

- WHITE, S. C. 1974. Ecological aspects of growth and nutrition in tropical fruit-eating birds. Ph.D. dissertation, Philadelphia, Univ. Pennsylvania.
- WORTHINGTON, A. 1982. Population sizes and breeding rhythms of two species of manakins in

relation to food supply. Pp. 213-226 in *The ecology of a tropical forest* (E. G. Leigh, Jr., A. S. Rand, and D. M. Windsor, Eds.). Washington, D.C., Smithsonian Inst. Press.

---

## 100 Years Ago in The Auk

---



From "General Notes" (1887, *Auk* 4: 167-168):

"What constitutes a Full Set of Eggs?—The question as to what constitutes a full set of eggs, and how to determine the number with any certainty, is a matter to which I desire to call attention, and, in doing so, will say that I have given the matter considerable thought, and have reached the conclusion, on account of the many nest robbers of the birds, that the larger number is the only safe one to enter as a full set. For example, say thirty nests of *first* sets of a species are found, with birds sitting, as follows: Four nests with four eggs in each; six nests with three eggs in each; ten nests with two eggs in each; and ten nests with one egg in each. In this case I would enter three and four—possibly two to four—as a full set. But in no case one to four, believing the undisturbed birds of a species do not vary much, if any, as to number of eggs laid. Say four eggs in first set, and three in the second; that is, in case the first set is destroyed, or the birds rear two or more broods in a season; for I find as a rule that the first set is the larger one.

"Many of the birds, especially the larger ones that breed in trees, as Hawks, Herons, etc., cannot hide their bulky nests; in fact, the branches overhead are more a protection to the thieves than to the nests when the parent birds are away; for all birds, however

watchful, will, during the early stages of laying and love making, steal away from their nests a short time, for a sail or flirtation, which affords the cunning Crows, Jays, squirrels, etc., an opportunity to come up from the lower limbs and steal the eggs unobserved, or before the parent birds can return to protect them. Such robberies, and the advancement of incubation, make the birds more watchful and closer sitters. But, with all their vigilance, I think to find a full set the exception and not the rule. It is to the interest of paid collectors and dealers in eggs to have the smaller as well as the larger number treated as full sets. But the oölogist at heart, whether a collector or not, can have but one desire, and that is to arrive at the facts in the case.

"In my 'Revised Catalogue of the Birds of Kansas,' I was governed in giving the dimensions and coloration of the eggs by the sets examined, but I did not venture to change the number when given by other writers, lest such changes, based on my limited observation, might prove erroneous or misleading; but the more I look the matter over, its importance to my mind increases. I therefore call attention to it, hoping to draw out, through 'The Auk' and other sources, the views of others.—N. S. Goss, *Topeka, Kans.*"