

Radar Keeps Track Of Migrating Swans

Because of the danger to private and commercial aviation, University radar observers are cooperating in tracking the migration of some 60,000 whistling swans.

"The birds are leaving their winter grounds around Chesapeake Bay and flying toward northern Canada where they breed," according to Larry G. Davis, assistant professor of meteorology, who is directing the radar search here.

Cruise at Great Heights

Whistling swans cruise at such great heights that they often pass unnoticed by the human eye, but these very heights put them on a collision course with planes. Last year, for example, a swan in the Chicago area crashed through the windshield of a small plane. Since an adult bird is 4 1/2 feet long and travels at a speed of some 50 miles per hour, his impact can be considerable.

Prior to that, 17 persons were lost when a Viscount crashed over Cleveland, Ohio, after a swan sheared off the aircraft's tail gear.

Also cooperating in the project, which was initiated by William W. H. Gunn, of the Canadian Wildlife Service, are the U.S. Weather Bureau's radar installations in Washington, D.C., and Buffalo, N.Y. These are directed by Stuart G. Bigler, a 1952 Penn State graduate. Observers in London, Ontario, will track the birds through Canada.

Departure March 15

"Last year migration got underway about March 10" according to Davis, "but this spring's bad weather has delayed it. An observer stationed at Chesapeake Bay alerted us when the birds began their departure March 15. He is also taking a count of them as they leave."

En route to their destination, the high-flying swans make several stop-overs, the first of which is normally Lake Erie. Another observer there is counting the arrivals to see how many made the journey safely and how long they took.

Radar observers will try to pick out the exact flight path, the altitude of the birds and their speed. Penn State, which is operating on a three-shift, 24-hour-a-day schedule, has a unique automatic tracking radar so watchers can look on and track individual birds.

In Canada Next Month

"Because of their late start, the birds are not expected to reach Canada until early April," Davis said. "They seemingly have some inherent sensitivity to the right kind of weather in which to fly."

"They will wait until the winds are out of the southeast to pick up a tailwind to help them travel north. If the weather is turning bad, they'll alight and wait for it to clear."

The flight of the swans is in three sections, one following the Atlantic Coast, another the Mississippi Valley, and the third, the Pacific Coast.

"This gives them ample opportunity to come into contact with heavily travelled jet routes," Davis pointed out. "If we can determine what kind of weather stimulates the birds to fly, and then clock their altitude, velocity and path, we can alert pilots to impending hazards."

Comparatists To Hear Gerard, Tschumi in May

"New Frontiers For Comparatists" will be the theme of a special two-day conference sponsored by the Department of Comparative Literature, May 3 and 4.

The conference will cap a series of spring events planned by the department that will feature lectures on Wednesday and on Thursday, May 2.

Albert Gerard, internationally-known specialist in African literature, who is currently serving as a visiting professor at Penn State, will open the program Wednesday with a lecture on "Mannerisms to Baroque: Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida and Lope de Vega's 'Fuenteovejuna'."

Gerard from Belgium
Author of more than 100 books and articles in the field of literature, Gerard came to Penn State from the University of Liege, Belgium, where he was a member of the faculty and received his doctor of philosophy degree.

He also served seven years as professor and member of the administrative commission for the University of Elizabethville, the Congo.

Tschumi from Switzerland
The May 3 lecture will feature Raymond Tschumi, head of the Department of English, Hochschule, St. Gallen's, Switzerland.

The two-day conference, designed to study some of the emerging and lesser known literatures will feature Gerard; George Anderson of the East-West Center of the University of Hawaii, discussing oriental literature; and Willard Trask, lecturer in the humanities at Juniata College, who will focus on comparative literature and the unwritten song.

Trask did the translation of Auerbach's "Mimesis," a book of criticism. He is also in the process of preparing a 12-volume translation of the memoirs of Casanova.



MEMBERS OF Alpha Phi Omega, service fraternity, help out the 1968 Easter Seal Campaign. From left to right are Dick George, John Curtis, Bruce Benninger, and Ken Walbert.

Phi Kappa Phi Issues Over 361 Invitations

The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi has issued invitations to more than 300 juniors and seniors and 61 graduate students whose outstanding academic records make them eligible for membership.

These candidates constitute the top three per cent of the junior and senior classes in academic achievement, and one and a half per cent of the graduate students, who were nominated by their major departments.

Phi Kappa Phi was founded in 1897. The Pennsylvania State College chapter was one of the three original chapters which formed the national organization. There are now 97 chapters, at least one in all but six states and one in the Philippines. The total membership has grown to over 160,000, of whom about 10,000 are still active.

