

of some one as much as to say "Aw! Aw! I don't believe it." Mr. Heller suggested that it sounded like the subdued notes of a California burro!

We had a couple of bright days on Green Island and the mosquito and "no see" flies increased about a thousand fold. The mosquitoes were worse at night; but by getting inside of two or three nets arranged inside of each other, one could get a little sleep. All self-respecting flies are supposed to cease from their blood letting by night time but this particular breed was so industrious that they simply swarmed into the tent and no mosquito net is fine enough to stop them. It was useless to try to kill them and their bite feels like fire and swells up like baking powder biscuits. At last I wrapped my head up in the blankets and then about smothered but I was away from the pesky flies.

We must make another try at Montague as we have no bear from there yet. Then we will work the islands east of here until we strike the Kenai Peninsula where we ought to get some good big game hunting.

La Touche, Alaska.

THE NESTING OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN SCREECH OWL IN WYOMING

By CHAS. W. METZ

WITH FOUR PHOTOS BY THE AUTHOR

SO far as I know, no collector has reported the nesting of the Rocky Mountain Screech Owl (*Otus asio maxwelliae*) in Wyoming. A few notes taken by me in the northern part of the State, may, therefore, not come amiss. The first nest was found May 30, 1906, the old bird being flushed from a bush



NESTING SITE OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN SCREECH OWL (in tree trunk to right of picture)

in a fairly thick grove of box elders. A search thru several hollow trees in the vicinity soon revealed the nest. It was situated in a hollow limb of a live box



NESTLING OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN SCREECH OWL;
IN A WIND

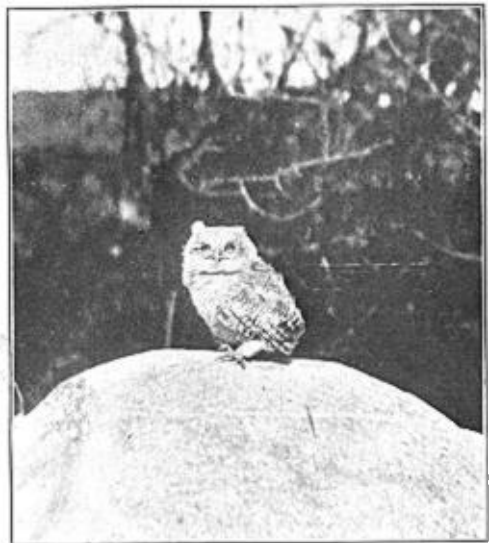
elder, about twenty-five feet from the ground, and contained one young bird almost ready to leave the nest. The cavity, which was in the end of the limb, was about five inches across at the top and about two feet deep; it sloped at an angle of about thirty degrees, for a short distance, then went off in a horizontal direction; it was back here that I found the bird. While I was at the nest, the old bird, presumably the female, lit a few feet from me, but did not show much anxiety, except to snap her bill occasionally.

The second nest was found on May 28, 1907. I flushed the adult from the hollow, but, on account of the size of the tree, I could not get into it. The cavity was in the center of a huge cotton-wood stump about three feet in diameter, and fifteen feet high; it was over a foot wide at the top and nearly ten feet deep, so it was almost impossible to get into it. However, as I saw

a fledgling with the old bird a few days later, I am pretty sure that this was the nest.

The third nest I was able to visit several times and my notes, accordingly, are more complete. This nest, apparently an old flicker's hole, was in a small cottonwood stump, about fifteen feet up; the stump being very rotten, and leaning directly over a mountain stream, it was not a very safe place for a family of young birds.

I found this nest on June 4, 1907, by rapping on the stump; the owl responded by peeking out of the hole and promptly dropping back again. As I suspected young birds to be in the nest, I returned on June 10, with my camera. I enlarged the opening a little and put my hand in. The lady of the house was in possession;



YOUNG ROCKY MOUNTAIN SCREECH OWL

for awhile it seemed as tho she would retain it, for the way she clawed up my hand while I was removing her, is something I shall not forget soon. However, when I let her loose, or rather got her loose, she quickly flew out of sight and was seen no more. Turning again to the nest I found three fledged young, as large as the old bird. I certainly cannot see the reason for her staying on the nest; for the young birds were nearly suffocating each other in the narrow cavity. These youngsters were as good subjects for the camera as a person could want, except possibly their



YOUNG ROCKY MOUNTAIN SCREECH OWL; IN MOUNTAINS NEAR SHERIDAN,
WYOMING, JUNE 16, 1907

tendency to turn over on their backs, with their claws waving in the air, and show fight.

I took several pictures of them at different distances, and in different positions; the difference that this makes in the looks of the birds, is interesting to note.

Two of the birds soon disappeared, but the third remained in the nest for about two weeks; I hope he has safely reached maturity, for, in the visits I made the little fellow, I became quite attached to him.

Sheridan, Wyoming.