I don't know how they got in the ditch, but judging by their age, they were probably driving too fast. They were very nice kids and extremely appreciative of our help.

Moraine Lake was a thrill. The clouds were hanging here and there on the mountain tops, making this lake, which we both decided was even more beautiful than Lake Louise, look almost other-worldly. Jagged peaks rise steeply from the teal-blue glacier-fed waters. Of course, Jim took lots of pictures.

It was so pretty that we went back the next day and he took some more. On the way up there we almost ran over a Spruce Grouse crossing the road. I braked suddenly and, even though his motor drive chose that moment to fail to work, Jim managed to fire off a few shots before it disappeared up the hill.

After our jaunt back to Moraine Lake, we hooked up the trailer and spent the rest of Monday driving, banking, and grocery shopping. I had thought we would stay in the town of Banff, but we were both tired of full, oversized campgrounds and trails full of people, so we decided to leave the park.

We ended up in a city park campground in Black Diamond, a small town about 35 miles southwest of Calgary. It's by a river on the edge of town. The camp itself is adequate, but nothing special. The part we like is the riparian woodland which abuts the developed camp. We spent all morning birding the woods, each going our separate ways. I found a female Yellow Warbler chipping

frantically, so I was pretty sure she had a nest nearby. I played "warmer-colder" with her, hoping to discover it. She even went into a warbler version of a broken wing act, spreading her tail, folding one wing while letting the other dangle, and tumbling through the bush. I simply couldn't find the nest, though, so I backed off, hoping she would resume her feeding-young chores. I soon found out what she was doing, for I caught a glimpse of a large broad-billed chick perched on a limb. It was a baby cowbird! I fetched Jim, and he tried to get a picture of her feeding it, but she just chirped agitatedly. He gave up after about 1/2 hour. He did get some pictures of the half-downy tail-less cowbird chick, though.

This afternoon we took a drive through the beautiful Alberta farmland here in the foothills of the Rockies. I was hoping Jim could photograph a Swainson's Hawk. We had seen several on our drive out here yesterday, but he couldn't stop then on the narrow shoulder-less two-lane road, especially with the trailer. Our hopes were rewarded. On a power pole we found a rather tame one, which even let Jim get out of the truck to photograph it. After a bit of that nonsense, it started screaming--and flew to the very next power pole. I got out my tape recorder, then drove to the next pole, recorded it out the window as it flew off from there. This time it lit on the ground in the middle of a field. Jim wanted to try a different camera setting--to be sure. That will have to wait until another day and another hawk, for the thunder storms which we'd been seeing all around us decided to open up. We left that area and headed toward the hills, which the storm had already passed. [The slides came out poorly. Jim said the day had been too dark, making for fuzzy long-exposure photos.]

As we drove up into the hills, the fields gradually became smaller and the woodlots larger. It's absolutely gorgeous country--especially with puffy black-and-white clouds and a storm or two off in the distance.

Next to one woodlot, I had to brake suddenly. I almost ran over an extremely tame grouse. Jim was convinced that I had, but when he peered out the window, there it was in his view-finder, ready to be photographed. It then trotted across the road and flew up into a close tree--and started calling! I recorded the sound, which resembled a baritone chicken more than anything else. The silly bird could be easily seen, though not in its entirety, right there in the tree. It flew around a bit, finally perching out in the open for pictures. Most of this time I stayed in the truck, recording out the window, so as not to scare it. So it took quite a while for me to see it well enough to identify. It was a Ruffed Grouse. The tail band was the final clincher. The NG Guide wasn't very helpful. It only shows puffed-up displaying birds--and not from underneath. I've had trouble using it with all three grouse (2 Spruce and 1 Ruffed) we've encountered. Voices aren't too helpful either. It only describes the courtship drumming.

I just looked up the bird in the *Master Guide*. It had a photo of the gray form, which clinched my ID. The black collar, shown in NG, is apparently usually hidden. That was my only question, for I hadn't seen it. The voice was described as "assorted clucks, hisses, seldom heard." The bird we found called nearly all the while we were there, a good 15-30 min. We wondered if it was a distraction display, but really don't have any way of knowing. MG compared some sounds to a Red Squirrel. Jim and I had a disagreement over whether there was one bird plus a squirrel--or two birds. I thought the former, he the latter. Later I went over and recorded a Red Squirrel as I watched it. I'll have to listen carefully to the earlier part of my tape to determine if it sounds exactly like the known Red Squirrel. [Still haven't done it.]

