

The most striking fact about these nestings is the *persistence* of the male in returning to the same nesting site each year. We hope there may be other observations in time which will indicate whether this is characteristic of the species or simply of an individual. Also of interest is the fact that the female apparently made the final decision. Three times the choice of the male was accepted without apparent objection; once the female seemed reluctant to follow his choice, and once she refused.

The above record of the male Greatcrest shows that he is now at least five years old.

Glenolden, Pennsylvania, June 24, 1927.

THE PROTECTION OF GROUND NESTS WHILE UNDER OBSERVATION

BY KATHARINE C. HARDING

FOR the past three years we have spent the month of June at a camp in New Hampshire, where I had an excellent opportunity to observe a large variety of nesting birds, at the height of the breeding season. The first two summers, I found it exceedingly difficult to study the Veeries (*Hylocichla fuscescens fuscescens*) and other ground nesting birds, owing to the fact that their eggs and young were so frequently destroyed, before the records of the period of incubation and growth of the fledglings were completed. Frequent visits to the nests appeared greatly to increase the chances of their destruction. Hoping to solve this problem, I decided in 1926 to try two new ways of safe-guarding the nests.

First of all, upon finding a nest I immediately looked for an "Observation Post"—preferably a rock or a stump from which I could look into the nest without actually going close to it, on my daily visits. This method worked satisfactorily and in several cases I was able to follow the history of the nest, until the fledglings were ready to band.

When a nest was concealed or no observation post was available, I used a different scheme. Placing a strip of dark green cambric, nine feet long and two feet wide, in water, I soaked it until the dye stopped coming out. Then every morning before starting out, the cambric was again placed

in water and wrapped up in a piece of corduroy. When I was within nine feet of the first nest, one end of the strip was laid on the ground, and standing on it, I began unrolling the cambric and walking forward upon it at the same time until I reached the nest. After I had examined its contents, I retraced my steps, picked up the miniature carpet and dowsed it thoroughly in the lake before going to the next nest.

This method was used most successfully for all close-range observation of five Veeries' nests, one Oven-bird's nest, one Chestnut-sided Warbler's and a Black-throated Blue Warbler's nest. These eight broods all left their nests safely to the best of my knowledge, while four other ground nests (three Veeries' and one Warbler's) which were visited only once without the use of the wet cambric, were robbed overnight, probably by some prowling animal which followed the scent of the footsteps leading to the nests.

This precautionary measure was not infallible, however, as one clutch of Black-throated Blue Warbler's eggs and a brood of three day-old fledglings vanished mysteriously. Both nests were in exposed positions, however, and Crows or squirrels may have been the culprits.

The cambric was particularly useful in observation work from a blind, and for two weeks I approached a Veery's and a Black-throated Blue Warbler's nest, at least once a day and frequently more often.

If any similar way of protecting nests is already in use, I should be very glad to hear of the results obtained. Also I hope that other observers may be interested in trying this device and reporting whether they find it has any real merit in safe-guarding ground nests under observation.

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THE LURE OF BIRD MIGRATION

BY HARRY C. OBERHOLSER

THE attractiveness of the study of bird migration arises from more than one circumstance. In the popular mind the migration of birds derives much of its charm from its mystery; and while to a considerable degree this is the attitude also of the seeker after knowledge, it is likewise true that were all the facts of migration known, our present interest in its mys-