

have suffered the loss of an ardent bird student,—one whose whole-souled admiration for the varied charms of Nature was outwardly reflected in his generous and impulsive disposition, and be it further

*Resolved* that these resolutions be enrolled in the minutes of this meeting and a copy transmitted to the family of our deceased member.

Thus has another naturalist joined the "innumerable caravan" which, let us hope, leads to a keener perception of those mysteries of nature which we would all attain.

C. BARLOW.



### Nesting Observations on the Black Phoebe.

BY F. B. JEWETT.

[Read before the Southern Division of the Cooper Orn. Club, Jan. 8, 1898.]

**M**Y observations have been confined to one pair of birds which have nested on my barn for some eight years past. While I cannot state positively that it has been the same pair during the entire term I am led to believe that such is the case. During the first two or three years the birds changed the site of their nest frequently, probably owing to some disturbance, for afterwards when I guarded them against interference they chose a site which they have occupied ever since. The nest they now occupy is situated on the north side of the barn under the ridge-pole, almost inaccessible except with a long ladder. On account of this, my observations of the inside of the nest have been by means of a mirror attached above.

Both birds assisted in the construction of the nest, one working while the other kept watch. Both also incubated, dividing the work equally, as nearly as I could judge. In most cases the eggs were laid on consecutive days, incubation commencing immediately after the laying of the last egg. The young grew at a great rate and kept the old birds busy from morning to night bringing food. They remained in the nest on an average about two weeks, or until it was too small for them. After leaving the nest the old birds continued to

feed them for some time. It was a ludicrous sight to see five fluffy youngsters ranged one after the other on the rose-bush stakes, with quivering, outstretched wings and constant plaintive cries waiting their turn to be fed by the parents. The old birds took them one after another, never seeming to make a mistake as to whose turn it was next.

The youngsters were voracious little things; watch as long as I would I never saw one satiated. After feeding them as long as they thought advisable, the old birds abandoned the young and started a new brood. In this way three broods were generally reared in each year, the first and second usually consisting of five, and the last of four birds. The youngsters never remained long after they had been turned adrift, usually disappearing on the third day.

The birds have used the same nest for four years, tearing out the old lining and replacing it with new at the beginning of each season and mending places that had been broken. In 1896 eggs were laid April 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, and hatched on April 21, 22 and 23. Young birds left the nest May 9 and were abandoned by the old birds on May 27. One of them became entangled in the horse-hair lining of the nest, fell over the side, and was strangled to death; his remains are still hanging there as a reminder of the fate of a too precocious Black Phoebe. In 1897, by March 29, the old birds were busy tearing out the old lining and replacing with the new. Eggs were laid April 7, 8, 10 and 12; incubation began April 15, the eggs hatched on May 1 and the young left the nest May 15. I am under the impression that this brood fell victims to cats as they disappeared suddenly before they were able to take care of themselves.



Mr. R. B. MORAN, of San Luis Obispo, will present through the Club a paper on the nesting habits of the Black Oyster-catcher, as observed on the coast of San Luis Obispo County. He remarks the tameness of the birds and hopes to secure some interesting photographs of them next season.