Johnson's Camp, St. Mary, MT.

Wed., July 15, 1987.

A week has passed since I last wrote--a week of mostly spinning our wheels, except for the truck wheels!

On Wed, July 8, we drove all day to get from Black Diamond to St. Mary, Montana. Customs was a cinch; no problem with the huge bag of BC cherries I'd bought to use up our Canadian cash.

St. Mary is located on the east end of the famous Going-to-the-Sun Road through Glacier

National Park. We are perched on a high hill looking out over two lakes and up into the Rockies. It's a marvelous view. The campground is again one of the rough-'n'-ready type--rough roads, strangely located hook-ups, high sewer openings, etc. But after rejecting the first site we were offered, we ended up in a lovely one with a fabulous view.

After we unhooked, we drove up the Many Glacier spur road to the end. Grizzly Bears had been seen there recently, and tourists were examining the hillside above the parking lot at the end of the road, but nothing could be found. So after an hour, we came back.

Thursday we spent right here in the campground, for we had discovered that the tent camping section behind the trailers was a woodland wonderland. It's mostly aspens, plus lots of shrubby undergrowth. We found two Red-breasted Sapsucker nests. One of the females looked like a Red-breasted/Yellow-bellied intergrade--or is the term "hybrid" now? I think they're officially split. [They certainly are now, so "hybrid" is the correct term.] Unfortunately that is the only one of the four parents Jim hasn't gotten good pictures of. We also found a Mountain Bluebird nest plus two Tree Swallow nests. One of the latter was only a few feet below one of the Sapsuckers', probably in last year's cavity. Those fearless Tree Swallows spend long periods of time sitting with their heads peering out of the hole, even while Jim is standing with his camera only a few feet away.

We had planned to drive up into the park Friday, but it rained constantly all day. The temperature was round 42°. It tapered off in the evening, so we took a walk down into the tent section again. I saw and recorded a Veery, only the second one I've ever seen. [Jim never saw it.]

Saturday dawned cloudless and briskly cool. So we went off on our postponed trip over the Going-to-the-Sun Road. It goes up into the sub-alpine meadow, and there is a lovely trail (about a mile each way) that leads from the Logan Pass Visitors Center up to a viewpoint overlooking Hidden Lake. It's a fairly steep hike, but good boardwalk and steps. It passes through a wonderland of alpine wildflowers, plus occasional patches of stunted conifers (Krumholtz is the term, meaning "twisted wood" in German.). Rosy Finches (Gray-crowned) were foraging along the edges of the rapidly melting snowbanks. They were tame enough for photos. We met people who had seen Ptarmigans, but they had disappeared by the time we got up to where they had been seen. The most interesting sight, though was a flock of Mountain Goats at the end of the trail. Talk about tame! Jim claims they were trained and placed there by Kodak. I didn't realize those animals were ever that tame. They wandered around among the many tourists, as if the people were just so many trees.

It was 12:30 when we finished our hike. We continued on over the road down the west side of the continental divide. This narrow road, perched on a ledge blasted out of a nearly vertical cliff, was completed in 1932 and has been little changed since then. The stretch west of Logan Pass is called the Garden Wall and for good reason. The roadsides and every soil-filled crevice in the rocky walls were abloom with wildflowers--reds, yellows, purples, blues, pinks, etc. What a sight!

We had a very good lunch at McDonald Lake Lodge's coffee shop around 2:30 p.m.. I had a delicious "taco" made on Indian frybread laid flat like a tostada and stacked high with meat, cheese, lettuce, tomato, salsa, sour cream. What a surprise in Montana. For dessert we had ice-cream cones made in cones which were baked to order on a special waffle iron, then wrapped around a wooden cone form to cool and harden. They were good, too.

After a brief nap in the truck beside Lake McDonald, we set off to retrace our course across the mtns. to St. Mary. (No trailers are permitted on the road if truck plus trailer exceeds 30 ft.) We had barely turned around when Jim spied a doe grazing on a patch of grass. I stopped and backed up--and that's where our troubles started!

A terrible grinding noise occurred when I tried to back up. I thought I'd hit something, but no, it was our transmission. The truck did go forward, so I drove forward and turned around. Then it quit entirely. The engine ran, but it wouldn't turn the wheels. We were stuck! Fortunately we were only about 1/4 mile from the Lake McDonald Lodge, so Jim went back and called AAA for a tow truck.

