

EL PASO BIRD STUDY CLUB

THE ROADRUNNER

PUBLISHED BY THE EL PASO BIRD STUDY CLUB

LENA McBEE, EDITOR

No. 30

FEBRUARY-MARCH, 1949

Fifty cents a year

ROYAL JACKMAN

"And flute notes fall from the hermit thrush"

From one of the late Royal Jackman's poems this line was quoted, because it conveys the essence of his gentle spirit. He departed this life, December 29, 1948, after a brief illness. He was for several years a member of the El Paso Bird Study Club. His devotion to beauty and to the memory of his departed wife, Mey. Bailey Jackman, stands unsurpassed. Such souls live on, as "flute notes fall."

RECENT MEETINGS

At the meeting of December 2, 1948, new officers were elected; plans were made for the Christmas Bird Count; and a tour of the Ornithology room of the Mines Museum was conducted by Mrs. Lena McBee.

Officers for 1949 were elected: Chairman, Mrs. J. Owen Allen; Assistant Chairman, Mrs. George W. Young; Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. J. C. Wilmarth; Recording Secretary, Mrs. Harriet McGuire; Treasurer, Miss Mary Belle Keefer.

At the February meeting of the Bird Club, held in the Mines Museum on the first Tuesday, George Burrows lectured on Wild Life in the Everglades. Burrows was formerly a tour leader for the National Audubon Society in that section of Florida, and last summer was Assistant Manager of the Audubon Nature Camp at Kerville, Texas. A film of the camp will be shown in the near future. The club made further plans for the next Audubon Screen Tour, February 21. It was voted to add more reference material to the Jackman Memorial.

A Bird Walk to Ascarate Park was conducted January 15, to Ascarate Park. Leaders were Miss Keefer for the adults, and Miss Jennie Camp for the Juniors. About forty joined in the walk, on which twenty kinds of birds were noted. Of the ducks seen, the rarest is the American golden-eye. A flock of thirty robins made the children glad. A golden eagle and a sharp-shinned hawk were noted. One yellow-shafted flicker was seen, of which we have but two previous records here. Plans are being worked out for a future bird walk, soon to be taken.

A record audience saw THIS CURIOUS WORLD IN NATURE at the El Paso High School Auditorium on the evening of December 6, 1948. Scenery, birds, and animal life passed before their eyes, waking memories and wonder in all those who had visited the park. These entertainments are marked by growing interest in El Paso.

COMING SCREEN TOURS

Carl W. Buchheister, Vice President of the National Audubon Society, will present WILD LIFE DOWN EAST in the El Paso High School Auditorium, Monday, February 21, at 7:30 P. M. New England birds, animals, and natural scenery form the background for this sparkling program. No lover of the outdoors can afford to miss it.

On Wednesday, March 16, at 7:30 P. M., in the El Paso High School Auditorium, Allan D. Cruickshank will bring us the wild life of New York City and its environs, in his Screen Tour, TRAILS FOR THE MILLIONS. Audubon Screen Tour fans will recall his appearance two years ago in "South Along the Suwannee", one of our most beautiful numbers.

NEW MEMBERS

The latest member to be enrolled in the Bird Club is Brownie Zundel.

BROWN THRASHER VISITS EL PASO

A brown thrasher has fed for four days in Mary Belle Keefer's yard at 3029 Federal Street, eating her scattered bird feed with juncos and sparrows, or scratching in the hedge for whatever he considers edible. So far as we know, this is the first record in El Paso for *T. rufum*. He was first seen January 20, the day an "Arctic blast moved over the nation". Apparently he had not eaten lately; he cracked and pounded large pieces of corn, rejected by the smaller birds, and ate an astonishing amount upon arriving.

WITH OUR CORRESPONDENTS

From Miss Sarah Durkee, Massachusetts, and Mrs. Jack Whitaker, Oklahoma, comes news about winter visitors to the feeding shelf.

In regard to one of our booked Audubon Screen Tours lecturers, Nick Short writes from Missouri, "Look out for Father Link. He is indeed a wonderful person."

"Our tiny house in the desert is over-run with thrashers, cardinals, cactus wrens, pyrrhuloxias, woodpeckers, and dogs." This, from the George McClelland Bradts, Tucson, Arizona.

Ernest Melancon sends us a promise, from his home in Balboa, Canal Zone, that he will make pencil sketches for us of some of the birds down there that we do not have in the States.

Unwritten message from Cupid: George Burrows and Mary Elizabeth Harper were married at high noon on New Year's Day, 1949, in El Paso, Texas.

Dr. Allen R. Phillips of Tucson hopes to receive from our club all available information on post-breeding migration of local nesting birds. (See Page 3.)

