

1901. *Falco columbarius* at Santa Clara, Cal. —Condor III, September 1901, p. 133.
1901. A List of the Land Birds of the Placerville-Lake Tahoe Stage Road. | Central Sierra Nevada Mountains, Cal. | By Chester Barlow | With Supplementary Notes by W. W. Price. —Condor III, November 1901, pp. 151-184, 11 hftt.
1902. Some Echoes from the Sierras. —Condor IV, July 1902, pp. 79-81, hft.
1902. Some Observations on the Rufous-crowned Sparrow. —Condor IV, September 1902, pp. 107-111, 2 hftt.

### Nesting of the Townsend Solitaire.

BY A. W. ANTHONY.

**N**EARLY all of our western ornithologists are familiar with the Townsend solitaire in life. A few of the more favored have listened to its incomparable song, as, perched on the topmost twig of a dead fir, in the solemn silence of the high Sierras, or in deep and ragged canyons of the Rocky Mountains, this shy,



PHOTO BY A. W. ANTHONY

NEST AND EGGS OF THE TOWNSEND SOLITAIRE.

retiring bird pours forth its very soul in a wild ringing outburst of song, that seems to descend from crags and ledges in a veritable shower of crystalized melody. With

none of our song-birds is the song so long sustained as with this species lasting as it does for several minutes, sometimes without a break. But if the beauty of its song is known to but few, still fewer can claim an intimate knowledge of its nesting habits.

During the past summer it was my good fortune to discover a nest under circumstances favorable for securing a photograph of a perfectly typical nesting site and nest, which are herewith offered to the readers of *THE CONDOR*.

The set of four eggs together with the nest has found a permanent home in the collection of Mr. J. W. Preston of Baxter, Iowa.



PHOTO BY A. W. ANTHONY.

LOCATION OF THE TOWNSEND SOLITAIRE'S NEST.

The discovery was made on July 23, on Eagle Creek, in the Powder River Mts. of eastern Oregon. The nest was built in a ditch bank about six feet above the water and less than half that distance from the top of the bank. The ditch, which has been cut to furnish water to the placer mines, was, at this point, some distance up the mountain side in the scattered fir forest. The formation, as can be seen in the illustration was firm gravel. A large rock had become loosened and fallen from its matrix. In the cavity thus formed the nest was placed, and with the long loose

grasses hanging down from the side it very successfully simulated the overhanging grasses and rootlets of its surroundings.

When discovered, the parent was brooding, but left the nest silently and disappeared, nor was she seen again while I was in the neighborhood. The eggs at this date contained small embryos.

There was no evidence of a former brood having been reared in this nest, nor had I seen any young of the species in the month or more I had been in the canyon.

The following is a description of the nest and eggs kindly supplied by Mr. J. W. Preston of Baxter, Iowa. At the base of the nest is a quantity of disintegrated trash such as bits of bark, pieces of weed stalks and finely broken old grass stems and blades, with some dirt and dust which had evidently been scratched up from the bottom of the cavity. On this slight platform are dead sticks and twigs, from larch and pine, intermixed with much old faded grass, pine needles and leaves of fir, and with some bulbs and rootlets of different grass-like sedges. The materials have been drawn into the burrowed-out cavity in the bank, leaving two-thirds of the material outward from the true nest, which is of fine dry grass stems and blades finely shredded and formed into a neat, well-rounded rather shallow cup. I note a few sprays of the long, black moss so common among the fir trees of the mountains. The structure before me is oblong in outline, being ten inches long by five wide, and three and one-half inches deep. In the inner end is formed the neat, symmetrical nest, cunningly resting in so great an amount of superfluous matter. The inside measurements are one and one-half inches deep by two and nine-tenths across. The structure is of course, somewhat compressed in boxing.

The ground color of the eggs is faint greenish-blue, blotched and marked with pale chestnut and lavender. Some of the spots are large, and a number of irregular markings resembling written characters appear, well scattered over the surface, but heavier about the larger end. Two of the eggs are less heavily marked, the specks and spots being smaller. These eggs appear somewhat elongate. The following are the measurements: .90x.64, .94x.64, .95x.65, and .96x.66; average .93x.64 inches.

### Nesting of the Abert Towhee.

BY M. FRENCH GILMAN.

**I**N PARTS of the Colorado Desert the Abert towhee (*Pipilo aberti*) is quite at home, and in the breeding season is fairly common. During a three or four years acquaintance with the species at Palm Springs, Indio, and Torros, I have made a few observations of nesting habits which may be of interest to Club members.

While more shy and retiring in disposition than the California towhee yet if undisturbed the Abert gains confidence and will make itself at home about the house. Its song or rather chirp, is more musical I think than that of its near relative, and is pitched in a higher key.

During the winter of 1899 I saw two pairs of the birds at Palm Springs and found one old nest. On May 9 of the same year I found a nest in a desert bush about two feet from the ground. The old bird slipped quietly off at my approach and revealed a set of three eggs slightly incubated. They were longer than those of the California towhee and not quite so large around. The nest was deeper cup-shaped and not quite so bulky.