

Taylor River Journal Transcription

About the journal

The journal is a fairly typical "composition book" often used in high schools and colleges. The notes in the journal are specifically dated from September 10th to October 10th, 1993. It was found in a plastic trash bag suspended about 8 ft. off the ground along the banks of the Taylor River, not far from where it intersects the Middle Fork Snoqualmie River. It was situated on a large dead limb which appeared to be up ended by recent flooding. The journal itself suffered little damage beyond getting a bit damp. The scan of the journal on the website has only superficial clean up to improve legibility. No attempt was made to rewrite any of the text.

We don't know much about the author except that we know he was a "he" courtesy of the Oct. 8th "Cub Scout" mention, that he went by the initials J.C. and that the person claimed to have received a small grant to listen for and study owls. The "Living Earth Society" mentioned as the donor of the grant has not been identified and appears to have no connection with the "Living Earth Trust". Beyond the date of October 10th, we know nothing more of the author except for a washed out faded receipt found in the same bag which showed part of a last name "Cane".

No attempt has been made to correct spelling, grammar or punctuation unless necessary to communicate meaning.

All notes and necessary edits by transcriber are in italic.

September 10, 1993

Chris dropped me off at MF (*Middle Fork*) campground. Long, wide road – fallen logs – pot holes – not sure why such a big road. Camp Gr. Closed for season – deserted – awesome!

- Supplies brought

Used tent, sleeping bag, pad, camp stove, 12 canisters of fuel, pack, various tools, v-camera, audio recorder, tapes – 3 lbs dried Beans, 2 case Ramen, dried fruit, jerky – insty meals – 20 box Mac & Cheese – Pots / Pans – tapes

Thank You Living Earth Society and the “exploration grant”!

-Notes-

I have had a need to just take some time away from world. Procured small grant to notate owl species, sounds, presence. Have set up small camp on T-River (Taylor River) away from camp ground (officially closed two days before). Plan to stay through Oct. Beautiful area, firs, cedar, alder? Other plants, lots of ferns. Quiet, calm – no people!

Nature is made to conspire with the spirit to emancipate us! – RWE (*from Ralph Waldo Emerson's Nature, Chapter VI "Idealism"*)

September 12 (*journal contains no entry for Sept. 11*)

Camp settled, area explored a bit. Saw deer this morning, lots of sounds I don't know yet. Grey bird stopped by to investigate camp. Officially will start owl listening tomorrow – Found wood planks and stumps at camp site – made nice table.

Weather awesome!



September 13

Spent day exploring – settled in for nice meal of mac & cheese. – First recording session for owls –

5 PM –

7 PM -

8 PM – loud hooting! To(o) dark to look for source – not sure what this bird is.

Did not get good recording

9 PM -

10:30 - More of same hooting who, who, whowho! who, who, whowho!

September 14

Haven't seen a human for days! Sawed off lock of camp toilet. Made good use. Took trail up river after lunch, beautiful and quiet – stopped at falls _ returned by dusk

4 PM – Hooting! Same as last night. Walked into trees toward sound – no sighting

6 PM –

7 PM -

8 PM – more hooting – same as before

9 PM -

10 PM -

11 PM –

September 15

Walked down 110 (*Forest Serv. Road 110*) along Middle Fork (*Snoqualmie river*) – maybe climb one of those hills soon.

-4 PM – more hooting – followed noise

Saw something large high up in fir – owl?

5 PM -

6 PM -

7 PM -

8 PM – more ho ho whowho! same as before

9 PM

10 PM – different hooting – high pitched – toot! toot! toot! – thought this was someone's whistle

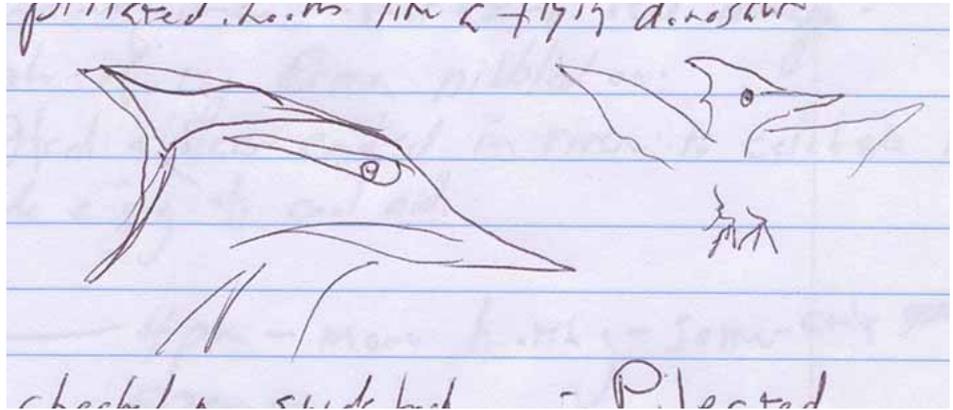
11 PM -

12 PM –

September 16

Found little trail to back of MF campground

Giant Wood Pecker - Beautiful – I think this is a pileated. Looks like a flying dinosaur. Yep – checked my guide book. – Pileated. I thought I had found some rare ancient species – My grey friend is always at my camp – a “Gray Jay” – not very original name. I call him Taylor. Taylor is very fond of potato chips.