Mrs. Al Eynon writes from Verona, New Jersey, an interesting account of following migrating hawks in a blimp. Part of her letter follows:

"Our house is so located on the first Watching Ridge which is on the hawk migration that we have many of the ridge flight birds, and the cross ridge flight birds pass directly over it or in view of it. This fall, during the broadwing flight, the Uxner Ornithological Club, to which Al belongs, sponsored an attempt to follow the broadwings and record their behavior from a blimp.

"Al was one of the two men chosen to make the trip....This was one of the largest flights we have witnessed in years, with a total of 2380 birds going over during the day.....Much to my delight, the blimp kept flying back and forth over our house, picking out flocks and following them as long as possible.....Many questions remain unanswered; however, they did learn how to go about following birds in the air, which is totally different from ground study. It presents many unexpected difficulties, which they hope to cope with better in subsequent flights."

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT AT EL PASO

The El Paso Bird Study Club took the annual local bird census Sunday, January 2, 1949, in cooperation with the National Audubon Society. Fifty-eight species and three additional sub-species were reported. Unusually high winds caused the count to be terminated by 2:00 P. M.

No pintail duck were seen here this year, but more blue teal than usual were noted. Otherwise, the number of duck was about the average. Horned owl, Say's and black phoebe, mountain bluebird, hermit thrush, Audubon's warbler, Green-tailed and canyon towhees, jays and goldfinches were conspicuously absent from the list; so were many common sparrows, such as Bairds, lark, chipping, Brewer's, vesper and Savannah. The small number of sparrows seen during the census and throughout the fall is believed to be traceable to an unusually dry season.

Florida gallinule were seen for the first Christmas record in four years. Juncos were abundant. The unwelcome starling were present in greatly increased numbers.

According to National rules the radius of the area selected cannot exceed seven miles. Ascarate Lake, Memorial and Newman Parks, McKelligon Canyon, Randel's Pool, the Country Club Area, and the Rio Grande levees north and east of the city were visited. El Paso is fortunate to have such a variety of terrain as mountain canyon, desert mesa, artificial lake, river bosque and irrigated farmland included in its territory.

Birds seen were as follows: horned and pied-billed grebes, great blue heron (Treganza's), mallard, gadwall, baldpate, green-winged and blue-winged teal, shoveller, redhead, canvas-back, and American merganser duck, scaled and Gambel's quail, turkey vulture, red-tailed marsh, sparrow hawks, Florida gallinule and coot, killdeer, Wilson's snipe, western sandpiper, ring-billed gull, mourning dove and road-runner, long-eared owl and belted kingfisher, red-shafted flicker and ladder-backed (cactus) woodpecker, horned lark, white-necked raven and verdin, house wren and rock wren, mockingbird, curve-billed thrasher, robin, western (chestnut-backed) bluebird, ruby-crowned kinglet, American pipit, loggerhead (white-rumped) shrike, starling and English sparrow, meadowlark; redwinged and yellow-headed blackbirds, cowbird and Brewer's blackbird, pyrrhuloxia and housefinch, spotted (spurred) towhee, black-throated (desert) sparrow and sage sparrow, Oregon junco (Shufeldt's),

Montana, pink-sided and gray-headed (red-backed) junco, white-crowned (Gambel's) sparrow and song sparrow -- 58 species, 3 additional sub-species and about 8320 individuals.

Participating in the count were Meses. J. Owen Allen, Harry R. Conway, Lena McBee, Harriet McGuire, John K. Rose, and Marguerite Wright; Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Wimberly; Misses Frances Camp, Jennie Camp, Mary Belle Keefer, Diane Quigley, and Nancy Wilbanks; Messrs. Fred Andresen, Tommy Conway, Johnnie Martin, and Rickey Miles (El Paso Bird Study Club).

Mrs. J. Owen Allen

The El Paso Region as a Migration Highway

A favorite theory in the past has been that migrating birds tend to mass along certain "highways" or "flyways" instead of migrating everywhere at random. The El Paso region offers exceptional advantages to make long-range studies testing this theory. This is due to its central location; its rivers and mountain chains paralleling the direction in which most birds travel; and its many miles of almost continuous fertile bottomlands bordering the Rio Grande in a desert region.

Of course, not all birds are equally migratory, and probably different kinds behave differently. For example, swallows and crows may migrate slowly down the Rio Grande, feeding as they go, simply because there is plenty of food there in an otherwise unfavorable region. But most of our birds, which are nocturnal migrants, may not care about the vegetation below them. When we have amassed enough information on enough different kinds of birds, we will probably find that they show various kinds of behavior.

