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A REAL SYCAMORE WARBLER

On June 22, 1918, I was standing on the bridge over the Big Barren River, three miles north of town, watching for any birds that might appear along the river. Near the end of the bridge stands a large sycamore tree. Because of the height of the bridge my eyes were on a level with the upper limbs of the tree. Suddenly a Sycamore Warbler darted in among the leaves and I heard the chatter of young birds still in the nest. As the place was inaccessible, either with glasses or by climbing, I gave the matter no more thought and had so far forgotten it that I failed to look for the nest when the leaves had fallen.

On April 19, 1919, I was again standing on the bridge when I happened to think of the experience of the year before. While I was telling some friends about it, we saw a Sycamore Warbler fly to the same place, seize some of the material of the old nest, which was now plainly visible, and fly with it to a much lower limb on the opposite side of the tree. Here we soon made out a nest in process of construction.

On April 8, 1920, I visited the place again and a Sycamore Warbler was building a nest on another limb, nearly on a level with the nest of 1918. I often visited the place in 1921, but failed to see either the bird or a nest. In all my experience as a bird student these are the only nests of this species that I have discovered, even though I have seen the bird in small numbers every summer.

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NESTING OF THE BELL VIREO

The Bell Vireo has been known at Red Cloud, Nebraska, for several years, but in 1920 we were favored with a study of the nesting bird for the first time. About July 10, 1920, one of my friends who is interested in birds and has a large garden with many fruit trees, told me of a bird that was new to him nesting in his lilac bush ten rods from the house. It was about two and one-half feet from the ground and near the outer edge on the south side, half covered by overhanging leaves and yet quite in sight. Four of us pushed aside the leaves and gazed at the tiny bird to our heart's content. She seemed to think, as her eyes twinkled, "I can see you all right but you cannot see me." I could not bear to put her off the nest for fear of injury or fright, so came again a few days later, with the same result. Saturday, July 17, I had to leave for over Sunday and feared the eggs would hatch in my absence, which they did, so I went with metric rule to take observations on nest and eggs. To my surprise, as soon as I neared the nest the bird flew off, quite nervous. As I wished first to study the line over the eye and a few other points, I

retired to the other side of the bush and the bird returned to the nest at once. On my approach, he jumped off again and began to sing the familiar notes of the Bell Vireo, thus confirming my previous diagnosis. I then examined the four eggs, all sharply ovate, three white and one twelve millimeters in length, with an irregular ring of pale brown spots around the largest diameter. The nest was less than two inches in diameter, inside measurement, and one and three-quarter inches deep. It was hung below a small horizontal fork, and made outside of the cotton of cottonwood trees or the silk of milkweeds and decaying paper bits, lined with tiny root hairs and other more brittle material. Before the birds could fly, something, cat or snake it may be, brought to naught this thing of joy. I have saved the nest to show my bird-loving friends, but not fastened to the twigs as it should be. It makes one wonder why the evolution of "the survival of the fittest" has not resulted in teaching all perching birds to build higher from their ground enemies, and I imagine that the answer is that they build today exactly as they did ten thousand years ago, not having yet been apprised of the law of evolution.

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