

**WINTER NESTING ATTEMPT BY
A HOUSE FINCH (*Carpodacus mexicanus*) AT CEDAR KEY, FLORIDA**

DAVID W. JOHNSTON
5219 Concordia Street, Fairfax, Virginia 22032

On 14 November 2009 I was surprised to see a female House Finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*) carrying nesting material while her mate sat quietly on a nearby wire. The site was under the eaves of a two-story porch of the Cedar Key Historical Society Museum at the heavily traveled juncture of 2nd Ave. and State Road 24 in the town of Cedar Key, Levy County. She continued to carry material several times that day, and again on the 15th and 16th. On the 16th I climbed to the porch eaves and discovered a partially completed nest 3 cm high and 15 cm across (Fig. 1). Thereafter, the pair abandoned the nest, and I did not see them again in the neighborhood.

During the previous week several observers reported the scarcity of House Finches in the town even though the species is a common breeding permanent resident there (Johnston 2008). The weather was mild during this time with ambient temperatures ranging between 26°C and 13°C.

This report represents the first known winter nesting attempt of the House Finch in Florida (Stevenson and Anderson 1994), and likely the entire eastern United States (Hill 1993). Winter nesting has been reported twice in California (Smith 1930, Howell and Burns 1955).



Figure 1. Unfinished nest of a House Finch on 16 November 2009 in Cedar Key, Levy County, Florida.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Roger Clapp kindly supplied literature references.

LITERATURE CITED

- HILL, G. E. 1993. House Finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*), The Birds of North America Online (A. Poole, Ed.). Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, Ithaca, New York. <<http://bna.birds.cornell.edu/bna/species/046doi:10.2173/bna.46>>
- HOWELL, T. R., AND R. D. BURNS. 1955. Mid-winter nesting of the House Finch at Los Angeles, California. *Condor* 57:246.
- JOHNSTON, D. W. 2008. Cedar Key. Birding in Paradise. Finding Birds Then and Now. Renaissance Press, Gainesville, Florida.
- SMITH, P. 1930. Winter nesting of a California Linnet. *Condor* 32:12.
- STEVENSON, H. M., AND B. H. ANDERSON. 1994. The Birdlife of Florida. University Press of Florida, Gainesville.