Case studies

The Case Study pages of each chapter provide examples of how different species adapt the nest type to their specific habitat and requirements. The key characteristics of their nest type are described alongside general information on the species, and details of nest location, building techniques, and materials. Nests are primarily built to rear young rather than as permanent homes, so there are also notes on courtship and mating, monitoring of eggs, and care for the young. Some case studies also feature step-by-step illustrations highlighting a bird’s distinctive architectural behavior and building techniques.

The book also features those birds that have a nest site but do not construct a nest; for instance, the White Tern (Gygis alba) lays a single egg in a crack on a horizontal branch or rocky ledge. Finally, there are those species that build structures other than nests. A book on avian architecture would be incomplete without the ornate constructions of the bowerbirds of Australia and New Guinea.

African Masked-Weaver

The African Masked-Weaver (Ploceus velatus) exhibits one of the most intricate nest-building techniques.