4 PM – more hooting – walked out to tree to see if I can see my friend –no luck

5 PM – no

6 PM – no

7 PM – no

8 PM – who who - who cooks for who?

9 PM -

10 PM – Hooting same as yesterday – Toot! Toot!

September 17

One week in the Bush!

Went up to waterfall today – Some critter went through camp – don't think it was a bear – probably raccoons – squirrels – Food Okay – no real damage -

Couple of top Ramen nibbled on.

Had a beer cooled in river to celebrate 1 week. Made jug of cool aid.

4 PM – more hooting – same – can't see

5 PM -

6 PM – campers show up in the campground – very noise(y) party

- Hiding out of site – fortunately well away from camp

2 AM – Go to bed assholes!

September 18th

Campers left! Mid afternoon

Went and looked over campsite – guests left beach chair – good for the camp. Lots of trash left at their camp site – not cool! Walked back down road – 56 (Forest Serv. Rd. 5600) no other signs of campers.



4 PM – no hoots

5 PM -

6 PM –

7 PM –

8 PM -

9 PM

10 PM – no sounds

September 19

Walked up 110 – Passed by couple cars

Not sure where they are going.

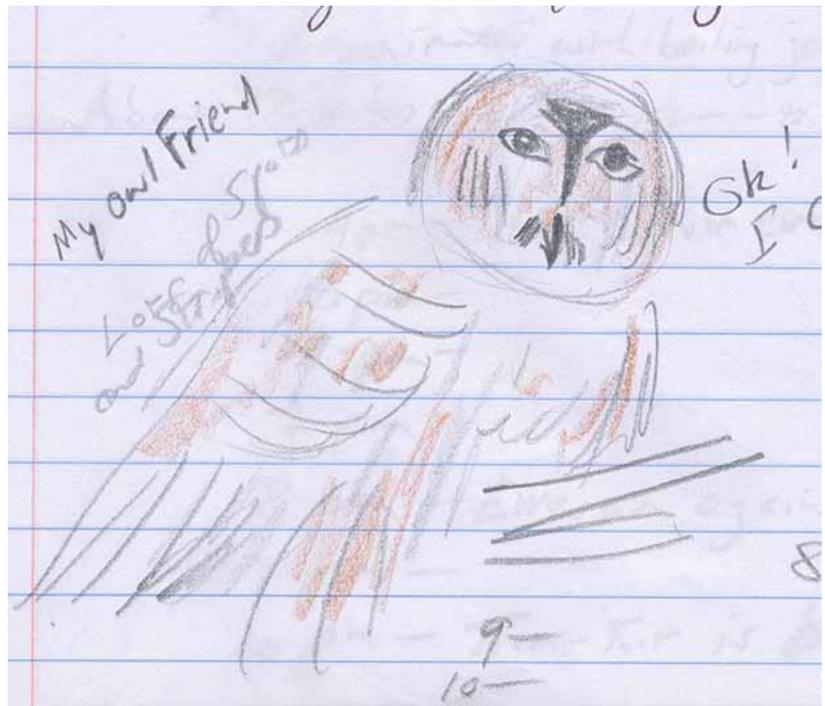
Bushwhacked up creek and up trail about mile in – ended up in cliff face. – I'm no climber!

Hang out good day.

Heard more cars coming down trail. Wandered further down middle fork – took nap.

Camp back to camp late afternoon - I immediately hear – who – who –who – walked toward sound and there it was! In a low limb of cedar tree. My owl friend! Big fellow! Just sat in tree and stared at me – got close – 20ft away

Went back to camp – couldn't find this one in my Western Forest guide book.



