

Photography became my preoccupation at eleven, and it started with birds. In my twelfth year began a long series of summers on an island off the coast of Maine. In an environment of the sea and a brisk northern climate, of a formidable rocky shore that rose out of the cold, blue Atlantic, of white gravel beaches, and of ~~a black-green~~ ^{dark} spruce forest, birds first became an integral, inescapable part of my life.

On mornings when the tide was out I was awakened early by the calling of gulls from the seaweed-covered rocks below my bedroom window. Often, too, I would hear the piercing whistle of a ~~circulating~~ circling osprey searching for fish for his young in a huge stick nest half a mile away. This sound would always get me out of bed and I would go to the window to see the hawk's swift plunge as he dove on his prey. That arrow-like dive, spread talons reaching ahead, and the suspense that followed before the dripping bird emerged, ~~have~~ always gave me a tingling thrill. Usually he struck true, ~~to rise steeply from the water with his quarry held fast~~ ~~and beating his wings~~ and on strongly beating wings rose steeply from the water with his quarry held fast. ^{always on} ~~After~~ gaining altitude he would pause in midair to shake the water from his feathers.

I visited colonies of nesting terns and gulls on barren, neighboring islets, which excited me as ~~much as~~ ^{in the same way that} a boy as a trip back into primordial time ^{in time} ~~today~~. There I photographed the eggs and downy chicks with my first cameras, and later, with more sophisticated equipment, the adult birds at their nests and in flight. As the years went by ~~other birds attracted my attention~~ my interest focused on the ~~birds~~ birds of the deep spruce woods, of the birch and alder bogs, and of the brake and sweet fern thickets. I photographed all I could find. Still

more years later ~~i~~ I took my collection of black and white pictures to a publisher. He said they could not be used to illustrate a book on birds because they were not in color and the species could not be identified. This was a challenge to ~~the~~^{my} youthful feeling of immortality when time seemed to stretch endlessly ahead and was no cause for concern. I took it up and with the newly developed Kodachrome ~~set~~^{film} about photographing birds in color.

From this first beginning with color photography based on a near horizon of living things it is perhaps not surprising that I ~~am~~^{a similar} developed ~~an~~ interest in other realms of nature. My horizon remained primarily a close ~~one~~ and intimate one but my appreciation of the intrinsic color of the world spread from birds and other forms of life to the whole natural world.

These photographs are an attempt to show, better than any reproductions can possibly do, this development of a point of view towards the use of color to interpret ~~more freely~~ the world more freely. It will remain to others to judge whether I have succeeded in revealing - even begun to reveal - color as a new dimension in the perception and representation of nature photographically.

by photography