It took it 1½ hours to get there from Columbia Falls (about 45 minutes away). It arrived about 6:30 p.m. and towed us to the nearest Chevy agency, which was in Whitefish. By the time we got there it was close to 8:00 p.m. and on a Saturday night! We thought we'd rent a car and drive back to

St. Mary, then return Mon. a.m. We called 6 rental agencies. Some had no cars, some didn't answer, and two had a tape saying call back at 10:00 p.m. They apparently opened up for arriving flights at the Kalispell airport. So we twiddled our thumbs until 10:00, sitting in the truck behind the Chevy agency in downtown Whitefish. All that was open there was the railway depot, the run-down "New Cadillac Hotel," plus lots of nice saloons.

At 10:00 Jim called the rental agencies in the airport, and they had no cars either.

So we started calling motels. That proved to be a lost cause, too. We were stuck! There was nothing to do but sleep in the truck. We stacked everything to the ceiling in the front seat and on the cabinet in the back, folded down the back seat and stretched out the best we could on the floor. We had a couple of very thin camp pads--rather stiff from old age--plus a thin sun couch pad. Covers consisted only of jackets and sweaters, plus plastic raincoats, tarps, ragged sheets used for picnics, etc. The temperature got pretty cold--into the low 40's, I'd guess, but we survived, stiff and groggy. Next morning we tried calling car rental agencies again. The message had become, "Call around noon. Maybe we'll have a cancelation."

The day was turning into a repeat of the night before. We didn't like the idea of another night in that truck one bit, so decided to seek a motel instead. We wanted to be there at 8:00 the next morning to talk to the Chevy service department anyway. Fortunately we were able to get a nice room in a motel that advertised free pick-up service to and from airport or train station. They were very helpful and even lent Jim their pick-up truck to drive down to the Chevy dealer the next morning and took him to Kalispell to get the car we rented that day.

After the service garage looked at the transmission, they said it required a part which they didn't have, so we decided to rent a car, if possible, and return to our trailer until the part came in. The prices of rentals at the top-rate agencies shocked us, so we decided to check Rent-a-Wreck and Ugly Duckling. We ended up with an AMC Eagle, which wasn't bad at all. The AC didn't work, and it was missing a sun visor, but it ran fine. Our main complaint was that its second gear wasn't perceptibly lower than drive, and first gear was too low. We needed a good second gear for that Glacier NP road. But that complaint would have applied even if we'd had a nice new one. Ours had 48,000 miles. I'd patronize Ugly Duckling again. So Monday afternoon we packed all our gear in the Eagle and drove back to St. Mary and our trailer.

Yesterday (Tuesday) morning we decided to drive back up to Logan Pass and try again to find the White-tailed Ptarmigan. I also thought that if we went early I might be able to record Rosy Finches before very many hikers were on the trail. Neither worked out very well. We saw no Ptarmigan, the Rosy Finches called very seldom and then not at close range. And the wind blew. By afternoon it was a hot gale. We probably should have closed up and turned on the A/C in the trailer, but we thought it might cool off. It didn't and was warm all night.

The part came in yesterday, and the truck was ready when Jim called early this morning. So we went over after it. It took all day to drive over through the park, return the Eagle to Kalispell, then come back around the south edge of the park for variety. The latter is a faster, but longer route.

The wind is still blowing, but it's cooler and not quite so strong. Tomorrow morning, we're going to try to get pictures of the Veery and that last female Sapsucker here in the campground, then set off for points south. [We failed on both.]

Our troubles were a nuisance, but could have been worse: If we'd been on this side of the mountain, a Chevy dealer would have been even farther away. Jim only had to walk 1/4 mile to phone for a tow truck, and luckily we weren't towing the trailer when we broke down. Glacier NP and our lovely campsite overlooking it are pretty nice places to get stuck for a few extra days. [Later: All our repair expenses, including towing, were covered by the warranty on the truck, although it took some months to get reimbursed by GM for the \$90.00 towing bill. Also, if it had happened a few years later, our old Sea and Sage Audubon friends, Ferne and Marty Cohen, would already have moved to Whitefish from Orange County and would have been happy to put us up for a night or two.]

Fishing Bridge Campground, Yellowstone NP

Mon., July 20, 1987

We left St. Mary about 11:00 last Thurs. and drove south to Augusta, Montana. It was rather pleasant to be in the plains for a while, even though they were more rolling than they are farther east. Vast wheat fields, some golden, some green, were everywhere. Augusta lies about 20-30 miles from the Rockies, so we could see them off in the distance from the open campground where we spent the night.

