

In nearby areas, some chimneys without active nests attracted roosting flocks of up to 300 Chimney Swifts during the 1977 breeding season. In New York, James (1950) reported large flocks of swifts still roosting in the spring after breeding swifts had paired off, but we found no other records of large mid-summer swift roosts.

## LITERATURE CITED

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**Privet as a Potential Winter Food Supplement for Songbirds.**—Privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*) hedges are common throughout the eastern United States, especially along southeastern stream and river bottoms. This plant is a prolific fruit-producer; however, food habit investigations have generally provided little evidence that the fruits of this plant are of value to wildlife.

Privet comprises a large percentage of the winter diet of some fur-bearing animals. Johnson (*Agric. Exp. Sta. Bull.* 402, 148 p., 1970) reported that privet makes up as much as 60% of the total diet of Raccoons (*Procyon lotor*) in Alabama during November and December. Bird utilization of this plant has not been mentioned in many studies. Martin et al. ("American Wildlife and Plants," 500 p., 1951) reported that privet comprised ½ to 2% of the diet in Bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*), Eastern Bluebirds (*Sialia sialis*) in Maryland, and the Tree Sparrows (*Spizella arborea*) in Maryland; 5 to 10% of the diet of Cedar Waxwings (*Bombycilla cedrorum*) in the southeast and northeast was privet. No other study could be found showing any appreciable utilization of privet by songbirds.

Two small hedges of privet (approximately 0.25 ha) were isolated for observation during late January and early February (1977) for songbird utilization. One hedge was located on the Oconee River in Greene County, the other was located along a tributary of the Oconee River in Clarke County, Georgia. Temperatures during this period were on the average sub-freezing.

A total of 124 individuals of seven species were observed feeding on the fruits of privet during two hours of observation over a three-week period (Table 1). There was a total of 2,362 bird-minutes of use during this period of observation. American Robins were the largest birds eating the fruit. Large numbers of robins could be heard feeding among other hedge rows on adjacent areas. Cedar Waxwings and White-throated Sparrows were also seen feeding on large quantities of fruit. Two Gray Catbirds seen feeding on the privet comprised an unusual record for this area during the winter according to Burleigh ("Georgia Birds," 1958).

A total of 131 bird fecal samples were collected from under one privet shrub and all were found to contain remains of partly digested privet fruits. In addition to fecal analyses, eight road-killed robins were collected from three counties and their digestive tracts examined. The results are shown in Table 2; seven of the eight specimens contained between 85 and 100% privet by volume. One specimen contained 68 privet seeds in the digestive tract.

TABLE 1.  
Songbird utilization of privet.

Species	Frequency	Total min use	Percent of total min use
American Robin ( <i>Turdus migratorius</i> )	73	1,631	69.1
Hermit Thrush ( <i>Catharus guttata</i> )	13	95	4.0
Cedar Waxwing ( <i>Bombycilla cedrorum</i> )	20	200	8.4
Purple Finch ( <i>Carpodacus purpureus</i> )	4	40	1.7
White-throated Sparrow ( <i>Zonotrichia albicollis</i> )	11	385	16.2
Gray Catbird ( <i>Dumetella carolinensis</i> )	2	6	0.3
Mockingbird ( <i>Mimus polyglottos</i> )	1	5	0.3
Total	124	2,362	100.0

TABLE 2.  
Digestive tract analysis of eight Road-killed robins.

Specimen	No. privet seeds	Percent (estimate) volume
1 <sup>1</sup>	31	99
2 <sup>2</sup>	38	85
3 <sup>3</sup>	17	100
4 <sup>2</sup>	68	100
5 <sup>1</sup>	31	100
6 <sup>1</sup>	13	95
7 <sup>1</sup>	18	100
8 <sup>1</sup>	0	0

<sup>1</sup> Oconee County, GA.<sup>2</sup> Athens, Clarke County, GA.<sup>3</sup> Oconee National Forest, Greene County, GA.

From these findings it appears that privet may play a more important role in songbird food habits than previously reported. Privet might have the potential for an important supplemental food in some species during periods of severe cold when other foods are scarce.—ROBERT L. LOCHMILLER, *Department of Fish and Wildlife, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, VA 24061*. Received 17 January 1978, accepted 4 April 1978.