

bayberry, viburnum, bush honeysuckle, high-bush blueberry, bittersweet, wild grape, red cedar, dogwood, and sassafras, with an occasional stunted apple tree. The terrain is sandy and hilly.

About mid-May when the birds are present in good numbers, they are relatively easy to observe from any of the jeep trails which criss-cross the area. As breeding proceeds, they become increasingly secretive but can be located up to mid-July by the series of loud mews, toots, gurgles and grunts which are characteristic of this large noisy warbler. After the breeding season, the Chats vanish. It may be of interest to note that the dominant singers in this area in mid-August are species which could not be found here twenty years ago, Cardinal, Carolina Wren, and House Finch. Two pairs of another recent invader, the Yellow-crowned Night Heron, were discovered on the edge of this area a year ago, nesting in the upper story of oaks at least 75 feet above ground.

Eugene T. Mudge, RFD 1, Box 316, Northport, L. I.

Adventure with an Oriole: A small miracle occurred in my kitchen last summer. It started when a neighbor's boy brought me a tiny fledgling bird that he had found abandoned in the woods ten miles away.

All maimed or orphaned wildlife in our neighborhood comes to me but I had never raised a Baltimore Oriole (*Icterus galbula*). He perched wobbly on my finger, a fluffy round ball, while I examined him. Just a wisp of yellow showed through the olive green down on his breast and at the tail ends. Two white bars crossed the immature studdy black wings and traces of a baby clown mouth were at the sides of the slender beak. He showed no fear and submitted to a cardboard box on the kitchen table. When he chirped tentatively and opened his mouth, I fed him from the tip of my finger with a commercial mixture that I give my Mynah bird and Troupials.

By morning, the fledgling had fluttered to the edge of the box and was ready for a large cage. From the first, I tried to follow the pattern he might have had in the wild state, knowing I must release him later. Each morning I lined his cage with dewy branches, heavy with ripe, red berries, from the honeysuckle bush so he could have cover and places to explore. Perches were forsythia and apple twigs. I used a clothes dampener to sprinkle water on the branches and the baby bird. When he was older he drank water from the leaves but I never saw him bathe.

From the first day, he refused food while caged so I put more green branches on the top of the cage and fed him there. He graduated to hard cooked egg yolk which I gave him from a blunt-tipped stirrer or the tip of my small finger. He also liked bits of sweet berries and fresh fruit. Then I began to spread the egg mixture on leaves and branches in an effort to teach him to feed himself.

The little bird grew sleeker each day, his pinfeathers showing, the yellow becoming more pronounced and the tail feathers lengthening. He tried his first flight, ending disastrously on the kitchen floor. It seemed time to give him more freedom, so I let him flutter through the crab apple tree outside the kitchen door. This excited him very much and he would slip and scramble and call. He was so responsive and anxious to communicate that it was difficult to resist teaching him tricks. I used a short whistle to bring him to me when he was in the apple tree. He often ignored this and I usually ended up scrambling after him, whistling madly, a dish of egg yolk in one hand and a rake in the other with which to pull branches down.

Eventually, he became unhappy in his cage except at night and then, head tucked under wing, he slept quietly until six the next mornig, undisturbed by lights or sounds.

Finally, he had been with me three weeks and had become a beautiful young bird, not fully feathered but with a long yellow tail, slender long black beak and a flickering white tongue that lashed across leaves like lightning. His three perching toes in front and one longer one in back enabled him to turn over leaves and span tangled branches. He had developed a variety of calls; a whirring throaty low whistle when he was impatient or hungry, a sleepy cheep at bedtime and a series of sharp three-notes used frequently when outdoors.

I drove him to a wooded area of tall oak trees not far from where he had been found. There were no birds in sight. He flew to a scrubby laurel bush, examined the leaves and called to me. I took him deeper into the woods and let him go again. I turned and walked quickly away. As I drove off I looked for a flash of yellow but did not see anything.

Alice Vee Sweeny, 25 Meadow Lane, Syosset