We all know that, at the break of dawn, migrating birds do not simply drop down on the desert wherever they happen to be, but that most individuals fly into places that look promising for food and shelter -- in other words, into wooded areas of some sort. Now, if migrants are just as numerous in one part of the sky as in another, this should mean that we would find more concentrated numbers of birds in remote spots of greenery like Deming or on small, isolated mountains far out in the desert than we would at El Paso or along extensive mountain chains such as the Sacramentos.

If on the other hand, migrants tend to follow along the features of the landscape below them, we should find them more numerous at El Paso and Cloudfcroft than at Deming, in the smaller mountains away from the main chains, or on east-west river systems like the Hondo.

Many factors add to the complexity and fascination of bird migration. Some species prefer to migrate always in the higher mountains; others may do so at one season, yet move across the lowlands at other times of the year. Still other birds, mainly those of open country, may shun the mountains at all times. An area that is full of migrants (especially insect--or fruit-eaters) in fall may be nearly deserted in spring. Places where a north-south river empties or bends into an east-west river are good spots to look for a "piling up" of migrants at the proper season.

Then there are special groups like the waterfowl, shorebirds, and hawks that deserve particular attention. Thus far, we know of no special hawk migration routes in the southwest -- possibly because there are so many mountain chains with their updrafts of air to make flying easy.

Shorebirds and hawks, however, present certain difficulties. They have an embarrassing richness of very similar-looking species that are extremely hard to tell apart. Flycatchers and sparrows are open to similar objections. For example, let us say that small flycatchers are found nearly everywhere in about the same numbers. We still could not say that they showed no particular preferences if we found the mountain birds were mostly Hammond's and Wright's while the desert birds were largely Gray and Traill's Flycatchers. A great deal of collecting would be necessary.

Similar objections apply to birds that nest or winter in the El Paso region. How can we determine how many migrant Yellow Warblers are present where the woods are full of the local Sonora race? Hermit Thrushes may occur all year in the mountain ranges of the Southwest, yet the birds that nest here do not stay for the winter and we cannot look at a bird and say whether it is a migrant, summer resident, or winter resident.

The ideal species for such studies are birds like the Tree Swallow and the Townsend and Pileolated Warblers, that are safely identifiable in life and do not nest or winter here. Identifiable subspecies like the Cassin Vireo and the White-crowned Sparrow will do well, but little can be done with such birds as the Rufous Hummingbird, in which only the adult male can be safely identified.

Nevertheless, records should be kept of all migratory birds. No one can predict in advance what unexpected facts may come to light. The El Paso Bird Club will do well to serve as a depository for records from different areas. These records should state what area and distance was covered, the types of vegetation investigated, and hours afield and weather. By all means they should include the early morning hours, beginning as early as possible, when birds are most active. Accumulation of as many such lists as possible, with accurate counts of the number of each species seen (or as close an estimate as is humanly possible), over a period of several years, may throw new light on one of the greatest mysteries in the world we live in.

Another migration about which we know almost nothing is postbreeding migration from the nesting grounds. The El Paso group has pioneered in such a study of the

White-necked raven. Other birds that seem to show this peculiar behavior in the southwest are the Black and Say's Phoebes, Horned Lark, Phainopepla, Shrike, and perhaps also the mockingbird. We need full data on these -- their numbers in each area at each time, when they arrive and depart, and the proportion of the adult birds that build nests and raise young. All the books tell of the marvels of regular migration, yet we can search high and low without finding any reference to the even more peculiar behavior of post-breeding emigration. This is because it is almost unknown. Here is a real chance for southwesterners to make new discoveries!

Allan R. Phillips

THE HARLINGEN BIRD COUNT

Mrs. McBee and I had the pleasure of spending the Christmas holidays in Harlingen, Texas, and of taking part in the Christmas bird count there. It is a matter of local pride to have a large count and they work hard for it. Last year their count of 163 species was the largest in the country, and they hope to exceed that this year. Their goal is to better the count of 171, once turned in by some community in California.

To this end they bend every effort. Within the limits of the dates set by the Audubon Society, no definite day is set until the last minute, for the weather must be as favorable as possible. Weather reports and forecasts are carefully studied, in order to avoid a norther, wet or dry, or a high wind. For a week or more before the probable day, Mr. Irby Davis, one of the prime movers in the count, has been scouring the country, to look for something unusual, strays and casuals, or something uncommon that they wish especially to include. If he finds something of interest, the team assigned to that place is instructed to look for it.

The observers, of course, are divided into groups with certain areas assigned to each group; and such large lists are brought in that they find it convenient to have each team accompanied by a young person who keeps tally. Generally this is a student who does not necessarily know the birds but who gets valuable training in this way.

