

Hummingbird Experiences from my Note Book.

MOLLIE BRYAN, ORANGE, CAL.

AT this season of the year, when household cares are not occupying the Anna hummingbirds, (*Calypte anna*) they may be observed at any hour of the day about their chosen feeding grounds. They always select a perch near their favorite flavors, where they alight to rest, preen their feathers, sing their squeaky, mouse-like song and occasionally dart out that long needle-like tongue after some passing insect, snapping its bill with quite an air of satisfaction over the dainty morsel. To any of the members of the Cooper Club who wish to establish a friendship with one of these tiny creatures I can heartily recommend that a red sun-bonnet be worn, or a red wrapper—but the sun-bonnet will prove the most effective and this will insure you the notice and often very especial attention from any of these color-loving birds, and while it is watching this new species of flower, you will be enabled to approach the little hummer's perch.

The Anna hummer is the familiar friend of many households in Southern California, sometimes choosing sites for their nests which show unlimited confidence in their human friends, or in their own ability to elude observation. At my own home they have sometimes built directly over the front walk, the tiny nest saddled to a limb of the pine tree, but alas!—twenty feet above my head. As little is to be learned by the neck-breaking work of watching such a nest, I go to my neighbors for observations, where the birds are more considerate. At the home of one of these was the quaintest nest I ever saw. It was in a loop of bale rope that hung from the ceiling of the woodshed, and was securely fastened by threads of cobweb to the rope. The nest was completed and eggs laid, before it was discovered by anyone. It hung just inside the door, and there the little owner sat gazing into the eyes of all who

came to make her acquaintance. A prettier sight could not be imagined than this little nest, swaying gently in the sea breeze as the occupant gazed out on the busy world, as though this was the most natural place in the world for a nest.

Another bird chose for her home the vines that twined above the steps of the back porch, of another friend. Early one morning my friend observed the bird fluttering among the leaves overhead, and thinking she had become entangled in a spider web, went to her rescue. As the bird darted away she saw a tiny bit of leaf down resting on a twig of the ivy, evidently the foundation of a nest. The family and neighbors were called and although it was Monday and wash-day, there was time to spare to watch little madam at her labors, for she labored alone. The step ladder was set up beneath the nest—to be, and one and another mounted to watch, as the walls of the little home were erected and shaped over the breast of the little builder, as she turned this way and that in the nest, fitting and moulding it, working and pressing the material in with her bill. She payed no heed to the notice she was attracting, but worked as busy as a bee till almost night. The walls were just high enough to keep it in place, when she deposited one egg. The second day the walls crept higher and higher and before night the second egg was laid. The third day the finishing touches were added to walls and lining—the little felt cup was finished. On the fourth day incubation began.

It was three weeks before the little birds appeared, when the customary "pumping process" called feeding the little ones, was enacted. One of the little ones thrived wonderfully, stretching the nest to accommodate its increasing size. By another three weeks the nest was almost in tatters and the ro-

bust child decided to leave. As it spread its wings to fly away the weakling brother fell to the ground. Kind hands rescued it, the torn nest was carefully drawn together and it placed within, for we supposed, of course, the mother would come to feed it, but she did not. All day it lay without food. That night a rain came, and the next day it seemed chilled and almost life-

less. Flowers were placed near it that it might find food within—if it would. Another cold night passed, and we thought the life of the little one would be ended, but when the warm sun came it raised itself, stretched first one wing then the other, and with a last look at its human friends darted away to be lost in bird-land.

The Oregon Song Sparrow.

BY WALTER K. FISHER.

MR. Joseph Grinnell has generously placed at my disposal a series of fourteen curious dark song sparrows collected by Mr. Edmund Heller at Crescent City, California, and along the coast of southern Oregon. A comparison of the series with some excellent unworn examples of the Mendocino, rusty, and sooty song sparrows in the National Museum and Biological Survey collections proves that the form is undescribed, as Mr. Grinnell thought when he forwarded me the specimens.

Melospiza cinerea phæa new subspecies.

OREGON SONG SPARROW.

Type, ♂ ad., No. 4974, Coll. Joseph Grinnell; Gardiner, mouth of Umpqua R., Oregon, Dec. 1, 1901; collected by Edmund Heller.

Subspecific characters.—Intermediate in size between *Melospiza cinerea cleonensis* and *M. c. morphna* but darker than either; in general color and markings nearly identical with *Melospiza cinerea rufina*, but much smaller. Measurements of type in millimeters: wing, 68; tail, 65; exposed culmen, 11; depth of bill at base 6.5; tarsus 22.5.

Distribution.—Immediate vicinity of coast from Rogue R. to Yaquina, Oregon.

Measurements of type series compared with *Melospiza cinerea rufina*, *M. c. morphna*, and *M. c. cleonensis*.

phæa:

			Wing.	Tail.	Culmen.	
Crescent City	♂	Sept. 15	61.	58.	10.5	
"	♂	"	62.	60.	10.5	
"	♂ ad	"	62.5	61.5	10.75	
Goldbeach, Or.	♂ ad	Oct. 10	64.	65.	11.	
"	♂	"	61.	61.	11.	
Gardiner, Or.	♂ ad	Dec. 1	65.	60.	11.	
"	♂ ad	"	65.	60.	11.	
"	♂ ad	"	68.	65.	11.	
"	♂	"	65.	65.	11.	
"	♂	"	67.	65.	11.	
Yaquina, Or.	♂	Oct. 31, '94	62.	62.	11.	
Average 11 ♂ ♂			64.	62.4	11.	
Goldbeach	♀	Oct. 10	65.	63.	11.	
"	♀	"	63.	60.	11.	
Gardiner	♀	Dec. 1	61.	61.	10.	
"	♀	"	63.	60.	11.5	
Average, 4 ♀ ♀			63.	61.	11.	
<i>rufina:</i>	average,	5 ♂ ♂	72.1	70.1	12.4	(Ridgway)
"	"	13 ♀ ♀	67.	63.5	12.2	"
<i>morphna:</i>	"	20 ♂ ♂	67.8	66.	12.9	"
"	"	13 ♀ ♀	65.	63.	12.4	"
<i>cleonensis</i>	"	13 ♂ ♂	61.7	59.9	11.9	"
"	"	9 ♀ ♀	59.4	58.1	11.9	"