

Along The Trail

by

ken legg

It all began last spring. I had only stopped to watch some golden-crowned kinglets in a spruce tree, never expecting to encounter a winter wren and especially one building a nest, for winter wren nests are supposed to be hard to find.

I was perched motionless upon one of the few dry logs in the vicinity, for if you know much about Sitka spruce you know they often grow in flat places near streams where the ground is half mud and half water.

The kinglets were high in the tree and as I watched them I had visions of finding a kinglet nest. I wasn't looking for anything that might appear lower down until I heard some animal tearing lichen off a salmon berry stalk.

A diminutive, (and if you think this is too small, you should try to take a picture of one), winter wren was tugging and struggling to remove the lace-like lichen. Finally she, (I took it to be 'she' for another was singing nearby and what I know of most songbirds tells me that the male considers he is doing a good job if he merely stays close by and sings encouragement while his mate does all the work), got the material loose. When she had a good mouthful she scampered off toward a pile of drift beside the little stream.

I watched for a whole hour and in that period she visited the lichen patch seven times for material. Going from the lichen back to her home she ran on the ground three times; three times she flew back and once she just appeared by magic. (I could not see how she got to the drift pile).

A six-inch spruce had slipped and fallen in the mud and the accumulation of twigs, limbs and leaves had lodged in its top. Although it was pretty apparent that the wren was building in the trash pile I wanted to be sure before making my presence known. I would watch her run down the top side of the fallen tree, but before reaching the top she went under the log and ran on the mud. Then she would appear, from all directions alternately, from out of the pile.

After it had been determined definitely that the nest was in the pile, and even near a certain point, (for she went here with the material and departed without it), I moved in. The hip boots came in handy as I had to wade in knee-deep water and soft mud to reach the trash pile. The nest was not easy to find as a wren-made accumulation of trash doesn't look much different from a creek-made ball of trash.

After considerable searching I saw the dark brown elongated 'cocanut' with the tiny hole near the top and knew I had discovered the secret of the disappearing lichen. Before being content to depart I went back to my log and set down a few thoughts I was bursting with. Once I saw ripples in the still water and before I had decided where the nest was she was giving me such a bad time with her secretiveness as she crept about mouse-like among the litter, that I asked myself if she could be swimming to the nest. Then I realized it was a falling salmon berry leaf that had dimpled the surface.

I looked about me and thought; "A spruce tree started it all when it fell and caught the debris". I thought of the season and said; "Don't you know how April sun turns alder leaves golden-green. Only lately it was winter, cold and dreary. But now a new skunk cabbage was smelling up to its name and pink-faced Dentarias waved in the breeze".

Another trip to the nest revealed that the interior and its contents were not visible, but a lightly probing finger told me of its treasures and on April 30th I found that there was a 'mess' of eggs. The May 14th visit revealed that the eggs were gone and in their place was a mass of warm naked bodies.

Both adults were now attending the nest, creeping in with insects, and coming out head downward, jumping off to a

twig and going in search of other food, most of which seemed to be found near the ground.

Two weeks later the young popped out of the nest and scattered among the trash pile. Their home of a few short weeks had been an almost suspended pouch which seemed to be made mostly of lichens with a few bits of spruce twigs thrown in to make it blend with the other trash. The nest was only six inches above a sluggish stream. It was well hidden amid the twigs, branches and alder leaves of a drift pile ten feet long and four feet wide. It had been home for seven little winter wrens that would now join the clan of many others flitting about the damp dark woods where they would greet their human guests with sharp calls of alarm from the security of some brush pile or tumbled root mass, or in spring would climb to an elevated perch and give out with singing to characterize the redwood forest in wren song.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE TO CREDITORS No. 15,418

In the Superior Court of the State of California, in and for the County of Santa Cruz.

In the Matter of the Estate of LETTIE IRELAN HINCKLEY, Deceased.

Notice Is Hereby Given by the Undersigned, LE ROY L. HINCKLEY, Executor of the estate of Lettie Irelan Hinckley, deceased, to the creditors of, and all persons having claims against the said deceased, or said estate, to file them, with the necessary vouchers, in the office of the Clerk of the above named Court (which said office is situate in the Court House in the City of Santa Cruz in said County and State), within six months after the first publication of this notice made on the 29th day of December, 1957, or present and exhibit them, with the necessary vouchers, within said period, to the said Executor at the office of Robert W. Scott, Attorney at Law, 1200 Mills Tower in the City of San Francisco, County of San Francisco, State of California, which said last named office, the undersigned selects as the place of business in all matters connected with said estate.

LE ROY L. HINCKLEY,
Executor of the
Estate of said deceased.

Dated: December 27, 1957.

ROBERT W. SCOTT,
Attorney for said Executor.
Dec. 29; Jan. 5, 12, 19

NOTICE TO CREDITORS No. 15453

In the Superior Court of the State of California, in and for the County of Santa Cruz.

In the Matter of the Estate of VICTORIA L. STARLEY, also known as VICTORIA STARLEY, also known as VICKI STARLEY, Deceased.

Notice Is Hereby Given by the Undersigned, STELLA RUTH GLIDDEN, Executrix of the Last Will and Testament and of the estate of VICTORIA L. STARLEY, also known as VICTORIA STARLEY, also known as VICKI STARLEY, deceased, to the creditors of, and all persons having claims against the said deceased, or said estate, to file them, with the necessary vouchers, in the office of the Clerk of the above named Court (which said office is situate in the Court House in the City of Santa Cruz in said County and State), within six months after the first publication of this notice made on the 12th day of January, 1958, or present and exhibit them, with the necessary vouchers, within said period, to the said Executrix at the office of RAYMOND H. GOODRICH and JOSEPH C. DAVISH, Attorneys at Law, Farmers & Merchants National Bank Building, in the City of Santa Cruz, County of Santa Cruz, State of California, which said last named office, the undersigned selects as the place of business in all matters connected with said estate.

STELLA RUTH GLIDDEN,
Executrix of the Last Will and
Testament and of the Estate
of said deceased.

Dated January 10, 1958.

RAYMOND H. GOODRICH and
JOSEPH C. DAVISH,
Attorneys for said Executrix,
Farmers & Merchants National
Bank Bldg.,
Santa Cruz, California.
Jan. 12, 19, 26; Feb. 2

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