

Nature Coordination

Realizing the need for a national program that would coordinate the nature activities of national groups working with young people, the American Museum of Natural History invited these volunteer organizations to form a council to be known as the Coordinating Council on Nature Activities for the purpose of teaching the growing generation, through nature activities, the value of all wild life and natural resources and their conservation.

The various organizations represented are as follows:

American Museum of Natural History, American Natural Study Society, Boy Scouts of America, Camp Directors Association, Camp Fire Girls, Inc., Girl Scouts, Inc., Pioneer Youth of America, Playground and Recreation Association, Woodcraft League of America.

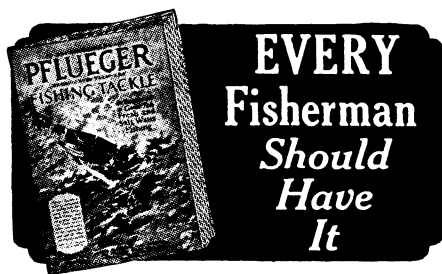
Science News-Letter, August 6, 1927

Daily weather observations are made at about 5,000 places in the United States and its possessions.

It has been estimated that the ton weight of insects in Africa is greater than the weight of all the mammals.

A trans-Atlantic plane capable of carrying 40 persons would weigh about 15 tons loaded, and would cost about \$100,000, Giuseppe Bellanca estimates.

Marking the names of towns on the roofs of the tallest buildings as a guide to aviators has been suggested as a practical tribute to Col. Charles Lindbergh.



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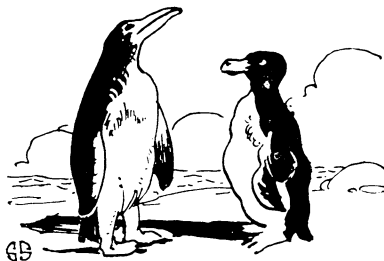
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NATURE RAMBLINGS

By FRANK THONE



Birds of the Ice

Dog-days here—but think how nice and cool the penguin has it. He lives in the Antarctic seas (the nearer he can get to the South Pole the better he likes it), and July and August are midwinter months in the southern hemisphere. With a slippery rock to roost on, and plenty of fish in the sea for the taking, he asks nothing more of life.

He is an extreme example of what a single-track evolutionary habit can do, for he has lost all the long feathers from his wings, and can use his abridged pinions only as swimming-flippers. Indeed, his wings have an astonishing resemblance, at least superficially, to the flippers of a seal, which are also forelimbs of an originally non-aquatic animal that has taken to a seafaring life.

The northern hemisphere once had a flipper-bird of its own, too, but the ruthless hunting of the first comers along the Newfoundland and Labrador coasts exterminated the poor thing. This was the great auk, the last of whose flocks disappeared during the nineteenth century. The great auk was never a true ice-bird, for it was found little if at all north of the Arctic circle; but it lived in such stormy waters that only the stout ships of the whalers and fishermen could navigate them, so that it got the reputation of being an even hardier fowl than it was. Its inability to fly was its undoing, for its magnificent swimming and diving accomplishments could not carry it out of the reach of white men with firearms.

The great auk is survived by a lesser relative that is still fairly abundant, the razor-billed auk. This bird also uses its wings in swimming, but has retained the power of swift flight, so that the hunters have not yet succeeded in wiping it out.

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An air mail service between Madrid, Lisbon and Seville, Spain, has been started.

Many of the early migrations of men were to escape regions shaken by earthquakes.

A swarm of locusts that plagued Algeria in 1866 was estimated to weigh 50,000 tons.