6 PM – My owl still in a branch near camp!

7 PM -

8 PM – Who! Who! Shined flash light at friend – hooted more

9 PM -

10 PM –

September 20

Walked up Taylor river trail again up to what I think my map calls Quartz Creek. Bushwhacked up creek 100 yards in found remains of old shelter and metal posts, couple of chairs. Very rusty. Further on kept going most of the day. No signs of humans – impassible brush. Found giant cache of huckleberries? Sweat tasted good. Nice change in diet. Wish I had brought better food. Returned to camp mid afternoon. Taylor was waiting for me. Shared some Ramen with him/her. My owl friend appeared – flew right over camp and was back in his branch. I got even closer – 10 ft? Didn't seem to care. Dubbed him/her – “Emerson”
Experimented with boiling jerky – didn't work so well. About 12 miles back to town – to(o) far for a burger run.

4 PM – Hooting from Emerson

5 PM -

6 PM -

7 PM -

8 PM – Emerson again

9 PM -

10 PM – Toot – Toot is back – walked toward sound – no luck

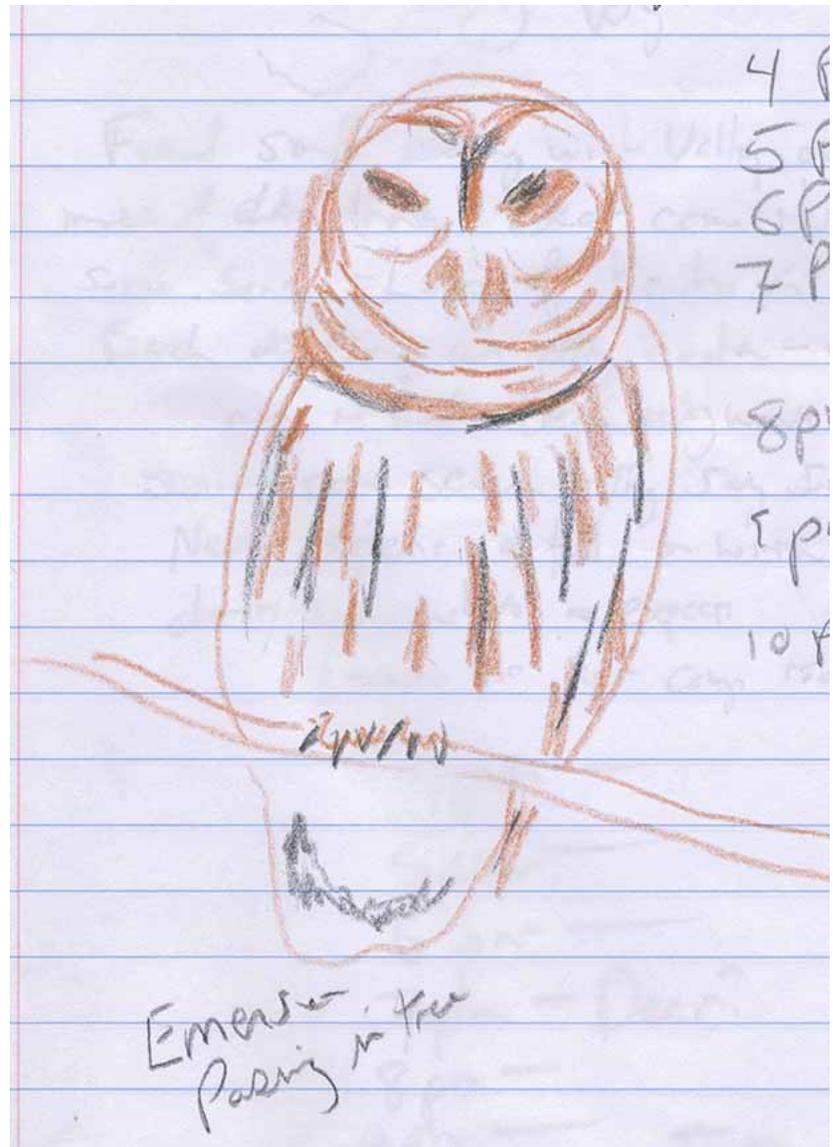
September 21

Tuesday?

Went back to Quartz creek – looked around old shelter again – found not much. Nice warm day – dipped in river on sunny bank – felt good to wash off. I must smell terrible!

Back to camp – Emerson appears right on time.

No sign of Taylor today.



4 PM – Emerson

5 PM -

6 PM -

7 PM – Loud noises – deer-

8 PM – Emerson

9 PM -

10 PM – Toot – toot again. Will try to see this one tomorrow

September 22

Last of the fruit loops gone –just oatmeal or whatever for breakfast. Went back to campground, followed creek up steep hillside for several hours. Saw what I think is a cougar print – 4 pads – no claws

Found small clearing with valley overlook. Spent most of day there. Deer came through – Partridge of some sort – Lots of hawks in the air.

