

Is That So?

By EUGENE BURNS
Ranger-Naturalist

When autumn leaves have fallen and branches are bare, birds' nests are often revealed to plain view. Then is the time to study these nests—and in the studying realize how each species has its own inherent instinct to locate its nest in certain areas and to build it in a certain way with very special materials. And in this, experience and age have little if any effect.

Some birds locate their nests within the ground, in burrows; others make them on the bare ground or atop water; many place them in shrubby plants; and several place them high in treetops or inaccessible cliffs.

Among burrowers are the owls, some of which build their nest in abandoned prairie dog holes. The northern puffed-up rabbit burrows or excavates a short tunnel of its own. Belted kingfishers and bank swallows dig out deep horizontal tunnels—the kingfishers often extending ten feet.

Some ground-nesting birds like the whippoorwill and night hawk build no nest—they simply lay their eggs on the bare ground. The killdeer and tern at least make a feeble try at a nest—they scoop out a little depression on the ground to keep the eggs from rolling out. But another problem is presented to the Emperor penguin. It breeds on the Antarctic ice shelf during the long winter night when temperatures may fall to 70 below. With nesting materials unavailable, the adults stand on the ice and hold their egg off the ice on the web of the foot with a fold of skin from the abdomen enveloping the egg to keep it warm.

Floating Raft of Weeds
Water-dwelling birds, like the pied-bill grebe make a large floating raft of weeds. One of the long-toed jacanas, known as the water trotter, does it more simply—it lays its four eggs on a broad lily pad and should the next be submerged, simply takes the eggs up under its wings.

As for those birds which take to the shrubs and trees, they too may be careful of highly indifferent builders. The fairy tern simply balances its single egg precariously on the branch of a tree with no material whatever to hold it. The robin rests a secure home of mud and grass in the crotching branches of a tree. The barn swallow attaches its nest to a cliff or wall under the eave of a building. While one of the most elaborate of builders, the weaver bird, suspends a com-

plicated cradle from a limb which has been woven, in and out, and even knotted.

Diverse as locations may be, the appearance of these nests is even more varied. You'll find types from the swinging basket of the oriole to the open-air platform of the bald eagle; from the excavated tree trunk of the woodpecker to the spherical mass of green moss of the American dipper tucked into a crevice



over a swift-flowing stream; from the nine-pound hard-baked clay nest of the thrush-sized South American oven bird to the tiny walnut-sized nest of the hummingbird.

Of cunningly-fashioned nests there is no end, one of the best being that of the tailor-bird. Employing his beak as a needle, he sews together with fibers or silk threads from a caterpillar's cocoon the edges of leaves to make an envelope in which he places his nest.

Building materials used for the exterior of nests are most diverse. Although some may use mud, others demand vegetable fibers or feathers and hair is one of the prime ingredients. Of 794 nests studied at the University of California, 622 contained hair. Along with this, special species make special demands. A duck uses rushes; a flower-pecker, spider webs and down from seedpods. An oriole, horsehair and it searches far afield to find it. A barn owl uses bones from dissected pellets of its prey. A kingfisher uses fishbones and regurgitated scales. A ruby-throated hummingbird uses bud scales, lichen and ties it up with spider webbing.

Some Feather Nests

Although some birds like the osprey may leave the interiors of their nests bare and hard, others like the goose, duck and swan feather them with specially-grown down plucked from their own bodies. The American goldfinch uses thistle-down and when it cannot find it, often dismantles nests of its own and other species to get it. The hummingbird, appropriately, lines his with chestnut-burr down as fine as silk. And the crested flycatcher may go far afield to find a castoff snakeskin to decorate its doorway.

But once you find it even in the fall when it seems abandoned, do not destroy this delicate handiwork: a crow's nest may serve a hawk next year, and the year following, a horned owl. A bald eagle may rescue its nest for 35 years, until the heavy accumulation may crash to earth. And often the thistle-down lined nest of the goldfinch may be remodeled by a deer mouse for a winter nest of its own.

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Shady Cove Fire Hall Work Begins

Shady Cove-Trail — Construction of a new fire hall in Shady Cove got under way last week, according to Ray Briggs, chairman of the building committee. The work of pouring the concrete foundations was finished on Thursday, and work is now going ahead as fast as volunteer labor will permit.

