THE AUDUBON POCKET GUIDE TO FAMILIAR MAMMALS DESCRIBES THE EASTERN WOODRAT

Jean Pearson
Trumpeter
Or pack rat, who gathers scraps of metal — buckles and spoons, cartridges and coins — to adorn her nest. Her five-fingered hindpaws are shaped like human hands. A true peddler, she'll quickly trade a mislaid wrist watch for an old wedding band. She often leaves a cherished prize behind in exchange for her latest find. "Not due to honesty," the guide proclaims, but because she just can't carry many things. I think about the origin of honesty. It’s good to live with warm, simple hands that can’t take more than they can hold.