Back at camp air getting cooler – rain – not to bad – definitely want to vacate before serious rainy season – They say sometime in October? Never spent fall or winter in Seattle – don't know what to expect.

Emerson not at camp today

4 PM -

5 PM -

6 PM -

7 PM – Deer?

8 PM –

9 PM -

10 PM – Tooty is back – can't find

September 23

Lazed around camp today – Chris comes tomorrow to check in – will be good to see a person or two – maybe he'll bring P.

Taylor still missing – Emerson is about I think. Found owl pellets on my table

4 PM -

5 PM -

6 PM -

7 PM –

8 PM – Yes - Emerson

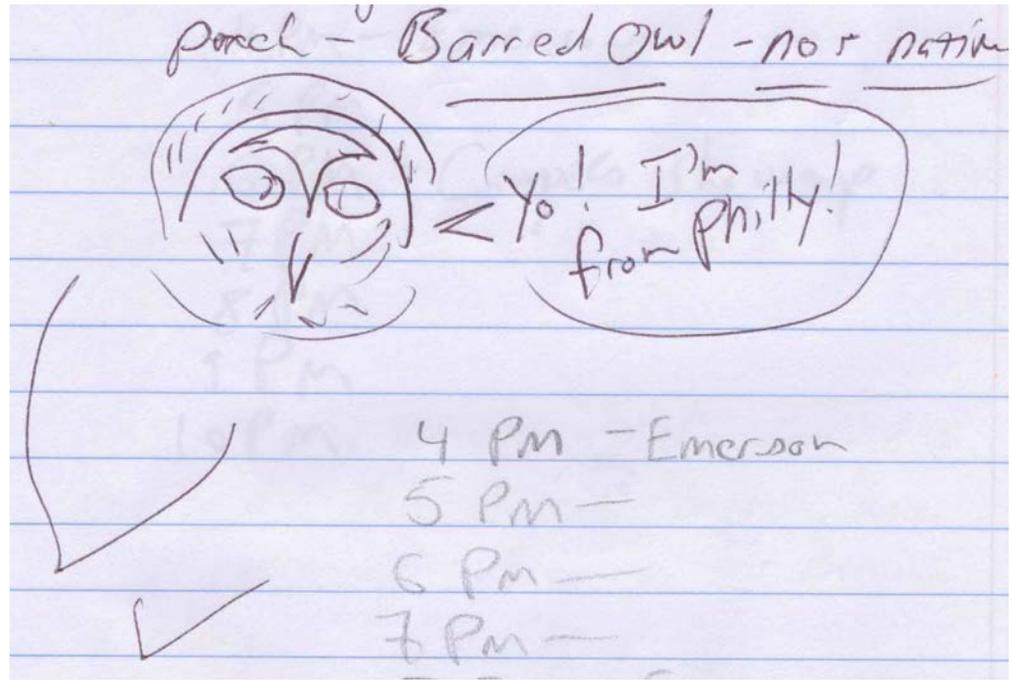
9 PM -

10 PM – Toot – Toot

Walked in with flashlight down river – saw small bird with big round face – Small owl? Saw whet?

September 24

Chris came today with P. Brought lunch – pancake mix – bless him! Brought bird book. Went for hike up river then they drove back. Looked up Emerson – who was back in his perch – Barred Owl – not native



4 PM - Emerson

5 PM -

6 PM -

7 PM -

8 PM - Emerson

9 PM - More loud crashing - Elk? Sounded Big

10 PM - Toot - Toot - sounds like a recorder - chased down again with flash light - found again - definitely Saw Whet - new name = Mr. Von Trapp

11 PM - VT (Saw-whet Owl, Mr. Von Trapp)

12 PM - VT

1 AM - VT - Go to bed!! Had to yell!

September 25

Spent day exploring river, found crawfish. Cooked a few with my Mac & Cheese for early dinner

4 PM - Emerson

5 PM -

6 PM – Campers show up

7 PM –

8 PM –

9 PM –

10 PM

September 26

Hiding in woods. Spied on new campers. They broke lock on gate and pulled in two large pickups with cabs (?). Very loud -

- Campers set up shelters over picnic tables. Couple of large free standing stoves

Hiding in tent tonight – campers are loud. Yell at each other, lots of swearing. Someone hit someone I thing (*think?*).

2 AM. Hear car doors slam quiet – I think they have gone to sleep.

September 27

Campers are still here. I don't think these are campers. Seem to(o) focused on their stoves, doing things under shelters.

