

fore feet until one, pretending to be overcome, ran away for a short distance, while the other chased him, and then both stopped and raised the long white hair on the rump patch—a striking exhibition. I saw little kids go up to their mothers and nurse, sometimes standing up or again kneeling on the ground. The old does paid little attention to the young and as little to their companions, though two or three times I saw and heard one of them utter a sound something like the bleat of a sheep, but much deeper and stronger.

At last, as I have said, the little company began to drift toward my station on the top of the hill and at last came within easy rifle shot. Then one after another the old does deliberately lay down; the kids, weary of their play, at last also lay down, and then two fat old bucks followed lazily to where the others were, and walking a little higher up on the hill, one of them lay down, and just as the other was about to do so, I aimed at his side behind the elbow, and as the gun cracked all the antelope rushed away and out of my sight. In a moment or two McConnell came up with the horses and we rode over the hill and down on the other side. We had not gone far before I pointed out the antelope to McConnell. He had rushed seventy-five yards down the slope, and just as he was crossing the little wash in the valley had stumbled at its further side and fallen there. From him, too, we cut away head and shanks and tying him behind my saddle, set out for the camp.

It was now well on to the middle of the afternoon and a leaden sky hung low over the prairie. For an hour or two I rode along without much considering the question, of course automatically keeping my horse in a direction which I supposed we ought to go, but as time passed and I could see nothing of landmark or sun to give me my direction, it suddenly occurred to me that I did not know where I was, nor whither I was going. Of course, I said nothing of this to McConnell, but as I rode along I did a great amount of thinking. Search as I might, I could see nothing to give me any hint as to where I was. I had never been over the country before, and even if it had been familiar country there was nothing about it that was characteristic, nothing that the most acute prairie man could have called a landmark.

I began to be quite anxious, not about any danger that I feared might come to us, though of course there was always the possibility that we might run into a camp or a little war party of Indians who might easily enough kill us and deftly remove our scalps, but because I did not wish to acknowledge that I was lost and did not wish to fail to reach camp that night. At that time I was so young and so inexperienced that I believed that it would be a serious reflection on my prairie craft to acknowledge that I did not know where I was, or that I could not find the camp.

McConnell and I had little to say to each other. The day had been long, and before this we had gotten thoroughly talked out. He seemed to pay no attention to his surroundings, but to be contented to plod along behind or beside me. Either he knew precisely where he was and where he was going, or else he had not given the matter the slightest thought.

As for me I was each moment becoming more and more unhappy. I knew perfectly well that

I was absolutely lost; that I had no idea where the camp was nor the stream on which camp was to be made; in fact, I had lost all sense of direction. What I tried to do, and believed that I was doing, was to keep my horse's head turned in the direction in which I had started. I knew perfectly well how futile an attempt to do this would be if the horse had any disposition to swerve in one direction or another.

By this time night was at hand, and it was obvious that before long we must stop and make a dry camp. It might even be necessary to wait till the stars or sun appeared so as to get the points of the compass again. With this in my mind I was congratulating myself that in dressing the antelope we had left its liver within the carcass. The day had been long, we had seen no water, and I, for one, was beginning to feel thirsty; I did not doubt that McConnell was so, too. All plainsmen know that nothing quenches

thirst so satisfactorily as a slice of the raw liver of the prong-horned antelope.

Turning this over in my mind I noticed that we were climbing another one of the low hills which we had been climbing all day long, and as we topped it, to my utter astonishment, I saw down below me the winding valley of a stream, some white tents, a couple of camp-fires and some feeding horses and mules scattered out over the green bottom. Turning in the saddle I said unconcernedly to my companion, "There's camp, McConnell."

He kicked the ribs of his horse and pushed up beside me as he replied, "Well, I'm mighty glad of it. I was getting mighty thirsty, and I haven't known anything about where we were since you killed that antelope and we started."

I have always wondered whether I was really lost or not that day. Personally, I believe that I was, but I had the luck to hit the camp "plum center."

An Adventure With a Rhinoceros

By JOHN LETHBRIDGE

WITH my friend P. I had been on a shooting trip in British East Africa for several months, and toward the end of our trip we found ourselves on the German East African border, which necessitated our coming through the game reserve of British East Africa, as we wished to get to Nairobi.

