

Nest and Eggs of the Hermit Warbler. (*Dendroica occidentalis*.)

The accompanying plate of the nest and eggs of the Western Warbler is presented with the hope that it may interest those who may have specialized in the extensive and interesting warbler group. The photograph claims no special merit from a scientific standpoint, but is perhaps the first nest and eggs of *Dendroica occidentalis* to be published.

This nest and eggs was the second recorded set of this species, the first known set having been taken by Mr. Beck in El Dorado Co., Cal. in June, 1896, while the present one was collected by myself in about the same locality on June 14, 1898. As the set has been described at length (*Auk* XVI 159) repetition is unnecessary. The illustration serves to show the position of the nest upon the pine limb, on which it merely rested, not being fastened at any point. I quote the description from the article referred to: "It is very prettily constructed, the bottom layer being of light grayish weed stems, bleached pine needles and other light materials held securely together by cobwebs and other wooly substances. The nest cavity is lined with strips of red cedar bark (*Libocedrus*) and the ends, instead of being woven smoothly, project out of the nest. The inner lining is of a fine brownish fiber resembling shreds of soap-root. The eggs were about two-fifths advanced in incubation and measured .66x.52, .68x.53, .67x.53 and .69x.53 inches. They are spotted chiefly in wreaths at the large end with varying shades of lilac, brown and chestnut."

C. BARLOW.



A Provident Bluejay.

A singular incident touching upon the economy of jays and indicating a reasoning power, which I am not backward in ascribing to jay intelligence, occurred this morning (Dec. 19, 1899) as I looked through a window in the dining room. I saw a California Jay hopping on the ground about thirty feet distant, appearing at first to have an

extension bill. The extra length was accounted for when I saw that the jay carried a dark object and seemed to have some dark design.

He hopped a few yards in the grass and then deposited his burden, pecking it down as if into the earth. The bird then seemed to be plucking pieces of grass and laying them on the spot. He ceased this operation in a moment, flitted toward the fence and picked or excavated another darker object from the ground in the young grass, and flew with this in its beak to a low branch. Here he transferred it to his claws and pecked at it with apparent enjoyment. I watched him until he had disposed of the kernel, scrambling at times to maintain his hold and keep from losing the dainty morsel. Dropping the unpalatable fragment he then flew to rejoin his mate or a "pal" in an acacia tree. The discarded pieces proved upon investigation to be decayed almond shell.

I had not lost sight of the spot where the jay had evidently buried some plunder to await a more convenient season, and, in fact, it was fortunately marked by a white feather on the ground. I made for the spot, taking a direct course through the window, and after a careful search, discovered where the bird had artfully hidden a prize in the grass which stood about four inches high. It was a perfect almond and was not imbedded in the earth, but neatly tucked into a little hole and hidden by blades of grass. It was not decayed and breaking a corner showed a perfect kernel.

The nut had been filched from my neighbor's yard, making my premises a recourse for stolen goods! There is reason in most things, and as the jay was hungry he did not hide away this good almond for nothing. Mr. Jay is shrewd. My explanation is that the California Jay is especially fond of nuts with a wormy flavor. He has argued from experience that lying in the damp, they mould and probably gather living delicacies of which I wot not. What simpler then, that, having tweaked off the nut from the branch, he should place it where time will do the rest, where, one day, he will dine *en regale*?

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