

SANDERLINGS DEVOUR FISHERMEN'S BAIT

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SANDERLINGS that steal bait from fishermen on the Michigan City pier provide another bit of data helping us to understand how one animal starts depending on another for food. The sanderlings are small whitish sandpipers that migrate each autumn along Lake Michigan and feed along the beaches on all sorts of tiny animals, including washed-up fish. The birds are often very tame. The fishermen, with pole or rod, are after perch, and bait their hooks

another incident. One fellow in a row of fishermen pulled up his line to rebait its two hooks. He took two minnows from his bucket, laid them by his side, used one to bait the first hook, and then reached for the second. It was gone. A sanderling had taken it, but not knowing this, the man glared at his next-door neighbor suspecting him of theft. But saying nothing he took another bait from his bucket. This happened several times before the man learned what had really happened.

Here we have a small sandpiper that ordinarily picks up small fish along the shore and that is very tame. As soon as a third element is added—man making suitable small fish available—the bird enters into a social feeding association with him. In Michigan City this habit must be comparatively new, for the city has been established only about a hundred years.

Some other birds wait on man for fish and fish scraps—notably gulls that flock about places where fish are being cleaned and fulmars that swarm about the trawlers that dress their catch at sea. Sandpipers ordinarily do not do this, but the Michigan City incidents show that they may. This is another example of the wonderful acuity of birds in taking advantage of any new aspect of their environment in getting food. This is probably how the regular bird-animal association, such as anis and cattle egrets following cows for the sake of the insects they scare up, arose. Chance-encountered benefits were capitalized on, later were sought out, and finally became usual associations. In two species of oxpeckers of Africa, which eat ticks from the cattle, the birds have become completely dependent on the large animals for their food.



Cartoon by Ruth Andris

with tiny minnows that they bring alive in buckets. When fishing is slow they sit for hours, watching their bobbers and occasionally rebaiting. Sometimes when they leave, many dead minnows are thrown on the pier.

For some years I've been aware that sanderlings were often on the pier, along with the fishermen, but only recently did I realize that the sanderlings were actually waiting about and watching the fishermen. One day last fall I saw a sanderling eat a tiny minnow that was lying beside a fisherman, and I sat down to watch. The fisherman, seeing my interest, reached in his bait bucket for a minnow and tossed it a few feet toward the sanderling. The bird at once ran up and ate it. Another time three sanderlings edged past a fisherman to get a dozen or so dead minnows lying near him. One ate five minnows in quick succession, but the others, perhaps replete, only picked at them. Then something happened that illustrates how the activities of one bird can influence another. One sanderling picked up a minnow and ran with it. Another at once gave chase. The first bird dropped the minnow, which the second ate. This competition took place despite there being plenty of other minnows lying on the pier.

I was talking this over with Raymond Grow, of Gary, who regularly watches birds along the lakefront, and he told me of

JOURNEYS TO 'CAVE MEN' SET FOR MARCH, APRIL

Boys and girls won't need the conventional (well, almost) space helmet to travel thousands of years back in time during March and April at the Museum. To set the mood, perhaps some imaginary time boots would be in order when Museum Journey No. 9—"A Hunt With the Cave Men"—is offered to youngsters any time during visiting hours (9 A.M. to 5 P.M.).

After picking up their travel instructions at either the north or south entrances of the Museum, youngsters can visit, among others, people of the Stone Age of 250,000 years ago, a Neanderthal family, cave artists, and mammoths and wild boars. The cave man hunt is one of a series of Museum Journeys offered to all boys and girls throughout the year. Youngsters successfully completing four journeys receive special awards designating them as Museum Travelers; those fulfilling the requirements of eight journeys can become Museum Adventurers with a special seal added to their awards.

A special "Expedition Cave Man" will be offered to Brownie Scouts, (junior Girl Scout members) and Bluebirds, (junior Campfire Girls) in March and April. On any Saturday morning during the next two months, Brownies and Bluebirds from the Chicago area can attend the Museum's regular spring series of children's movies at 10:30 A.M. in the James Simpson Theatre. After they have seen the program they can begin their own expedition planned by members of the staff of the Raymond Foundation. Written suggestions for follow-up activities to the expedition will be distributed.

GIFTS RECEIVED BY THE MUSEUM DURING THE PAST MONTH

Following is a list of principal gifts received during the past month:

Department of Botany:

From: Holly Reed Bennet, Chicago—462 plant specimens, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana; Joshua Daston, Chicago—3 type photographs of *Micropuntia*; Jack Doran, Barrington, Ill.—a *Sagittaria latifolia*, Wisconsin; Chester Hansen, Chicago—3 plant specimens; A. J. Hermann, Chicago—2 hand samples of wood, India; Kendall Laughlin, Chicago—12 *Crataegus* and *Quercus*, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri; Dr. Ursula Levi, Santiago, Chile—12 plant specimens; Morton Aboretum, Lisle, Ill.—74 seed samples; Harold Nogle, Port Arthur, Tex.—4 plant specimens; Orville A. Oaks, Wilmette, Ill.—24 woods of Finland; Peter K. Ogle, Paoli, Pa.—3 plant specimens and a seed sample; Santa Rosa Junior College, Santa Rosa, Calif.—20 *Viola*, western North America; Dr. Earl E. Sherff, Hastings, Mich.—13 plant specimens; Dr. John W. Thieret, Homewood, Ill.—141 plant specimens, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan

Department of Geology:

From: Prof. J. Ernest Carman, Columbus, Ohio—1,000 specimens of lower Devonian fishes, invertebrates, plants; Claire and Albert Arenberg, Highland Park, Ill.—an Oriental pearl necklace; Roy E. Sturtevant, Chicago—2 Autunites, Redman, Maine; Elmer B. Rowley, Glens Falls, N.Y.—collection of minerals; Ozark Biological Laboratories, Hot Springs National Park, Ark.—a specimen of Pyrite (nodular)

Department of Zoology:

From: William J. Gerhard, Chicago—2,000 reprints on true bugs; Robert Bate-man, Toronto—a mammal; Fraser Walsh, Formosa—2 birdskins; Dr. Daniel Cohen, Stanford, Calif.—4 fish specimens, Spain; A. E. Ellis, Epsom, England—a collection of European freshwater clams, Europe; Henry Field, Coconut Grove, Fla.—3 snakes; A. J. Franzen, Chicago—3 pocket gophers; W. C. Freihofer, Stanford, Calif.—29 fish specimens; General Biological Supply House, Chicago—microscopic slides of protozoans



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