

## FROM FIELD AND STUDY

**Brown-capped Rosy Finch Nesting in Buildings.**—The nest and eggs of the Brown-capped Rosy Finch (*Leucosticte australis*) were unknown until July 11, 1915, when F. C. Lincoln found a nest in a crevice on the southwest side of Mount Bross at 13,500 feet, in central Colorado (Auk, 33, 1916:41–42). On the afternoon of July 26, 1954, while climbing Mount Bross, I went through the buildings of the abandoned Dolly Varden Mine, at about 13,000 feet altitude on a tundra slope on the east side of the mountain. While I was standing in a wing of one of the ruined buildings, a rosy finch flew into the open north end and up to the timber supporting the rafters. On seeing me, it hesitated for a moment, then disappeared into the dim corner; soon it flew out with a white object in its bill. Between the rafters on the beam, about nine feet above the floor, I found a nest with three young not more than a few days old. The nest proper was rather neatly made of grass and fine stems and was built on a broad base of soggy vegetable matter which extended out for several inches along the beam. Its shape and appearance were like those of a nest of a robin or bluebird when built in a similar place, but it was somewhat smaller than that of a bluebird. The parent finch soon returned and came very close to me, anxiously repeating its metallic chirps.

On July 9, 1956, about 2½ miles south and 1 mile west of the preceding site, I found another nest with five small young. It was also in an old mine building, near the top of the steep northeast-facing slope at the east end of Loveland Mountain, at about 12,000 feet. Most of the mountainside for hundreds of feet below the building was bare rock and talus, but the site was not actually above timberline, since there were a few spruce bushes in a gulch just above the structure. The building was on a steep slope and was in fair condition, with openings in both ends which allowed the finches free access to the inside. The nest was on the junction of some large timber supports about ten feet from the ground, and several feet below the roof. The base of the nest consisted principally of mosslike vegetation and other coarse plant material; the sides were mainly of grass, rootlets, feathers and sheep's wool, and the lining was of grass with a few feathers. The parent was not there the first time I examined it, but after a few minutes' absence I went back and found an adult at the nest. It became highly agitated when I climbed up, chirping and sometimes flying within three feet of me.

On July 27, 1957, again on Mount Bross, I found a third *Leucosticte* nest. Just after entering the west room of an old mine building I saw a rosy finch, apparently a male, fly out through a broken pane in the east window of the south wall of the room. There was chirping as of another bird being fed. I soon saw a nest directly above the window on the ledge supporting the rafters, about nine feet above the floor and three feet above the window. When I began to climb up, a female rosy finch flew from the nest, landed on a table in the room, and then flew out the front door, which I had left open. The nest held three white eggs, one of which I examined by the light from the window and saw that it was nearly ready to hatch. The nest was rather dark in its cubicle between the rafters of the flat-roofed building, so that I could not tell much about its composition, but it was a wide-based structure like the others found earlier. The broken window through which the male bird had flown was probably the birds' main entrance, since the building was the best preserved on that part of the mountain and had only two other openings—a small hole in the door and another missing pane in the window to the west of it.

Hanna (Condor, 24, 1922:89–91) stated that the rosy finch of the Aleutian area (*Leucosticte tephrocotis griseonucha*) has nested in buildings. Insofar as I know these nestings in Colorado are the first instances of this habit reported in other members of the genus.—DONALD G. DAVIS, *Timnath, Colorado, November 10, 1959.*

**Black-throated Sparrows in South-central Oregon.**—The recent report (Du Bois, Condor, 61, 1959:435) of Black-throated Sparrows (*Amphispiza bilineata*) in northwestern Oregon during May and June, 1959, has stimulated this report of additional observations of this species which were made in the same season in Klamath County east of the Cascade Range in Oregon. The specific location is just below the crest of "Nilakshi Ridge," approximately 12.4 miles north of Klamath Falls.

