

HOW TO MAKE A BIRD SANCTUARY ANYWHERE.

BY C. de BLOIS GREEN.

Birds have their own little quarrels and struggles all the time, but these don't matter a bit if only you can keep down the vermin; and by that I mean keep hawks and the largest owls scarce, crows and magpies scarcer still, skunks and pet cats about as scarce as the megalosaurus, and squirrels scarcer than anything which Nature has yet invented. Under these conditions the little jealousies and quarrels amongst themselves will only lead to enough tragedies to give the birds a wholesome stimulus in selecting their nesting sites wisely and in watching over the eggs and young. Ordinary care may be a nuisance, but birds don't seem to mind that. I remember working on a hillside near Okanagan Lake in April last year. Two white-headed eagles were building, or rather patching up their nest, and I had that nest commanded by my transit telescope nearly all day and every day—I mean I was seldom where I could not turn it on and take a look. The second day they finished and went off on the hunt, next day I saw a white head on the nest. First egg, no doubt, thought I; now you can go off on another hunt till tomorrow, but not much; when that egg was laid, ordinary care put in its appearance and the old hen spent the balance of the day in flying north twenty chains, then south twenty chains (a slight flip of the wings gave her a close look at the egg). Thence south twenty chains, thence north twenty chains (sight of that egg, looks all right). Thence north twenty chains, thence south twenty chains (egg again), and so on all day without a halt. Ordinary care seemed to me a bit overdone in this case, for I haven't yet found out what possible danger that egg was in. No common ordinary mortal baby was ever more closely watched. The old bird must have known she hadn't left any pin sticking in its leg, did she expect it to wake up and shriek for its bottle every minute? The old birds had picked out for their nesting-place a tree four miles from anywhere, and six feet through at the base, without limbs for 50 feet. I stood at the foot of the tree twice later and could not think of any way to get those eggs. I certainly think she overdid it. However, perhaps, even she is afraid of crows. But every bird is not a white-headed eagle, some are humming-birds, and from what I can see, any relaxation or ordinary care leads to trouble for most small birds. Apart from the vermin, which is always hunting them, there is the next-door neighbor who covets come part of the house; while the hen kingbird sits on her nearly hatched eggs, two cedar birds may be as busy as possible dragging out the bottom of her nest to build