

SWAINSON'S HAWK



SWAINSON'S HAWK
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The Swainson's Hawk breeds from the interior of British Columbia through Fort Yukon and Great Slave Lake country to Manitoba and south to northern Mexico. Obviously it is primarily a western species. It may be found as a casual visitor east to Quebec, Maine, New York and Florida so it is not necessarily a complete stranger anywhere in the United States. It normally winters in South America and even there is found in the winter season only casually north of the Equator.

The Swainson's Hawk may reach a length of 22 inches with the tail measuring to 9 inches. Superficially, it might in one form be taken in flight for a grayish Red-tailed Hawk with more pointed wings and a slatish gray tail bearing numerous dark cross-bars instead of the typical reddish tail of the Red-tailed Hawk. The under part of the wings appear to be with few marks although the borders and tips are darker. The throat and nearly

white belly are separated by a whitish collar of chestnut or brownish gray. The under side of the tail at a distance at least appears to be white or nearly so. This white does not appear on the rump as is the case with the Marsh Hawk.

The young Swainson's Hawk may resemble the young of the Red-shouldered Hawk but it lacks the characteristic red-shoulders of that species. There are two color phases of the Swainson's Hawk. In flight, these two differ rather conspicuously since the dark phase appears from beneath to be almost wholly gray except for light areas just back from the wing tips and at the base of the tail.

The Swainson's Hawk is essentially a bird of open prairie country. It is tamed and is easily and frequently shot as it flies low back and forth over fields in search of its food. It may also to its detriment perch for long periods of time on a low conspicuous perch such as a fence post from which it does not readily take flight.

The killing of a Swainson's Hawk is a reflection on the intelligence of the user of the gun. On rare occasions one may take poultry but the overwhelmingly large portion of the food is grasshoppers and reptiles. One survey in the State of Washington indicated that about 90 per cent of the food of a Swainson's Hawk was ground squirrels, the arch enemy of agricultural crops.

Swainson's Hawks build their nests in trees from 30 to 80 feet above the ground. In the nest are placed 2 to 3 eggs measuring from 2 1/4 to 1 1/4 inches. The eggs are highly variable and may be dull blue-white or creamy and unmarked or may be spotted and blotched with cinnamon brown. There is but one brood a year and the incubation period is just under four weeks.

Here is one species of hawk about which there is no disagreement on the part of those who are informed. It is a useful species and as such deserves every protection as a rule. Unfortunately it does not always get this and more unfortunately the bird does not seem to be as wary as it should so far as its own interests are concerned. The National Wildlife Federation asks your cooperation in understanding and in helping others understand this bird.

—E. Laurence Palmer



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Social Security Benefits Noted

Monthly payments of \$10,333. to 274 widowed mothers and minor children accounted for 11 per cent of the total monthly old-age and survivors insurance benefits of \$91,137, in Columbia county as of December, 1955, according to Robert Hamill, field representative, Social Security administration.

In all, 1722 people in Columbia County were getting \$91,139 each month in old-age and survivors insurance benefits at the end of 1955. This was an increase of 11 per cent over the number of beneficiaries at the end of 1954.

Aged people accounted for the greatest number in the County's increased beneficiary total, he said. In Columbia county at the end of last year, 1029 retired workers were getting \$65,521 monthly; 296 wives and dependent husbands were receiving \$9,637 monthly; 123 aged widows, widowers and parents were receiving \$5,648 monthly as survivors of deceased insured workers.

"With the bringing in of many groups of employed and self-employed persons previously excluded, the old age and survivors insurance program achieved almost universal coverage at the beginning of 1955," Hamill said. He pointed out that an estimated 68 million persons had taxable earnings under the program in calendar year 1955. Some 70 million workers were insured as the year came to an end. Of this number, 32 million are permanently insured and can qualify for old-age benefits at age 65, regardless of future employment; likewise, in the event of death, their survivors can qualify for monthly benefits, lump-sum death payments, or both.

When a worker retires or dies,

he or his survivors are urged to visit, phone or write the Portland social security office for assistance in making claim for benefits. "In fact," he said, "the social security office should be contacted (1) when a worker reaches age 65, regardless of retirement, (2) when he reaches age 72, regardless of earnings, (3) when an insured member in a family dies, and (4) when a worker becomes totally disabled for any gainful employment or self-employment.

A field representative is in St. Helens every Monday, second floor County court house, 12 noon to 3 p.m. The Portland office is at 926 S.W. Fourth Avenue.

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4-H Summer School Set June 11-22 at College

Training older 4-H club members in leadership methods will be a major goal of this year's annual 4-H summer school, June 11 to 22, at Oregon State college.

Four hundred selected club members are enrolled in workshops that will cover principles of democratic leadership, according to Burton Hutton, state 4-H leader.

Counties are expected to send about 1800 young people and 100 extension agents and 4-H leaders to summer school, Hutton reports. More than 50,000 class hours will be devoted to subject matter in agriculture, home economics, re-

creation, health and civil defense during the 4-Her's stay.

Girls will be housed in sororities, dormitories and co-resident houses at OSC. Eleven men's fraternities and two cooperatives will house and provide dining facilities for 4-H boys.

Those who will attend from this area are: Carolyn Heath, Louis Jones, Walter Berg, Karen Hoyt, Sherry Roediger, Carol Sharar, Gladys Sharar and Ron Anderegg.

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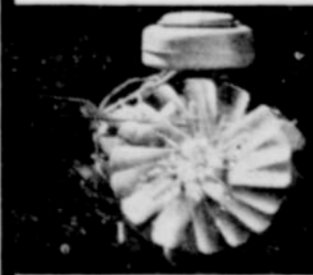
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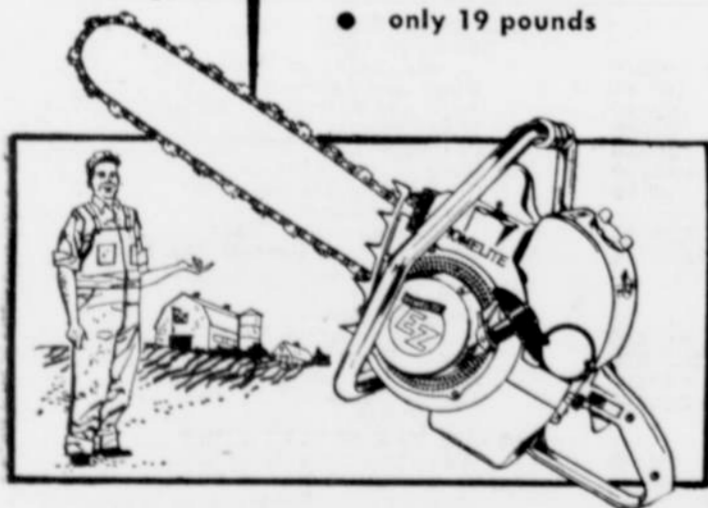
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