

Harris (in Tyler 1948) offers one clue as to the function of dirt-storing behavior in the White-breasted Nuthatch. He stated that a pair building a nest "collect little pellets of dried earth and lumps of mud which was scattered thinly over the bark (strips)" inside the nest cavity. We speculate that dirt may be used inside the nest cavity for sanitation purposes such as reducing ectoparasite loads. Storage of objects used for bill-sweeping, even at the cavity entrance, and storage of food items have been convincingly documented for this widespread North American species (Tyler 1948; Kilham 1968, 1974).

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Unusual behavior in a Solitary Vireo.—On 16 June 1990 (10:45 MST), we found a Solitary Vireo (*Vireo solitarius*) nestling on the ground at 1646 m elevation at the Southwestern Research Station (SWRS), Chiricahua Mountains, Cochise County, Arizona. The vireo was under a large sycamore tree (*Platanus wrightii*) along the north fork of Cave Creek. It had prematurely exited from a typical basket nest, suspended by its rim in the fork of tertiary branches, at the exceptional height of 12 m, approximately 6 m south from the trunk of the sycamore tree.

The parent(s) alternated feeding the nestling as well as juvenile(s) remaining in the nest. During the day, the grounded bird continued to hop around, begging by vocalizing and fluttering its wings. Vocalization periods of the fallen nestling generally lasted for 15–20 min and were followed by similar intervals of quiet. During one of the vocalization periods up to 30 chirps per min were noted. The parent(s) spent a large percentage of their daily time in feeding or foraging for the fledglings. At night, the fallen nestling took shelter under a cluster of small branches, remaining quiet until near sunrise. The vireos were all missing on the morning of 19 June, with no evidence of mortality.

Several of our observations appear to be unusual. First, we find few accounts of parents of this or other passerines continuing to feed a prematurely fledged, grounded bird along with siblings in the nest. Secondly, the height of the nest is of interest. Harrison (1979, *A Field Guide to Western Birds' Nests*, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, Massachusetts) found only one of 11 nests of this species above 3.1 m and no nests in riparian trees. Of the more than 200 Solitary Vireo nests reported on by Bent (1950, *Life Histories of North American Wagtails, Shrikes, Vireos, and Their Allies*, U.S. National Museum Bulletin 197) even notably high vireo nests were all under 9 m from the ground except for two 12 m nests (one for *V. s. plumbeus*, the subspecies breeding in the Chiricahuas, and one for *V. s. alticola*, breeding in the southeastern United States).

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