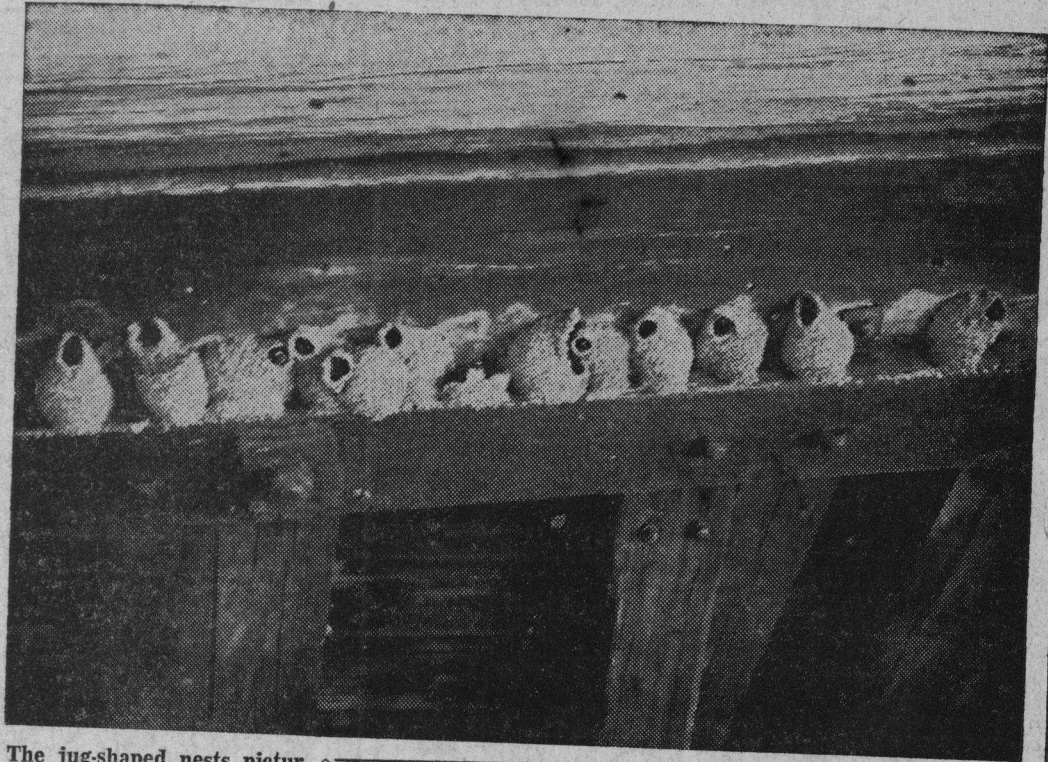


Cliff Swallow Is 'Mission Swallow'



The jug-shaped nests pictured above are the "Home Sweet Home" of a baker's dozen cliff swallows, also identified and somewhat improperly, says Author-Photographer Ken Legg, as "mission swallows." The little birds are only one of six varieties of swallows found in California.

Party snack: wrap bacon around water chestnuts (canned) and broil; serve with a thin chutney sauce for dipping.

Along The Trail by ken legg

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One of our most common birds in summer is the so-called "mission swallow." Indeed, many people base their knowledge of swallows entirely upon this species although we have in California some six other varieties.

The swallows at Mission Capistrano have become so highly publicized that some folks seem to think this is the only place in the west where they occur. When I was stationed at La Purisima mission a lady visitor, seeing our swallow nests above the museum door asked, "Did you bring your

swallows from Capistrano?"

Hating to destroy an illusion, but being a stickler for factual information, I was forced to inform my visitor that the cliff swallow (the correct name) is distributed, by the thousands, throughout California, Washington and Oregon.

Before the days of missions, barns and bridges cliff swallows plastered their mud jugs to the sides of cliffs. Some still follow this practice (as at the quarry at Santa Cruz) but even more utilize the eaves of buildings, beams of bridges and other masonry or wooden structures erected by man. The nests shown in our illustration were attached to an old ferry boat at Antioch.

Unlike the barn swallow which builds a cup-shaped, open-topped nest, the cliff usually builds a jug-shaped structure, at times with a neck and one small hole by way of which to enter and depart.

I have seen these hardened mud nests in a variety of places. First of these was at La Purisima where we had several hundred birds. At Point Lobos, the nests were placed upon the rocky cliffs overlooking the ocean. My next

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