

An Amazing Bird

Landívar's fascination with the mockingbird, a bird very common in the Western Hemisphere, may amuse students. Mockingbirds were unknown in Europe, and their versatility with sounds seemed amazing. While the mockingbirds of the United States are usually rather plain in plumage, those of Mexico and South America are very brightly colored.

Lūdit et insignis rārō discrīmine vōcum
 Ālituum princeps quō nōn vōcālior alter,
 220 Centzontlus, priscō volucris nōn cognitū orbī
 Quī vōcēs hominū simulat, volucrumque, canūque,
 Et modulōs etiā sociantīs carminā plectrō.
 Nunc canit ad numerū, nunc milvū fingit edācem,
 Nunc simulat fēlem, lituī nunc signa canōrī
 225 Reddit, festīvusque latrat, lūgetque, pipitque.
 Inclūsus caveā gaudet volitāre canendō,
 Iungereque insomnēs modulīs noctēsque, diēsque.
 Nōn ita compositis dēflet Philomēla quērelis
 Moesta scelus, densis nemorum cum tecta sub umbrīs
 230 Pōpuleās tremulīs silvās concentibus implet,
 Lūsibus ut rīpās hilarat Centzontlus amoenīs.

VOCABULARY

canor•us –a –um *adj* melodious, vocal, ringing

discrim•en –inis *n* distinction, separating line, crisis

edax edacis *adj* greedy, destructive, rapacious

latr•o (1) to bark

litu•us –i *m* war-trumpet

milv•us –i *m* kite, hawk

pipi•o (1) to chirp