4 PM. Snuck up to campers. Light rain, more swearing. One of them is wearing a pistol in a holster.

6 PM. Still hiding at my camp. Campers don't seem interested in anything around them. Very noise (*noisy*)

8 – Hear “Just cook the shit”. Nasty smell in the air form camp. Kind of like cat pee – yuck!

10 PM – Raining moderate – smell is gone

September 28

10 AM – Still hiding from campers. Pretty quiet today more cat pee smell.

12 PM. Really tired of not being able to cook. Want these campers to leave!! Scaring all the wildlife away. Feeling tired.

2 PM – In tent – tired – have a cold? More rain – more cat pee smell.

6 PM – Feel like crap!

September 29

In tent – feel terrible. Camper are still here. Did not sleep well last night. Coughing, phlegm. Campers up yelling last night. Another car show(ed) up. More yelling. A fight? Party starts up late goes very late. Just want the people to leave!!

6 PM – More yelling – “I need my friggin meth! Get cooking” These guys are tweakers! Crap! Crap! I need to get out of here. Too tired to run out – maybe feel better tomorrow

10 PM – More party. Feel a little better. Maybe I can leave tomorrow. Long walk!!

September 30

Thurs?

Last night – not sure when – more yelling. Think someone else came to their camp. Feeling better – very stuffy – need to find more TP to blow my nose. Light rain. Just normal voices from the tweakers

4 PM -

5 PM -

6 PM –

7 PM –

8 PM –

9 PM – maybe Emerson – not sure

10 PM

October 1

Feeling better today. Again last night more trouble with the tweakers – more cursing – I think I slept through a lot of the noise. Something came through my camp – probably raccoons – food is in secure boxes so nothing taken

4 PM -

5 PM -

6 PM –

7 PM –

8 PM – Emerson? Can't tell. Don't want to use flashlight because of meth heads

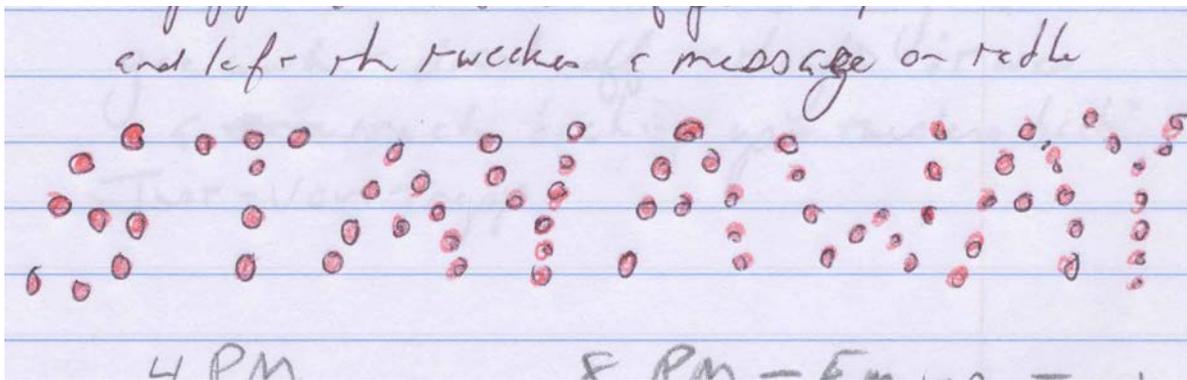
9 PM –

10 PM

October 2

Tweakers are gone! Last night again more noise. Someone visiting them. “who's there(?)” – gun shots – lots of cursing - maybe a bear in their food? Lots of doors slamming – heard cars driving out – saw light from heads (*headlights?*) as they cleared out – Slept Great!

Went over to where the tweakers were camped. They left a lot of food, some clothes, tarp – folding table and a case of pseudofed – score! Just the thing for my cold. Took a few boxes of Psuedofed and some cookies. I set down at their camp picnic table a(nd) popped out a bunch of psuedofeds and left the tweakers a message on the table.



4 PM -

5 PM -

6 PM –

7 PM –

8 PM – Emerson – Back on Perch!

9 PM –

10 PM – Von Trapp is back! All is well

October 3

Good day! Went for a short hike. Ate well today. Feel pretty good. Light rain – might go get the tweeker tarp if this gets serious. No need to be soaked.

