AURIPARUS FLAVICEPS ORNATUS

BY SHARON BEALS

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

Contemporary
United States
Verdin
Auriparus flaviceps

Collected from Sierra La Mojina, State of Chihuahua, Mexico, 1961
The Museum of Vertebrate Zoology

The only North American member of the penduline-tit family (Remizidae), these tiny insectivores survive bitter winters and searing summers in the arid forests, scrub lands, and deserts of the American Southwest and Mexico. They manage this year-round residency by building small thorny domes for both breeding and roosting. Fledglings as young as three months construct their own nests, and in a year a Verdin may build a dozen solo shelters.

The nests were photographed in four science collections: The California Academy of Sciences, The Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology, The Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, the Corne...