

Aug 18, 1930

Nest Report - Goldfinch.

On July 26 the nest of a goldfinch was found about twenty feet up in a small beech tree on a sparsely-wooded hill-side. It was constructed of shredded bark, fine grasses and plant down, lined with hairs, plant down and bits of shredded cord. Its measurements were: - outside diameter $3\frac{1}{2}$ in., outside depth $2\frac{1}{2}$ in., inside diameter 2 in., and inside depth $1\frac{1}{2}$ in.

The nest contained 5 very fresh eggs and the bird had evidently just started sitting. Once on this day while I watched the male came to the nest and fed the female while she was sitting. When she heard him calling as he approached, she fluttered her wings and answered as if joyful at his arrival.

Observations were made for about an hour and a half late in the evening of August 1st. During this period the sitting female changed her position on the nest three times. She was fed once by the male, by regurgitation as usual. He approached the nest tree calling, but after having passed it, swerved cleverly back and down to it, as though wishing to camouflage his approach. A few minutes after 8:00 pm, the female left the nest, but was back in ten minutes, going and coming so quietly, her movements were hardly noticeable.

All of the eggs but one were hatched on August 7, the other breaking open on the following day. This gave a probable incubation period of thirteen days.

Practically no observations, except measurements, were made during the next four days. On the afternoon of the 13th, I was informed that there had been considerable disturbance and alarm among the goldfinches about noon. Climbing up to the nest, I found it empty. On a leaf a few inches beneath, there were two or three bloody pin feathers. The nest itself was not injured in any way. Sticking to a leaf near the ground under the tree was the leg of one of the young birds. It had been torn or bitten off at the body.

I could discover no further evidence as to the fate of the Goldfinch brood. Some twenty feet from the foot

v. 112.

of the nesting tree was the entrance to a chipmunk burrow. Perhaps its owner was the marauder. Perhaps not.

In order to make these observations on the goldfinch a little more complete, I spent several hours watching another nest which had been found by someone else.

This nest was only about five feet above the ground, and near the extremity of a lower limb of a small oak sapling. It was constructed of the same general materials as the first nest described.

On August 16th the four young in this nest were five days old. At 6:25 am., neither bird was on the nest. At 6:27 the female returned, calling as she approached. She went almost immediately to the nest, apparently fed all the young by regurgitation of course, and then settled down to brood them. At 6:45 she was still on the nest, but had changed her position, perhaps to be able to look through my peep-hole into the blind.

I watched again from 11:06 till noon. When I entered the blind, the female was on the nest. She remained until about 11:30 and made no sound as she finally flew away. Almost half an hour later, I heard the male approaching. He fed all the young, swallowed the faeces from each and flew away, having remained at the nest one and one-half minutes.

When I observed again the same afternoon, neither ^{old} bird was present from 4:40 to 5:30. At 5:32 the male and female returned together. She fed all the young first and then perched at the side of the nest while he did the same. He then flew away while she swallowed the excretae of the young. By 5:34 she had settled down on the nest to brood. No sound was heard from the young at any time.

The nest was watched again on the morning of the 17th, beginning at 7:00, but no new points were noticed. The young were six days old on this date.

Growth Record

Goldfinch.

Age	1 Day	2 Days	4 Days	6 Days
Length	42. mm	45. mm.	60. mm.	
Tail		.5	1.	
Mid I.F.		.5	1.	
Bill	3.5	5.	5.	
Bill Eye	7.	7.5	9.5	
Bill Gape	7.	8.	9.	
Bill-Nostril	3.	3.5	4.5	
Eye Diam.			2.	
Wtent.	47.	53.	75.	
Wing Right	10.	15.	22.	
Primary	.5	1.5	6.	
Wing-Body	18.	24.	36.	
Foot-Body.	25.	28.	43.	
Tarsus	10.5	7.5	15.	
Tarsus-Joe	19.	21.	28.	
Foot	15.	17.	24.	
Joe #1 (with nail)	6.	7.5	9.	10.5
Joe #2 "	8.	6.5	8.5	9.
Joe #3 "	7.	9.	12.2	12.5
Joe #4 "	5.	7.	7.5	9.