4 PM –

5 PM -

6 PM – Deer? Can't tell, lots of noise – would like to see some

7 PM –

8 PM – Emerson?

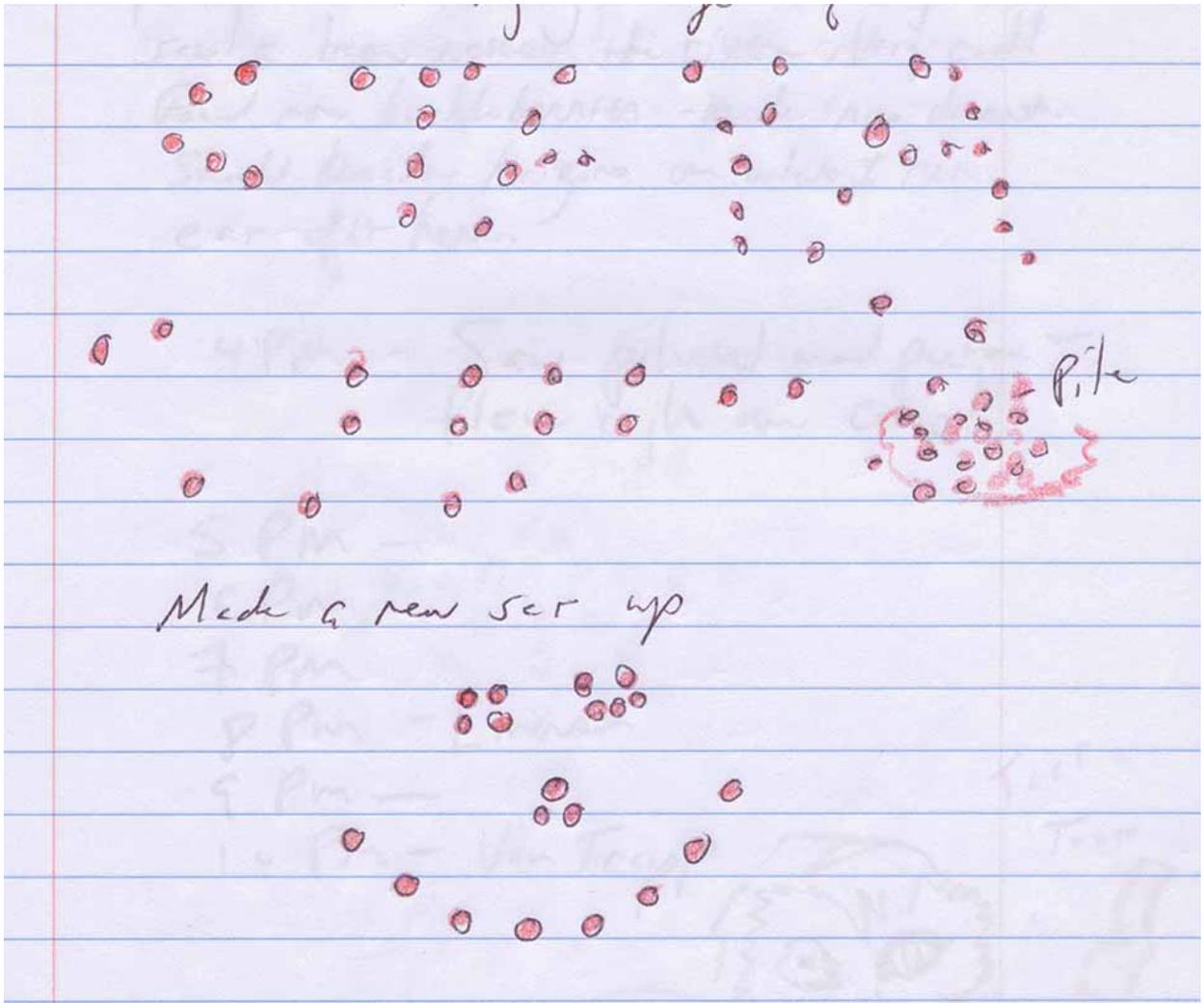
9 PM –

10 PM – Von Trapp – goes on for 2 hrs toot! Toot! The old recorder got a good (?) work (*work out*) – dosed off – thought it was a track (*tractor?*) backing up – tweekers back? Just – Von Trapp

October 4

More light rain this morning. Went to tweekers camp and got tarp. Something had messed with my message – squirrels?

