

THE NESTING OF THE BROAD-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD

By ARETUS A. SAUNDERS

ON JUNE 28, 1909, a friend showed me a nest of the Broad-tailed Hummingbird (*Selasphorus platycercus*). The locality was Squaw Creek, in the West Gallatin Canyon, Gallatin County, Montana. The nest was placed on a dead branch of an alder, overhanging the stream and was composed of cottonwood down and covered with bits of lichen. It contained two eggs which my friend said had been there more than a week to his knowledge, so that incubation must have been well advanced.

We sat down under the nest to watch for the bird, and had but a short time to wait before she appeared. She did not appear to notice us at all but flew immediately to the nest, perched a moment on the rim and then settled on the eggs. I stepped around to another position to get a stronger light on her, as I was at first a little uncertain of the species. I found that she was quite brilliantly marked for a female and had quite a large patch of metallic color on her throat. She was a very restless sitter, seldom staying on the nest for more than a minute at a time, but never going far away and always returning quickly.

I had my camera with me and hoped to get a picture. The situation was not good, however, as the sunlight reached the nest only for a few moments just before sunset, and then only thru the branches of surrounding trees. The nest was too high up to use a tripod, so I set a ladder against a neighboring tree and by climbing it was able to hold the camera within a few feet of the nest. The bird was very tame and gave me several opportunities for a picture without seeming to mind my presence at all. The pictures proved partial failures because of the poor light.

On July 13, I was again in the vicinity and visited the nest. It now contained two well-grown young. The mother bird was not in sight, so I sat down to wait for her. It was fully half an hour before she appeared. She seemed much less tame than before, and flew about from one perch to another for fifteen minutes before she finally went to the nest. She then perched on the rim, hesitated a moment, then fed the young in turn, ramming her bill down their throats and regurgitating the food in the usual hummingbird fashion.

On August 13, 1909, I found another nest of this species in Bear Canyon, Gallatin County. This one was also beside a stream, placed on a projecting root under an overhanging bank, and was composed of the same materials. No bird was to be seen and the cold eggs had evidently been deserted for some time. I found the contents somewhat dried and incubation so far advanced that I was unable to save the shells.

Anaconda, Montana.

AN EARLY COLORADO ORNITHOLOGIST—WILLIAM G. SMITH

By WILLIAM L. BURNETT

WITH ONE PHOTO

WE of the younger school of bird students in Colorado cannot help looking back with envy upon the early ornithological workers, those sturdy scientific pioneers who laid the foundation upon which the history of Colorado ornithology is built: a foundation not laid upon the sands of inaccurate