The major attraction in Augusta was a mule in the field behind the camp, who just about broke us up with every utterance. His ears provided gestures to go with each raucous syllable.

The weather clouded up late that afternoon and by morning there was a steady rain. In fact, we drove nearly all day Friday in the rain, settling in the Paradise (who named it that?) Campground in Gardiner, Montana. The town is just outside the north entrance to Yellowstone and is only five miles from Mammoth Hot Springs.

In the evening the rain stopped briefly, so we drove to Mammoth (1000 ft higher) for about an hour. We didn't have much time, for it soon got dark, both from nightfall and from clouds, and then started to drizzle.

On the upper terrace drive, just at dusk, we were treated to a herd of elk appearing, then disappearing in the murk, like so many ghostly beings. They were beautiful. Also heard Common Nighthawks and a Great Horned Owl, but they both ceased calling by the time I got my tape recorder out and waited for some noisy people to leave the area.

Saturday morning dawned partly cloudy, so we were hopeful we could do some sightseeing. We went back to Mammoth, and Jim photographed the terraces in the area. He had to wait out lots of clouds, so he could get them in the sun, but conditions were not impossible, even though the sky was "boring," to quote an 8-year-old girl who was directing her younger brother how to take a picture, "Get the red part and the yellow part [the terraces], then as much below as you can fit in. Don't get the sky; it's too boring."

We left Mammoth and drove south toward the Norris Geyser Basin. Along the way the sky opened up in torrents. So we pulled over in a turn-out and ate our lunch. By the time we were through eating, the rain had stopped and didn't start again until around 5:30. We enjoyed the walks in the area and watched the Echinus Geyser erupt. In fact, I got a thorough dousing with hot water! Clouds were too heavy for outstanding photos, but of course Jim had to keep trying.

Sunday we towed the trailer via Tower Junction to Yellowstone Lake and got a campsite at Fishing Bridge Campground. The hook-ups were all taken, but plenty of other sites were available in this and most other campgrounds. Only a few camps in the entire park fill up each night, and those only a lot later in the day than we'd want to stop. So we're fairly free to move around as we wish. Only one place--here at Fishing Bridge--has any hook-ups, and they seem to be all taken by people with long-standing reservations. All other camps are first-come-first-served, so we're OK.

Along the way we stopped at a few waterfalls and scenic views until we got to Canyon Junction, then drove straight on to the Lake. It's a nuisance to find a parking place with the trailer. After lunch and a nap (we were both still tired from the day before), we went back to the Yellowstone Falls and Grand Canyon areas. The early part of the day had been clear, but by now it was clouding up. By the time we got back to the trailer and had the BBQ fire lit, it started to rain. Jim put the awning up, so we continued as planned.

This morning we returned to the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone, so Jim could photograph it in brilliant sun with nice clouds. We left the trailer around sunrise and drove through the Hayden Valley, hoping to find wildlife. A herd of Bison obliged by straggling across the road in front of us. We got both pictures and sounds. They make ridiculous snorting noises.

At one of the canyon overlooks, we spotted an Osprey nest with two chicks. Jim hooked up one of his cameras to my Questar, and I shot a lot of pictures. It was a difficult task, because even with binoculars I couldn't see exactly what was going on in the nest. Fortunately a ranger soon came



out and set up a Celestron right next to me. When other tourists weren't looking through it, I'd look through the Celestron, then snap my pictures when the poses looked good. I was using Jim's remote control to prevent vibration. I hope a few shots are good, but it was about the limit of our equipment. [They were awful.] The nest was on a rock column on the other side of the canyon and far below us.

We finished up the day by walking around the Black Dragon's Caldron thermal area. To me it's one of the most dramatic thermal features in the park.

We got back here around 3:00, and Jim spent an hour or so photographing Least Chipmunks outside the trailer.

Home

July 31, 1987

On Tuesday, July 21, it dawned rainy. We moved over to Grant Village, which is the closest campground to the major geyser basins. We had to wait in line for a good half hour to register for a campsite. What a mess! Surely they could devise a better system. Fishing Bridge had self-registration, with a ranger checking things over in the evening. While Jim was registering, I went into the trailer and fixed a picnic lunch.

By early afternoon the rain was only intermittent, so we were able to visit one or two geyser basins before it set in again heavier than ever around 3:00.