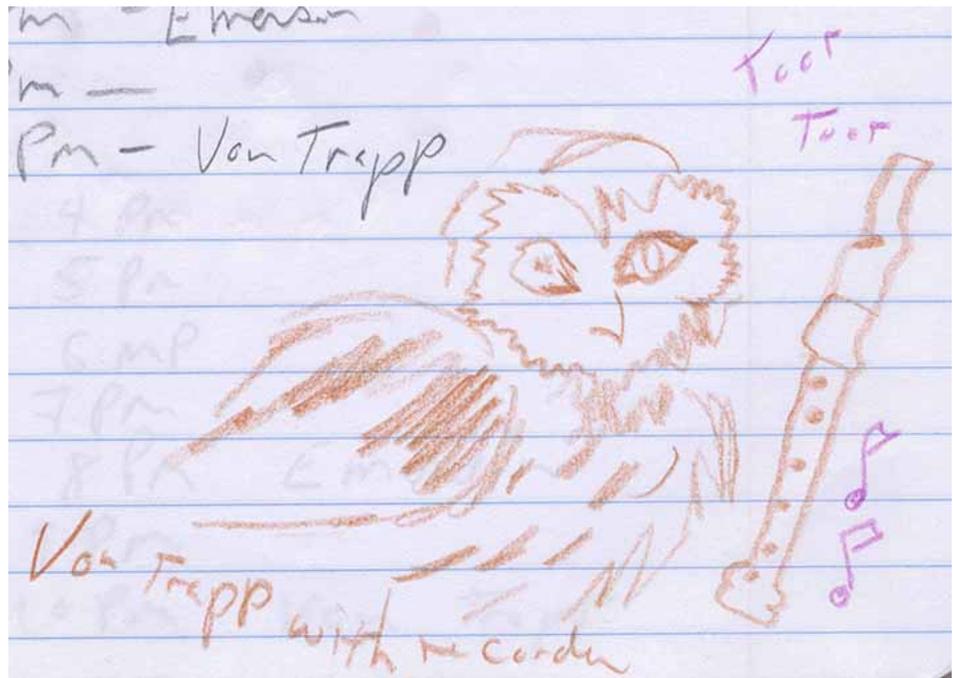
Made a new set up



- 4 PM -
- 5 PM -
- 6 PM -
- 7 PM -
- 8 PM - Emerson
- 9 PM -
- 10 PM - Von Trapp

October 5

Another good day. Feel like I am finally settled in again. Went on a long hike. Saw a bear across the river. Very cool! Found more huckleberries – made nice dessert. Should broaden horizons on what I can eat out here.



4 PM – Saw pileated wood pecker – flew right over camp!!

5 PM -

6 PM –

7 PM –

8 PM – Emerson

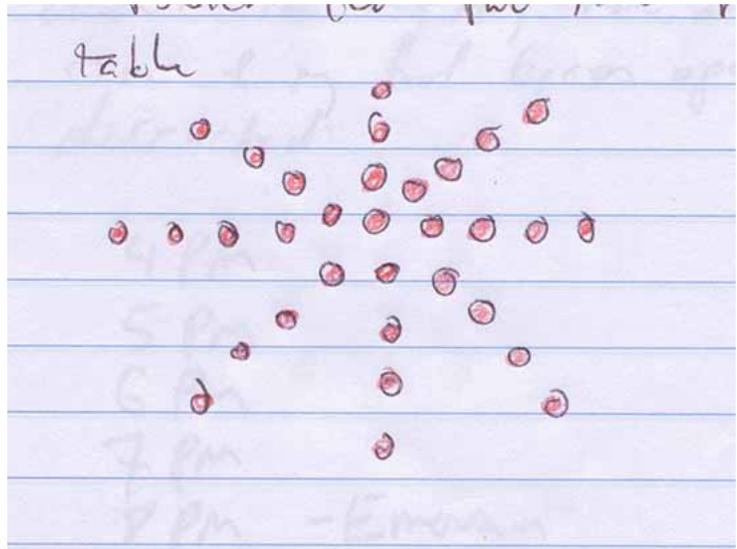
9 PM –

10 PM – Von Trapp

October 6

Went back to tweakers camp – found six of beer – another score. All of the pseudo fed missing from table. Took rest of case. Might be useful someday. Give out as house warming gifts.

Made a new pattern from Pseudo fed – Put it on my table



4 PM -
5 PM -
6 PM –
7 PM –
8 PM – Emerson
9 PM –
10 PM – Von Trapp

October 7

Went on long hike down middle fork road (Forest Serv. Rd. 110) saw couple of cars drive by not sure where they go?