The new members will be initiated in a ceremony preceding the annual Phi Kappa Phi banquet early in May.

Archivist Describes Two Types

'Enemies for Library'

If a library archivist were asked to compile a list of "Public Enemies," he would hesitatingly name two.

Number one is that group of heirs who unconcernedly discard as junk the papers and collections assembled by their forebears. Second comes those well-meaning relatives who "clean up" or censor the manuscripts of a deceased loved one.

Charles W. Mann, chief of special collections at the University, has met both these types in the course of building up the library's holdings.

Only a Picture

"I vividly remember tracking down the descendants of President William McKinley's press secretary," he said, "only to find that all they had bothered to save was an autographed picture of the President. Any correspondence had been tossed out."

Fortunately for both Mann's peace of mind and the library's acquisitions, many people do hang onto materials, and they can be induced to place valuable documents in the library for safe keeping.

"We are concentrating," Mann explained, "on building up archives which relate to Pennsylvania or Penn State figures. I'm certain many interesting papers are still lying around in dusty attics."

Less Competition

"Although University libraries and private collectors compete strenuously for rare books and literary material, there is much less in-fighting in the realm of historical material. Indeed, Pennsylvania's well known author-historian, S. K. Stevens, maintains we don't have enough archives to hold all the documents which need

to be preserved." While the bulk of archival material at Penn State is of interest mainly to scholars, there are a number of collections which throw fascinating sidelights on history.

"Recently, for example," Mann noted, "we were given the papers of Robert Jackson by his descendants in Clearfield. Jackson founded the Allegheny Mountain Health Farm, which later became Cresson Sanatorium."

Emerson, Thoreau

"In addition to his correspondence with such distinguished figures as Thoreau and Emerson, we discovered a notebook reporting the results of a physical examination at the Health Farm on Charles Sum-

ner, the Massachusetts senator and leader of the anti-slavery forces.

"In 1856, Sumner was violently caned on the Senate floor by a Southerner incensed by a speech in which Sumner had attacked the South and insulted one of his cousins. Sumner maintained the beating so affected his health that he was unable to resume his seat for four years. His opponents, however, claimed he was malingering."

"The results of Jackson's examination," Mann pointed out, "prove conclusively that Sumner was not faking, that he was lucky even to be alive."

Bernard Papers

Mann's model for a collection guaranteed to keep any archi-

vist happy is the papers of the late Penn State sociologist, Luther Bernard. Bernard never threw anything away, and two trucks were required to transport his papers to the library.

"Researchers have been going through them for ten years," Mann said, "and they are still turning up valuable historical materials."

Modern homes, lacking the capacious attics of yesteryear, not to mention modern wives, discourage this kind of collecting. But Mann at least hopes to make people think twice before they throw away what appears to them to be nothing but paper scrap.

Their "rubbish" could one day rest in splendor in a library's archives.

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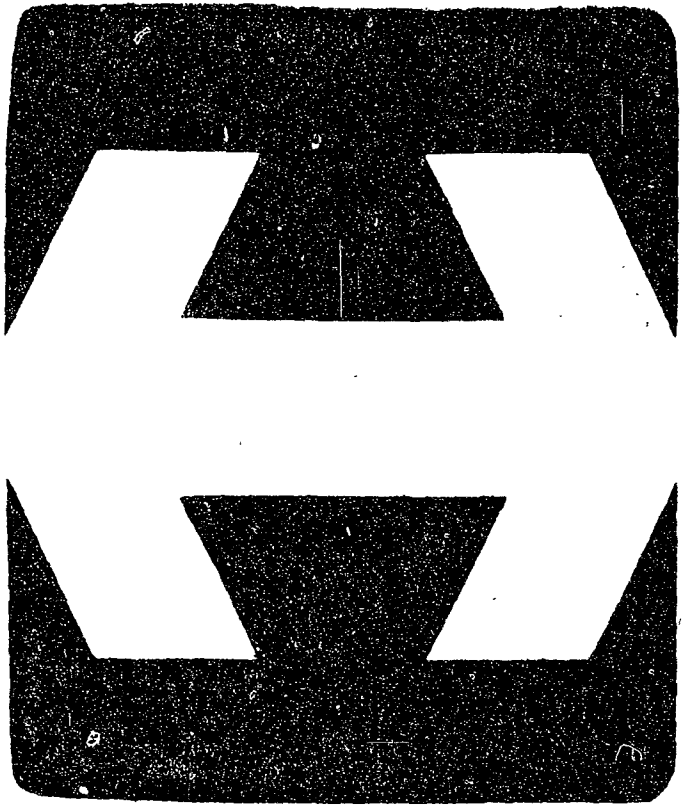
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