

Is That So?

By EUGENE BURNS
Ranger-Naturalist

Although homing pigeons were used by the hundreds of thousands in World War II, in practically all theaters—in the jungles of Guadalcanal, from armored tanks in Africa, from downed bombers, from torpedoed cargo ships — yet, admittedly, they had their shortcomings.

The pigeon has its natural enemies—hawks for example.

Next, our avian mailman takes time to get used to his beat—that is, oriented to a new loft site to which to deliver its



messages. In fast-paced war now-day, mobile lofts can be pulled by jeeps and be left behind within two weeks, which is not good.

And finally, this aerial courier makes only a one-way delivery. It is transported to the front and from there flies back to its loft with a message—with no return message to the sender possible.

But the Pigeon Post has by nature circumvented one and man is helping solve the other—most of the man-made advances having been made since World War II. Some are in the works, right now.

As for its natural enemies. True, a swift hawk can spot a pigeon three miles away and for their 120 miles-an-hour flight, the pigeon's lumbering gait of 65 miles an hour is easy to over-haul. But against this handicap, the pigeon through the centuries has developed its own natural answer: its feathers are loosely attached on the back and hence when a hawk swoops down upon the fleeing pigeon, it sometimes picks off only a cloud of feathers while in the ensuing confusion the twisting pigeon sometimes makes good its escape by hitting the brush.

Trained to Fly at Night

For another, to overcome the hawk and other daytime hazards, birds are now being trained to fly by night up to 50 miles in pitch darkness.

To make a night flyer out of a day bird took doing. First trainers mated birds which naturally flew earlier in the morning and later in the evening than the average. From these, the "squeakers" were released from their day-darkened lofts only at night to return to their blacked-out homes from gradually increasing distances. Although night-flying is still in the experimental stage, by the third year when pigeons fly at their peak performance, these youngsters should be stretching the 50-mile limit considerably.

As for getting "oriented" to a new location, the time has been reduced to three days—a truly remarkable feat in which breeding fast-learning birds played an important role.

Round-Trip

But the most important development—a hush secret in many training circles—the former one-way fliers are now becoming round-trippers. The underlying principle is simplicity itself. Pigeons, like most creatures, prize two things: food and sex. Now separate them. And so, by dangling food and water at one loft and sex at the other, it didn't take long for a bright bird to catch on—and soon, it was flying frantically from cote to cote, with distances gradually lengthening.

The round-trip experiment began with Mr. Corrigan, the great-grandson of Always Faithful whose pigeon ancestry goes back 525 years. Within two months, Mr. Corrigan was high-tailing 12 miles to trip a "bob-wire" to announce his arrival at the "food" station with a message attached and then after a hasty reward he was in the air again within five minutes with another message and arrowing

to his "love" cote at a mile a minute.

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First-Desk Men

Barred by Orchestra

Boston—First-desk men are barred from playing with the Boston Pops Orchestra even if they want to.

The Pops concerts were begun, not for public enjoyment, but for the benefit of Boston Symphony personnel who would otherwise be unemployed from May until October.

When the orchestra was organized, first-desk men, the principal performers in each chair of the orchestra, were banned from participation because they received extra salary anyway. The ban has continued and first-desk men may appear only as guest soloists.

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Cute Honey Chile Drippin' With Drawl Of Ol' South Guns For Chassis Title

MARTHA LEHMAN
Cream of the Far North

Seattle, Wash.—How any gal from so far north as Fairbank, Alaska, could come "outside" sportin' a Southern drawl, honey chile, is more than we all can understand.

But Miss Alaska, also known as Martha Lehman, age 18, bust 34, waist 24, hips 36, sho'nuff speaks like cone pone.

What's mo' she's aheadin' south

—but not back to Dixie. Miss Lehman is going to California to contest her face, figure and talent against some of the most luscious in the world. She's entered in the Miss Universe chassie championships to take place in Long Beach this week.

Accent Natural

But this gal from the Arctic country comes by her Southern accent most naturally. She lived many a day hard by the bayous

down south in Louisiana.

Her pappy's in the Air Force. He used to be a major but after the war he took up the more economical occupation of master sergeant. Now he operates the non-commissioned officers club at Eielson Air Force Base near Fairbanks.

The blonde, blue-eyed Miss Alaska is five feet, seven inches tall in her mukluks and weighs 122 pounds. She models clothing

sometimes, and dressed in her ski-pants and parka trimmed in wolf fur she would make poet Robert Service's better known Alaska beauties envious.

Honor Student

Miss Lehman is an honor student at the University of Alaska, where the boys outnumber the girls by better odds than you could get on a squirrel fight at the Northern Saloon.

"It's very convenient that

way," she said.

Miss Lehman wants to be an instructress in horsemanship. Horses? In Alaska? Alaska is for the dogs!

"Maybe so, but down south in Louisiana I have two horses," she cooed. "Thunder and Tubac Sue." What about Hollywood? Any aspirations in that direction?

"I was born in Hollywood," she smiled. And she was too.

REVIEWING OFFICER

San Diego, Calif. — The reviewing officer of a parade of 2,000 personnel at San Diego Naval Training center Saturday was Rear Adm. Yoshimori of the Japanese maritime self-defense force. The admiral, who leaves Tuesday for San Francisco, is observing anti-submarine programs on the West Coast.

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Milani 1 Calorie Dressing 6 oz. Bottle 33c
Tillie Lewis Chef's Dressing (1 Calorie Per Serving) 8 oz. bottle 33c
Tillie Lewis Blue Cheese Dressing 8 oz. bottle 33c
Tillie Lewis 1 Calorie Dressing 8 oz. bottle 33c
Diamel Liquid Sweetener (No calories) 3 oz. bottle 65c
Diamel Powdered Sweetener 2 1/2 oz. Pkg. 35c
Taystea Dietetic Cookies 4 oz. Pkg. 49c
Dietetic Banana Tea Cookies 2 1/2 oz. Pkg. 35c
Dietetic Sweet Mixed Pickles 8 oz. Jar 43c

Bisquick Large Pkg.—Limit 1 29¢ Save 14c
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C & H Sugar 25-lb. Bag \$2.59 Save 10c

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