

LIVING WITH WILDLIFE

Bird nests revealed as leaves fall

By Cindy Kamler

A bird nest is the place in which a bird lays and incubates its eggs and raises its young. In most cases, the nest is a structure made by the bird to keep the eggs and young close together where they can be kept warm. The nests also provide camouflage and cover, providing protection from the elements and predators. As a result, they are often difficult to be seen by the human eye. Now that winter approaches, leaves and other vegetation disappear and nests become more visible.

It is a good time to take a walk. Take your binoculars with you (if you have some) and scan

the landscape for these constructions. Not all bird species *build* nests. Shorebirds, falcons, quail, and nighthawks (among others) lay their eggs in **scrapes** on the ground or rocky ledges. Brood parasites like cowbirds lay their eggs in the nest of other birds. A rare few, like the trumpeter swan, build **mounds** of vegetation that help warm and incubate the eggs.

Some species dig their own **burrow** while other use the burrows of ground squirrels, badgers or tortoises. Locally, the belted kingfisher digs its own burrow on banks near water. Burrowing owls can dig their own but mostly utilize burrows already dug by oth-

ers.

Similarly, **cavity-nesting** birds may use "chambers" in living or dead trees or cacti; a small number ("primary cavity nesters") excavate their own cavities. In our neck of the wood, woodpeckers such as hairy and downy, yellow-bellied sapsucker and northern flickers use chisel-like beaks to excavate the nest, often making homeowners with wooden siding. In a tree, nests are in the trunk on the downward-facing side of a branch and the work takes an average of two weeks. The nest is used for only a single year.

Cup nests are smoothly hemispherical inside, with a deep depression to house the eggs. They are formed mainly of plant fibers, twigs and pieces of leaves and "glued" together with saliva (hummingbirds) or mud (robins).



CINDY KAMLER
GUEST COLUMNIST

The smallest cup nest is made by hummingbirds; the size is approximately 0.7 inches by 0.7 inches. Average weight is 3 grams; a nickel weighs 4.5 grams.

Hanging (or Pendant) nests: Northern and hooded orioles are the most common, but ruby-crowned and golden-crowned kinglets also make hanging nests. They

are easy to spot once the leaves are gone.

There are two sorts of **platform nests:** standing and floating. Grebes, loons and coots create floating nests; these usually occur in aquatic areas with cover such as tules and are rarely if ever seen.

Of the standing nests, most common and most visible are golden and bald eagles, osprey and great blue herons. Bald eagles nest most commonly in conifer trees. Golden eagles nest on cliffs, in deciduous trees, and sometimes on power poles. An average size nest for both eagle species is 4-5 feet in diameter, 2-4 feet in depth, and a weight of a ton or more; 1-2 feet of bedding is added each year.

In most cases, nests that you spot at this season will be empty of eggs or babies. However, some

nests may be reused in the non-breeding season for roosting (house sparrows do this.) Some species even build special dormitory nests or winter roost nests that are used in the winter only for roosting.

As I write this, the sun has dropped behind the mountains and dying leaves are floating gently to the earth. Tomorrow, I think I'll check out the big cottonwood down near the creek. "Did the red-tailed hawks nest there last spring or not?"

(Living with Wildlife is a program of Wildcare Eastern Sierra (formerly Eastern Sierra Wildlife Care) dedicated to helping the people of the Eastern Sierra live in harmony with our wild neighbors. For further information, contact Executive Director Cindy Kamler at (760) 872-1487.)

OBITUARY NOTICES



Shirlee R. Barnash November 10, 1934 - August 13, 2019

Paonia, Colorado, resident Shirlee Barnash passed away on August 13, 2019, at home. She was 84 years of age.

Shirlee was born on November 10, 1934 to John A. and Ethel Elm (Ferguson) Schwab in Bishop, California. She spent most of her life in Southern California after graduating from Bishop High School in 1952.

After high school, Shirlee attended the University of California Santa Barbara. She also attended Chaffey Junior College in Upland, CA.

On August 28, 1954, Shirlee married John A. Barnash, Jr., in Hollywood, California. Four sons were born between 1955 and 1959.

