

THE CARDINAL NOW TWELVE YEARS OLD

BY ALBERT F. GANIER

In the *WILSON BULLETIN* for December, 1933, and again in December, 1934, the writer gave the history of a male Cardinal, banded February 12, 1934. At the present writing (November 15, 1935) this individual is still living and is at least twelve years old. The bird was originally trapped at the writer's home and has been a permanent resident about the place. Each morning he comes for his breakfast of sunflower seed and grain which is placed on a feeding shelf near my dining room window. When not found waiting in a nearby tree, he will usually come in response to a whistled call. The mate of this bird, which had been his constant companion for at least three years, was killed on her nest, by a cat, on April 6. They had built this first nest, as usual, in the same crotch of the same shrub that has been used for years as a nest site for the first nest. It was begun on March 17, and proceeded leisurely. The female was killed at dusk on the first day she had begun to incubate her three eggs. On the following night I trapped and killed the cat.

An unmated young female, which had been about the place all spring, immediately became the consort of the old male and on April 15 they began a nest in a low shrub. The female began to sit on April 30, on three eggs. On the following morning, the nest was found tilted and one egg was missing but she had resumed incubation. On the next morning the nest was found turned over and the other eggs were missing. The third nesting attempt for the season was in the top of a high privet bush near my bedroom window and here, incubation of the three eggs began on May 30. These young successfully left the nest on the morning of June 19. At dusk they were located high up in a big hackberry tree but the following morning one of them was missing. On the second morning, another had been taken during the night. The surviving youngster was carefully tended by its parents but disappeared after a few weeks. I attribute these losses to a pair of Screech Owls which paid nightly visits to my premises. A fourth and last nest was built by the pair, ten feet up in the upper branches of a privet near my neighbor's house. The two eggs hatched and on August 9, the young looked nearly ready to leave the nest. The following morning the nest was found tipped over and both young were missing. Since the parent birds were not feeding them it was evident that they had been captured, presumably by the owls. The female had escaped with her life but the skin of her breast had been torn by a claw which resulted in her being marked permanently

by a tuft of feathers protruding from her breast. The season's efforts resulted in a net loss and demonstrated how difficult it is for this species to perpetuate its kind when confronted with the enemies mentioned.

As was the case with his former mate, the new one is constantly with him and he brooks no rivals for his favor. During the early winter the birds roost in a tall green privet hedge along the side of the yard. Last January, after the privet leaves had fallen, the pair resorted to the inside of my neighbor's double garage to roost, he kindly leaving a door open for them. Aside from looking rather bedraggled at molting time, there is but little in his appearance or manner to betray his unusual age.

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ARIZONA FIELDS ARE VIRGIN FOR BIRD BANDERS

BY FRED M. DILLE

From an ornithological viewpoint, there is probably no portion of the United States more intriguing than the "Southwest", and particularly Arizona. Especially to those that have punctuated their studies of birds with collections. I have been afflicted with an Arizona urge for years, and though I have been footloose for some time and could have gone, it was but last winter (1933-1934) that I got out of the old rut and made the break. A good sized blizzard in the Dakotas just prior to the date chosen for our departure, caused us to leave our car at home and start the journey by train. Therefore in due course of time, the early morning of the last day of the year 1933, found Mrs. Dille and myself rubbing the grime from the windows of the Pullman with our noses, in our efforts to obtain a first-view impression of Arizona.

As our train gradually dropped to lower levels and the sonoran regions, I saw my first sahuaro (Cactus) and mistook it for an abandoned fence post. But finally with too many fence posts to account for, I realized what they were. Recalling many oölogical yarns of collectors and climbing such hazards for eggs of the elf owl, I pointed out a good healthy specimen of sahuaro to the car porter and told him I would like to have a photograph of him climbing one of those cactuses. He took a good look at them and replied, "Boss, I do not believe I could do it." Later in the winter I had occasion to look up Mr. D. D. Stone, whom I found on a homestead near the historic town of Casa Grande. He is an old-time oölogical acquaintance of forty