

floor at the eastern base of Black Mountain (Monte Bello Ridge), Santa Clara County, elevation probably about 200 feet. I visited this nest on June 5, and saw the parents feeding their young. Coast redwoods were available in the canyon, but these birds evidently used the alder by pure choice.

Meanwhile, on May 23, while resting in the shade after a long, unsuccessful scouting for nests of Wren-tit and Bell Sparrow, an excited pair of "Olive-sideds" arrested our attention. This was near the head of a ravine, a branch of the Los Gatos Canyon, elevation, perhaps, 1800 feet. One large Douglas spruce (*Pseudotsuga*) was some distance down the slope and I remarked that their nest was probably far up in that tree. All about us were oaks, laurel-bays, madrones, etc.; but while our eyes followed one of the noisy birds as he nervously changed his position, I recognized the fact that the other bird seemed to be "having its say" from a more constant location. Thereupon scanning the tree-tops in the direction from which this bird's calls seemed to emanate, I soon spied the moving head of the bird, which was looking at us with first one eye, then the other. I accordingly imagined that this bird was sitting on her nest, and such was clearly seen to be the case as soon as the glasses were focused upon her. A cautious climb of some sixty feet, into the top of a gold-leaved oak (*Quercus chrysolepis*) secured the nest and three well-incubated eggs.

Thus I am able to report two nests of the Olive-sided Flycatcher built in May and in trees totally different from the conifers supposed to be their favorites, although cone-bearing trees were nearby, available, had the birds cared to patronize them. It should be remembered, however, that the season of 1926 was an unusually early one, many birds nesting two to four weeks prior to their usual time.—CHARLES PIPER SMITH, *San Jose, California, November 18, 1926.*

A Hybrid Flicker.—On the morning of October 7, 1925, I was climbing up the side of a hill which was covered with scrub oak trees intermixed with manzanita, poison oak, madrone and other brush. Suddenly I heard a flicker, then a second one. I located them on a nearby ridge and shot one of them. To my surprise, on picking it up, I noted that this bird was not of the species common to this locality. Mr. H. S. Swarth has since informed me that it is a hybrid between *Colaptes cafer* and *C. auratus*. The two birds appeared to be alike, and they are the only ones of the sort that I have noticed in this locality. Have bird observers seen any of these flicker hybrids in this region the last few years?—JAMES L. ORTEGA, *Yountville, Napa County, California, December 6, 1926.*

Notes on the Nesting of the Band-tailed Pigeon.—Albert E. Stillman, a member of the San Diego Society of Natural History, has lived for several summers in a cabin at about 4000 feet elevation near Mesa Grande, San Diego County, California, where he has had unusual opportunity to secure information on the nesting of the Band-tailed Pigeon (*Columba fasciata fasciata*). As the literature on this subject is meager, he has, at my request, been good enough to supply me with his notes, from which I have made the following condensed transcription:

"The summer of 1922, the first year I occupied the cabin, a pair of pigeons often visited the oak trees across the ravine from me. For two weeks I explored the woods in an unsuccessful attempt to locate their nest, and then, on August 25, it was discovered by a mere chance. George Smith, a boy who was visiting me, was collecting pine cones and climbed a tree about twenty feet high whose branches were loaded with cones. It happened that his belt caught on a dead limb and, as he gave the branch a shake, a Band-tailed Pigeon left her nest on the horizontal branch of a black oak, within a few feet of the boy. She alighted in the top of a pine tree about twenty-five feet away. The nest, which was about fifteen feet from the ground, contained one egg.

"I visited the spot frequently during the next two weeks and, by a system of gradual approach, was finally able to place my camp chair within three feet of the oak tree without causing the incubating bird any uneasiness. September 8 the baby pigeon was in the nest. While it was small the mother bird stayed near the nest, sometimes sheltering the baby with her wings during the mid-day heat; but when it was about ten days old she remained away from the nest for hours at a time. On September 17 the nest was photographed by Clinton G. Abbott, Director of the Natural

History Museum, San Diego. That day the female left the oak tree in the early morning and returned at twilight; after quickly feeding the young she left again. Next day she left at daybreak and returned at sundown. For more than a week after that I kept the youngster with me during the day, letting him perch on my finger or hop about on the cabin floor, returning him to his nest before evening. On the morning of October 2 I found that the young bird had climbed from the nest and was sitting on a branch of the oak tree, where he remained until late in the afternoon. That night he roosted on the high limb of a nearby pine tree. On October 4 he left the neighborhood and I did not see him again. Measurements of the nest were: diameter 8 inches, thickness 3 inches; construction rather bulky, a pile of oak and squaw-bush twigs, with no lining; count of twigs used, 150. The male was observed about the nest only twice.



Fig. 43. BAND-TAILED PIGEON SQUAB IN NEST. MESA GRANDE, SAN DIEGO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA. PHOTOGRAPHED SEPTEMBER 17, 1922.