The country to be covered is varied, consisting of citrus groves, wooded tracts with ash and hackberry predominating, thickets of mesquite, huisache, Texas ebony, and cactus; and of ditch banks and water, much water. As each town has its pumping station, where water is taken from the Rio Grande, there are some large storage basins and ditches everywhere. Levees along all these waterways make a confusing labyrinth for a stranger.

The list included many that were rarities to us, or that we had seen during the preceding week for the first time; such as the white ibis, the anhinga, black vulture, red-shouldered hawk, caracara, Harris's hawk, Inca and ground doves, chachalaca, Texas kingfisher, rose-breasted becard, Couch's kingbird, Derby flycatcher, green jay, black-crested titmouse, Sennet's thrasher, Audubon's oriole, Sharp's seedeater, and the Texas sparrow.

PRAYING MANTIS CAPTURES HUMMINGBIRD

The unique experience of a hummingbird's capture by a praying mantis was reported by Mrs. J. C. Wilmarth to the El Paso Times, and is here reproduced:

"Members of the Sunset Heights Garden Club, which had its meeting in Mrs. E. F. Flores' garden last September, were shocked to happen upon a praying mantis that had caught a hummingbird.

"The bird was fluttering", adds Mrs. Wilmarth, "and I pulled the mantis and the bird apart. In the jaws of the mantis were feathers and bloody flesh."

JUNIOR ROADRUNNER

Marguerite Wright, Editor

MOUNTAIN JAYS

Mrs. Hill stepped to the door of the adobe farm house, shading her eyes from the sun. "Here they come," she called to her husband. "I'll take one last peek at the turkey. Dinner is almost ready."

The jolly, white-haired farmer hurried out. His voice was bright with pleasure as he greeted the Martins and the Lamars. "Come right on in, folks," he said. Then, turning to the children, "Would you youngsters like to take a look at the bird bath? There's no telling what you might see. I scattered cracked pecans and wheat just a few minutes ago."

A harsh, scolding note sounded from the hedge. It was echoed from the cottonwood in the chicken run. A large, blue bird dropped to the top of the rose arbor, turning this way and that, and shrieking noisily.

"Well, look who's here," whispered Tommy. "Isn't it a beauty?"

"Bigger than a robin, and what a pretty blue!" noted Carlos aloud. "Black head and crest. Heavy bill and streaks on its forehead. Very curious about us."

"It sounds and acts like a jay of some kind," Tommy murmured. "Do you know what kind it is, Anita?"

"Yes, I do. It is a Steller's or long-crested jay. I saw dozens of them in Ruidoso last summer. Once you see this bird you never forget it, as there isn't any other blue bird with a crest west of the Rockies. It is one of the handsomest birds of the forest. But 'Handsome is as handsome does'. All jays seem to have bad reputations."

"Why?" Tommy wanted to know. "What do jays do?"

Anita counted the charges on her fingers: "Jays have disagreeable voices, and make lots of noise. They are impolite, inquisitive and impudent. They are thieves and camp robbers. They are the bullies of the bird world. They often destroy the nests of other birds, and eat the eggs or hurt the babies. Some folks say they even eat these baby birds, so maybe they are cannibals, too."

"Whew, what a list of sins!" Tommy murmured. "In this case, I guess we should say, 'Fine feathers don't make fine birds.'"

"But he is amusing, and is fun to watch. See that flashy color and the saucy look he has," Carol defended.

The children sat quietly on a bench. Another Steller's jay hopped out from under the hedge. A flock of juncos fluttered to the feeding shelf, murmuring soft junco talk and clicking their bills. A robin hopped to the stone wall, wondering if it dared come closer. A flicker coasted down with a display of red-lined wings and tail.

One of the long-crested jays started at the lowest limb of an evergreen tree and hopped rapidly, limb by limb, to the top.

"Look at that jay ladder-climb!" Tommy exclaimed.

"Just like going up a spiral fire escape," Carlos laughed.

"It was showing off for us, I think," Anita smiled. "The Bird Lady says the Steller's jays usually come part way down the mountains to spend the winter. When we see them in the valley, the food supply up there is getting low. They eat acorns and pine nuts, but they also like the pecans which grow on our valley farms."

With a screech, a large bluish bird dropped to the bird bath. The robin silently disappeared. With an excited whirl of wings, the juncos flew to cover. The flicker, protesting, ran up the trunk of a tree. The new bird jerked its round head once or twice, and dipped its bill in the water. Then tilting its head, it let the cold drops run down its throat. Finally it hopped to the feeding shelf and began picking at the wheat.

"That's a jay, too, but it has no crest," Carlos whispered. "How would you describe it, Tommy?"

