

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

Bears and Hawks.—Mr. Dixon's note in the last CONDOR (XXIX, 1927, p. 271), on the bear attempting to break into the woodpecker's nest, recalls a statement made by Mr. A. D. Henderson of Belvedere, Alberta. Mr. Henderson relates that in the Peace River country northwest of Belvedere, where he has had considerable experience, he noted that practically all the poplar trees containing large hawk's nests had at one time or another been climbed by bears. On the smooth, pale bark of these trees bear claws make very heavy characteristic scores that persist for many years as conspicuous black scars. Such nests are usually occupied in that country by Red-tailed Hawks or Goshawks, Great Horned or Great Gray owls. The natural assumption is that bruin is one of our original egg collectors and knows as well the meaning of these great masses of sticks in the tree-tops as any oologist.—P. A. TAVERNER, *National Museum of Canada, Ottawa, November 24, 1927.*

The Pileated Woodpecker Feeds on Berries.—It was the 19th of September, 1927. The day was drawing to a close, and already long shadows were reaching out into the valley from the great south wall when we passed Camp Curry. Suddenly the quiet of late afternoon was broken by the loudly shouted, high-pitched notes of the Pileated Woodpecker (*Phloeotomus pileatus picinus*). For years a lonely Pileated has roamed the Yosemite Valley and his startling notes have thrilled us time and again. Sometimes we look up to see him winging his steady way up or down the valley. Sometimes we have found him whacking off great chunks of bark in search of food. Today we had a new experience when we saw this great woodpecker, a bird as large as a crow, behaving like a chickadee. We were surprised, too, to learn that he had a taste for fruit.

Beside the road, with branches overhanging it, stands a group of mountain dogwoods (*Cornus nuttalli*). These trees bore this year a heavy crop of fruit. At the end of each flower stalk was a bunched cluster of ripe berries. The Pileated Woodpecker was here today to collect his toll of fruit. The fruit being at the ends of slender branches we thought the heavy-bodied bird would be out of luck. How could the big fellow reach the fruit? He was apparently not just sure himself. At first he tried walking out the heavier branches; but always as he approached the tip-ends they bent under his weight and threw the berries beyond reach. By working out on a cedar branch that intermingled with the dogwood branches he did manage to get a taste of fruit, just enough to tease his appetite. He was not to be cheated, however; for his next move was to flutter clumsily up to a branch containing berries, clutch the branch firmly with his strong feet, and then drop to swing like a great pendulum. He now had the system. Swinging head down he would pick the berries one by one, loosen his hold, swing into flight and then repeat the performance on another branch.

All this took place at the side of a much traveled road, with automobiles passing every few minutes. Occasionally he took to flight when a machine passed, but most often he held his ground. Twice a car passed directly below him while he hung to out-reaching branches.—CHARLES W. MICHAEL, *Yosemite, California, November 6, 1927.*

Bird Casualties Due to Automobiles.—At various times reports have been made as to the number of birds killed by automobiles. One such note is by F. B. White, in *The Auk* (XLIV, 1927, p. 265), who reports having noted only two dead birds in a distance of 2500 miles.

On June 1 of this year I made a trip from Berkeley to Redding, California, a distance of 239 miles. In this distance I counted 14 birds, 3 squirrels and 4 jack rabbits that had been killed by automobiles. Without stopping my car I was able to identify one Coot, two Red-winged Blackbirds, one California Woodpecker and one English Sparrow, out of the above number.—ERNEST D. CLABAUGH, *Berkeley, California, October 10, 1927.*