

A WHITE ROBIN  
By Constance Katholi

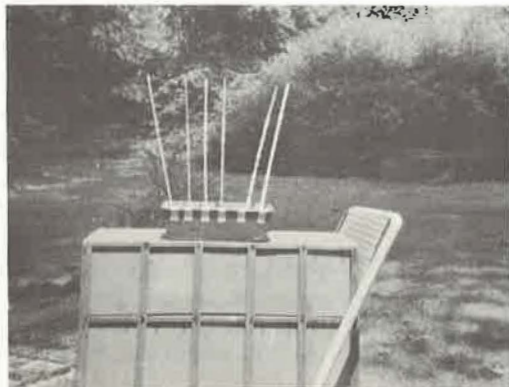
An albino robin made its appearance in the garden of a friend of mine on Harris Street, South Charleston, West Virginia, in July, 1964. It was then a fledgling still being fed by its parents, and it was by this fact alone that identification was made. In August the bird was reported independently by another observer in a different location, but one which is only a few blocks away. Although I visited its "birthplace," I was not able to catch a glimpse of it.

However, on September 24th on a golf course four miles "as the crow (robin) flies" from Harris Street, I watched a pure white robin for over half an hour as it fed up and down the fairway in the company of several hundred flocking normal robins. (From a distance I had been extremely excited thinking wildly of out-of-range gulls or terns.) Later the club greenskeeper told me that he had seen the bird on several occasions, but had not told anybody because he was afraid of being laughed at.

The bird's eyes were dark; the legs, gray; and bill, dark above and lighter below. One could "imagine" a tinge of pink across the breast, and in flight there was an impression that the tail was dark underneath, but this may only have been a shadow. Was this the same robin from Harris Street, or another one?

At the same golf course in the spring of 1965 I saw on two occasions a robin with a round white spot in the middle of the back. It was rather like the rump patch of a flicker, but it was placed higher. There were also a few flecks of white in the wing coverts. I read recently in the National Geographical book, Song and Garden Birds of North America, that albinism is not uncommon in certain species of thrushes.

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BANDS AT THE READY

If you open your strings of bands and put them on knitting needles (EBBA News 25(6):233) there's always the problem of anchoring the needle heads. A good box can be made (Dorothy Bordner has made a beautifully efficient one) but a quick and easy device is shown at the left. It is simply a baking tin filled with sand and the needle heads thrust into the sand. Not pretty, but it serves.

- Frank P. Frazier