

NESTING OF THE PINE SISKIN IN NORTH DAKOTA

BY RUSSELL REID

The Pine Siskin (*Spinus pinus*) appears to be a fairly common summer resident in the vicinity of Bismarck, and a few are found during the winter months. Migration records for several years indicate that they arrive in this latitude about the first week in April, in fair numbers. They commence nest building soon after their arrival. After the young have left the nest my records show that none are seen until the latter part of September. I do not know where they go, but pre-



THE PINE SISKIN ON ITS NEST

Photographed by Russell Reid at Bismarck, N. D., in 1925

sumably they wander farther north. I have seen siskins every month in the year, except during the hot summer period of July and August. When they again arrive in the fall, the majority of them soon depart for the south. However, they are so erratic that their absence or occurrence can not be depended upon. I have seen them at Bismarck in the latter part of January, during our coldest weather, and again none were seen during the spring of 1927.

Anyone acquainted with the nesting habits of the Pine Siskin can imagine my surprise on finding my first nest at Bismarck. Bismarck

is located on the east bank of the Missouri River, on a semi-arid rolling plain. The elevation is approximately 1650 feet. Trees of any description are rare, except along the course of streams, and there are no native coniferous trees. In Bismarck quite a number of spruce and pine trees have been planted for ornamental purposes.



NEST AND EGGS OF THE PINE SISKIN
Photographed by Russell Reid at Bismarck, N. D., in 1925

On April 10, 1925, the first nest was found, well concealed in a small spruce tree about five feet from the ground. It was made of dead spruce twigs, bits of cotton, and rootlets, and lined with horse hair. The nest was rather poorly constructed and loosely placed on the branches. The outside diameter measured three and one-eighth inches and the inside diameter one and one-eighth inches.

The female was not very shy, so I was able to take a photograph of her on the nest. As the owner of the tree was afraid that the tree would be broken down by curious small boys, the nest was removed and given to me. Upon blowing the eggs I found them only slightly incubated.

During April and May of 1925, five other nests were found in Bismarck. The height from the ground ranged from five to twenty-five feet. All were in spruce trees with the exception of one which was in a small boxelder, nearly dead. All of the nests contained three or four eggs or young.

The male is very solicitous as to the welfare of the female, and in all of the nests watched, he was seen feeding her while she sat on the nest. She, in turn, acted like a dependent nestling and greeted his approach with food with a shrill twittering and with fluttering wings. On one occasion he was observed to feed a female on the nest before any eggs were laid. Withal they were extremely interesting birds, and if sufficient time were available an interesting study could be made of them.

I believe the above data comprise the first nesting records for North Dakota.

NORTH DAKOTA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY,
BISMARCK, N. DAK.

NESTING OF THE PINE SISKIN IN IOWA WITH REMARKS ON REGURGITATIVE FEEDING

BY MRS. MARIE DALES AND WALTER W. BENNETT

This paper records two nestings of the Pine Siskin (*Spinus pinus*) at Sioux City, Iowa. The first nest was found by the senior author while walking through Grandview Park on April 3, 1926. A Pine Siskin was observed to be busily engaged in tearing up an old Goldfinch nest, and carrying the salvaged material to a nearby balsam fir tree, where a new nest was being built on the outer branches about ten feet up. This nest building was continued for several days, but the nest was finally blown down in a heavy storm. A few days later the birds, probably the same pair, came to the senior author's trapping station, about two hundred yards south of the first nest, and gathered cotton. For two days they were seen gathering cotton; then another storm raged and the birds were not seen again.

On May 20, 1928, the senior author was called to see a nest in a small cedar tree on the front lawn of a neighbor. Mrs. Geo. Jepson. Three feet up in an evergreen tree not over four and a half feet high was a Pine Siskin's nest containing four remarkably large eggs for so