Because of the bad weather the day before, we decided to stay a second night at Grant Village. After all, Jim had not yet seen Old Faithful! (I'd seen it on previous trips.) The next morning was beautiful, with scattered puffy clouds. So we made straight for Old Faithful. Jim photographed it with his 6x7-cm camera, while I tried my best with his 35-mm. After that, we checked the list of expected eruptions of other geysers in the area and spent the rest of the morning on foot dashing from place to place trying to catch them. We missed Riverside, but managed to see Daisy. We got back to the truck around 1:00 p.m. totally exhausted, not to mention famished. But Old Faithful was just about to go off again. So we had to photograph it again! Finally we had time to eat--very good food at a coffee shop near Old Faithful. After lunch and a look at a movie on geysers, we photographed Old Faithful yet again! (Jim believes in thoroughness in all photographic endeavors.)

After a short nap in the truck and an ice cream cone, we trudged around the Black Sand Basin, with its exquisite pools. Jim about scared me to death with his perches on top of the railings, so he could photograph the pools from above. The sky was beginning to cloud up for a thunder storm, and we were tired, so we returned to Grant Village. We made reservations at the restaurant there and had a delicious prime rib dinner overlooking Yellowstone Lake in the last light of the day.

Thursday we set forth for Grand Teton National Park. We had intended to spend a night there, but the place was so crowded, we decided we'd had it with summertime tourist hordes, so we went on to a KOA in Pinedale, Wyo. It was a relief to be in a town not overrun with tourists. The open setting with distant mountains was pleasant, too, after all the forests we'd camped in. A visit to the P.O. yielded three nice pieces of mail. Mother has been a jewel. She's had a letter for us at every possible stop. The only ones she missed were the fault of the terrible Canadian postal service.

Friday we drove all day, ending up in Campground Dina, Vernal Utah. We went past Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area. Some of the roads in that area were steeper than any we can recall on the whole trip. And they seemed to go up-and-down and up-and-down over and over. The high altitude plus the steep grades really slowed us down. Jim said he couldn't do much better than 20 mph on some climbs (with the trailer, of course.) [This trip was with our first Suburban, which had a 350 cc engine. Our 454 engine does much better.]

Saturday a.m. we visited Dinosaur National Monument and the museum in Vernal. Jim loved it, as I thought he would. He's fascinated by the creatures. I'd been battling a sore throat since Wednesday, so we just rested the rest of the day.

Sunday was another day of driving. We decided Beaver, Utah, might be a nice cool stop-over, because it's over 6000 ft. The campground was a mile or so from the freeway in a nice farming area

(Beaver Canyon Campground), so we decided to spend two nights there and take a one-day jaunt up to Cedar Breaks National Monument, one of my favorite places. It's over 10,000 ft high, so we won't be able to go there when we return to Utah in the fall or spring. It has some formations similar to Bryce Canyon plus others found only there.

After visiting Cedar Breaks, we drove on across the mountains to US-89, north to Hwy. 20, then back across to Beaver. Had lunch at a restaurant in the mountains--Panguich Lake. The specialty was BBQ chicken (strips or wings). They came hot, medium or mild, so we ordered "medium." They arrived alone on the plate except for two pieces of celery. When the plate was set down, the vapors from the sizzling chicken pieces assaulted our nostrils and really stung. But we bravely attacked them. They were pretty hot. I think they had been dipped in pure chili oleoresin (the stuff my father developed), possibly diluted with a little tomato. They weren't impossibly hot, but the flavor could have been improved with a few typical BBQ ingredients. Also, I think two tiny strips of celery weren't enough to tone down the heat. Bread or french fries were definitely called for. [In retrospect, I think this was our first experience with the now-ubiquitous "Buffalo Wings."]

Tuesday we drove all day to Barstow, stopping in Las Vegas for lunch and gas. It's really a terrible town--hard to find a gas station or restaurant with enough room for truck and trailer. Yet it's the only place.

We had stopped for gas in Mesquite, NV, and discovered their prices were 15¢/gal higher than Utah's and it turned out they were 30¢ higher than Las Vegas. What a rip-off! I'd realized they were artificially inflated, so we only bought a little there.