"On October 12, 1922, while looking for pine cones, I accidentally discovered a Band-tailed Pigeon sitting on her nest about ten feet above the ground in a live oak tree near a country road. The nest was remarkably well constructed of oak twigs, with a thick lining of pine needles, and contained one egg. I had the nest under observation for five days, when I was obliged to return to San Diego. Ralph Bushnell, a neighboring rancher and reliable observer, reported that a few days after I left a hard rainstorm swept over the mountains. He found the pigeon brooding during the first day of the storm, but she left the nest some time on the following day and did not return to it again.

"On May 15, 1923, Bushnell found a Band-tailed Pigeon's nest about fifteen feet up on a large horizontal branch of a white oak tree situated about thirty feet from our first 1922 nest. It contained one egg, which later hatched and in due time the squab left the nest. When I came to my cabin on July 3, I found that a Mourning Dove had built a nest of pine needles on top of the pigeon's oak-twig nest and was incubating two eggs. I had the nest under observation till the young flew, when I collected it.

"On September 15, 1923, Bushnell and Miss Lela Stillman, while riding horseback near my cabin, flushed a pigeon from her nest twenty feet above the ground on the horizontal limb of a white oak tree. They reported the find to me and when I went to the nest the bird flew off at a great rate, uttering a hoot-like note and clapping her wings. The nest contained one egg. Shortly thereafter a cold rain began falling all over the mountain country and continued without cessation for days. It rained until I thought that the bird would drown on her nest or die from exposure; but whenever I visited the nest I found her at her post. I believe that for at least forty-eight hours she could not have left her egg without its being chilled and spoiled. On the afternoon of September 22 the sky cleared and the sun shone brightly; and then I saw the bird leave her nest for a short time. That night another storm swept over the region. The next morning the pigeon was not at her nest, nor was she seen again. On September 24 I collected the nest and egg and presented them to the Natural History Museum, San Diego.

"That successive young pigeons are sometimes raised in one nest the same season was proved by Bushnell in 1925. He found a nest on March 8, containing one egg, from which the squab hatched and grew up. Then the pigeon laid an egg in the same nest and started to incubate. The second young bird hatched about the middle of May and lived to leave the nest.

"Five Band-tailed Pigeons' nests were located in the neighborhood of the cabin during 1926, all found by George Smith: (1) July 3; in white oak about twenty-five feet up; one egg; deserted prior to July 15, when I returned to Mesa Grande after an absence. (2) July 21; in white oak about eighteen feet up on small branch, almost hidden in a mass of poison oak; both pigeons left the tree, uttering a succession of harsh notes; one egg; female unusually timid and deserted after five days; nest small and poorly constructed; egg collected July 26 and donated to the Natural History Museum, San Diego. (3) August 2; in black oak about thirty-five feet up, built in a bunch of mistletoe; one egg; bird sat close and returned within five minutes. On the morning of August 19 the pigeon was absent and when the nest was examined about 9:30 A. M. the egg was found to be pipped. By 1:30 the youngster was completely out of the shell, but the old bird never returned. About 6 P. M. we took the squab and put it in a Mourning Dove's nest, where it was apparently thriving on August 22, when I left Mesa Grande. (4) August 4; in black oak about fifteen feet up, on large horizontal limb overhanging road; one egg; both birds seen near nest. (5) August 8; in white oak about fifteen feet up; one egg."—CLINTON G. ABBOTT, *Natural History Museum, Balboa Park, San Diego, California, September 21, 1926.*

Food of the Spotted Owl.—The Spotted Owl (*Strix occidentalis*) is a bird of the night. I have never yet observed one moving about in the day time, when it seeks some dark, shady canyon or dense tree wherein to spend the daylight hours in seclusion. As a result of these habits it is a bird that is seldom seen. During August of this year I found in a dark canyon west of Reserve, New Mexico, three young Spotted Owls that had left their nest and were seeking their own livelihood. They were so tame that I succeeded in capturing one of them, and, wishing to study the bird and its diet, I brought it home. Placed in a small barn I have which was literally overrun with mice and rats, in a very short time the bird had cleaned the barn of these pests. I kept it in a big box for a while and offered it the bodies of several birds and also parts of chicken, but these the owl absolutely refused to touch, even when very hungry. I believe he would have starved before eating bird or fowl.

My owl was very tame and seemed to enjoy having me stroke his fluffy feathers. When I approached with a rodent I could notice an expression of pleasure creep into his countenance—it seemed as if he actually smiled! He never refused at any time of day to take a squirrel, chipmunk, rat, or mouse from my hand. He would also eat rabbit, but he was most fond of the small rodents. One day I took two mice to him, one in each hand, and gave him one which he took first with his beak and then changed to his talons. Then he spied the other in my hand, at my side. I suppose he thought I had fooled him, for he first thrust the foot that was holding the mouse clear up in front of his eyes, then looked down again to the mouse I held. When I offered it to him he at once took it from my hand and seemed very much pleased. I had intended