

Regulus satrapa olivaceus. Western Golden-crowned Kinglet. Fairly common at the Lake; one was taken.

Regulus calendula. Ruby-crowned Kinglet. One seen and shot near Papoose Valley. Rare.

Myadestes townsendii. Townsend Solitaire. First seen in the timber near Big Meadows. Breeding at Lake. A nest was found near Papoose Valley with two young and one addled egg.

Hyllocichla guttata sequoiensis. Sierra Hermit Thrush. Very rare thru the Sierras. One taken near Papoose Valley July 1.

Merula migratoria propinqua. Western Robin. Common thru the Sierras, and breeding at the Lake in quantities. Juveniles taken, and set of four eggs found.

Sialia mexicana occidentalis. Western Bluebird. Juveniles taken June 12 on the Chico Mountains. Breeding at Lake.

Sialia arctica. Mountain Bluebird. Juveniles and adults taken at Eagle Lake. Birds fairly numerous.

A NEW BREEDING BIRD FOR COLORADO: THE CASSIN SPARROW (*PEUCÆA CASSINI*) NESTING NEAR DENVER

By L. J. HERSEY and R. B. ROCKWELL

ON July 14, 1907, while working over the prairie at Barr, Adams County, Colorado, about twenty miles north-east of Denver, in quest of nests of the Mountain Plover, we were fortunate enough to flush an inconspicuous, small brown bird from a remarkably well concealed nest almost under our feet. A careful scrutiny of the *Gutierrezia*, or small rabbit-brush, from which the bird had flushed revealed the nest sunken into the dense foliage of the bush and totally invisible from all points except from straight above.

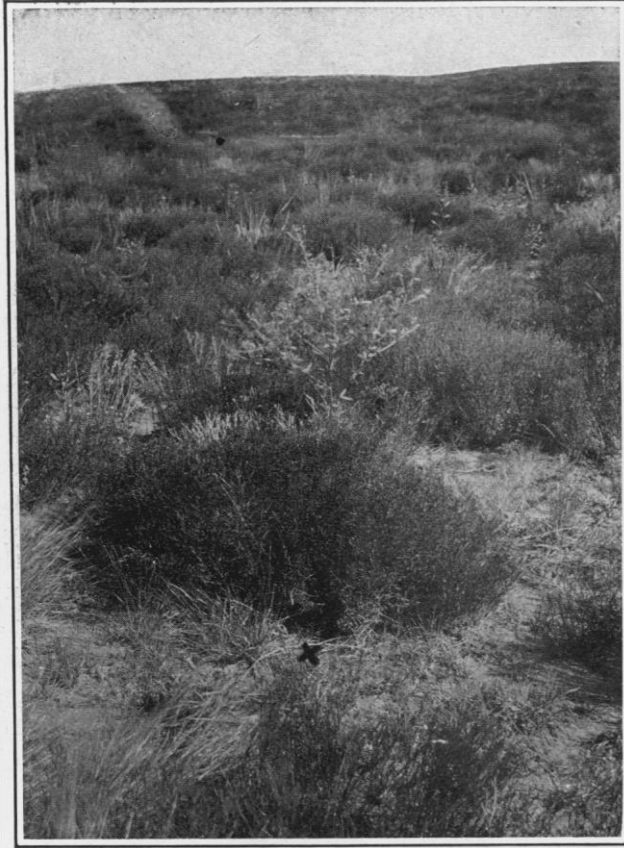
The nest was built among the closely interwoven stems and branches of the plant, the bottom of the nest resting on the ground but not sunken into it. It was a neat structure when supported by the numerous stems, but when removed proved to be rather flimsy in construction and very fragile. It was composed entirely of dry grass blades and stems, weed stems and bark, and vegetable fibers, lined with fine grass blades and a very few fine grass stems. The nest was unusually deeply cupped, with the sides built perpendicularly and slightly rimmed in. It measured as follows: outside, $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches in height, 4 inches in long diameter, and $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches in short diameter; inside, depth of nest cavity from rim of nest $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches, short diameter 2 inches, and long diameter $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The circumference of the inside of the rim was slightly less than that of the cavity where the eggs lay. The rim of the nest was not symmetrical but varied in height and thickness to conform to the branches among which it was placed, and altho built near the outer edge of the bush was supported and concealed on all sides by the spreading branches of the plant, which was about 10 inches high and 18 inches in diameter.

The bush in which the nest was built was located on a small knoll about 75

yards from the shore of Barr Lake, a body of water covering about 1000 acres, but was on ground that was always dry, and of the same nature as the prairie land farther removed from the water.

The female bird after flushing, flew about 50 yards and lit on a bunch of soapweed, where it stayed while the nest was being examined. It did not exhibit any particular uneasiness further than an occasional chirp, and made no demonstration.

The four pure white eggs immediately attracted our attention and as we did not have a collecting gun with us at the time we left the nest intending to return and collect the birds. In the afternoon we returned and carefully approached the



SITE (AT X) OF CASSIN SPARROW'S NEST, NEAR DENVER,
COLORADO

nest, but the female must have heard us and slipped away thru the thick brush, as she was not on the nest nor did we catch sight of her. Upon our return, about an hour later, the bird flushed from between us when we were within two feet of her. During all three of our visits to the nest we had occasionally heard the delightfully sweet, liquid, tho subdued song of the male, but had not seen him; but as the female left the nest she flew directly to the soapweed mentioned before, and was there joined by the male.

