

Fresh eggs may be looked for after the 20th of May though some pairs breed much earlier. I found one nest containing three newly hatched young May 25. The young did not appear to be over a day or two old, yet I heard them cheeping at a distance of about a rod, and by following the sound, located the nest.

No amount of watching on my part has ever enabled me to locate a nest being built. I have found a number of occupied nests, but it has always been by flushing the bird as I passed close by. The first week of June is the height of the nesting season. The male sings quite continuously in the vicinity of the nest. The latter is built of grass and lined with fine grass, closely resembling the nest of the Arizona Junco, but better built. The eggs are pure white, usually three in number. They are slightly smaller than the eggs of the Junco, and can be distinguished from immaculate specimens of the latter by this difference in size, and by the fact that they show no trace of a blue shading as Juncos' eggs always do.

When flushed from the nest the bird flies silently away, close to the ground, until the shelter of a bush is reached. Then she begins to scold vigorously but does not come back near the nest. When the young begin to fly, both parents are kept busy supplying them with food, which they demand most vociferously. At this time both the adults are very solicitous and set up a terrible scolding if the young are approached at all closely. The nest is carefully concealed under a rock overhung with dead grass, or under the leaves of a mesal plant. The nest, of which a photograph accompanies this article (see fig. 79), was found May 24, 1907, and is typical in every respect. Incubation was advanced.—F. C. WILLARD.

White-winged Dove in the San Diegan District.—I have recently examined a mounted specimen of the White-winged Dove (*Melopelia asiatica trudeaui*) in the possession of Mr. John Johnson, Jr., of Escondido. The bird was shot at a point not over five miles from the Pacific Ocean, at an elevation of about 200 feet. The locality is about ten miles due west from Escondido in an air line.

I am inclined to think that the specimen is a bird-of-the-year, as there is a rusty tinge at the tips of the feathers. It was in company with Mourning Doves, but seemed to feel out of place.

As to the date of capture, Mr. Johnson said it was three weeks before the quail season opened last year (1911). That would bring it about September 25.—JOSEPH DIXON.

Paroquet Auklet in Humboldt County.—Buzz-z-z-z-z—Bang! Was the way one Andy Aiton described the first appearance of this little auklet. It was about 8 o'clock in the evening of February 7, 1909, near the corner of First and E Streets, Eureka, California. Mr. Aiton was standing on the street in front of his barber-shop, when a whirl of wings and a sharp crack, was followed by the dropping of a Paroquet Auklet (*Cyclorhynchus psittaculus*) to the street from above.

It was a dark stormy night; the drizzling rain growing into a dense fog, with a strong wind blowing, turned the night into a dreary haze. The auklet was evidently lost, and, probably attracted by the street lights, flew blindly against an overhead telephone wire, thereby stunning itself and causing it to fall to the street below. On picking it up, Mr. Aiton found the bird alive.

He gave the bird to a local taxidermist, who after skinning it, failed to ascertain the sex. I secured the skin in its fresh state and afterwards turned it over to Mr. F. J. Smith, in whose mounted collection it was placed.

This is probably the second record and the sixth specimen, of the rare little Paroquet Auklet for the state of California.—C. I. CLAY.

An Elevated Camp.—Last spring I wanted to lead the simple life close to nature by camping out, and built the usual camp on the ground, but hogs and cattle, besides skunks and rattlesnakes, run free about here. The accompanying photo shows the alternative chosen in preference to building a fence around the tent; and such a camp has several advantages over the ground camp. The platform, if anything, is easier built than a "hog-tight" fence, as is usually done here; I never heard of a "skunk-tight" fence being attempted. Possibly the yarns about skunks are stretched, as they never bothered me. If food is not dropped on the ground, rats and mice are much less troublesome, as they apparently do not climb oak trees in search of food; and ants are entirely eliminated by painting a ring of kerosene, or smearing pitch around the main poles between tent and points of support. The platform is about eight by sixteen feet.

