

this territory, carrying on nesting through the autumn period, which includes the month of September. Moreover, this conclusion is in harmony with findings elsewhere in California (see Abbott, *Condor*, XXIX, 1927, pp. 121-123). This situation, come to think of it, is explicable on good natural history grounds. With birds in general the season of breeding is adjusted so as to bring the time of rearing of the young to coincide with the period when food supply is easiest obtainable. With the Band-tailed Pigeon, acorns provide the staff of life; and the acorn crop comes to maturity, ready for harvesting, during the early autumn months.

[I sent a copy of the above note to Mr. Charles W. Michael, for many years resident in Yosemite Valley, and who with his wife carries on regular and carefully recorded observations upon the bird-life there. The Michaels take exception to the implications I have stated, and on excellent grounds. I am glad, as Editor, to be able to present Mr. Michael's rejoinder as the next following "field and study" item.]—J. GRINNELL, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, Berkeley, October 18, 1927.*

Nesting Time of Band-tailed Pigeons in Yosemite Valley.—Without much further evidence than is now in my possession I would not be inclined to accept the idea that Band-tailed Pigeons (*Columba fasciata*) time their nesting season so late as to bring forth their young about the time that they feed most extensively on acorns; for this would mean that the height of the nesting season would come not earlier than September 1. My observations of Band-tailed Pigeons in the Yosemite Valley would seem to indicate that most of the young are fledged before the end of August.

The theory that, with birds in general, the season of breeding is adjusted so as to bring the time of rearing of the young to coincide with the time when food is easiest obtainable might be tenable; but if the acorn crop is considered the easiest obtainable food supply for the pigeon, then I do not believe that the rule here applies. It would seem to me if this theory applied, then there should be many more late nesting species of birds. For instance, the nesting period of the California Woodpecker should correspond with that of the pigeon. Also the Belted Kingfisher should nest late, when the water is low and fish may be speared at will. And why should not the Sparrow Hawk nest late when the grasshoppers are most abundant?

If it is the general habit for Band-tailed Pigeons to arrange their nesting activities to concur with the ripening of the acorns, it is strange that such late nestings have not come to our notice during our eight years of residence in the Valley. And furthermore, if it is their aim to bring their young along with the ripening of the acorns, why nest late this year when their favorite oaks (*chrysolepis*) absolutely failed to produce a crop?

Acorns for the pigeons may provide the staff of life, but if so, the Rhamnus berry provides the spice of life. Strange tastes these pigeons have! In event these two fruits fail the pigeon, why not postpone the nesting season until the time of ripe madrone berries? You know the pigeons dearly love this fruit.

Band-tailed Pigeons have a big advantage over most birds inasmuch as there are two parent birds to take care of a single young. This being the case it would seem to me that they might successfully rear their young most any time of year regardless of any specially abundant food supply. However, I do believe that in the Yosemite Valley their nesting activities are confined principally to the months of June and July. During these months nests have been commonly noted; and I believe we had one record for August, although I fail to find such record among my notes.—CHARLES W. MICHAEL, *Yosemite, California, October 24, 1927.*

Assistant Parentage Among Birds.—On Sunday, July 31, 1927, I was at Grants Park on the Clackamas River a few miles southeast of Portland, Oregon. As the family sat down to a picnic dinner in a grove of alder, maple and fir woods, my attention was attracted to the familiar calling of young robins, *Planesticus migratorius propinquus*. The nest, located about thirty feet from our table, was fourteen feet up in an alder, saddled on three of the lowest limbs next to the tree's main trunk. It was in plain sight and contained three young about half grown. Every few moments the parent female would fly to the nest and feed her young on wild fruits that from our seats looked like *Amelanchier* berries. The male robin was also present and much in sight, but was not seen to feed the young. Before our meal was finished, greatly to our