"It is larger than a robin. The head, wings and tail are a rich blue. The back is brownish, and it is gray underneath. It has white streaks over the eye and on the throat. It has a large bill, like the Steller's jay."

"You are getting good, Tommy," praised his brother. "Don't you know this jay, Anita? Here comes Mr. Hill. He can tell us."

"Mr. Hill, none of us know the jay of the feeding shelf. Can you tell us, please?"

"It is a Woodhouse's jay. We often see them in the valley during the winter months. You may call it a scrub jay, as it lives, during the summer, on the open hillsides where scrub oaks and pinones grow. Anita, don't you remember seeing them in Santa Fe when you lived there?"

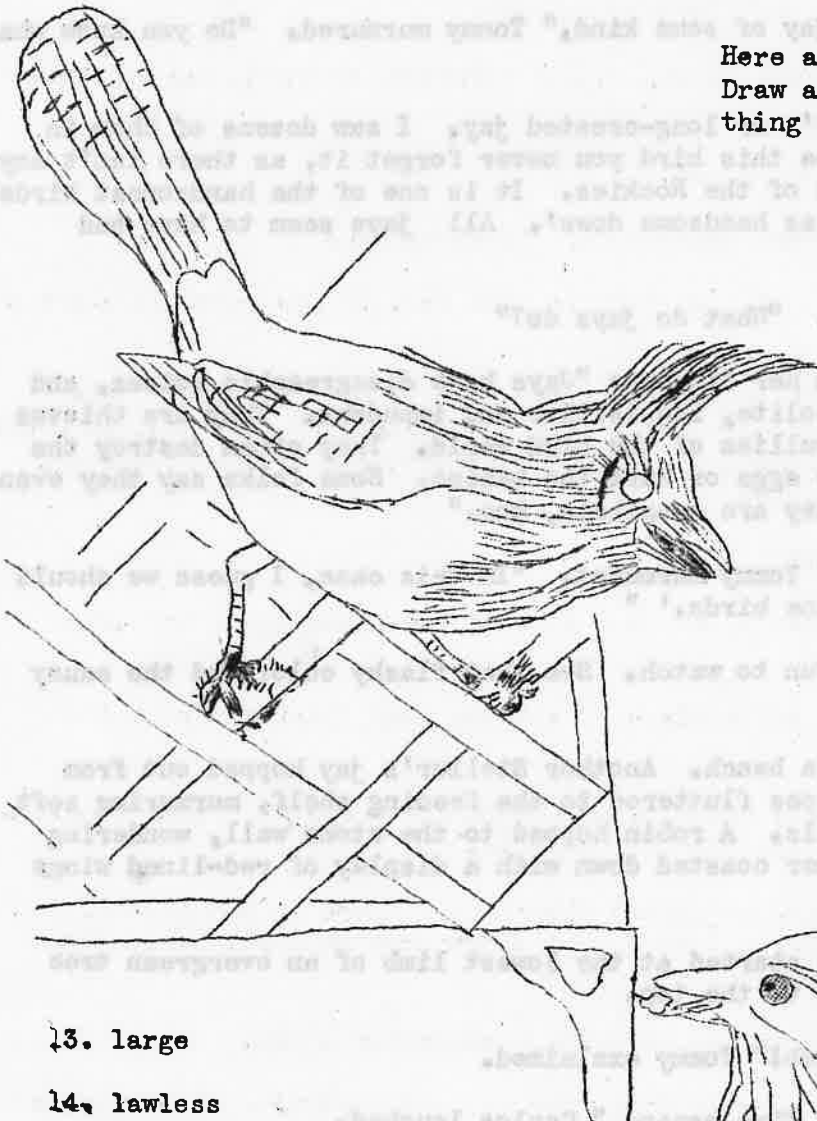
"No, I don't, Mr. Hill. Should I have noticed them?"

"Perhaps not," the old gentleman continued. "You were there only one spring and summer. The Woodhouse's jay is very quiet and secretive during the nesting season. He whispers to his mate instead of squawking at her, as he usually does, and flits through the trees as silently as a shadow."

"Dinner!" came a call from the porch.

