

About five hours afterward I went to have another look and the towhees started complaining again. This time there appeared almost immediately: 4 Goldfinches (Willow?); 2 Robins, still with angle-worms; several Anna and Allen hummers; 2 Juncos; 2 Wrens; 2 Purple Finches; several California Towhees.

The hummingbirds, juncos, wrens and goldfinches made the most protest. The robins and quail seemed very placid and little concerned, more curious than anything else. The attention of all seemed to be concentrated more on the parent birds than on me, yet none of them, including the parents, in the midst of all of the excitement, appeared to overlook a chance to capture a bug when opportunity offered. These towhees have, in season, been mewing at me and suspecting me of having my pockets full of their young for four years; but this is the first time they have managed to get together an audience, and I am still wondering if there was not a snake in the grass after all. I pulled one out of their nest last year after he had swallowed one youngster.—ERNEST I. DYER, *Piedmont, California, June 9, 1931.*

Cryptoglaux funerea in New Mexico.—Among the bird remains found by the Los Angeles Museum in Shelter Cave, Dona Ana County New Mexico, are a rostrum and tarsometatarsus of a small owl. These bones in all respects resemble specimens of *Cryptoglaux funerea richardsoni* kindly loaned by Dr. Wetmore from the United States National Museum collections.

The occurrence of *C. funerea* in the southwestern part of New Mexico is noteworthy in view of our present records of its distribution. Of the two subspecies known to North America, *C. funerea magna* is recorded only from the extreme north of Alaska, and *C. funerea richardsoni* has never been recorded south of Crested Butte, Gunnison County, Colorado (Cooke, Bull. 44, Col. Agric. Exp. Sta., 1898, p. 160, as cited in Ridgway, Bull. 50, U. S. Nat. Mus., pt. 6, 1914, p. 627).

In view of the exact correspondence of the cave bones with those of *C. funerea richardsoni*, as well as the present distribution of the two subspecies known in North America, one naturally supposes that the cave specimens are of *richardsoni*, though to make a definite statement with regard to subspecies is scarcely the paleontologist's prerogative.

The bones of this owl are perfectly preserved in their natural state. They were embedded in a light colored, unconsolidated matrix of fine texture and were closely associated with bones of the extinct *Geococcyx conklingi* described in this issue of the *Condor*. Mammalian remains of this cave deposit include bones of the extinct ground sloth, horse, and antelope (*Tetrameryx*).—HILDEGARDE HOWARD, *Los Angeles Museum, July 2, 1931.*

Odd Nesting Site of Ash-throated Flycatcher.—On July 3, 1930, an infertile egg of the Ash-throated Flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens cinerascens*) was brought to me by Rex Parker with the statement that it had been taken on June 19, from a nest containing three young birds and that the nest was in the boom of a gasoline engine shovel which had been in operation almost every day in loading clay. I visited the site, about four miles southeast of Colton, California, where the Triangle Rock and Gravel Company was busy digging clay, and Gerald Mathews, who was in charge of the shovel, showed me the nest (fig. 52).

It was of usual construction with heavy lining of fur and hair and was down three feet in a cavity on the underside of the boom and well out toward the end. The boom made the usual turn after every dipper full of clay and the shovel moved on caterpillars along the face of the clay bank, covering as much as 200 feet in a single day. Mathews told me that the last young bird had just left the nest and that he was forced to shut the machinery down to keep the youngster from injury.

It seemed to me that this most unusual nesting site must have been selected on some day when the shovel was not in operation and that nest building advanced so far that the birds would not desert. I thus looked forward with much interest to see if the birds, after the 1930 nesting season with noise, jar, and ever changing location, would return in 1931, after their migration to the South.

In May, 1931, the birds were working on the nest in the old site (except that the old hole had become so filled with clay that the nest was down only a foot from the entrance). The shovel was busy digging clay on June 6 and Mr. Mathews told

me the bird was incubating four eggs. While not doubting my informant I "had to be shown". When there was a little lull in the work he raised the dipper up near the hole and then climbed out on it and just as soon as he placed his face near the entrance the bird flushed. He climbed down and started the machinery and the bird returned. The nest contained four young birds on June 7.

The usual loading operation was under way on June 17 and the bird was busy bringing food to the hungry brood. After one trip the shovel started to back away from the clay bank and there was a big slide of hundreds of tons of clay to the place where the shovel had just been standing. The bird came on the changed scene with

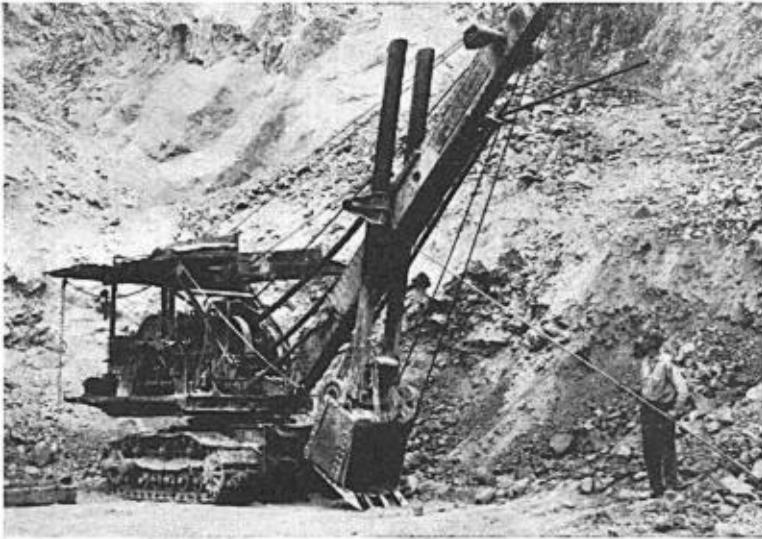


Fig. 52. NESTING SITE OF ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER; ARROW POINTS TO PLACE UNDER BOOM WHERE THE BIRDS ENTERED; LOCATION OF 1930 NEST NEAR END OF STICK IN MR. MATHEWS' HANDS; 1931 NEST WAS ABOUT A FOOT BELOW POINT OF ARROW.

food and landed on the dipper of the shovel and then into the nest where it remained while the shovel moved seventy feet. Out it flew again and when it returned to the nest a few minutes later the shovel had moved 180 feet to a new site where it had not been for at least a month.

Both birds were making frequent trips to the nest with food on June 25, and the four healthy young ones in the moving home were calling for food and more food at the tops of their voices which could often be heard even above the noise of the machinery. Without some unforeseen accident, yet to take place, the birds seem to have chosen a good site.

I termed the selection in 1930 as an accident, but in 1931 it must have been a matter of choice.—WILSON C. HANNA, *Colton, California, June 26, 1931.*

On the Breeding of *Puffinus chlororhynchus* in the Tonga Group.—Through the efforts of Mr. Edward Winslow Gifford, Curator of the Museum of Anthropology, University of California, it has become possible to add another nesting station to the known breeding range of *Puffinus chlororhynchus*¹. Specimens of this species were secured on Kelelesia Island, Nomuka Group, Tonga Islands, on January 6, 1921. Of the collecting of these examples Mr. Gifford wrote: "The birds were obtained for me by natives. . . . They report the birds nesting in burrows about a yard long, dug

¹ Cf. Loomis, *Emu*, XXIII, 1923-1924, pp. 283-284.