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THE AUDUBON POCKET GUIDE TO FAMILIAR MAM-
MALS DESCRIBES THE EASTERN WOODRAT

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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.

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