The subclimax vegetation is there dominated by shrubs of several species. These include, principally, *Arctostaphylos patula*, *Chrysothamnus nauseosus*, *Ceanothus velutinus*, and *Prunus subcordata*. Also represented conspicuously are *Ceanothus prostratus*, *Symphoricarpos* sp., *Purshia tridentata*,

*Haplopappus bloomeri*, *Ribes cereum*, *Amelanchier* sp., *Cercocarpus ledifolius*, and young *Juniperus occidentalis* and *Pinus ponderosa*. The numerous, scattered, charred snags in the area are remnants of the once-dominant but now burned out forest of *Pseudotsuga menziesii*.

On May 13, 1959, I observed one Black-throated Sparrow perched on a branch of one of the shrubs in the area. This was my only observation of this species there, but I reported it immediately to my companion, Mr. Kenneth L. McLeod, Jr. He returned to the area on several occasions, making the following additional observations: one on May 24, 27, 29, and 30; two on June 2; three on June 3, one of which appeared to be gathering nesting material; one on June 9 and 18; and two, perching together, on June 28. On June 3, the presence of a fourth individual was also suspected. Mr. McLeod stated that he could distinguish individuals by differences in the width of their black throat-patches, which suggests some variation in this aspect of their pattern.

Du Bois (*op. cit.*) refers to two earlier records for this species in eastern Oregon. These include reports by Jewett (Condor, 15, 1913:229) of two from Wright's Point, and by Gabrielson and Jewett (Birds of Oregon, 1940:565) of one from Silver Lake, both in Harney County. Hyde (Condor, 42, 1940:305) also reports one from Wright's Point. The observations reported here apparently provide the first records for this species in the intermountain area of south-central Oregon.—RICHARD MCP. BROWN, *Crater Lake National Park, Oregon, December 4, 1959.*

**Ground-level Nest of the Mountain Chickadee.**—Bent states in his Life Histories of North American Jays, Crows, and Titmice (U. S. Nat. Mus. Bull. 191, 1946:364), that the Mountain Chickadee (*Parus gambeli*) nests "at heights ranging from 2 to 80 feet above the ground, the extreme heights being very rare."

On July 9, 1959, while at Lake Mary in the Mammoth Lake area of Mono County, California, we found a nest of the Mountain Chickadee in a location almost underground, as illustrated in the

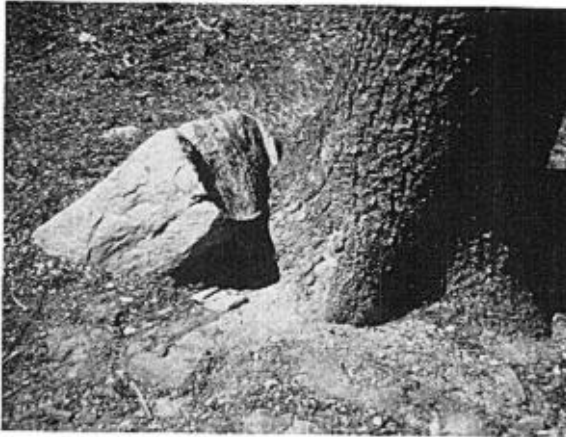


Fig. 1. Nesting site of Mountain Chickadee (*Parus gambeli*), Mammoth Lakes, Mono County, California.

accompanying photograph (fig. 1). The nesting cavity was entered through a crack, several inches long but barely an inch wide, between the flat rock shown in the picture and the base of the pine tree. We tried to reach in with our hands but no more than the fingertips could slip in. Thus it seemed well protected from most of the larger predators.

A light flashed into the narrow crevice disclosed at least five well-developed nestlings. Both parents made repeated flights to and from the nest with insects while we watched from distances of six feet and less. We captured and banded one of the parent birds which entered the opening, the capture being accomplished by holding a mist net near the opening.—MARJORIE M. ELMORE and DANA T. ELMORE, *Paradise, California, December 1, 1959.*