After driving all through Las Vegas, we finally found a gas station we could fit into, but no restaurant. (All food seems to be associated with big casinos.) So we set off down the highway. Maybe a small roadside casino would be better. We chose Pop's Oasis: Order and pay at the window, wait for your number to be called. We waited . . . and waited . . . and waited! People (employees? friends?) ordered and were served, but not the waiting tourists. We must have sat there for 45-60 min before our food came up. Pretty clever way to try to get you to feed their gambling machines! I, of course, did not indulge; I'm constitutionally a non-gambler. Jim did stuff in a few quarters, just for the heck of it.

The drive across the desert from Los Vegas to Barstow was lovely. Thunder heads and distant lightning were all around us, yet we experienced very little rain or wind.

Barstow (or, rather, Daggett) was hot, but our A/C was more than adequate to cope. It didn't cool off much at night. In fact, we ran the A/C until I awoke at 2:00 a.m. and turned it off and opened the windows.

Next morning (Wed.) we cleaned up the trailer, emptied our waste tanks, then stopped at the "Solar One" visitors center for an hour or so before driving home. Solar One consists of about 1800 special mirrors focused on one column. They heat water to steam for generating electricity. It's a pilot project, and we'd been fascinated by it as we'd driven by on other trips when there was no time to stop. There's often an aura hanging in the air around the column, which had puzzled us. It turned out that at mid-day they often partially de-focus the mirrors so as not to overheat the collecting column. This intense light reflects off of moisture and dust in the air (Tyndall effect--similar to a searchlight beam at night).

We got home about 1:30 p.m. Wed., July 29.

There was one bird which we encountered in every campground on the trip except Daggett. We began to call it "The Bird." It was the American Robin.

## CAMPGROUNDS

5/4-5/6	Buena Vista Lake, Kern Co., CA
5/7	Dos Reis County Park, nr. Stockton, CA
5/8-5/10	Bodega Dunes SP, Bodega Bay, CA

5/11-5/12 Casini Ranch RV Park, Duncan's Mills, CA  
 5/13-5/15 Russian Gulch SP, N of Mendocino, CA  
 5/16 Golden Rule Trailer Park, 6 mi. S of Willits, CA  
 5/17 Williams Grove Day-use Area, Redwood Hwy., N of Myers Flat, CA  
 5/18-5/24 Giant Redwoods RV and Camp, Myers Flat, CA  
 5/25-5/26 Pinewood Cove RV Park, Trinity Lake, CA  
 5/27-5/29 Lake Siskiyou RV Park, nr. Mt. Shasta, CA  
 5/30-6/1 Name of park not noted, nr. McArthur-Burney Falls SP, CA  
 6/2-6/4 Sheepy Ridge RV Park [now called State Line RV Park], nr. Tulelake, CA  
 6/5-6/6 Rocky Pt. RV Park, Upper Klamath Lk., OR  
 6/7 Hiouchi Hamlet RV Park, nr. Crescent City, CA  
 6/8-6/9 Pine Springs KOA, nr. Langlois, OR  
 6/10 Washburne SP, OR  
 6/11-6/12 Cape Lookout SP, OR  
 6/13-6/14 Name of park not noted, Troutdale, OR  
 6/15 Brooks Memorial SP, N of Goldendale, WA  
 6/16 Chelan City RV Park, Chelan, WA  
 6/17-6/21 River Bend RV Park, nr. Twisp, WA  
 6/22 Abbotsford and District RV Park, Abbotsford, BC  
 6/23-6/25 Manning PP, BC  
 6/26 Overlanders RV Park, nr. Little Fort, BC  
 6/27 Spahats Creek PP, BC  
 6/28 Name of park not noted, Tete Jaune Cache, BC  
 6/29-7/1 Jasper NP, AB  
 7/2 Wilcox Ck. Cpgd., Banff NP, AB  
 7/3-7/5 Lake Louise Cpgd., Banff NP, AB  
 7/6-7/7 Black Diamond City Park, Black Diamond, AB  
 7/8-7/15 Johnson's Camp, St. Mary, MT  
 7/16 Name of park not noted, Augusta, MT  
 7/17-7/18 Paradise Cpgd., Gardiner, MT  
 7/19-7/20 Fishing Bridge Cpgd., Yellowstone NP, MT  
 7/21-7/22 Grant Village Cpgd., Yellowstone NP, MT  
 7/23 KOA, Pinedale, WY  
 7/24-7/25 Campground Dina, Vernal, UT  
 7/26 Beaver Canyon Cpgd., Beaver, UT  
 7/28 KOA, Barstow, CA  
 7/29 Home