AN OUTSIDE NEST OF A FLYING SQUIRREL

In many localities there have been no records of outside nests built by flying squirrels, therefore it seems advisable to record such observations in order to ascertain how widespread this practice is.

During the summer of 1920 I spent several weeks at Point Pelée, Ontario, collecting material for small habitat groups. On June 24 I found the outside nest of a flying squirrel (*Sciuropterus volans*) in a small tree covered with climbing bitter-sweet. A tall walnut tree four feet away gave the elevation necessary for the squirrels to "fly" to their permanent home, which was in a natural cavity of an oak sixty feet distant. Upon climbing to the nest, I found it contained one young, naked and blind, but my discovery evidently prompted its removal before the following day. The nest was constructed entirely of red cedar bark, and lined with fine, soft shreds of the same material. It was roughly ovate in shape, with the entrance near the top, at the end towards the tree trunk. The branches and vines supported it from all angles against the wind, and its compact structure and sheltered position in the vine made it fairly waterproof. In this instance it seems that the flying squirrel is an architect comparable with other squirrels.

—L. L. SYNDER, *Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology, Toronto, Ont.*

BEAVER "FORMS"

Although most persons who are familiar with the habits of the beaver in its native haunts must surely have seen the "forms" or resting places of the animal, yet I have failed to find mention of them in any of the literature on the beaver with which I am acquainted.

These forms, of which I have examined several in northeastern Minnesota, are not unlike those of the varying hare, except of course in the matter of size. They seem, so far as my observations extend, to be used merely as resting or sunning places during the day time, the animals returning to them daily. I have seen no indications that they are used as feeding places; they are, as a rule conspicuously free from peeled sticks; this is also true for their immediate vicinity. Whether the animals found in these forms,—I know of them only in the summer months—are males, whose presence in or about the lodges may be more or less unwelcome to the mother beaver during the time when she is rearing her young; whether they represent unmated individuals of either sex; or whether indeed they may be referable to any particular class of individuals, I cannot say. However, a specimen which I once trapped in one of these forms was a male.

All of the forms that I have seen were more or less shallow depressions in the ground, roughly oval in outline. One such form, which was occupied by a very large beaver, was situated on a muddy bank under some overhanging alders. It was approximately twenty inches in its greatest length and two inches in depth, and was littered with small chips or shredded wood. Another was in a natural depression between two slightly projecting slabs of rock and contained a rather scant bedding of dry twigs and grass. In dry situations I have seen them without litter of any kind, merely shallow depressions in the bare earth.

In most instances the forms were situated close to the edge of the bank, a couple of feet or such a matter, so that the animal could quickly reach the water.