

Mohave Bird-Dance Song

Informant/Performer:
Louis Ballard, 1973

Source:
Louis W. Ballard
Native American Indian Songs
Southwest Music Publications, 2004

$\text{♩} = 104$

Rattles

mf

Hä - äh chä li - wä li wä hä - chä ko - mo - ko

Rattles

mä, hä - chä li - wa - li wä Hä - äh chä li - wä li wä hä - chä ko - mo - ko

Rattles

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mä, hä - chä li - wa - li wä hä - chä ko - mo - ko mä, hä ko - mo - ko mä,

Game Directions

Boys and girls for separate lines, facing each other.

Section A: Using a shuffling two-step (step-close),
dancers take three steps forward, then two steps backward.
Repeat.

Section B: Dancers take five steps forward, turning on the fifth
step to face the other line.
During this action, they have traded places.

Repeat dance to return to original places.

In this dance, rattles may be used for percussive effects.

Background Information

The Mohave people still live on their ancient lands along the Colorado River which separates California from Arizona. The Mohave Bird Dance, of which these songs are an integral part, are ancient forms of dance and music with the origins lost in history. Today, the Bird Dance is a social dance which is performed during the summer months on the Mohave, Yuma, and Cocopah reservations near Parker and Yuma, Arizona and Needles, California, where 1,600 Mohaves live.