Shirlee enjoyed attending the weekly Bible Study at Creek Vista, as well as sewing and gardening when she was able. Shirlee lived in North Carolina, Illinois, and Northern California before settling in Paonia in 2000.

Shirlee is survived by her four sons: Gene (Sherry) Barnash of San Antonio, TX; Ben (Naomi) Barnash of Paonia; Mike (Vicki) Barnash of Southern CA; and Ray Barnash of Susanville, CA; as well as fourteen grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren.

Shirlee was preceded in death by her parents, her husband, and her sister, Irene Nicholl.

BARBARA 'BOBBIE JO' RILEY 1936 - 2019



Barbara "Bobbie Jo" Riley, devoted mother, grandmother and wife, passed peacefully into heaven at the age of 83 on November 1, 2019 at the Southern Inyo Hospital in Lone Pine, CA. She is survived by her husband James "Jim" Riley, her daughters, Rene' Moore, Susan Skaggs and Nancy Schwebe, and stepchildren Michael Riley and Judy Sherley. Her children remember her as a loving and supportive mother who always encouraged them to be unique. She is also survived by five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren who thought

the world of her.

Bobbie was born on September 29, 1936 in Fullerton, CA to Kendal and Betty Yorba. She graduated from Fullerton Junior College with a degree in cosmetology. She moved to Independence in the late 60's, where one 4th of July, volunteer firefighter Jim Riley came to the rescue when her youngest daughters' sparkler caused a small bush fire. They fell in love and were married on June 4, 1974 and spent 16 years raising their family at the Mt. Whitney Fish Hatchery, where Jim worked as the hatchery manager and Bobbie was the owner of "Bobbies Hair Shop," the only hair shop in town for 36 years. They later moved to their forever home on Washington St. in Independence. Many memories with friends and family would be made in this home; each made special by Bobbie's loving touch.

Bobbie was a kid at heart and loved the Owens Valley in all its wonder. She would often stare at the snowcapped Sierra mountain range from the big window in her living room. One of her favorite places to travel was Quartzsite, Arizona accompanied by Jim and her 2 dogs "Joy" the Shih Tzu and "Flake" the Chihuahua. Bobbie was accomplished at many forms of art and could create beauty out of anything she touched. One of her favorite places to be was in her craft room, where many hours and lots of love went into all of her creations. In the past you could see her creative flair on her 4th of July parade floats, which were always towed behind Jim's model T Ford. She enjoyed giving to those in need by making quilts and baby blankets.

Bobbie loved to cook and bake which she did for weddings and family gatherings; many would say her tacos were the best. Growing up her grandmother was the most special person to her, which inspired her to be the best grandmother a child could ask for. She was a grandmother not only to her own grandchildren, but any child that came into her home.

Bobbie truly was an Independence Icon. She touched many lives throughout her time living in the Owen's Valley. She was deeply loved and will be greatly missed by all who were fortunate enough to know what a special lady she was.

At Bobbie's request, there will be no services held. If you would like to donate to her favorite charity in her honor, please visit; gofundme.com and search for Bobbie Riley.



A mother hummingbird keeps her young warm in her nest.

Photos courtesy of Wildcare Eastern Sierra



A northern oriole nest against the winter sky.

"HOLIDAY HOEDOWN"

2019
*Community
Christmas
Events*



Railroad Express-12/14
10am-3pm at Laws Museum. Train Rides, crafts, ornament making, wagon rides, visit with Santa & Mrs. Claus. Tickets: \$10 for kids ages 3-12, \$15 over 12.

Chamber Holiday Mixer-12/19
5:30-7:30 pm at High Country Lumber. Complimentary appetizer, no-host bar, raffle prizes and great company!

Main Street Parade-12/7
Starts at 4:30 pm at High Country Lumber, ends at Bishop City Park for Tree Lighting Ceremony. Rotary Santa Mile Run starts at 3:45 at Bishop Chamber.

Street of Lights Party-12/7
Downtown shops open until 8pm. Music, refreshments, warming fires & fun. Visit with Santa & Mrs. Claus at Bishop Chamber. Visit participating merchants to enter raffle - \$500 local shopping spree is top prize.



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Contact Bishop Chamber of Commerce for more information - (760)873-8405
www.bishopchamberofcommerce.com