

**CAVITY-NESTING BREWER'S BLACKBIRDS**

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Nest sites of the Brewer's Blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*) are unusually diverse—on the ground in weedy cover, in stump crevices, shrubs or trees (Verner and Boss, California wildlife and their habitats: Western Sierra Nevada, USDA Forest Service Gen. Tech. Report PSW-37, Berkeley, CA, 1980). In Washington, Dawson and Bowles (The Birds of Washington, Occidental Publishing Co., Washington, 1909:47) described nesting "in cavities near the tops of some giant fir stubs, none of them less than 150 feet from the ground." We have found no other reference to cavity nesting by Brewer's Blackbirds.

This note reports on a nest cavity used by Brewer's Blackbirds for three consecutive years in Poison Meadow, Sierra National Forest, Fresno County, California (T10S, R25E, Sec. 5), at an elevation of 1755 m. The meadow covers about 5 ha, has a permanent stream, is bisected by a paved road, and is surrounded by mixed-conifer forest. Scattered clumps of willow (*Salix* sp.) grow along the stream.

The nest cavity was in a 13-m Ponderosa Pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) snag measuring 65 cm dbh, with several large branches remaining, and about 15% bark covering. It was located 15 m from the nearest edge, 10 m from the road, and 10 m from standing water.

The cavity was in an enlarged, abandoned woodpecker hole 2.4 m above the ground. It faced 282° WNW. The opening was approximately rectangular, measuring about 6 x 10 cm. The rim of the nest was nearly up to the bottom of the cavity opening, so the adults could feed the nestlings without entering the cavity, and incubating and brooding adults could sometimes be seen in the opening.

The nest was first discovered with five nestlings on 12 June 1980. All nestlings were present on 17 June, but three fledged during an attempt to photograph them. By 22 June the nest was empty. On 10 June 1981 it contained three nestlings, and a fourth was found dead below the cavity. They were judged to be about 8 days old. Again on 7 June 1982 adult Brewer's Blackbirds were seen entering the cavity, and an undetermined number of nestlings were being fed there on 14 June. Presumably the young fledged between 15 and 20 June, as the cavity was empty on 21 June.

During the three seasons we knew that Brewer's Blackbirds nested in the cavity, a pair of White-headed Woodpeckers (*Picoides albolarvatus*) also nested in the snag. Their cavity was 2.0 m above ground—only 36 cm from the cavity used by the blackbirds—and faced 356° N. We observed no interactions between these species.

*Accepted 11 October 1983*