The game reserve is an enormous one and is simply alive with every species of game; in fact, so much so that the rhinos are a perfect nuisance and even a serious menace, but woe betide the unfortunate sportsman who kills one of these brutes in the reserve, even in self-defence. The Government will quietly tell you that it was your duty to have got out of its way, and that you had no right to be in the reserve. A friend of mine, practically an invalid, was shooting last year in British East Africa. He was far too sick to think of going after elephant and such things and so instead of taking a sportsman's license, which costs £50, took out a settler's license which costs only £10. It does not allow the holder to kill elephant, rhino or hippopotamus, but only all ordinary kinds of antelope.

One day he was out shooting buck, more to pass the time than anything, but had the misfortune to run across a rhino which happened to be particularly vicious and which repeatedly charged, and he at last shot it. On arriving at Nairobi he told me what had happened and I advised him to keep quiet about it and trust to luck, but he certainly was of a more honorable turn of mind than I and reported it to the game ranger, telling him at the same time that what he had done was practically in self-defence. The game ranger, who is one of the nicest men I have ever met, listened to his report and told him first of all that he was sorry that he had reported it, but to go straight away and take out a sportsman's license, which he had to do, and there the matter ended, but that rhino cost him £50. The odds are that if he had reported it the natives would have done so, and

then it would have been so much the worse for all concerned.

We had a large caravan and the rhinos were a perfect nuisance, charging us continually when, of course, the porters would throw down their loads and bolt. I had with me a little rough-haired fox terrier which I had brought out from England to look at. She was not worth her food, but she was game to death. She had had pups on the trip and I had killed all but two, which were being carried in a box by one of the boys. When this rhino charged, the boy threw down his box and ran with the rest. It is extraordinary but true that this little bitch tackled the rhino and it was certainly an absurd thing to witness. To see a great unwieldy animal like a rhino worried by a dog of about fifteen pounds weight was distinctly ludicrous. The rhino did not know what to do nor which way to turn, but eventually trotted away. You must realize that a rhino has very bad sight and trusts almost entirely to his sense of smell, which is very keen. The puppies were unhurt and the little bitch was satisfied, and I suppose quite congratulated herself on having saved the pups and put her adversary to flight.

In three days our caravan was charged no less than seven times, and the last charge might really have turned out disastrously, but for the good fortune that my friend did not happen to be where he should have been at the moment. We had made a long march, as we were nearing home and had made our camp by a small river in a hollow. Having reached our camping ground fairly early we had both tents pitched. Usually when on the march we slept in one tent. It was a pitch dark night and rather windy and after dinner we both turned in early to dream of England and home where we shortly hoped to be. About twelve I was awakened by a most unearthly din and jumping quickly out of my tent found the boys running about shouting, the little bitch barking and everything in

a great uproar. I shouted to my friend who called to me to come to him. His tent was down and after we had straightened it up we found his camp bed was broken in two. He explained to me that in the middle of the night he had awakened and heard Vixen barking and had stepped out of the tent to see what was wrong. He had gone about three yards when he heard something coming like a steam engine. It was too dark to see, but it turned out to be the rhino charging his tent and during the onslaught the brute must have put one of its feet on the bed. If P. had happened to be in it at the time it would have been a bad case for him, as the weight would have crushed him and at any rate it would have meant broken limbs.

Rhinos are so pugnacious that the moment they wind you you are in for it, and down they come full charge, and seldom it is that they will give you right of way. It does not signify whether your caravan is large or small, wagons

or not; if they can, they are going to hurt something. The largest number I have ever seen together was eight and I assure you I gave them a wide berth. The natives say that if you whistle to a rhino he will stop. I have heard other white people say the same thing, but I must candidly confess I never waited long enough to try the experiment.

A young surveyor was working at a place called Fort Hall not very far from Nairobi. He had been warned that it was not safe to go about without a rifle, but like some of our tenderfoot friends he thought the boys were trying to make fun of him, and took no notice and no rifle. The result was disastrous. A rhino winded him while he was working and charged, and before he could get out of its way the rhino was on him and flung him about twenty yards, and the first horn, which is generally the long one, went right through his thigh. Before help could be obtained he died from exhaustion and

loss of blood, but the doctor afterward said that the wound would have been fatal in any event.

This is a story that is scarcely credible, but natives swear it is true. A crocodile has been known to pull a rhinoceros into water and drown him. We all know they can do this with an ox, but a rhino is so strong and of such an immense size that it is hard to believe the tale.