The available dry space is more than doubled, and I have shelves and a punching bag on the "first floor", and considerable chemical apparatus to occupy my time profitably dur-

ing stormy weather. A pyramid miners' tent covering a space of six and one half by seven feet was found to give plenty of room for all purposes. The floor is of boards and has a trap door, so that wet coat and hat may be removed below and left there, the tent being entered by a ladder. We had a snow storm just after putting this up, and it was very much less damp, and with better ventilation than any ground camp I have occupied, as the snow fell away, instead of piling up around the tent.

A brush fence is often built around tents here, but in hot weather this increases the heat, besides causing danger from fire. My camp was safe and very comfortable in the hottest weather, as the brush was cut and burned for fifty feet all around, making it practically fire-proof.

It has caused more or less local comment, one remark being that it must be tiresome to live in such a small space, which of course cannot cause anything but a smile from a field ornithologist. The weather here is mostly fine, if windy, so that I have "all out of doors" to live in. I simply sleep and occasionally work in the tent, the "kitchen" being at a little distance and roofed over with boards.

The wildest available locality was selected, my judgment of the place being confirmed by a pair of Pileated Woodpeckers raising their brood nearby. The nest was certainly not



Fig. 80. AERIAL CAMP IN THE WOODS OF SOUTHERN OREGON,
AS CONTRIVED BY C. W. BOWLES

more than 200 yards away, yet I was never able to catch them going to it. They seemed to take special delight in parading their young in Indian file, on all the trees around my camp, as often on the trees supporting it as anywhere else. From May 15 to 20 seems to be about the best time for nearly fresh eggs in this latitude.

The camp was in a stretch of heavy oak, fir and pine timber one mile long and a half mile wide, on a level bench near a steep bank, about fifty feet high, at the foot of which are the Illinois River and a large swamp covered with pines, cottonwoods and brush. Monotony at night was dispelled by all kinds of noises, great horned, screech and pigmy owls being conspicuous, but there seemed to be only one pair each of the first and last named.

Late in the summer what were probably a pair of long ears (had a glimpse of one in daylight) kept up their cries for hours at a time. It seemed like the harsh grinding of the brake on a heavy cart wheel going down hill, but was in single, monotonous notes, about every forty to sixty seconds, and sounded like "creak—creak—creak", ad lib., as the doctors say. The pigmys at first started calling pretty much anywhere in the neighborhood, but finally the sound started every evening from about the same place for one of each series of

notes. One, probably the male's, was a very high pitched staccato affair, and the other similar but much lower, softer and more liquid. The soft notes finally started in one place about 200 yards away, but for some reason this fact did not dawn on me until it was too late to see if a nest might be located by waiting every evening nearer and nearer to the apparent location. The other bird appeared to roost in one place most of the time, but not always, and much farther off. Both were in the heavy timber away from the open stretches.

High up on the Big Elder Trail, leading from Waldo, Oregon, to Althouse Creek, another owl was heard, apparently not a variation of the great horned owl's call, although it must have been a large owl. The notes were "Hoot—hoot-toot—hoo-oo-o-o-o". The long dashes represent pauses of fully two seconds each, the first three notes being very short and sharp, while the last was prolonged for about a second, making each song (?) last about five seconds. This was the regular call and never varied on the two or three occasions that I passed there at night.

In the dark I traveled by feeling the trail with my feet in the inky darkness of the big fir timber; it is curious that it is possible to walk quite fast that way, the ground on each side of the trail being so much softer in the woods and rougher in rocky places, that the difference is instantly noticeable to the feet if the trail is left.

Several pairs of Hermit Thrushes kept the "desolate woods" anything but desolate around my camp during the day, but I have never yet heard a Willow Thrush—that is if the note is anything like the Wilson Thrush. Capen describes this as being like the sound made when a marble is rolled around in a big iron kettle, which seems to me not a bad description, as, although the sound varies, it lacks the sharp change of other thrush notes that I have heard. Hermit and Black-throated Gray warblers were also conspicuous neighbors around my camp, but most of the birds of this section prefer more open country.

