

Bible Plants and Animals

Annual Holiday Excursion

THE HABITAT group, "Marsh Birds of the Upper Nile," located in Hall 20 on the Museum's first floor, displays clumps of bulrushes growing thickly along the mud banks of the river. Bulrushes are one of the many plants mentioned in the Bible; it was, for example, in an "ark" of bulrushes that the daughter of Pharaoh found the infant Moses. The exhibit is one of several in the Museum which show plants and animals of the Bible. Each year, a self-guided tour of these exhibits is offered as a holiday feature.

Adding an important dimension to the tour are two Museum publications, one on *Bible Plants*, the other on *Bible Animals*. Written by Marie Svoboda, the first of these Raymond Foundation Storybooks relates how bulrushes were used in Bible times not only to make boats, or "arks," but also mats, clothing, sandals, and baskets. The most famous use of the bulrush, however, was

in paper making. Most of the writings preserved in Egyptian tombs were on papyrus, the name by which the bulrush plant is perhaps better known.

Other plants whose histories are related in *Bible Plants* are the Cedars of Lebanon from which Solomon's temple was built; the palms whose branches were spread before Jesus on Palm Sunday; the olive trees in the Garden of Gethsemane; the fig tree that provided a perch for Zaccheus; the "rose of Sharon," the "lilies of the field," and the richly laden vines of the Promised Land. Many of these plants are featured in the Museum's holiday "excursion."

Written by Maryl Andre, *Bible Animals* records how lions and serpents, dugongs and corals, and many other living creatures, were important to the peoples of the Bible. Most of these animals, too, are seen on the holiday tour. A final chapter in the Storybook describes the animals used by biblical



Bulrushes. Illustration from "Bible Plants"

writers to illustrate traits of human character.

Directions for the self-guided tour of "Bible Plants and Animals" may be picked up free of charge at the Museum entrance doors or at the information desk in Stanley Field Hall. The two booklets can be purchased at the Museum Book Shop for 25 cents each.



Birds of the World

Paintings by Karl Plath

BIRDS of the world, captured on canvas by the well known ornithologist and painter, Karl Plath, will be displayed in Stanley Field Hall December 14 through January 20, as one of several special exhibits to be presented during the holiday season.

The paintings are notable for their life-like quality, a reflection of Plath's life-long study of birds. For 25 years, until his retirement in 1960, Plath was Curator of Birds at Brookfield Zoo. He has traveled thousands of miles to collect, study, and sketch birds in many parts of the United States, in Bermuda, the West Indies, and in Australia. For many years he also kept a private aviary which housed more than 400 species.

Karl Plath's paintings have been shown in eight of the annual exhibitions of Chicago artists, and at the Art Institute of Chicago. A traveling exhibition of his canvasses has toured major Eastern and Midwestern museums. A number of Chicago galleries have arranged one-man shows of his works. In 1962, Plath was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Art in London.



1963. "Bible Plants and Animals." *Bulletin* 34(12), 3-3.

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