

several hundred yards to the woodland on a circuitous route, making a noticeably slow and labored return against the strong wind. It seemed that the flycatchers sought all their food in the distant woodland. They never were seen perched anywhere in the dead forest, except close by or on the nest-tree, immediately before entering the nest or immediately after leaving it.

Since there are many decaying or partly decayed live-oaks in the woodland offering apparently suitable nesting sites, and since the skeletons of the sand-killed trees come right up to the sand wall at the edge of the woodland, it is puzzling that these birds should go so far out into the wasteland, so far from their foraging area, to establish their nests. In flying between the edge of the woodland and the nest sites, the birds passed dozens of dead trees, every one of which contained cavities that appeared (to the human eye) to be identical with those chosen by the birds. I am certain that none of these was being used by other birds, so that competition could not have been a factor in selecting the sites. This open wasteland, dotted with dead trees, is entirely free of snakes and other predators, so that the nests, because of their location, were completely insured against predatory enemies; but is it reasonable to suppose that the flycatchers could realize that fact, and act accordingly? The nests would also have been immune from attack in dead trees near the sand wall adjacent to the foraging area; in other years, I have found crested flycatchers nesting here, within 20 yards of the woodland.—WILLIAM L. ENGELS, *Department of Zoology, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N. C.*

Probable destruction of queen bees by swallows.—Mr. Fred M. Sickler of Bonsall, California, noted my article (*Condor*, 47: 261–264, 1945) on swallows selecting drone bees. He is of the opinion that birds cause a very negligible loss of worker bees, that the loss of drones is a good riddance, and that swallows do real harm in eating queen bees.

Mr. Sickler writes: "This summer I noticed large numbers of barn, cliff and green-back swallows flying about 100 feet above one of my apiaries for several weeks. Fifteen parent hives became queenless after swarming, a real loss in more ways than one. Worker bees fly close to the ground whereas queens and drones fly high and slow. There was no loss of queens at another apiary three miles away where no swallows had appeared."

To the list of bee-eating birds which appeared in the above quoted article, Mr. Sickler adds the California shrike, *Lanius ludovicianus gambeli*, and Brewer's black-bird, *Euphagus cyanocephalus*. I saw a California brown towhee, *Pipilo fuscus*, apparently pick up and eat a bee from the alighting board of my hive, but as I have seen this only once I cannot be sure of the case.—CHAPMAN GRANT, 2970 Sixth Ave., San Diego, California.

Fall aggregations of cliff swallows in the Allegheny Mountains.—For the past 20 years I have been observing aggregations of northern cliff swallows, *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*, in fall migration through West Virginia and Maryland sections of the Alleghenies. These aggregations are usually to be found during the last week of August and the first 10 days of September. They almost invariably occur in elevated valleys between the high Allegheny ridges. I have not found large flocks of migrating cliff swallows in autumn in any lowland section of the region.

One of the remarkable features of these aggregations is that the birds return to the same sections of telephone and power line wire each season. Mr. Brown Beard of Bartow, West Virginia, a careful observer, tells me that in 30 years the swallows have not failed to appear along a certain section of State Highway No. 28, near his