Between our first and second visits reference to text books had satisfied us that the bird could be no other than the Cassin Sparrow (*Peucaea cassini*) and consequently a new breeding record for the state and the second record of the species occurring within the state boundaries. It was therefore with a mixed feeling of regret and exul-

tation that we collected the two birds, photographed and then removed the nest and eggs, thus putting an end to the pretty family picture.

The eggs, as has been mentioned, were pure crystalline white with an unusually high polish for sparrow's eggs, more pointed than is usual for eggs of this family, and measure .76x.55, .81x.58, .77x.57 and .79x.57 inches. On blowing, two proved to be perfectly fresh and two showed very slight blood veins. Mr. H. G. Smith, who prepared the birds, states that both were in badly worn plumage, and the abdomens of both birds were entirely bare of feathers, a fact which might possibly indicate that this was a second set.

During the three weeks following the date upon which the nest was found we paid especial attention to the sparrows observed, and on each of the three trips over the section surrounding the nesting site we were fortunate enough to see several of the birds, only one of which was taken however, as in every other instance save this one we were positive of our identity without taking the birds. It is practically impossible to derive any deductions from our observations as to whether the bird occurs regularly or whether we simply happened on to a community of them, but we are positive that we saw at least a dozen individuals in a radius of two miles surrounding the spot where the nest was found.

On one occasion Mr. Hersey saw one of the birds going thru their characteristic performance of rising perpendicularly into the air and slowly descending in full song. Dr. Heermann in speaking of this peculiarity of the species describes it as rising with a tremulous motion of its wings some twenty feet or more and then descending again in the same manner to within a few yards of the spot whence it started and accompanying its entire flight with a lengthened and pleasing song. This peculiarity, while mentioned by nearly all authorities, was seen by us only once, probably on account of the lateness of the season.

Prof. W. W. Cooke in his Second Appendix to *The Birds of Colorado*, in speaking of the habitat of this species, quotes from the A.O.U. Checklist, as follows: "Central and Western Kansas, southward and westward thru Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and Southern Nevada," and further says: "It would be difficult to have a bird a rather common summer resident over the west half of Kansas, also common in New Mexico at the same season, and not have it occur in southeastern Colorado; but up to the present time (1900) no one has found it in the state."

This surmise was later verified by Mr. E. R. Warren who published the following, which is an extract from "A Collecting Trip in Southeastern Colorado" (CONDOR Vol. VIII, No. 1; January, 1906). Under the heading of Cassin Sparrow, he says, "A specimen of this species was taken May 27th near Springfield [Baca County]. The bird was on a wire fence near Cat Creek south of the town. Its breast was quite bare of feathers so that it may have been incubating."

Col. N. S. Goss in his *History of the Birds of Kansas* classes it as "Summer resident; in the middle and western part of the state, common. Arrives about the middle of May, begins laying early in June and leaves in September."

These statements seem to establish the fact beyond question that the extreme northwestern limit of the Cassin Sparrow as it is known at present, is the western boundary of Kansas, but the above records for Colorado and the finding of nest



NEST AND EGGS OF THE CASSIN SPARROW

and eggs fully 150 miles west of the Kansas line, unless purely accidental, would seem to indicate the possibility of the birds occurring more or less commonly thruout the eastern half of Colorado; a question which can only be definitely settled by extensive and accurate observation.

Denver, Colorado.

SOME BIRDS OF SOUTHWEST COLORADO

By M. FRENCH GILMAN

(*Concluded*)

Petrochelidon lunifrons. Cliff Swallow. Common, nesting under eaves of buildings and on cliffs. Down the La Plata River near the New Mexico line I saw several holes in a cliff, containing the swallows' nests. These nests would completely fill the shallow holes, six or eight nests being required to close the entrance of some.

Tachycineta thalassina lepida. Violet-green Swallow. Numerous, breeding in holes in the pines. I saw several spirited fights between two birds that wanted the same nesting site. I stood against the tree trunk and watched the birds "lock horns" at the entrance of the hole and slowly flutter and fight, revolving the while till they reached the ground. Several times I think I could have scooped them in with a butterfly net.

Lanius ludovicianus excubitorides. White-rumped Shrike. Several seen at Fort Lewis; common about Cortez.

Vireo gilvus swainsoni. Western Warbling Vireo. Common. Nests frequently seen in alders and cottonwoods near the river.

Dendroica æstiva. Yellow Warbler. Common, nesting along the river bottoms.

Dendroica auduboni. Audubon Warbler. Common, nesting from 7,500 feet to about 11,000 feet.

Geothlypis tolmiei. Tolmie Warbler. Common. Nesting in river bottom and along irrigating ditches.

Icteria virens longicauda. Long-tailed Chat. One seen near Durango.

Wilsonia pusilla pileolata. Pileolated Warbler. Rather common.

Anthus pensilvanicus. Pipit. Arrived April 30, soon leaving for higher altitudes. July 22 I saw two pairs in a ten-acre patch of blue columbine (*Aquilegia cærulea*) at an altitude of over 12,000 feet. From their actions I judged a nest was near; but patient search failed to reveal it.

Cinclus mexicanus. Water Ouzel. Seen by Mr. Peterson on the La Plata River several miles below Fort Lewis, and also on the Animas River near Durango.

Oroscoptes montanus. Sage Thrasher. Found nesting from Cortez to Navajo Springs, in May and June.

Mimus polyglottos leucopterus. Western Mockingbird. Seen only in the vicinity of Navajo Springs where one nest was found and five or six pairs of birds seen.

Galeoscoptes carolinensis. Catbird. One seen at Mancos, May 31. Two pairs