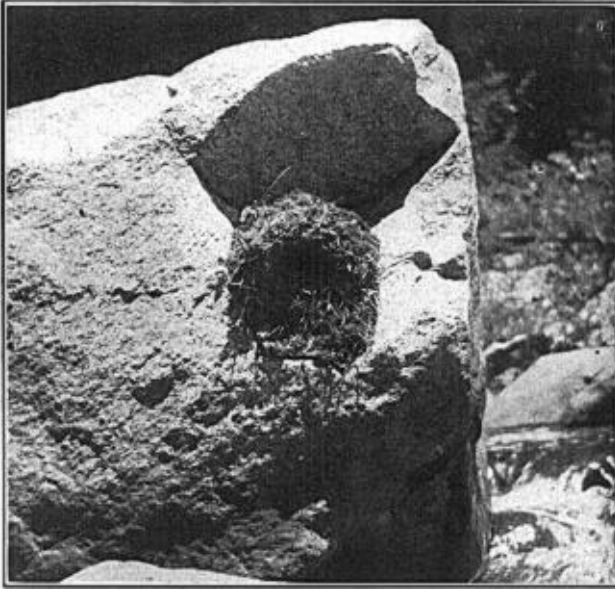


some other individual, was last seen June 26, perched on the topmost branch of a tall eucalyptus, where its loud call rang forth as in the coniferous forests of its usual summer home, the Transition and Canadian zones.—WALTER K. FISHER.



A WATER OUSEL'S NEST

A Water Ouzel's Nest.—The accompanying photograph of a water ouzel's nest (*Cinclus mexicanus*) was secured on the San Lorenzo, in Santa Cruz County, California. The nest was beautifully situated on the down-stream side of a big rock in the middle of rapids, where the water was boiling all around it. Although taken in 1897, the nest was so round and compactly built that it is in perfect shape to-day, and the moss has a green, fresh look. The inside of the nest is lined with twigs, strips of redwood bark, and bay leaves.—GEORGE S. TOWNE, *Palo Alto, Cal.*

Bell Sparrow (*Amphispiza belli*) in Santa Clara Co., California—On March 31, 1904, I took two specimens of Bell sparrow near the San Antonio Creek (locally known as Adobe Creek) in the foothills of Black Mountain (Monte Bello)

Santa Clara Co., California. At least two others of the same species were seen, and since the specimens secured proved to be male and female adults, with sex organs well developed and enlarged, it is very probable that the species breeds here.—HUBERT O. JENKINS, *Stanford Univ., Cal.*

Nesting Habits of the Rock Wren.—Noting Mrs. Bailey's most interesting article on the rock wren (*Salpinctes obsoletus*) permit me herewith to quote a few lines on this interesting wren from my note book.

During the years of 1898 and 1899, while sojourning in San Antonio, Texas, it was my good fortune to run across a colony of eight or ten pairs of rock wrens. Near the head of the San Antonio River in the northern suburbs of the city where the land is broken, of a limestone formation with almost no surface soil and covered with prickly pear and laurel, is quite an extensive lime-stone quarry. This, with its immediate environs, is the home of the colony of rock wrens, and was where I located and examined thirteen nests as follows: *Nest 1*, April 2, 1898; building in crevice in wall of quarry 20 feet up, the male assisting in its construction. This nest now before me, and which is typical of this colony, is composed outwardly of weed stalks and dead grasses with a heavy layer of fine rootlets, the inner nest being fairly well cupped and heavily lined with grayish goat hair. Inside diameter of this nest is $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches with a depth of $1\frac{1}{8}$ inches, the whole being placed in and upon a cup-shaped foundation or rim composed of numerous and various sized flat stones deposited by the birds, the interstices and uneven places on bottom of crevice being filled with these stones, forming a walk to the nest which was placed 8 inches in from face of wall. There must have been at least a half pint of these lime-stone chips, and it seems incredible how so small a bird with so slender a bill can carry stones of such a size and weight to such a height. Measurements of three of the larger stones before me are as follows: $2\frac{1}{8}$ by $\frac{3}{4}$ by $\frac{1}{4}$; $1\frac{1}{2}$ by 1 by $\frac{3}{8}$; $1\frac{3}{4}$ by $\frac{3}{4}$ by 3-16. In weight they each run something over one-fourth of an ounce. On April 15th this nest contained 6 eggs.

