

Along The Trail

by
ken legg

The old cliches that "Gold is where you find it" and "To catch fish you gotta have your line in the water" might apply to nest finding. To find very many bird nests requires a lot of patience and one must be out there where the nests are. Then there are certain other clues which come in handy.

I never found a Varied thrush nest before yesterday. Last week I surprised a female at a muddy place with her beak full of mud and trash. As she flew off with this material it was reasonable to assume she was nest building. Today I saw her near the same place and in a few minutes had found her nest.

It was on the side of the trunk of an alder tree. A knot and a bunch of sprouts grew from the trunk, and in these sprouts, reaching upward to the light, she had fashioned the nest. It was a clever and well hidden setting.

Perhaps the value of finding a nest is that each succeeding one is easier because we are armed with more know-how. Five years ago I couldn't find a hummingbird nest — now I can't keep from finding them. Most birds I have seen practically tell you there is a nest around.

The best seasons for locating nests are when the birds are building, and when they are feeding young. The building period also has a "best time" and this is morning, for more trips are made in the early part of the day. Likewise, there is a "best time" for nestling feeding — the older the babies the better, for the older they are the more food they eat; the more food they eat, the more trips the parents make.

This latter, as applied to age of the young, can be frustrating and misleading, for a bird can be too old. We saw a pair of Pileolated warblers carrying food to a fern-covered bank. For more than an hour I tried to set the pattern. Once they were at the base of a coffeeberry tree. The next time they were on down the slope, and again they were into the ferns. I "rushed" one of the "fern trips" and found a young bird out of the nest, being fed. The brood was scattered in four directions. This is one of the problems during the latter part of the nesting season.

No two birds of the same species act exactly alike but one can glean certain facts through observation. A White-crowned sparrow's nest I found this year was right on the ground beside a bunch of grass. A second nest was five feet high in a shrub.

Calling each bird by name, I'm asked "Where does such and such a bird nest?" One can generalize fairly well in some cases, and in others can be fairly sure of giving correct information.

Woodpeckers, chickadees and tree swallows (I mention these because I remember them), nest in holes in trees. But so do wrens and English sparrows although wrens and English sparrows also nest in other situations. For a while I thought redwings always nested over water in cattails until I found a colony nesting nearly on the ground in willowdock in a field.

Creepers nest under a loose piece of tree bark. Ducks nest on the ground — except wood ducks which nest in hollow trees.

Sizing up a piece of ground for bird nests the neophyte is likely to draw some erroneous conclusions. The most dense tangles

of vegetation are not always the most productive. Birds don't like to travel through close and difficult vegetational situations either and most nests are found beside paths or on the edges of clearings. A Pileolated warbler nest I found this spring was in a clump of saw grass beside a path and right across the path in a thimble berry was a Russet-backed thrush nest and an Allen hummingbird nest.

Adult birds going to a nest, either with material or with food, offer the best clues to their nest locations. Actions of most birds as they are flushed lead us to others when they set up an unusual fuss.

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE TO CREDITORS No. 15,719

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

In the Matter of the Estate of JOSIE A. HUST, Deceased.

Notice Is Hereby Given by the Undersigned, BANK OF AMERICA NATIONAL TRUST AND SAVINGS ASSOCIATION, a national banking association, Executor of the last will and testament and of the estate of Josie A. Hust 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 13th day of July, 1958, or present and exhibit them, with the necessary vouchers, within said period, to the said Executor at the office of its trust department, Bank of America National Trust and Savings Association, San Jose Main Office, No. 12 South First Street, P. O. Box 910, in the City of San Jose, County of Santa Clara, State of California, which said last named office, the undersigned selects as the place of business in all matters connected with said estate.

BANK OF AMERICA NATIONAL TRUST AND SAVINGS ASSOCIATION, Executor of the last will and testament of the Estate of said deceased.

By J. J. Carraher
Trust Officer.

Dated July 11th, 1958

EMMET L. RITTENHOUSE

Attorney for said Executor.

July 13, 20, 27; Aug. 3 (124)



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