



## ROCK SPARROW

BY SHARON BEALS

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### COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

Contemporary  
United States  
Common Rock Sparrow  
*Petronia petronia*

Collected from Dalai Nor, Heilungkiang Province, China, 1935  
The California Academy of Sciences

This loose arrangement of grass, fur, and feathers was built by a pair of Common Rock Sparrows, a species found in the Canary Islands, Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. They belong to the family of Old World Sparrows, seedeaters that share an adaptation unique among granivores. They are equipped with tongues toughened with a stiff skeletal structure and horny palates, which work like miniature nutcrackers to crush seeds. These sturdy bills grow longer during breeding season to capture insects. They nest in crevices in rocks, trees, animal dens, and burrows made by other birds, and when close to humans, abandoned or even inhabited buildings.

# COUP D'ETAT

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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:

Rock Sparrow

*Petronia petronia brevirostris*

The California Academy of Sciences

Nest CAS 10003

Asia;China; Heilungkiang Province; Dalai Nor

18 May 1935

Eggs10004

Asia; China; Heilungkiang Prov.; Dalai Nor

29 May 1935

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