

BIRDS

but occasional hardwood and cypress swamps, one of the latter dominated by several giant cypresses. I remember seeing a winter wren in one creek-bordering swamp and my first Florida red-cockaded woodpecker in some pine trees. Once at the end of the day's trip I left the bicycle in the baggage room of the station and took the bus back to Green Cove Springs.

MORE  
BICYCLE  
TRIPS

A week later a very straight and nondescript side roll along the scrub-bordered shore road, behind the sand dunes, got me back to Atlantic Beach ready for a more interesting trip the following day off. This involved a short ride to Mayport, a ferrying across the St. Johns just above its mouth and a very pleasant down wind ride from Fort George Island, which was thoroughly explored first, to Jacksonville.

"FERRY"

A fisherman with his put-put, which he had a lot of trouble starting, got me across the river for a reasonable fee, and a short ride in the opposite direction

from Jacksonville brought me out to the island, really a raised "hammock" covered with live oaks and pine and pretty well surrounded by salt marsh. After leaving the island I saw little, but salt marsh for many miles. A flock of about thirty green-wing teal in a pond by such a marsh was one of the more interesting sights observed, and another was a series of four or five flocks of skimmers totaling about two hundred birds flying down the river, which I was close to a good part of the way. In the vicinity of the city airport the road actually climbs a little, passing through some sand hills, and then descends again giving one a good coast, a rare thing in most of Florida. The Jacksonville railroad station marked the end of this trip as well as the series of five that had started near there. Altogether they totaled not far from 175 miles, not bad for non full days of riding.

TEAL

SKIMMERS



ASSIGNED  
TO DAYTONA  
FOR  
OPERATIONAL  
TRAINING  
IN SBD  
SCOUT  
BOMBERS  
(DOUGLAS  
"DAUNTLESS")

Lee Field became N.A.A.S. Green Cove Springs while we former seaplane pilots were instructing there, but soon after that the process of turning the field into a strictly operational training center for Marine "Corsair" (F4U) pilots began. None of us had had operational training except in Kingfisher and accordingly were sent to various VSB (scout-bombing) or VT (torpedo) bases. Paul Garble and I, and eventually Tim Brennan, rated N.A.S. Daytona Beach. Then the only base with SBDs, "Bunco" Baker, then attached to the operational training center at Jacksonville, whom I had seen several times around there and who was most friendly, clinched this choicest of spots for me. Then less fortunate went to SB2Us at Cecil Field, near Jacksonville, SB2As (Brewster Buffaloes) at Vero Beach, or TBFs at Jacksonville.

Before settling down to Daytona, which became my working place for over a year, I might call up on social

SOCIAL  
EVENTS

events. It was just after returning from Miami that I ushered at Roy Merchant's wedding to Cathy Mark, one of the most delightful of the nice Jacksonville girls. Roy had been in my original Squantum class, and I was the only one of his "old" friends around, so naturally I was honored. Things would have been even pleasanter if the prettiest bridesmaid, Sally Newsome, hadn't been all "dated up" and the matron of honor not a married woman (Margaret Taylor - Patison).

I remember running into Archie Coolidge and Ken Hadden, both at the entrance to the administration building at Jacksonville, but at different times (late '42 or early '43). Mr. Mott, who lives in Jacksonville in the winter, I finally got in touch with and dined with <sup>him and his wife</sup> once or twice, as I did with Dick Baker. The Omdorfs, the Quibbers, the Paynes and perhaps others.

I'm the natural history line



butterflies

I became somewhat acquainted with the butterflies, as well as the birds, lizards and trees. There was one swallow-tail rather larger even than our northern yellow swallowtail, which was also found down there, the true southern having large amounts of both black and yellow. Another greenish-blue species had extremely long "tails".

FLOWERING

TREES

Early in both '42 and '43 I noticed that the red buds began to bloom as early as January and were not uncommon in the woods around Tazewellville. There was also some dogwood, another early bloomer. Red maple buds began opening in January too, and down there somehow it seemed to be a far less objectionable tree than up north.

shells

I started collecting shells before getting to Daytona, picking up a few specimens around Ponte Vedra and Atlantic Beach. The nicest one of these was a fine example of that