5-27-56

**Black Oystercatcher Is Rarity** 



A bird which is not seen t often along the coast is the black oystercatcher, two of which are pictured above. The

main reason they are found in great numbers may be the fact they are reticent birds, usually \$\diamoldrightarrow\$\diamoldrightarrow\$ content to nest in out of the way areas along the shore and in spots which are largely in-accessible to humans.

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In the most remote and loneliest places along rocky ocean shores, a large black shorebird with a bright red bill sometimes can be seen. These shy maritime birds are known as oyster-catchers. catchers.

Ours is the black oyster-catcher; there is another species in the east and in Mexico. Both of these have some white in the plumage while ours is all black. My first acquaintance with this bird, whose range is from lower California to Alaska, occurred near Big Sur. The bird is considered somewhat of a rarity among bird-watchers, and while I was at Point Lobos, many nat-

## PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF HEARING

uralists came to the place mainly to see this bird.

Actually, I do not consider it very rare. The reason many observers seldom get to see them is because their habitat is often in isolated, inaccessible places where few humans care to go, or because the bird is so secretive that it is not easily seen.

There were about 30 of these large shorebirds at Point Lobos. But they are anything but a conspicuous part of the shore

## PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF SALE OF REAL PROPERTY No. 14,594

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

In the Matter of the Estate of PANY COLLING PAPAGETT.

for the for the for the Estate of PAPWORTH, al-C. PAPWORTH TH, Deceased. Even that the AN TRUST of the Estate apworth, also payworth and payworth payw AN TR coff the Estate apworth, also Papworth and ased, will sell highest bidder, set forth, and hy said Su-3lst day of for 10:00 o'clock at the Trust in Trust Comstreet, Salintitle and corth, in Trust Com-Street, Salin-ight, title and ngs Papworth, C. Papworth or the Estate apworth, also Papworth and ased, in and bed real and

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in spots which are largely inaccessible to humans.

life. Unless put to flight they may crouch upon the seaweed covered rocks and lie perfectly still, or may stealthily and quietly walk away.

If excited and put to flight, they are quite noisy, giving loud, sharp calls which can be described as "whick, whick."

In some places oystercatchers build no nest but lay their two or three chicken-sized eggs in a slight depression in the sand. At Point Lobos, of three nests which I found, all were constructed of angular pebbles.

About a quart of small pebbles, none over a half inch, were carried to the flat, rocky tableland. When arranged in the shape of a bowl, this became the nest.

Both birds incubate the eggs, relieving one another at regular intervals. Some naturalists say that the eggs are left uncovered for long periods to allow the sun to incubate them. However, others are skeptical of this. At Point Lobos, where the sun seldom shines, there would be few oystercatchers if they depended upon solar heat for incubation.

The incubation period is about 25 days. When the young are hatched they are quite attractive little bundles of brown and tan down. My observations revealed that they are not able to walk or run about as early as are quail and killdeer. If I remember correctly, it was 24 hours before the oystercatcher young could stand and walk; both the other precocial birds mentioned above can run in an hour or two after leaving the egg.

Young oystercatchers are fed

stand and walk; both the other precocial birds mentioned above can run in an hour or two after leaving the egg.

Young oystercatchers are fed upon shell fish which are brought to the nest area by the parents. At first these shellfish, mostly limpets, are "shelled" and pre-

At first these shellfish, mostly limpets, are "shelled" and presented to the young. After about a week, the entire animal is merely brought to the rock and the young do their own shelling. Oystercatchers present a rather awkward, foolish picture as we observe them. They are probably not too abundant on any stretch of California shore, but where found are an interesting part of the marine scene. Bird-lovers come from far or near to get sight of these comicial birds of the shore. the shore.

SCHS Students