I suppose that many young sportsmen will soon be following the example of Colonel Roosevelt, who is now in British East Africa. I offer them one bit of advice which I hope they will excuse me for venturing. I have shot all over Africa for the last ten years and know the conditions there and so the suggestion may be pardoned. Never on any account or for any reason leave your camp without your rifle. You never know what may turn up and it is always the unexpected that happens.



NATURAL HISTORY



An Ornithologist in the Sierras.

DURING the early summer of 1908 it was my privilege to spend a most delightful week with the birds in the Sierra Nevadas in Fresno county, California.

This outing was especially enjoyable as it was the fulfilment of a long-cherished desire—an ever-increasing hope that I might meet on their breeding grounds several species of birds known previously only as occasional winter visitants. Among these were the blue-fronted jay, the Western robin and the sierra junco.

Our camp was made near the shore of Shaver Lake, a body of clear, cold water picturesquely formed by building a large dam across the lower end of a cañon through which a mountain stream had formerly found its way. This lake covered a considerable area and many large pines were left standing in the water. These trees soon died and at the time of our visit were to be seen as large, ragged, decaying stubs, some standing only a few feet above the surface of the water, while others rose to a height of forty feet or more. These stubs afforded excellent nesting situations for a number of birds.

The Brewer blackbirds (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*) seemed to realize that here was a retreat where they were in little danger of being disturbed, and all of the nests of this species observed were built in these stubs. Many of them were in cavities excavated by flickers or other woodpeckers, while others were placed on the wind-broken tops of the trees; some were built against the body of the tree and supported at the base by a large branch, while one or two were snugly packed in behind a large slab of loose bark.

The nesting dates with this colony of birds evidently varied somewhat, as birds were seen

carrying building material the same day that others were observed feeding young. The only nest that was closely examined held four incubated eggs on May 27.

Another species that made use of the cavities in these stubs was the tree swallow (*Iridoprocne bicolor*). These swallows were commonly seen skimming over the lake and were frequently observed entering holes, most of which were high up and so difficult of access.

In the same stub with the nest of blackbirds last mentioned was a swallow's nest with eight or nine small young, the entrance being on the opposite side of the tree and about a foot higher up. One evening, just at sunset, a swallow was seen to poise for an instant on fluttering wings before a cavity and then to disappear within the tree, and although the trout were taking the hook in fine shape, we lost no time in pulling the boat up near the stub, where an excavation some eight inches in depth was found to contain a soft lining of white feathers in which eight eggs were almost half buried.

One of the commonest birds throughout this mountain region was the Western robin (*Merula migratoria propinqua*). They were found to be nesting principally in small oaks at lower altitudes, but near the region of the lake the majority of them placed their bulky, conspicuous, mud-plastered nests in small evergreens where two or three small branches extended in a horizontal position from near the top of the tree. Some were found, however, in other positions, as in old buildings around deserted mills, on the timbers of a flume, one in a small bush not over three feet from the ground, and one was placed in a niche of an old burnt stub standing at the roadside. This nest was not concealed in any way, but the robin that occupied it sat serenely upon her treasures apparently in-

different to the many wagons and teams that frequently passed.

The sierra juncos (*Junco hyemalis thurberi*) were everywhere abundant, and many nests with small young or eggs were found after I had spent two or three days in learning how to look for them. After tramping around for a time in what seemed to be a favorable place, a pair of juncos were sometimes disturbed and went through all the usual methods of feigning lameness to draw the intruders' attention from the vicinity of their homes. It generally required only a few moments to form an idea as to the approximate location of the nest. After this the birds were left undisturbed for some hours when a hurried and unexpected tramping through the pine needles and underbrush often resulted in the flushing of the bird from the nest.

A bird that has always been to me an interesting subject for ornithological study is the blue-fronted jay (*Cyanocitta stelleri frontalis*). My first acquaintance with this jay began during the winter of 1900-01 when a great many of these splendid birds left their usual haunts among the pine and oak clad mountains and spread out over a portion of the San Joaquin valley. Just how extensive a local migration this was remained a matter of doubt, but the birds were very numerous in the region about Fresno, frequenting the trees along the roadsides and canals. Large, noisy and very conspicuous these unfortunate jays offered excellent targets for every passing gunner and no doubt their numbers were reduced somewhat when the horde of crested, blue-coated visitors returned to their sierran home almost as suddenly as they had made their appearance, leaving no clue by which one might learn the cause of their sojourn here. They did not again appear, although each succeeding winter they were looked for with much