

This was the last day in Mexico and my last "life" bird was a pyrrhulaxia somewhere north of Monterrey. We left Laredo at 8 P.M. and drove steadily, reaching Memphis 24 hours later.

The people in Mexico are most friendly, but very poor. A farmer, and the majority are farmers, works all day for 3 pesos, about 45 cents. They live in pathetic one-room bamboo huts without windows or floor. Sanitary conveniences are totally lacking most everywhere. Generally speaking water is very scarce and must be carried great distances. How they keep so clean, for they and their clothes are clean, is a mystery to me.

Travelling in Mexico is very inexpensive. We seldom paid more than \$1.50 apiece even for the best room. Food, too, was reasonable--the largest dinner we attempted to eat cost about 75¢ and we could not eat all of it. Some day I would like to return to that hotel with a better appetite!

COMMON TERN TWICE CATCHES A FALLING FISH

By
Harold B. Wood

We were watching the common terns feeding in the receding breakers on the beach at Beach Haven, New Jersey. One tern was seen to catch in its bill a shiner minnow and start flying westward with its prey. It flew close enough for us to distinctly see the silvery stripe of the minnow, perhaps 20 feet away, and flying about 15 feet above the sand. The fish fell from the tern's bill; the bird dived and caught it before it had fallen perhaps 5 feet. The fish wriggled loose again and the bird again dived down and caught the fish the second time and began to fly away. Thereon the fish immediately escaped the third time, all within a distance short enough for us to see all that occurred. The tern seemed to look down at the falling minnow, which was now about 5 feet above the sand. The tern evidently judged that it could not recover its prey without striking against the sand, as we believed it would, but continued its flight, fishless, landward to its nestlings.

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AN EXPERIMENT WITH PAINT ON BIRD TRAPS

by
Merrill Wood

Black paint appears to improve the efficiency of a trap, not because it matches the background but because it increases the visibility of the bait inside the trap. During 1948 five identical chardonneret traps with inside water baths for bait, were placed along the edge of a wood in State College, Pa. These traps, kept on the ground which was covered with brown oak leaves, were placed 10 feet apart and were rotated to remove the factor of location. The paint used on the trap and the percent of the total birds taken were: black--40%; green--28%; brown--12%; white--8%; and unpainted (weathered grey)--12%. This is a contribution from the Pennsylvania Agricultural Experiment Station Project 1099.

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