Hummingbirds also nest in the big timber, probably more often than anywhere else, judging from the number of males, although I have found only three nests. One was about one hundred feet from my tent, forty feet from the ground in one of the largest firs; it was about twenty feet out on a small twig and beneath a large branch. Males killed by a cat in Kerby were Rufous, making it probable that the nest near camp belonged to that species although the male was not seen during the whole season. The special attraction of the neighborhood to the female was the large pile of ashes left from the brush I had burned. Apparently she came at least five times every day throughout the nesting season, as I was seldom at camp without at least one visit. On each occasion she would dip down into the ashes five or six times and pick up a mouthful, once about six feet from me. Apparently it was ashes she wanted and not small specks of charcoal. I was sorely tempted to shoot her

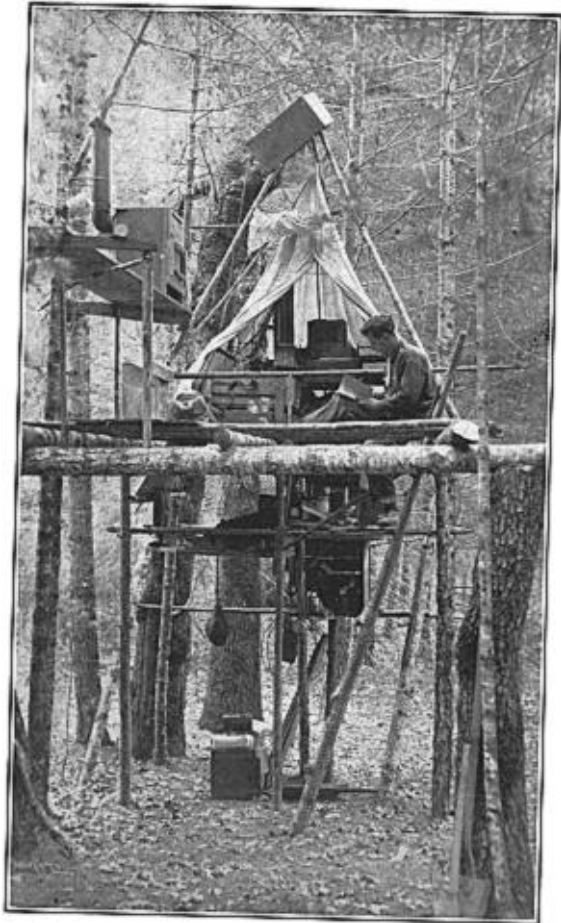


Fig. 81. C. W. BOWLES' CAMP AT KERBY, OREGON, IN SUMMER, SHOWING DETAILED CONSTRUCTION

to settle this point. At each dive, the suggestion of a violent tornado in miniature, as shown by the dust of the ashes, was very striking.—CHARLES W. BOWLES.

Egrets in California.—As the total extinction of the Egret (*Herodias egretta*) and the Snowy Egret (*Egretta candidissima candidissima*) has been prophesied, the following records should be of interest. A trip into the marsh lands southeast of Los Banos, Merced County, California, on July 11, 1912, revealed the fact that these two birds still exist in small numbers in this state.

A flock of seventeen egrets was first noted. The birds were first seen quietly standing about in an open marshy field. On nearer approach they took flight and were seen to settle down in a field some distance away. Later, a lone Snowy Egret was seen wading about in water about a foot deep. Still later in the day, three Egrets and two Snowy Egrets were seen feeding together. The aigrettes, the valuable feathers which caused the near extinction of these birds, could be seen. In no case would the large egrets permit one to approach nearer than a quarter of a mile. The lone Snowy Egret was approached within a distance of a hundred and fifty yards.

