

at it and, to my amazement, carried it into the oak far above my head, where it caught, was relinquished, and hung like a captured battle-flag for several days. That evening I saw, against the faintly-lit sky, several movements of what were probably the young, higher in the branches of the same tree.

A series of attacks by owls on human beings was described in a sequence of letters to *Science*, beginning in the issue of November 1, 1929, page 429. The old belief, which I now remember hearing as a child in New England, that the owl mistakes human hair or a fur cap for the back of some smaller "fur-bearer" crops up again and again.

Was the tendency to attack sufficiently hair-triggered only in the earlier period, or did the bird learn that human skulls are too thick for its offensive equipment, and only strike again when an object, apparently alive, of attackable size was substituted?—THOMAS T. McCABE, *Berkeley, California, August 8, 1933.*

Late Nesting of the Olive-sided Flycatcher in the San Gabriel Mountains, California.—Mr. W. D. LaNiece of San Bernardino, brought to me on July 8, 1933, a fresh set of three eggs, together with the nest, of the Olive-sided Flycatcher (*Nuttallornis mesoleucus*). He had collected this on the previous day in the San Gabriel Mountains, near Wrightwood, about 6000 feet elevation, San Bernardino County, California.

The nest was far out on a downward sloping branch of a large yellow pine and about forty feet from the ground. The location had been discovered twelve days earlier by watching the birds go to the nesting site, but even the completed structure could not be seen from the ground. One of the eggs was perforated in removing it from the nest, the weights, in grams, of the other two were 3.93 and 3.69. This is the latest nesting date which I have ever seen recorded.—WILSON C. HANNA, *Colton, California, July 16, 1933.*

White-throated Swifts at San Juan Capistrano.—To me, it is always interesting to learn of the persistence, or otherwise, of bird colonies. In the *Condor* (9, 1907, pp. 169-172) Mrs. Bailey published an article on the "White-throated Swifts at Capistrano." Recently I found that this colony of *Aëronautes saxatilis* was still nesting in the same places in the same old ruin of this wonderful old mission. On May 14, 1933, I found about ten pairs still living there, flying in and out over the visitors' heads.

The part of the ruin where the swifts are, is considered unsafe; it is roped off so that the visitors do not get to the part where the birds are. Naturally, this adds much to the sense of security on the part of the birds. But the birds can readily be seen by everyone as they pass in and out of the old church. There are a few eave swallows with them, usually.—M. P. SKINNER, *Long Beach, California, May 23, 1933.*

An Unusual Nesting of the Black-chinned Hummingbird.—Early in April, 1925, a female hummingbird was noticed flying in and out of our garage in Buena Park, California, when the door was left open. On April 11, investigation showed that she was starting a nest in a loop of small rope that hung from a small board that rested across the wall plates of the building. It was located about the center of the garage, and the loop hung about a foot above the top of the car. The sliding door of the garage was left open the greater part of each day, and on April 11 there was a small amount of plant down held in the bottom of the loop by spider web.

On April 12 and 13, I watched the bird at work on the nest and decided that she was a Black-chinned Hummingbird (*Archilochus alexandri*), a common breeding bird in our vicinity, that usually nests in the large eucalyptus trees at elevations of thirty feet, or more, from the ground. Progress on the nest was slow, as the bird would not come to it when the car was in the garage, and it was not until April 24 that the first egg was laid. We were away from home during the next two days, leaving the garage door open, and on our return April 27, there were two eggs in the nest, but the bird refused to return to them while the car was in. By the evening of April 28, she had overcome her fear of the car and returned to the nest after it was in

for the night. She seemed to be all set to raise a brood, but, on the night of April 30, disaster overtook her, and something, probably a cat, knocked the eggs from the nest to the car top below, where they were broken. There was no indication that the bird was killed, but she was not seen about the garage again.

The nest was added to my collection (see fig. 49). The rope is the single strand that is commonly used in lumber yards to tie bundles of light pieces together. It hung over a small board with the knot at the lowest point of the loop, giving a slightly broader foundation for the nest. The nest is composed for the most part of

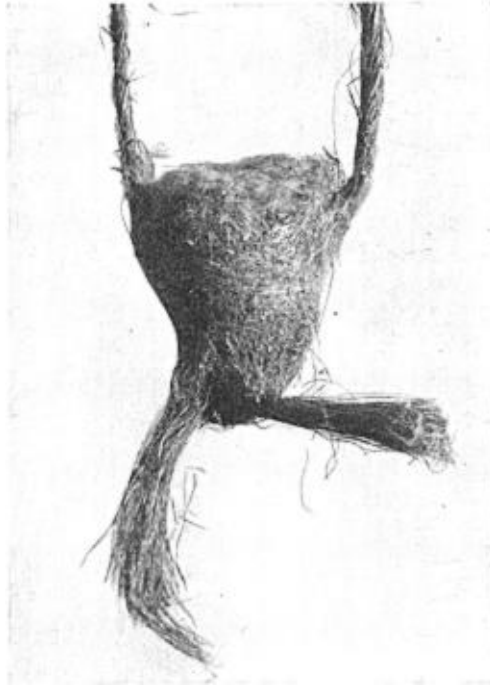


Fig. 49. NEST OF BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD IN LOOP OF ROPE.

plant down, and the outside is covered with the stamens of eucalyptus blossoms. These stamens have turned brown with age and give the nest a brown tint that it did not have when new. Other objects to be seen in it are several tiny bits of eucalyptus bark, a scrap of dry leaf, several long human hairs, a small feather that is probably from a Linnet, a pair of bracts from a plant that furnished down, and a seed of alfilaria.

The rope supports the nest on opposite sides like the handle of a basket, and is well tied into the structure with spider web which covers the whole outside of the nest. It is not as large as the nest usually constructed by this species, but it probably would have been added to, as incubation progressed. However, it is an interesting example of avian architecture.—JOHN McB. ROBERTSON, *Buena Park, California*, April 13, 1932.

Notes on the Ages of a Few Florence Lake Birds.—In posting my "repeat and return" card file I found that eight of our birds have been in the trap sufficient times to show that they have reached the age of five years or more. This is but a small percentage of the birds I have trapped in the past seven years, but I feel they may be of interest anyway.