The site of the new structure is on the Mobile Service property which is being furnished by M. M. Huggins, Mobile distributor for the Medford area, and will house the fire equipment of the recently organized Shady Cove-Trail Rural Fire district. The volunteer labor is furnished by those residing within the area which will be served by the district. So far, few have showed up to work, and an appeal is now made for all help possible in order that the building may be completed before rainy weather sets in. Anyone who can work is urged to contact Ray Briggs at the Advance Plumbing shop or Roy Long of Long's Valley supply, stating the exact time they will be available.

According to Fire Chief Athel Dudley, the new fire hall will furnish a meeting place for volunteer firemen. Drills will be held in the use and operation of the fire-fighting equipment.

Seedlings Available From State Nursery

Salem — (U.P.) — More than 7,000,000 seedlings will be available to Oregon tree planters from the State Forestry department nursery at Corvallis in the 1955-56 season, Nursery Superintendent Vern E. McDaniel said Saturday.

This includes 2,250,000 trees that have been set aside for the farmers who desire to establish windbreaks, shelterbelts, or woodlands.

The small two-year-old seedlings are also available to plant on cutover or denuded forest lands, to the 4-H Forest clubs, Boy or Girl Scouts, service clubs and other organizations. McDaniel said a special item included 250,000 fir trees produced specifically for the Izaak Walton league from seed provided by that organization.

Court Records

POLICE COURT
Franklin Irwin Brown, no operator's license, \$5; violation of basic rule, \$10; excessive noise, \$10; excessive noise, \$15.
Margaret B. Collins, failure to yield right of way, \$10.

DISTRICT COURT
Gerald Dwayne Green, no mud guards, \$10.
Frank Sidney Lewis, overload, \$15.
William Elmer Han, violation of basic rule, \$20.
Thomas Jason Ward, overload, \$10.
Clifford William Mynatt, overload, \$285 (bail).
Hugh Maurice Curtiss, inadequate muffler, \$15.
Milton Leroy Anderson, overload, \$125.
Dean Richard Chamberlain, overload, \$62.

MARRIAGE LICENSE APPLICATIONS
Richard Lee Wootton, 20, of 1314 South Peach st., Medford, and Marilyn von der Hellen, 17, of 925 Newtown st., Medford.

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CONTENTEDLY DRINKING MILK, baby Robert Marcus is ready to go home after undergoing checkup at Mt. Zion Hospital, San Francisco, which revealed he was in good health despite being kidnaped shortly after birth. (International)

OPEN HOUSE

Hillsboro, N. D. — (U.P.) — A burglar ransacked the Hovet Implement company here recently, scattered papers over the floor and left with some \$80. Owner John Hovet discovered a note

left behind by the intruder, which said: "Next time keep your safe and back door locked. Ha. ha!"

Dead line Sunday Classified is at noon Saturday, 10 a.m. Monday for Monday; other days 5:30 previous day

Sunday, October 2, 1955

MEDFORD (OREGON) MAIL TRIBUNE—FIVE

Fescue Growers Vote Approval of Commission Setup

Salem — (U.P.) — Oregon growers of creeping and red fescue seeds voted more than 5 to 1 to create a commodity commission for their product in the referendum conducted last week, J. F. Short, state director of agriculture said Saturday.

The vote statewide was 156 for the commission; 27 against.

Above Requirements
Tonnage represented in the favorable vote was 3,658,225 pounds, or more than the required one-third of the 10,145,000

pounds of the two grass seeds produced in Oregon in 1954. This is the first producer commission to come to a vote under the Oregon Commodity Commission enabling act.

With certification of the official vote to the secretary of state, the next move in establishing the Fescue Commission will come from Gov. Paul Patterson. The enabling act provides that the governor appoint from 5 to 11 members of a commission. A majority of the members must

be growers and at least one member must be a handle.

Vote Listed
The vote in the four main chewing and red fescue producing counties and the combined scattering vote from other counties included: Clackamas, 53 yes, 10 no. Marion, 50 yes, 10 no. Union 24 yes, 2 no. Linn, 12 yes, 3 no. Seven other counties, 17 yes, 1 no.

No votes were cast in Yamhill, Umatilla, Klamath or Clatsop counties.

Most Fatal Highway Mishaps Occur at Night

Salem — (U.P.) — More than half of Oregon's fatal traffic accidents take place at night when there are considerably fewer cars on the road in daylight, analysis of reports submitted to the state traffic safety division disclosure.

Of the 359 fatal smash-ups reported last year, 188 took place after nightfall and 79 of the 152 traffic fatalities in the first half of 1955 happened after dark.

The division gave these figures in issuing its annual appeal to motorists, as fall gets into full force, to drive carefully especially after dark.

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