Nest 2, April 2, building. This nest was placed in a small cavity in a pile of loose refuse rock and debris 3 feet up, the material being practically identical with that of No. 1. This nest rested in a cup-shaped foundation of flat stones. No signs of a walk existed, possibly owing to lack of space. On April 26th nest contained 6 newly hatched young. During incubation the male was quite wary but very attentive to his mate, taking her all the most choice morsels in the way of small beetles. On April 7th I was rewarded by locating three nests. *Nest 3* con-

tained 5 young about 5 days old, material and location practically the same as No. 1; nest foundation of stones and walk of stones extending about 10 inches. *Nest 4* contained 5 young 10 or 12 days old; nest placed in small cavity formed by root of tree 10 feet up in wall of quarry. Nest was typical, placed in shallow cup-shaped foundation of stones; no room in cavity for walk. *Nest 5* contained 6 young 10 or 12 days old. Nest was placed in cavity under boulders on bottom of quarry and had the usual stone foundation; two matches, a few splinters of wood, lining of black goat hair and considerable wool, especially round the rim; no sign of a walk. *Nest 6* contained 3 eggs; typical; location practically same as No. 5; cup-shaped foundation of rocks; no sign of a walk. *Nest 7*, April 8, 1899, containing 6 young, one week old; nest situated in crevice in wall of quarry; typical stone foundation and 9 inches of walk. *Nest 8*, April 11, containing 5 young a few days old. Nest typical, placed in cavity in wall of stone powder magazine; usual stone foundation; slight walk of stones. *Nest 9*, April 15, containing 5 fresh eggs; nest typical; location, foundation and walk same as No. 1. *Nest 10*, April 29; in a cavity formed by large rocks on bottom of quarry; nest typical, usual cup-shaped stone foundation, no sign of walk; 6 eggs. *Nest 11*, May 18, containing 7 eggs; nest, location and foundation same as No. 10; no sign of stone walk. *Nest 12*, June 3, containing 7 eggs; nest typical, placed in crevice in wall of quarry 10 feet up; usual foundation of stones, also 7 inch walk; evidently second nest of pair of birds, whose nest was located on April 8th. *Nest 13*, June 3, containing 7 eggs. This nest was typical, but the location was quite unusual, the structure being placed in a small waste or outlet pipe in an old open cistern. This pipe was 4 inches in diameter and about 3 feet from top of cistern. This nest had quite an extensive walk and stone foundation consisting of at least a pint of stones.

Summing up the above it will be seen that where the nests were located at the bottom of the quarry there was no attempt at building a walk, but when the nest was situated in a crevice the walk was invariably there provided. Of course there was room for it. In every case, however, the cup or saucer-shaped foundation was there. Query: could not this walk have been built to keep the young birds from falling into the crevices or getting their feet caught in same? I find that as a rule two broods are raised in a season and that their food consists to a large extent of a species of beetle which they find in the crevices of the rocks.

One interesting trait and one which I should judge to be purely local is their habit of dodging under a boulder or overhanging rock upon the loud report of a blast, and remaining there until the shower of falling rock is over. They are then among the first upon the ground, searching fearlessly among the Mexican quarrymen for such beetles as may have become exposed by the blast. They seem perfectly fearless of the quarrymen and the heavy cannonading, but on the appearance of a stranger they become quite perturbed and suspicious and very cautious in going to their nests. It was some days or even weeks before they permitted any familiarity whatever on my part. How they stand the terrific heat and glare in that quarry during July and August is a mystery to me.—PHILO W. SMITH, JR., *St. Louis, Mo.*

Melanism in *Buteo borealis calurus*.—While overhauling a number of *Buteo* skins a few months ago there was one which did not answer the tag *B. swainsoni*. On comparing it with some dark phases of *Buteo borealis calurus* of the last month's collecting I found this particular skin to be a beautiful melanistic phase of *calurus*. It is a female, number 1446, coll. W. O. E., Haywards., Cal., August 20, 1897. The general color of the plumage is a blackish brown over the whole body, with a purplish reflection on the back and wings; the edges of the feathers of the breast, belly and thighs washed with chestnut brown; thighs also sparsely mottled with the same color. The measurements are: length 22 inches, wing 17 inches; while another female taken December 18, 1903, measures 23¾ inches in length, wing 18¼ inches. This specimen compares more with some dark phases of *B. swainsoni*. The rufous tail is black-banded, twice as deep as in a typical red-tail, and is edged with same at end. The head and throat are rufous black, fore-breast more grayish, belly brownish black, thighs rufous, barred with black, wings dusky brown and black, edged and slightly barred with grayish white; upper and under tail-coverts similar to thighs. A slight purplish reflection is seen over the wings, but not so much as on the first bird described.

In a large series of these hawks there are rarely two out of five but show a difference in the plumage color. Seven out of twelve before me run either to a light or dark phase; some with grayish backs, others with dark brownish black or chestnut. The throat, breast and belly run from ochraceous gray to reddish brown, chestnut and yellowish white.—W. OTTO EMERSON, *Haywards, Cal.*

A Few Notes on Bird Life at Three Rivers, Tulare Co., Cal.—The varied thrushes have been here in numbers, and the plain titmouse (*Bæolophus inornatus*) is giving out its pleasant call: *wheetit, wheetit, wheetit*. Band-tailed pigeons (*Columba fasciata*) have been and