

GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE

BY SHARON BEALS

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

Contemporary
United States
Great-tailed Grackle
Quiscalus mexicanus

Collected from Chinautla, State of Guatemala, Guatemala, 2002
The Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology

Opportunistic survivors that have moved from the neotropics to as far north as Canada, these grackles need suitable cover in trees or other foliage for nesting, and water for drinking, bathing, and finding aquatic prey. Females fasten their cup-shaped nests to vertical twigs, weaving the outer cup with coarse grasses, weeds, bark strips, reeds, leaves, vines, feathers, paper, ribbon, fabric, or plastic. They cement the inner cup with mud or cow dung and line it with finer grasses.

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

Cornell Museum of Vertebrates, and the American Museum of Natural History.
Subject Details:
Great-tailed Grackle
Quiscalus mexicanus
Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology
Guatamala, Departamento Guatamala
Chinautla 13 March 2002
WFVZ 172,912_1
Collector: René Corado
A composite photo of 3 frames to keep the depth of field in such an intricate nest
The collector of this nest said that the next year when he returned to Guatemala, the forest where this nest had been was now a watermelon patch. Take away lesson: Think twice about eating food out of season. While this is a pretty common bird, how long till it is uncommon?

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