

## FROM FIELD AND STUDY



Fig. 65. Nest of Say Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*) showing rocks used in construction.

**Use of Rocks in Say Phoebe's Nest.**—On April 12, 1942, a nest of the Say Phoebe was found on a rocky cliff in a canyon of the Virginia Range east of Reno, Nevada. The nest was situated on a narrow horizontal shelf which sloped downward. Perhaps to prevent slipping on this shelf, the whole outer base of the nest was formed of small angular rocks (weathered veined quartz), averaging about an inch in length and  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 3 grams in weight. The upper and inner parts of the nest were being finished at this time, chiefly with wool apparently gathered from bushes where tufts of it had been caught from sheep passing through the area. When the accompanying photograph (fig. 65) was taken on May 10, the nest was finished and contained eggs.—FRANK RICHARDSON, *University of Nevada, Reno, Nevada, May 17, 1942.*

**Pacific Eider Nesting at Glacier Bay, Alaska.**—On June 30, 1941, while on an archaeological reconnaissance trip to Alaska for the University of New Mexico, my husband, Dr. Frank C. Hibben, and I landed on North Marble Island at the entrance to Muir Inlet in Glacier Bay. This rocky island is the nesting place for many sea birds, and we landed to take colored moving pictures. Nesting there were both kinds of puffins, Glaucous-winged Gulls, and Pigeon Guillemots. Twice we noticed three male Pacific Eider Ducks (*Somateria mollissima v-nigra*) fly past, and took one short shot of them as they flew, feeling that this might be an unusual place to find them. Later we flushed a female eider duck from her nest, photographed her as she walked to the edge of the water and slipped in, swimming near us, and not attempting to fly. Lifting up the branches of the alder from under which she had appeared, we found a nest and six eggs, one egg still wet as if it had just been laid. We took pictures of this also, being careful not to touch the nest or egg.

The A.O.U. Check-list for 1931 (p. 56) states that the Pacific Eider breeds south and east to Cook Inlet. However, Bailey (Auk, 44, 1928:189) reports this species at Glacier Bay in summer. Heretofore there has been no actual breeding record from this region.—MRS. FRANK C. HIBBEN, *Albuquerque, New Mexico, February 14, 1942.*

**The European Starling in New Mexico.**—Although the European Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) has been reported on two previous occasions in the Rio Grande Valley of New Mexico (Condor, 42, 1940:86; *ibid.*, 43, 1941:197), the bird has occurred only sparingly and in small numbers.

As evidence that it is moving west in larger numbers, it may be reported that a flock of about 100 birds was noted at Elida, Roosevelt County, New Mexico, on February 25, 1942. Individuals and groups of from 3 to 10 were noted at Roswell and Portales in this same week.

This exotic pest species has become a disturbing problem in the northeastern United States, and it appears that it will soon be a problem of considerable concern to agriculturists and city dwellers in much of the west.—CLARENCE COTTAM, CLARENCE A. SOOTER, and RICHARD E. GRIFFITH, *Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D.C., May 12, 1942.*

**Duck Hawk Takes Short-eared Owl.**—While driving along one of the patrol roads in Unit 9 of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, Oregon, at 4:30 p.m. on December 6, 1941, a Duck Hawk (*Falco peregrinus*) was flushed from the side of the road. Examination of the place from where the bird flushed revealed the carcass of a freshly killed Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*). The owl had apparently been struck in the back of the head by the hawk. At the time the owl was found, the greater portion of its head had already been eaten and the breast was fairly well picked.

When flushed from its unusual meal, the hawk flew about 100 yards away and lit where three Marsh Hawks found it and chased it to a fence post about 100 yards from the writer.—CLARENCE A. SOOTER, *Fish and Wildlife Service, Burns, Oregon, December 6, 1941.*