

NOTES ON THE NESTING HABITS OF THE BROWN
CREEPER AND HUDSONIAN CHICKADEE.

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In an article on the Brown Creeper someone has observed that this bird searched for its food as if it had lost the one thing necessary to life, and ignored the onlooker completely in its endeavours to find it. Nevertheless, I had occasion, on July 14th of this year, to find a bird startled out of its monotonous occupation. Whilst walking through a piece of hardwood, interspersed with small clumps of evergreens, and bordering on a large cedar swamp, I heard a bird uttering peeps of alarm, and, on looking for the cause, saw a Brown Creeper in a very nervous state, flitting from tree to tree without thinking of its usual occupation. Thinking there was a nest, I started towards a likely-looking balsam stub, and, on striking the tree there was a great commotion at its base, whereupon several young creepers fluttered away in different directions. This was evidently their debut from the nest, and instinctively they flew to the nearest trees and ascending spirally, picking the tree at intervals with weak little pecks, commenced their traditional life search.

To return to the nest, I found that I had broken off a large piece of bark about two feet from the base of the stub, thus disclosing the nest, which was fastened to the loose bark with threads of spiders' silk. It was a very deep structure though necessarily much flattened (as the bark was only about three inches from the trunk at its widest) in the shape of an elongated one-sided wedge. It was composed of dead lichen-covered twigs of spruce, balsam and tamarac, thrown together in a very loose mass with a lining of shreds of the inner bark of balsam. Its outside depth measured eight inches, the diameter parallel with the trunk five, and the other diameter two and one-half. The bark and trunk formed the boundaries of the nest cavity, which was perfectly flat. The nest also contained one infertile egg, which was rather elongated, of a shining creamy white slightly flecked on the larger end with reddish flesh colour.

I counted six young birds which, with the infertile egg, made seven originally contained in the nest.