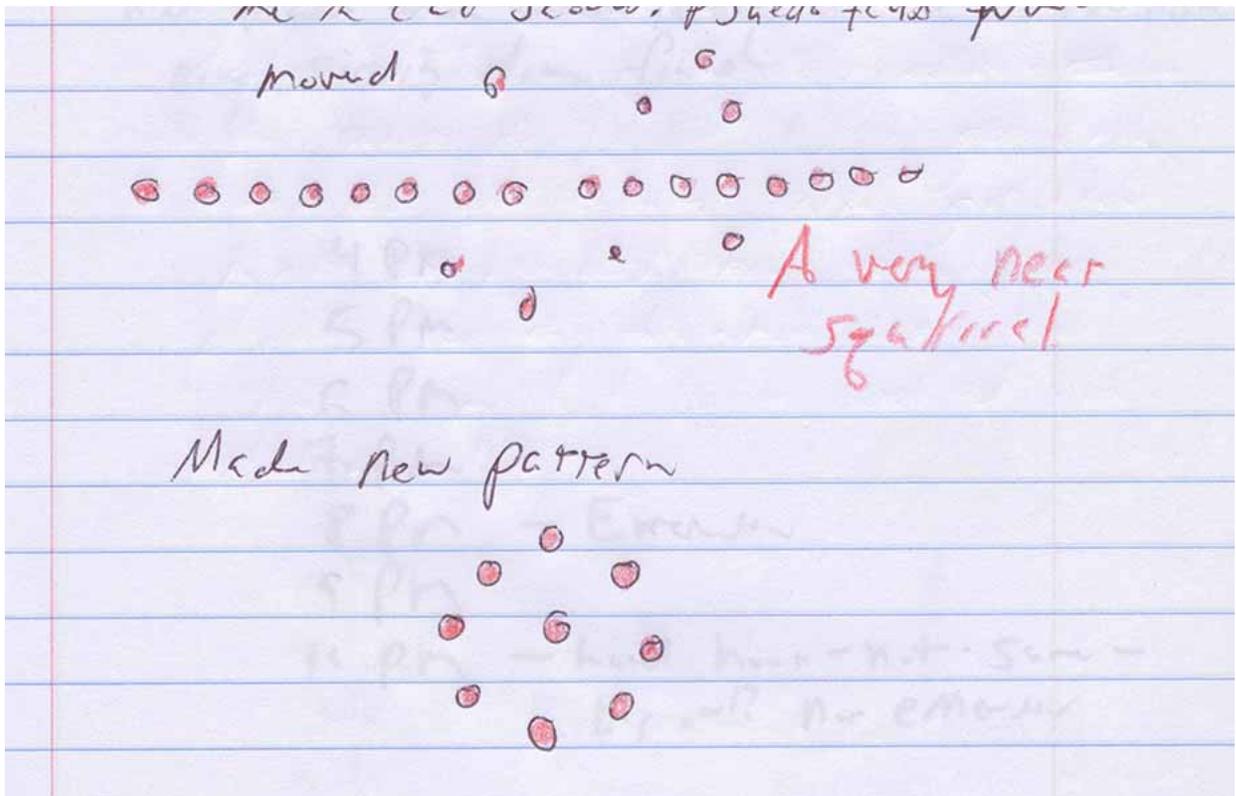
Found trail up in to mountains took most of day to get over saddle - rewarded by beautiful lakes. Took a dip in cold water. Nice warm day for it. Didn't get back to camp till late. When got back heard something loud moving through brush – didn't see anything – more deer? Bear? One of my food boxes opened – nothing disturbed.

4 PM -
5 PM -
6 PM –
7 PM –
8 PM – Emerson
9 PM –
10 PM – Von Trapp

October 8

Something loud in brush last night. Grabbed one of my pots – banged it. I think I scared it off. Tied up food this morning like they taught me in cub scouts. Psuedo fed were moved

(J.C.) Made new pattern



- 4 PM -
- 5 PM -
- 6 PM -
- 7 PM -
- 8 PM - Emerson
- 9 PM -
- 10 PM - No Von Trapp

October 9

Heard more noises in brush – caught something big in brush with flashlight – bear?
Made big pot of mac & cheese for lunch – had feast with beer / cookies. Went for hike, now sitting down finish (mac & cheese)

4 PM -

5 PM -

6 PM –

7 PM –

8 PM – Emerson

9 PM –

10 PM – Loud hoot – not sure – big owl? Not Emerson

October 10

Made tea from pine (*probably Douglas Fir?*) needles – not too bad. Goes well with dried fruit.
Went on another walk along Taylor River, found huge patch of blueberries – kind of old but still good.

Made dinner – had double ramen with Jerky – interesting. Noticed a mushroom was in broth. I didn't put it in. Maybe something came through camp when I went off to pee?



4 PM -

5 PM -

6 PM –

7 PM –

8 PM – Emerson –Great hooting

9 PM –

10 PM – Another loud hoot? Not an owl! Relaxed at camp

VERY CHILL

flashlight made cool patterns in the woods

No date

Far away in exile (*exile?*)
in the forest where I rest

Shapes move but don't resolve
leaves glow and then fade away

A home for those escaping
for those who have come to hide

I'm a stranger asleep in trees
good-night from the land of Nod

