

A MID-MOUNTAIN FOREST IN THE PHILIPPINES

By AUSTIN L. RAND
CURATOR OF BIRDS

I'VE JUST COME BACK to Dumaguete City after a week in the tropical mid-mountain forests of Negros Island. There I woke at dawn to hear jungle fowl crowing, big pigeons booming, and leafbirds singing, and at dusk monkeys squalled from the



Photo by D. S. Rabor

THE 'HORNS OF NEGROS,' PHILIPPINE PEAKS

forest edging the camp clearing as the frogs began their evening chorus. I lived in a camp just below the summit of the "Horns of Negros," the twin peaks that dominate the mountains of southern Negros.

After the meetings in Manila of the Pacific Science Congress I came down to the central Philippines where the Chicago Natural History Museum Field Associate, Dr. D. S. Rabor, is head of the Department of Biology of Silliman University. Dr. Rabor met me at the plane, had me stay with him, and arranged for me to stay in this Cuernos de Negros camp that he maintains for periodic field work by his biology classes. He not only arranged it, but saw me comfortably installed, with cook, personnel, supplies, and equipment, and he stayed a night to see that all functioned smoothly.

Seldom can one talk long in the Philippine Islands without reference to the recent war. This camp is no exception, for it is in the clearing where Dr. James W. Chapman, ant specialist of Silliman University, lived for eighteen months after the occupation before the Japanese found him and sent him to Manila for internment.

Eastern Negros is a country of small farmers of coconuts and corn, heavily settled. From Dumaguete we look up, in the early morning, to see the forested "Horns of Negros." For the rest of the day it's

usually cloud covered. We climbed up nearly 3,000 feet through the hot, sweltering foothills, through coconut groves, banana groves, sweet potato and corn fields, and abaca plantations (which yield Manila hemp). With our lunch, along the way, we had fresh coconut milk (one of the advantages of living in the tropics, Rabor says) and also toba. This last was quite new to me, but it seems widely used in Negros.

The inflorescence of the coconut is cut and a bamboo tube is attached to collect the juice. Near each house we passed we saw the tubes in the coconut palms. Each morning the men climb to gather the juice. Fresh (slightly fermented only, as we had it), I found it recalling hard cider, flavored with things I couldn't name. Rabor says a powdered bark is put into it—and also insects, rats, and even bats and lori-keets come to drink from the tubes, fall in drunk, and drown. If kept for two days its alcoholic content is

greatly increased and caution is required.

At 3,000 feet we were in the forests, and at 3,700 in the camp. Rabor and I climbed to the top of the North Horn of Negros, which is nearly 6,000 feet. It starts out as a moderate slope with fine tall forest, with ferns, tree ferns, low palms, and moss common. Half-way up it steepens. Coniferous trees come in, and great rocks moss covered and gripped by aerial roots and scrambling pandanus are conspicuous. We clambered up with hand and toe holds past mossy caves and passages. We grasped at mossy trunks that looked to be six inches in diameter to find them one-half inch in diameter and the rest moss. A misstep on a pandanus-leaf mat sent a leg through into space. When we finally reached the top, a mass of aged dwarf conifers, pandanus, tree ferns, palms, and moss, we found the clouds had

DALLWIG TO DRAMATIZE TRIP TO THE MOON

Paul G. Dallwig, the Layman Lecturer, will take his audiences "out of this world" in his first dramatization of the season, "A Trip to the Moon—Why Not?" to be given at 2 P.M. on January 3, 10, 17, 24, and 31. The possibility of such a trip seems much more likely now that scientists have managed to contact the moon by radar, and Mr. Dallwig takes into account all that science knows so far about what might be expected on a trip of this kind. The dramatization is divided into three scenes: "The Take-Off," "The Trip to the Moon," and "A Day on the Moon." Mr. Dallwig will also explain the difference between comets, meteors, and meteorites, whether flying saucers are fact or fantasy, and other topics connected with outer space.

Museum Members are admitted to these lectures upon presentation of their membership cards; others must make reservations in advance by mail or telephone (WAbash 2-9410). There is a half-hour intermission for refreshments in the Museum cafeteria at 3. The programs begin in the Lecture Hall and progress into exhibition halls containing material that Mr. Dallwig uses to illustrate his dramatizations.

In February Mr. Dallwig's subject will be "Life—What Is It?"

closed in below us. There was no view. We were above the clouds and it was like being on a small forested island in a frozen sea of white.



Photo by D. S. Rabor

MID-MOUNTAIN FOREST INTERIOR IN THE PHILIPPINES

Though wet enough now, with water in the streams and the moss like sodden sponges, this is the start of the northeast monsoon, which is dry, and in February and

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1954. "Dallwig to Dramatize Trip to the Moon." *Bulletin* 25(1), 7-7.

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