

The Wingless Cormorant of the Galapagos.

BY ROLLO H. BECK.

ACCOMPANYING this sketch is a half-tone of the wingless cormorant (*Phalacrocorax harrisi*), found only about Narborough Island, Galapagos Archipelago. The bird was brought aboard our schooner alive and kept three or four days in the tortoise

penguins with similar habits are as common on one island as the other. The cormorants seem to stay very close at home however, as we saw none over 500 yards off shore and usually they were close in shore, often right in the breakers.



PHOTO. BY E. ADAMS.

THE WINGLESS CORMORANT (PHALACROCORAX HARRISI)

pen, where we secured two or three photographs of it, this one being the best.

It is a common habit of these cormorants to extend their wings to dry when they climb upon the rocks to sun themselves and digest their breakfasts. It seems strange that they should be found only about this one island since Albemarle is only about five miles distant with a rough coast line, and the

The second illustration is a more or less faithful representation of myself in collecting costume, examining a nest of *Geospiza fuliginosa minor* on Abingdon Island, April 15, 1901. We found a flour sack the most convenient and lightest receptacle for nests. If we had but one or two, after wrapping them they could be placed in our shooting coats, but when several nests are found, as they frequently are, within 100 yards

of one another, a flour sack proves very useful. Placing the heaviest and most compact in the bottom after wrapping, and the lighter ones on top, they arrived on board in fine shape.

The canteen is necessary on all the islands, only two or three having fresh water. While the temperature is not nearly so hot as on the mainland, one often gets warmed up, especially if carrying tortoise. We struck a side-hill on Abingdon 1,400 feet up, that reminded me of the Coast Range in California. It was covered with heavy ferns and a cold fog was blowing from the ocean so strongly that we were glad



PHOTO. BY ADAMS  
BECK COLLECTING IN THE GALAPAGOS.

to get down 500 feet to a valley where the sun was shining, birds singing and 8-inch centipedes crawling.

One good thing about collecting in the Galapagos is the absence of venomous snakes, the one or two species found being rare and inoffensive so far as we could see. Some of the smaller islands will equal the famous Farallones for sea bird collecting I think, particularly Hood Island where albatross, frigate birds, gulls, terns, tropic birds boobies and shearwaters all nest within less than a quarter of a mile of one another.

### A Day on the West Fork of the San Gabriel.

**D**URING my trip to the West Fork of the San Gabriel, in early June of 1900, I was fortunate enough to see my first California pygmy owl.

I began looking around for a cavity, when seeing a woodpecker's nest, which did not have the appearance of being excavated this season, I had almost reached the tree and was about to rap, when something blocked the entrance. I then rapped on the tree and the bird left the nest flying to an oak on the side of the canyon. As soon as I saw it fly I was positive it was a bird I had not seen before. As it left the nest it made a peculiar noise and its flight was jerky.

I then sat down about 200 feet from the nest and waited for an opportunity to get a better view of the bird. After waiting fully twenty minutes, the bird flew from the oak to a sycamore near the one containing the nest. On approaching the tree I could see the bird looking down at me, and was soon in position to get a fairly good view of it. Not wishing to shoot it before finding out what the nest contained, I took a description of the bird, which I thought was a California pygmy owl, but was not positive on account of its long tail. So after completing my notes, I ascended to the nest which was about twenty feet from the ground and began cutting into the tree on the opposite side to the entrance, as it placed one in a better position to work.

I was considerably over an hour in making a hole, when I heard the squeal of young, but kept on chopping until having made the hole large enough for my hand, I pulled out four young, one at the time; which I think must have been about two weeks old. I was very much disappointed in not finding at least an addled egg.

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