

Upon my arrival on February 3 three hawks were on the roost and two off at a distance on fence posts. One by one, they deserted the roost and congregated in trees near a farm house about a third of a mile away. When I left there were seven hawks on the new roost and one still hunting over the fields. On February 14, the day after the worst glaze-ice storm in 15 years in the Chicago region, I stopped at the hawk roost and found one hawk in the trees and a pile of broken branches on the ground beneath. I imagine the previous night must have been very bad for them with branches breaking off around them and perhaps from under them. Thereafter the roost was deserted.

I obtained from beneath the roost three large, irregularly shaped pellets and four smaller ones similar to those of the Long-eared Owl. These were wrapped in fur, with the exception of one of the largest ones which was twice the size of the others. The pellets, as analyzed by William H. Stickel of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, consisted chiefly of hair and bones of meadow mice, *Microtus pennsylvanicus*. The largest pellet consisted of a piece of cotton wadding, a small piece of thread, a fragment of yellow leg skin and some bones (these may have come from a chicken leg), fragments of corn, corn cob, oats, barley, and caraway seeds; also some grass and other vegetable matter. The supposition is that these materials were ingested as carrion.—F. J. FREEMAN, *Itasca, Illinois*.

Food of a Family of Great Horned Owls, *Bubo virginianus*, in Florida.—On the Welaka Game Reserve, Messers. William McLane, Joseph Moore, and Paul Pearson found a nest of Great Horned Owls. A nestling bird about four weeks old was removed from the nest and tethered to a nearby tree on January 16, 1949, on which date nest scraps and whole pellets were collected. At intervals, pellets were collected from the young bird and some were gathered in the near vicinity. On

PREY ITEMS OF THE GREAT HORNED OWL IN FLORIDA

<i>Species</i>	<i>Pellets</i>	<i>Minimum no. individuals</i>
Common Mole, <i>Scalopus aquaticus</i>	1	1
Little Brown Bat, <i>Myotis austroriparius</i>	1	1
Rabbit, <i>Sylvilagus</i> sp.	8	3
Pocket Gopher, <i>Geomys tuza</i>	5	4
Cotton Rat, <i>Sigmodon hispidus</i>	5	5
Pied-billed Grebe, <i>Podilymbus podiceps</i>	1*	2
Least Bittern, <i>Ixobrychus exilis</i>	1	1
Greater Scaup, <i>Aythya marila</i>	4	2
Lesser Scaup, <i>Aythya affinis</i>	9	5
Florida Gallinule, <i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	2*	3
American Coot, <i>Fulica americana</i>	55*	26
Flicker, <i>Colaptes auratus</i>	*	1
Robin, <i>Turdus migratorius</i>	1	1
Snake, undetermined	4	2
Lizard, undetermined	1	1
Grasshopper, <i>Schistocerca</i> sp.	1	1
Grasshopper, <i>Stilpnochlora coulonia</i>	1	1

* Fragments of prey also found in nest.

April 25, 100 days later, the four-month-old owl broke loose. Eighty-eight pellets had been accumulated, 24 from adult birds.

The nest tree was situated in a flatwoods comprised of turkey oak and long leaf pine. This area and the mammals therein are described by Moore (Journ. Mamm., 27: 49-59, 1946). Less than a quarter-mile to the northeast is a flatwoods pond upon which a large population of Coot (*Fulica americana*), Florida Gallinule (*Galinula chloropus*), and Lesser Scaup (*Aythya affinis*) resided during the winter and early spring. Directly westward are two other smaller ponds at an equal distance. The St. Johns River flows about one mile from the nest tree. The state fish hatchery ponds lie between the river and the nest. These latter are frequented by many species of water-fowl. These thickly populated habitats were well within the daily foraging radius of this owl, as mentioned by Errington (Condor, 34: 75-86, 1932). The only human dwellings in the locality were adjacent to the hatchery ponds.

A qualitative analysis of each pellet was made to determine the animals preyed upon, and which of these formed the most numerous item of the owl's diet. Eight species of birds were taken and five or six mammals (*Sylvilagus* identified to genus only). Reptiles formed a part of the adult food. Two snakes and one lizard were found but could not be identified from the occasional vertebrae present in the pellet remains. The grasshoppers were probably caught by the tethered bird and formed but a minor component of the diet.

I wish to express my appreciation to Dr. Pierce Brodkorb, Dr. H. B. Sherman, Dr. Irving J. Cantrall, and Mr. Paul Pearson for aid in the identification of the prey species.—BARTLEY J. BURNS, *Department of Biology, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida.*

Blue Jay, *Cyanocitta cristata*, "Anting" with Burning Cigarettes.—A fledgling Blue Jay, brought alive to the Dallas Museum of Natural History in late May of 1949, was kept captive until its death some six months later. During this period the bird was not confined in a cage, but was given the freedom of a large workroom where it quickly became an entertaining if somewhat "mischievous" pet.

The bird early evinced—as opportunity was afforded it—the unusual behavior trait of dressing the feathers of its wings with the lighted and still burning tip of a cigarette. McAtee (Auk, 55: 98-105, 1938) in his summary of the subject of "Anting" has classified recorded observations of birds dressing their plumage with various animate and inanimate objects other than ants, as "Cognate (?) phenomena, not anting."; under this heading he cites an observation by Heinroth (Journ. für. Orn., 59: 172, 1911) in which a tame Magpie "eagerly rubbed its feathers with cigar stumps." As it is not specified that the cigar stumps were lighted and burning, the inference is that they were not.

In the present instance, the bird showed no particular interest in an unlighted cigarette other than occasionally to tear one apart, as it also would other comparable objects; but if a lighted one were left unguarded within its reach or purposely tossed to it on the floor, almost invariably its responses were immediate and positive. It would swoop down and seize the cigarette, which, if the "butt" were a short one, would be taken lengthwise in the bill by the unlighted end. If it were long, it would be held diagonally, with the lighted end away from the bird. Then, partially elevating and carrying forward the wings, the jay would bend its head and with rapidity and vigor rub the burning tip of the cigarette alternately along the under surface of the primaries of first one wing and then the other. In the meantime, it would squat on the length of the tarsi with the tail brought forward and to one side, in which position it appeared to be more or less sitting on its tail. The intensity of the