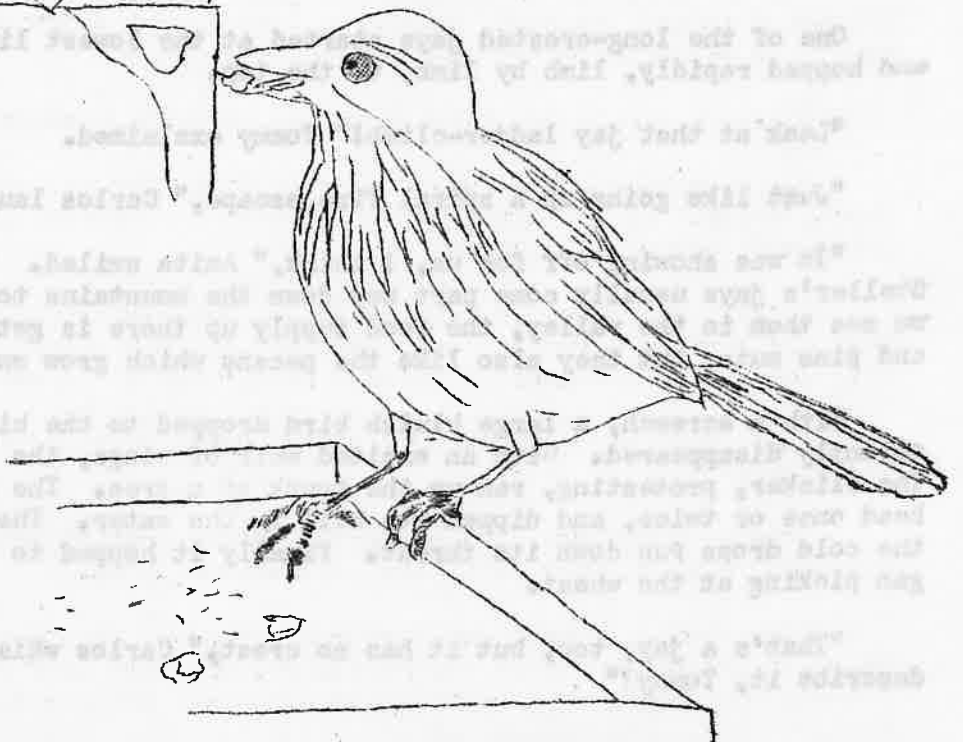
"Coming!" shrieked the boys.

"Two more noisy jays, one with a red crest!" laughed Anita, as she and Mr. Hill followed the boys to the house.



Here are some words which describe birds. Draw a line under those which tell something about jays.

1. amusing
2. beautiful
3. curious
4. destructive
5. flashy
6. friendly
7. gay
8. gentle
9. helpful
10. ill-mannered
11. impudent
12. inquisitive
13. large
14. lawless
15. musical
16. noisy
17. quarrelsome
18. quiet
19. saucy
20. silent
21. timid
22. tiny



CARDINAL AND PYRRHULOXIA

Anita and Tommy loitered on the sandy river road. To their right the truant waters of the Rio Grande curled about the sand bars, chuckled a greeting to the water birds, and reflected the bright rays of the sun. Then, perhaps remembering that New Mexico would soon be left behind, and curious to see the new lands to the south, the waters gurgled under the bridge. Soon the river would become a boundary line between Texas and Mexico.

The cousins spent some moments watching a great blue heron which stood, motionless, in the water. "I would like to see him catch a fish, wouldn't you, Tommy" asked Anita. "He stands there just like a statue."

"Probably that is what he wants the fish to think he is," laughed Tommy. "I don't see any new birds near the water. Let's look on the other side of the road."

Mr. Hill's farm lay to the left. Stiff brown stalks stood sadly in the fields. They had been robbed of their fluffy white balls of cotton. Beyond, lazy smoke curled up from the chimney of the farm house.

"Mr. Hill gets wood for his fireplace from the bosque over there," Tommy said. "There are usually a lot of birds in the trees. Let's go over there next."

In the bosque, or woods, cottonwoods stood high above a tangle of mesquite, tornillo and catclaw. From a hidden spot came a clear, musical whistle. The children "froze".

"That sounded like a cardinal," Tommy whispered.

"It sounded like a pyrrhuloxia to me," Anita answered, watching for any movement in the bushes.

"What a fancy name!" Tommy murmured.

"Well, a pyrrhuloxia is a very fancy bird," Anita smiled.

"There! It whistled again. Tell me what to look for, if you think it isn't a cardinal." Tommy begged.

Anita thought a moment. "It is not as large as a robin," she said. "The chest, face and wing edges of the male are a deep red. The Bird Lady says he wears his gray coat unbuttoned to show his geranium-colored vest and blood-red cravat. His coat tail is lined with red, too."

"Does his mate look the same?"

"No, she has a yellowish breast, and not so much red trimming on her gray dress and bonnet."

There was another whistle, and a flash of red and gray flitted across the trail.

"There it goes, into the tall mesquite at the fence corner," whispered Anita. "Let's try to get closer, so we can watch it a while."

The two cousins, black braids and blond thatch bent close to the ground, slipped from bush to bush, trying to look like two friendly shadows. Soon they were near the fence where the bird had disappeared.

"I see a female pyrrhuloxia in the tornillo," whispered Anita.

