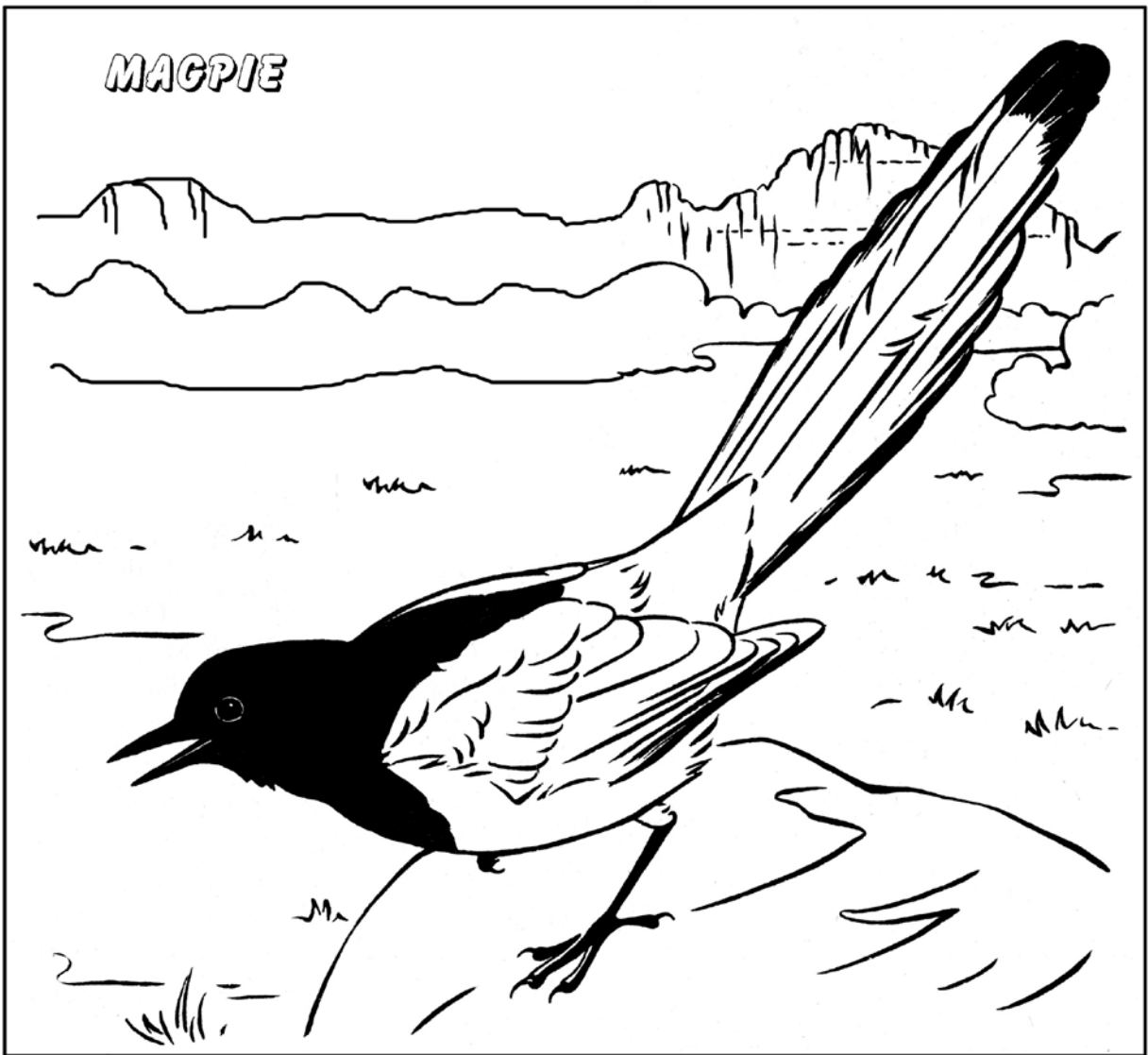


## MAGPIE



Magpies are large handsome black-and-white birds with long tails. You will have to go west of the Mississippi to see them. They live from California east to Kansas and up into Canada. Magpies prefer open country along rivers and lakes. They also live in parts of Europe.

These are noisy, chattering birds. Their calls, cheg, cheg, cheg, never stop as they feed. They always fly in flocks, feeding on grasshoppers, beetles, berries, grains, fruits and melons, and even dead animals.

Magpies nest in bushes and in willow thickets. The nest is made of sticks and mud, lined with rootlets, fine grass, and horsehair. The female lays four to eight grayish eggs, marked with brown.

To the western farmers and ranchmen, Magpies are sometimes pests. These birds may attack newborn or sickly cattle and poultry. They injure melon crops, too. Thousands of Magpies have been killed off, but their number has not decreased.