ALEUTIAN SANDPIPER

BY SHARON BEALS

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

Contemporary
United States
Aleutian Sandpiper
Calidris ptilocnemis couesi

Nome District, Alaska, collected in 1935
The California Academy of Sciences

This small but stocky sandpiper breeds in tundra along the Alaskan Pacific and in Russian Islands along the Bering and Chuksa Seas. The total population of the species may not not exceed more than 100,000. Though most of the nest building is done by the male, as part of their courtship rituals, the female joins him in making the first scrapes in the ground. Nests are often built on moss, and filled with willow leaves, sedges and lichens, the male shaping these into a deep cup with his body.

The nests were photographed in four science collections: The California Academy of Sciences, The Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zo...