"Oh, yes, I see her now. The male is in the tallest mesquite. Look at his crest, Anita. He is talking with it, I think, the way Miss Smith talks with her hands when she tells a story."

A twig snapped under Tommy's knee. Both top-knots stood erect in alarm. Then, as nothing more happened, the feathers settled back. The female hopped nearer. Her mate's saucy crest swooped forward as if to ask if everything was all right.

"Look what heavy bills they have, Tommy. They look like little parrots' bills, don't they?"

"Yeah. They look like cardinals' bills, except these are yellow. This male pyrrhuloxia looks very much like a female cardinal."

"Oh, I wish I could see just one cardinal. Everyone says they are so pretty. They are in most parts of the Southwest, the Bird Lady says, except this arid strip through West Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. Maybe some day one will come to El Paso."

"YOO, HOO, ANITA! TOMMY!" a near-by voice shouted.

With a flash, both birds disappeared. "Here we are, Carlos," Tommy called back. "Over here by the corner of the bosque." Both cousins stood up and waved, then started over to join the older boy.

"Oh, Carlos, we got close to a beautiful pair of pyrrhuloxias. I wish you had been with us," Tommy told his brother.

"I wish so, too," Carlos said. "They are cousins of the red bird or cardinal. They are often called gray cardinals, you know. Tommy, you remember the cardinals we had back home, don't you?"

"Of course I do," said Tommy scornfully. And I remember a pair we saw out at the Dude Ranch in Arizona last summer. No one but a dumb-bell would ever forget a cardinal."

"Then you'd better tell me what they look like, so folks won't think I'm a lame-brain if I ever should see one," laughed Anita.

"Sure," Tommy began. "The male is the only all-red bird with a crest. Even the bill is red, but there is a small black velvet patch on his face, going back to the eyes and down on the throat.

"Is he a seed-eater, Tommy?"

"Yes, but he eats bugs and worms, too."

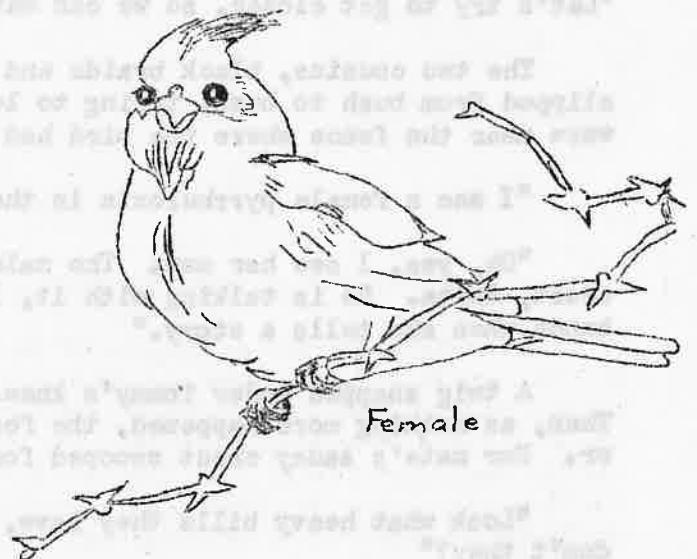
"That's all right, but I like the cardinal and pyrrhuloxia because they are pretty and they sing, too," Tommy commented. "Does the pyrrhuloxia nest here, Anita?"

"Yes, the Bird Lady showed me a nest last spring. It was near the pool, in a mesquite bush. It had four eggs in it. So you see, it is a permanent resident. It does not migrate."

Tommy took a pencil from his pocket. "I must write 'pyrrhuloxia' on my bird list. But you will have to teach me to spell it, Anita."

"Some other time, amigo mio," Carlos laughed. "I almost forgot that Mother sent me to find you kids. It is time to start back to town. Let's go!"