The Fulvous Tree-duck (*Dendrocygna bicolor*) was the bird most abundant in the locality. Other water and shore birds noted were: Pied-billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*), Forster Tern (*Sterna forsteri*), Black Tern (*Hydrochelidon nigra surinamensis*), Ruddy Duck (*Erismatura jamaicensis*), Bittern (*Botaurus lentiginosus*), Least Bittern (*Ixobrychus exilis*), Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias herodias*), Anthony Green Heron (*Butorides virescens anthonyi*), Florida Gallinule (*Gallinula galeata*), Coot (*Fulica americana*), Avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*), Black-necked Stilt (*Himantopus mexicanus*), and Killdeer (*Oxyechus vociferus*).

A Great Blue Heron picked up beneath the wires of an electric power line, where it had evidently accidentally killed itself, furnished abundant evidence as to the economic value of this bird. The stomach of this particular individual contained two large gophers (*Thomomys angularis*), still undigested. Considering the time of digestion one would naturally infer from this, that these birds must need a minimum daily food supply of an equivalent of two gophers. A complete knowledge as to the average number of gophers taken by one of these birds in a day would furnish interesting evidence as to their money value to the rancher. The patience displayed by one of these birds as it watches a gopher hole in an alfalfa field, and the cleverness shown in catching the rodent when it puts in an appearance, have become topics of conversation by many observing ranchers of the state.—H. C. BRYANT.

Blue Jay Imitating Song of Brown Thrasher.—On July 4, a hot, sultry day, while seated near an open window, a Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*) was seen to alight on a bush within twenty feet, and was observed to sing softly a song distinctly resembling that of the Brown Thrasher. Dr. Craig Thoms and I both saw its throat moving as it sang and have not the slightest doubt as to the source of the notes. It was softer and lacked the "ring" but was almost as pretty a song as the Brown Thrasher's own.

Dr. Thoms relates that some ten years ago on a similar hot afternoon in Des Moines, Iowa, he saw and heard a Blue Jay sing just outside of an open window. That time, though, the song was brief and didn't distinctly suggest that of any other common species.—S. S. FISHER.

The Northern Brown Towhee.—In 1899, Richard C. McGregor (Bull. Cooper Orn. Club 1, page 11) gave the name *Pipilo fuscus carolae* to what he at the time regarded as a separable form of the brown towhee from northern California (type from Battle Creek, Shasta County); and the name was adopted by the A. O. U. Committee. Subsequently several writers, including McGregor himself, expressed doubt as to the reality of the assigned characters, and the name was dropped from the A. O. U. List.

Some material has lately come into the California Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, which seems to me to establish adequate grounds for reinstating *carolae* as a valid subspecies. The material representing *carolae* is as follows: Kerby, Josephine County, Oregon, two (nos. 17201, 17202); California: Helena, Trinity County, one (no. 17359); Tower House, Shasta County, two (nos. 17360-17361); Tehama, Tehama County, ten (nos. 22856, 22871-22879); Winslow, Glenn County, five (nos. 22880-22884); Chico, Butte County, two (nos. 22869, 22870); Oroville, Butte County, one (no. 22868); Marysville Buttes, Sutter County, two (nos. 22866, 22867); Carbondale, Amador County, five (nos. 22860-22864); Galt, Sacramento County, one (no. 22865).

Specimens from the latter two localities approach *Pipilo crissalis senicula*, and others, from the rim of the southern San Joaquin Valley, are best referred to that form, the known range of which is hereby extended accordingly. *Pipilo crissalis crissalis* is thus to be considered as restricted to the coast region of west-central California.

The characters separating *carolae* from *crissalis*, are slightly larger size, and paler, more slaty and less brownish, coloration. From *senicula*, *carolae* differs in decidedly larger size and deeper, slaty-brown, tones of coloration. The two skins of *carolae* from Kerby, Oregon, (presented to the Museum by Mr. Charles W. Bowles), show the extreme of large size.—J. GRINNELL.