

## FROM FIELD AND STUDY

**Birds Caught in Spiders' Webs.**—Responding to the hurry call of one of my children about 7 a. m. on April 22, 1931, I found a live Coast Bush-tit (*Psaltriparus minimus minimus*) securely enmeshed in a spider's web close under the eaves of my two-story home in San Diego. Feebly struggling in the taut strands of the net, and silhouetted against the sky with one wing extended, the little bird's size, in this unusual situation, seemed magnified when viewed from a near-by window. Occasionally it responded to cries from the fellow members of its flock, which seemed to be remaining in the neighborhood. I took the bird in my hand and found it to be literally covered with the glutinous substance of the web. Not only were wing and tail feathers firmly stuck together, but the feathers of the breast and head were disarranged beyond remedy, and the toes of both feet were held tightly closed. The bird was evidently immature and was almost dead when liberated. After working for some time to remove the sticky webbing from its feathers, I determined that it would be impossible for it to live and therefore dispatched it.

Three other instances of birds being caught in spiders' webs have also come to my notice. In one case the bird, an Anna Hummingbird (*Calypte anna*), was found dead and brought to the San Diego Natural History Museum by one of the gardeners in Balboa Park. In the second case, also involving an Anna Hummingbird and occurring several years ago, the victim was discovered by J. W. Sefton, Jr., President of the San Diego Society of Natural History, caught, about six feet above the ground, in his garden on Point Loma; after being cleaned off, the bird was able to fly away. The third case was that of an adult female California Linnet (*Carpodacus mexicanus frontalis*) which Mr. Sefton found fluttering helplessly in one of the driveways of his garden on May 9, 1931. He picked it up and saw that the flight feathers of the left wing were securely attached by spider's webbing to the left foot. In his estimation the bird could never have disentangled itself, but with his aid it was able to proceed on its way.

In the Auk (XLVI, 1929, p. 123) George H. Mackay records the capture of an American Goldfinch in a spider's web in Massachusetts. The Linnet is even larger and stronger than the American Goldfinch and probably represents the maximum size of bird that could be so ensnared in this country.—CLINTON G. ABBOTT, *San Diego Society of Natural History, Balboa Park, San Diego, California, May 12, 1931.*

**Some Additional Notes on James Hepburn.**—When Mr. H. S. Swarth was working at the British Museum last year I showed him some information on James Hepburn and he suggested that I should send a note to the Condor to supplement the information he had published (Condor, XXVIII, 1926, p. 249).

James Hepburn or, to give his full name, James Edward Hepburn, appears to have dropped his second name after going to Cambridge. He was born in London in 1810 or 1811, and was the eldest son of James Hepburn of Tovil Place, Maidstone, England. He was educated privately in Sussex and, at the age of nineteen, was admitted a Pensioner of Trinity College, Cambridge, on December 20, 1830, taking his B.A. in 1835 and M.A. in 1838.

In 1835 he left Cambridge and went to London to study law and was admitted a student of the Inner Temple on January 15 of that year and, seven years later, on April 24, 1842, was called to the Bar. When he emigrated to California I have not been able to discover, but the earliest date mentioned in his American note books is 1852.

On April 16, 1869, Hepburn died suddenly at Victoria, Vancouver Island. In his will he is described as of "Tovil Place, Maidstone", but later of "California" and "Victoria, Vancouver". His collections were not mentioned in his will, but his relations, knowing that he had expressed a wish that they should go to Cambridge, presented them to the University in October, 1870.

Dr. J. W. Clarke, the Superintendent of the University Zoological Museum, in his report to the Museums and Lecture Rooms Syndicate dated February 8, 1871, described the collections as follows.