Pyrrhuloxia

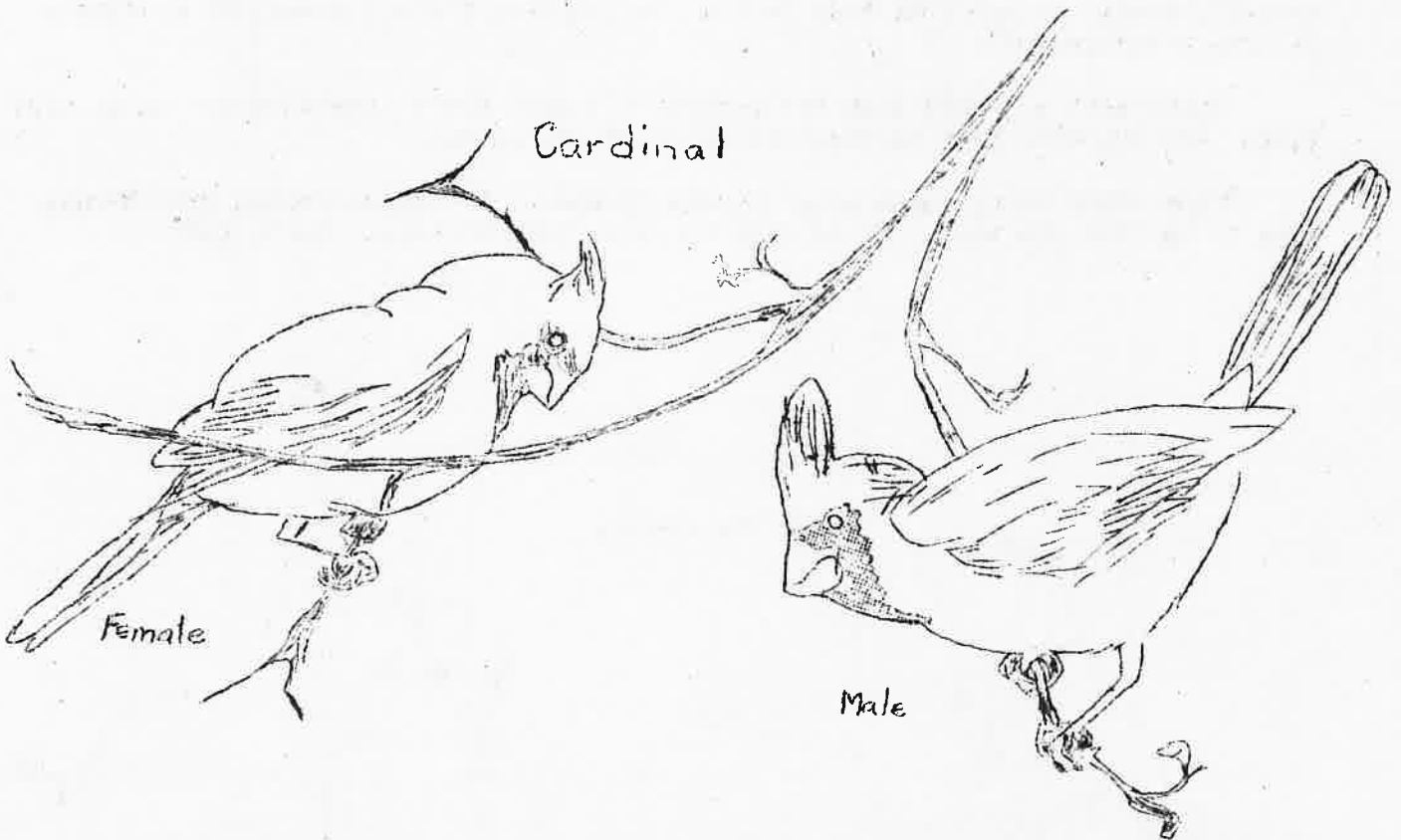


Use the words which belong in the blanks to fill in this crossword puzzle.

| | | | | | |
|----|--|--|---|--|--|
| 1. | | | C | | |
| 2. | | | A | | |
| 3. | | | R | | |
| 4. | | | D | | |
| 5. | | | I | | |
| 6. | | | N | | |
| 7. | | | A | | |
| 8. | | | L | | |

- Mesquite, cottonwood, tornillo and _____ grew in the bosque.
- Anita must _____ Tommy to spell pyrrhuloxia.
- Cardinals eat weed seeds and harmful bugs, beetles, and _____.
- To keep from frightening the birds, the cousins tried to look like friendly _____.
- Pyrrhuloxias' coats _____ are lines with red.
- The tall mesquite stood in the _____ corner.
- The beaks of the cardinal and pyrrhuloxia are thick and _____.
- Cardinals' beaks are red; those of the pyrrhuloxias are _____.

- Key: 1. catclaw
 2. teach
 3. worms
 4. shadows
 5. tails
 6. fence
 7. heavy
 8. yellow



Which of the answers is correct?

- The cardinal is the only all-red bird with a (black eye-crest-speckled eggs).
- The cardinal eats seeds and (harmful insects-grass-nuts).
- The Pyrrhuloxia is gray and (purple-blue-red).
- Both birds have strong beaks like a (duck-blue jay-parrot).
- The male and female look (alike-different-awkward).
- They seem to talk with their (crests-beaks-feet).
- Their song is a musical (scream-whistle-quack).
- Cardinals do not (migrate-fly-sing).

- Key: 1. crest
 2. harmful insects
 3. red
 4. parrot
 5. different
 6. crests
 7. whistle
 8. migrate