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**NATURE NOW**

By Lydia King Frehse  
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

**Swallows Come Back  
On Time to Capistrano**

Once more the swallows have returned to Capistrano and as usual they were on time—March 19. So has their promptness been recorded throughout the years.

Here at the Old Mission at San Juan, Calif., the quiet townspeople take a holiday to welcome the birds. Store windows are decorated, strolling bands of gay Mexicans parade the streets in their finest costumes, strumming their tunes. It is St. Joseph's Day and the return of the cliff swallows has become a tradition.

SWALLOWS ARE among the best known and loved of our songbirds. They are creatures of the air, drinking and bathing and mating on the wing, gracefully circling their way through the long summer days. Most important of all is their habit of feeding on wing, their deep, wide, gaping mouths straining the air for insects. Here rests their service to nature's economy for they catch a harmful beetle, fly and other pests in numbers almost beyond imagination.

Swallows have strong, narrow-pointed wings giving them speed and agility in flight. Their legs are short, their feet small and weak, their tails notched or forked containing 12 feathers. More than 100 species are known, widely scattered over the globe. The Audubon Bird Survey lists six species common to our range; the tree, bank, rough-winged, barn, cliff and the purple martin.

WITH US the barn swallow is the best known of its kind. Your scribe remembers the colony of nests in her grandfather's barn and the swooping and circling of the birds during the late May nesting time. Although the structure looks as though it were made of clay reinforced with a few wisps of grass, it is really compounded of many materials.

Edwin Way Teale counted more than 1000 objects in a single nest; 8 ounces of dirt and mud, 35 chick feathers, 114 rootlets, 718 grass stems, 89 pieces of leaves and twigs, 34 fragments of coal, 18 pieces of brick, 9 bits of shell, 8 minute lumps of coal ashes and 10 small stones.

FIRST OF its kind to speed northward is the tree swallow which migrates in April. Steel blue above and white below it usually nests in lowlands in a hollow stump. In late summer these birds congregate by the thousands, often sitting in long lines on telephone wires previous to their early migration to the tropics. However

**LEGAL NOTICE**

Walter R. Deane, Attorney, 1101 Pontiac State Bank, Pontiac, Michigan

STATE OF MICHIGAN—The Probate Court for the County of Oakland.

In the Matter of the Estate of VIRGINIA H. GIBSON, Deceased.

At a session of said court, held at the Probate Court in the City of Pontiac, in said County, on the 17th day of March A. D. 1960.

Present: Honorable Arthur E. Moore, Judge of Probate.

Order appointing time for hearing claims.

Notice is hereby given and it is hereby ordered that the time and place for hearing on claims against the above estate shall be the 15th day of June 1960, at nine o'clock in the forenoon at the Probate Court in the County House at the City of Pontiac, Michigan.

All creditors or claimants against the above estate are notified and ordered to prove their claims at said hearing and prior to said hearing to file written claim therewith, with this Court and with the clerk of this estate under oath, containing sufficient detail reasonably to inform the majority of the nature and amount of the claim.

It is further ordered that notice be given to all interested parties as shown by the records in this cause by delivering a copy of this order to each of them personally, or by mailing such copy to each of them by registered mail with return receipt demanded addressed to their respective last known addresses as shown by the files and records in this cause.

And it is further ordered that public notice thereof be given by publication of a copy of this order once each week for three successive weeks previous to said day of hearing in the BIRMINGHAM ECCENTRIC, a newspaper printed and circulated in said county.

ARTHUR E. MOORE, Judge of Probate.

3, 4, 4

These swallows make busy harmonious colonies. They attack crows and hawks but cannot endure the English sparrows which frequently try to evict them from their homes. The cliff swallows of Capistrano arrive March 19 and depart as promptly October 23 for their winter homes. Their nests shaped like ancient ear-bottles are made of pellets of mud and clay and lined with soft wool, feathers and grass. They are placed under the protecting eaves of the old mission house. Their notes are the twittering sort so common among swallows.

WHEN THE BIRDS arrive at the old mission, they frequently find the eaves occupied by the chimney swift which is not a swallow. A fight ensues, the swallows take over for the summer only to have the swifts return for another winter.

Your scribe has a vivid memory of the swallows circling the minarets of the beautiful Blue mosque in Istanbul while the muezzin sounded the call to prayer from the heights. The birds, their circling flight so graceful and masterful, were reaping an invisible harvest from the still air of late afternoon.

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\* In ancient China, bamboo pipelines were satisfactory only for very short distances—today, pipelines bring this wonder-fuel from faraway places. Consumers Power Company receives its Natural GAS from Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas and Louisiana.

**GET THE FACTS—BETTER YET—GET GAS!**

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