

Jaybird

The musical score for "Jaybird" is written in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. It consists of two main sections, A and B, each with a first and second ending.

Section A: This section begins with a repeat sign. The first ending consists of four measures with chords D, D, D, and A7. The second ending consists of two measures with chords D and D, ending with a triplet of eighth notes.

Section B: This section also begins with a repeat sign. The first ending consists of four measures with chords G, D, D, and E. The second ending consists of two measures with chords A7 and G, followed by two measures with chords D and D, ending with a triplet of eighth notes.

The score includes various musical notations such as repeat signs, first and second endings, and a triplet. Chords are indicated by letters (D, G, A7, E) above the staff.

"Jaybird", also known as "Jaybird Settin' on a Limb", "The Pennsylvania Fifers" (Pa.), "Daddy Shot a Bear" (Pa.), "The Lady's/Ladies Breast Knot" or "The Bonny Breast Knot" is an American old-time breakdown, march or reel and an English or Scottish country, Morris or sword dance tune in D Major. It is played in Standard or ADae fiddle tunings. The parts are played AABB (most versions) or AABBAAC'C' (Phillips/1994).

This was at one time an "old-time revival" favorite re-popularized in the late 1960's/early 70's by Art Rosenbaum, John Burke and other young banjo players and fiddlers.

Samual Bayard collected numerous versions (most called "Jaybird") from southwestern Pennsylvania fifers and fiddlers in the mid-20th century, where it was played as a march and a reel. He identified "Jaybird" as a derivative of the British air "The Lady's Breast Knot". The second strain of the tune is used for the music to the songs "Skip to My Lou" and "Bobby Shaftoe". This version is from Fennigs All Stars and appears in Brody and Lamancusa. The parts are reversed from Bayard's 9 similar versions.

Bayard relates that one of his informants added a rhyming couplet to his tune similar to some sung to "Old Molly Hare":

Daddy went a-huntin', Daddy shot a bear,
Shot him in the ass and never touched a hair.

The tune was printed in Bayard's **Dance to the Fiddle** (1981), Brody's **Fiddler's Fakebook** (1983), Ford's **Traditional Music in America** (1940), Lamancusa's **The Gettysburg Collection of Old-Time Fiddle Tunes** (2021), Milliner & Koken's **Milliner-Koken Collection of American Fiddle Tunes** (2011), Phillips' **Fiddle Case Tunebook: Old Time Southern** (1989), Phillips' **Traditional American Fiddle Tunes, vol. 1** (1994) and Sweet's **Fifer's Delight** (1964/1981). It was recorded by Ace Weems & the Fat Meat Boys on **Ace Weems & the Fat Meat Boys**, The Renegades on **The Renegades** (1993), Fennigs All Stars on **Saturday Night in the Provinces** and Country Cooking on **Fourteen Bluegrass Instrumentals**.