

**Peculiar Nesting Site of Anthony Towhee.**—On April 25, 1914, a friend called my attention to a nest placed in the topmost box of a stack of berry boxes that were standing on a bench in his barn. At the time, the nest contained two partly incubated eggs of the Anthony Towhee (*Pipilo crissalis senicula*). The bird usually entered the barn through a door near the nest, but when this was closed it entered through a window fully ten feet from the nest. For some reason the nest was deserted after the eggs were about half incubated. This is the first instance where I have found this bird nesting otherwise than in a tree or bush.—WRIGHT M. PIERCE, *Claremont, California*.

**The House Finch as a Parasite.**—Close observation of some of our commonest birds often leads to the discovery of some trait not hitherto ascribed to the species. The practice of making use of the nests of others in which to deposit their eggs is common to many of our North American birds. Among the cowbirds and cuckoos this practice

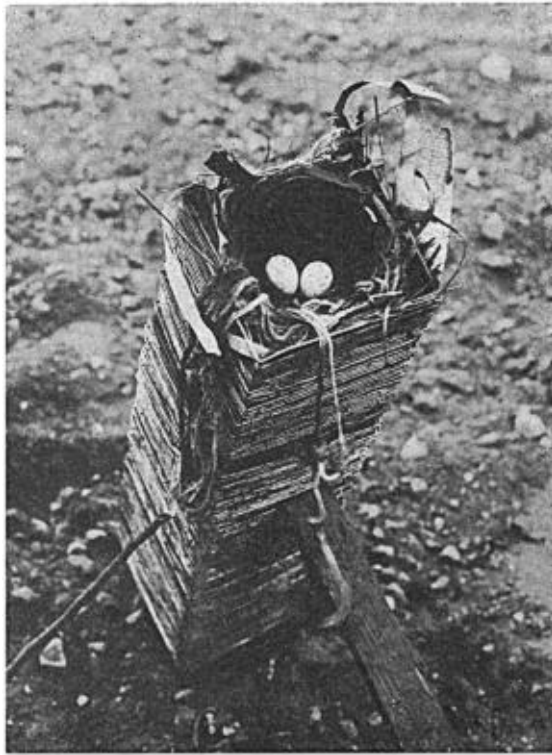


Fig. 39. NEST AND EGGS OF ANTHONY BROWN TOWHEE IN STACK OF BERRY-BOXES

Photo by W. M. Pierce.

is so well known as to need no comment. Certain of the gallinaceous fowls, such as pheasants, partridges, quail, etc., occasionally deposit their eggs in nests of others of their own or allied species.

The waterfowl are represented in this class, many species leaving their eggs to the care of other birds. Thus eggs of the Ruddy Duck, the Redhead, the Shoveller, and others, are frequently found in the nests of other ducks, and coots. Many of the Raptors make use of the deserted nests of crows, ravens, magpies, and others suited to their needs. The sparrow hawks, smaller owls, and numerous species of wrens, chickadees, titmice, etc., use old woodpecker holes.

But as far as I know, the Linnnet, or House Finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus frontalis*) is unique among the Fringillidae as a parasite. I first encountered the species under consideration as leaving its eggs to the care of a foster-parent in April, 1908. A nest of

the Black Phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*) was found under a bridge near San Pedro, California, containing five eggs of the Black Phoebe and one egg of the House Finch. All were heavily incubated, the egg of the House Finch not quite so much as the others. As the female Phoebe was brooding when the nest was found, it was apparent that she had no objection to the intruder, or else was not aware of its presence.

The same year I had occasion to examine a nesting colony of Cliff Swallows (*Petrochelidon lunifrons*) near Los Angeles. Two nests examined had been appropriated by House Finches before the builders had laid. The Finches added a few straws and feathers, and were in sole possession when found. A third nest in this same colony held three eggs of the Cliff Swallow and two of the House Finch. The Swallows were as complaisant to the added burden thrust upon them as were the Phoebes, and were incubating contentedly. Had the young Finches hatched, I wonder if they would have survived the "bed-bugs" with which the nest was infested, such conditions not being natural to the species.

A pair of Arizona Hooded Orioles (*Icterus cucullatus nelsoni*) started a nest of palm-leaf fibers in a eucalyptus tree across the street from my home in the city the same year. Before it was quite completed the builders were ousted by the ever-present House Finches, which made a few changes and reared their young in the cosy basket. The Orioles selected another site in the same tree, and raised a brood without further molestation. The following year a pair of Orioles, probably the same pair of the previous year, appeared in the neighborhood, and soon built a nest near the old one. Wishing to ascertain the contents, I got within sight after a strenuous climb, and beheld two eggs of the owners and one of the House Finch. The Orioles seemed to have submitted to the inevitable; and here, I thought, was a good opportunity to see what would happen to the mixed brood when hatched. But I was doomed to disappointment, for the tree was trimmed before further investigation could be made, and a like chance has not yet presented itself.—D. I. SHEPARDSON, *Los Angeles, California.*

**Pink-footed Shearwater on the Coast of Washington.**—An extensive movement of Shearwaters observed at Point Grenville on the coast of Washington August 27, 1910, yielded the customary toll of weaklings cast ashore. Among many stranded specimens of *Puffinus griseus* and some of *P. tenuirostris* I noted carefully (but, unfortunately, had no facilities for preserving) a Shearwater which appears to be *Puffinus creatopus*. My notes say, "Underparts white, changing to sooty on sides of throat, edges of wings and (conspicuously) under tail-coverts"; and make mention of bill notably stouter than that of *P. griseus*. Also "feet very pale, might have been pink in life." I was not at that time acquainted with *P. opisthomelas*, which proves to be a smaller, slender-billed form,—and so buried my notes under a misleading caption.—WILLIAM LEON DAWSON, *Santa Barbara, California.*

**Another Record of the White-throated Sparrow for California.**—With the finding of the White-throated Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*) on January 28, 1915, by the bridge near the new Agricultural building, a new name has been added to the list of birds of the Berkeley campus. The bird was feeding in a patch of chickweed in company with a number of Nuttall White-crowned and Golden-crowned Sparrows, at a distance of about ten feet from where I was standing. I was first attracted by its brighter brown back and its crown stripes which were noticeably different from those of the White- and Golden-crowns. It then turned and I discovered the distinct white throat patch which settled its identification as the White-throated Sparrow. On three subsequent occasions, January 29, February 9 and 15, I have watched a White-throated Sparrow, presumably the same bird, in the same spot. On February 9 I discovered the bird just after it had taken a bath and for a few minutes was in doubt as to its identity because of the ruffled condition of its feathers; but I watched it until it was dry again and the white throat patch was unmistakable. On the other two dates the White-throated Sparrow was feeding in the company of both Nuttall White-crowned and Golden-crowned Sparrows.—MARGARET W. WYTHE, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California.*