

As the nest was badly broken in the fall, it was obvious she could not return the youngsters to their original home. Selecting an old tomato can with the top half open, she nailed it to the side of the barn as near the old nest as possible. With parts of the broken nest she made a bed for the young birds and placed them in it. In a couple of hours the parent birds appeared and began to build a "neck" of a nest over the opening in the can.

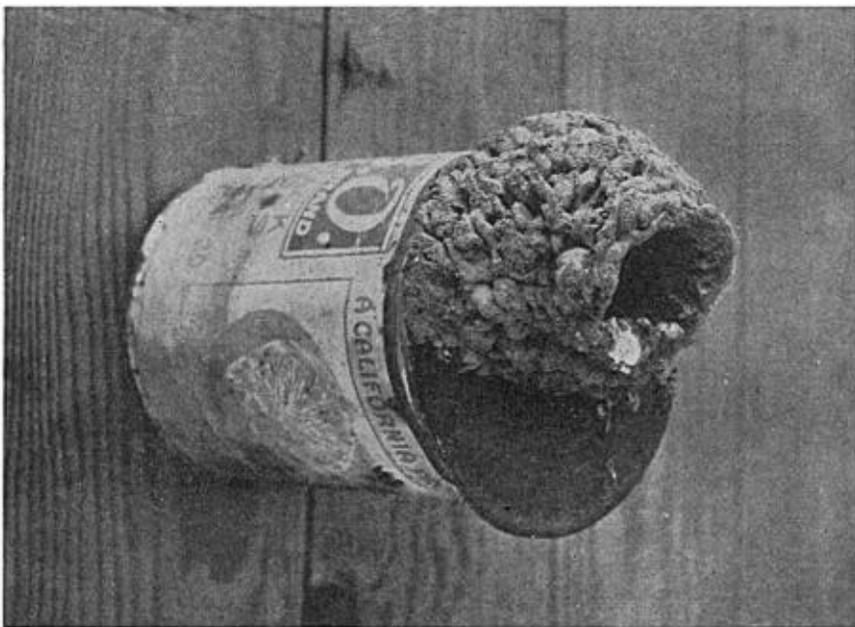


Fig. 45. EMERGENCY NEST OF CLIFF SWALLOW

The young birds were quite content in their new home and the parent birds continued their ministrations until the fledglings took wing and were able to forage for themselves. When the Mossholders moved to a new home some miles distant they remembered the unique nest and took it with them, to be turned over later to the Natural History Museum, Balboa Park, San Diego, where it now occupies a post of honor among the interesting things that make up the Museum's School Educational Exhibit.—W. S. WRIGHT, *Supervisor of Nature Study, Natural History Museum, Balboa Park, San Diego, California, January 5, 1924.*

**Escaped Foreign Cage Bird Survives Winter.**—The future of our fauna is endangered by every introduction of an exotic species, whether purposeful or accidental. Prevention of intentional introductions is difficult enough, but still more difficult is any control over the chance escape of cage birds.

On November 25, 1923, Miss Julia Harbison wrote me regarding a strange bird that had for several days been feeding on toyon berries in her yard near Vacaville, California. Her description left no doubt that the bird concerned was the commonly imported cage bird known as the Canton Grosbeak (*Eophona melanura*).

On January 31, 1924, Miss Harbison again wrote that the bird was still to be seen in the same general locality. The fact that the bird was extremely tame and would drink from a dish of water placed for it seemed to indicate that it had been a cage bird. I suggested that observations on the bird might be worth recording and that a check as to its identity, by the writing of another careful description, would be worth while. On February 13, 1924, Miss Harbison furnished the following description and habit notes:

"The black of the head covers the forehead, crown, lores, chin, part of the throat, and all, or nearly all, of the malar region, ear coverts and occiput. It hardly seems to me to quite cover these last regions, but the black extends well back of and below the eye. The eye is black without a trace of eye-ring or stripe.

"The under parts are light gray, becoming lighter until white on the lower tail coverts. The sides and flanks are lightly washed with pale orange, this color seeming to reach up under the wing.

"The back is darker gray than the under parts, in some lights showing a brownish cast, becoming gradually a lighter gray on the rump to very light on the upper tail coverts. The tail is black and double rounded.

"I may go a little wrong on the wing, but the black seems to be restricted to the primaries, the ends of the primary feathers being white with other white places showing near the end. The rest of the wing is dark gray or brownish gray like the back. (This gray is dark only by comparison with the under parts.) When the bird flies the white of the wings is very conspicuous in patches. At rest, the black hood and the large bill are its most striking features.

"As to the bird's general habits, I can supply only a few meager details, as I have very little leisure to follow it about. Its environment here is an orchard, one and one-half miles from Vacaville. Besides a row of shrubs bearing red berries beside the dwelling, there are, near by, orange trees rather densely foliaged, pepper trees, fig trees, and a walnut tree bare of leaves this time of year. All about are smaller deciduous trees.

"When I see the bird it is most often eating the berries of toyon and of pyracantha, which it seems to like equally well. It eats these literally by the hour, audibly crushing the seeds with its massive bill; I wonder how it gets enough to eat on the days it forsakes our bushes. I have never seen it eat anything else. I have seen it drink twice. Once when I saw it hopping along on the ground in an open space as if looking for something, I thought perhaps water, I placed a saucer of water on the ground; it flew to a near-by clothes-line until I retreated and then hopped down and drank. Another time it flew down from a toyon shrub to a puddle close by and drank.

"Only once have I seen it fly into an orange tree, and perhaps two or three times into the pepper trees. It appears to choose the leafless walnut and fig trees, where it perches either on a low branch or on the very top. I have seen it fly from one tree top to another a hundred yards away. Never have I seen it on the ground except when it was after a drink.

"It does not call very much, which probably accounts for my failure to locate it some days. At first, I used to hear it only early in the morning; but I have since heard it call throughout much of the day. It is always perching in the open trees at such times. When too close approach frightens it, it gives two or three notes and flies away."—HAROLD C. BRYANT, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, April 10, 1924.*

## WITH THE BIRD BANDERS

Under the Direction of J. Eugene Law, Altadena, California

**Annual Census.**—In order to provide a measure of growth of banding activities in the west, a list of all birds banded in the "Western Province" is presented on the inside of the back cover of this issue. Approximately one year has elapsed since effort began to be especially directed to the development of this movement in this region. Prior to this period a half-dozen or less of banders had spontaneously developed and had banded only a modicum of birds.

"Western Province" is here used to designate the Pacific and plateau regions of North America which are naturally delimited by the eastern base of the Rocky Mountains, and it is this region, roughly tied in by state lines, which has been assigned by the Biological Survey to the Cooper Ornithological Club for purposes of promoting banding. Since many of the birds that breed in the north of this province winter in the south of it, it is fitting that the entire region be thus coordinated.