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#### GREAT HORNED OWL NESTING IN MONK PARAKEET COLONY IN SUBURBAN CONNECTICUT

The Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*) is one of the most widespread and successful of North American birds of prey. Throughout its range, it nests in an extremely wide variety of habitats, ranging from desert cacti in the Southwest to forests of the Northeast. Excepting only the Eastern Screech Owl (*Otus asio*), the Great Horned Owl may also be the raptor most tolerant and adaptable to human modified habitats; it has been recorded nesting in a variety of urban and suburban open space habitats, where it usually appropriates nests of crows or squirrels or, less frequently, large cavities in trees (K.H. Voous 1988, *Owls of the Northern Hemisphere*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA).

We report on the nesting of a Great Horned Owl in a Monk Parakeet (*Myiopsitta monachus*) colony in a residential suburb of Bridgeport, Connecticut. This Monk Parakeet colony has existed since the mid-1970s and was, until recently, unique to this site in the state. The colony typically included 90 or more birds and 35–40 active nests at any one time, all constructed in a single ornamental fir (*Abies* sp.) about 19 m tall, in a suburban yard.

The Great Horned Owls used the top of the largest Monk Parakeet nest located along a branch 15.2–15.4 m high. The nest was about 1.8 m in length, 0.6–0.9 m in width and 0.9 m deep. It housed seven pairs of nesting Monk Parakeets, which entered from the bottom or sides. A single Great Horned Owl nestling was first observed in mid-April. It fledged on or about 17 May. Backdating (Anderson and Hickey 1970, *Wilson Bull.* 82:14–28), suggests that the egg deposition was in mid-February and hatching occurred in late March. One adult owl typically roosted in the tree, usually close against the bole and overlooking the nest. The second adult sometimes roosted in a small line of White Pines (*Pinus alba*) about 90 m away. After fledging, both young and adult continued to roost in the nest site tree, always close to the trunk and well within the canopy at heights of 15.2–18.3 m.

Pellets and prey fragments collected from beneath the nest site tree yielded the remains of 22 prey individuals belonging to four species. Of these, 17 (77.3%) were the Norway Rat (*Rattus norvegicus*), 1 (4.5%) an Eastern Cottontail (*Sylvilagus floridanus*) and 2 (9.1%) each were of Eastern Chipmunk (*Tamias striatus*) and Gray Squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*). Observations indicated that the Great Horned Owls were taking Norway rats from a small estuary located about 0.5 kilometers from the nest site. The other prey species suggest that the adult owls also sometimes foraged along the lawns.

Although several piles of Monk Parakeet feathers were found beneath the nest site none were found in pellets. However, we did observe the nestling scurrying along a branch toward a parakeet that had landed about 1.5 m away while the adult female watched. Neither it nor the nearby adult were able to capture the parakeet, which flew off as the juvenile owl approached.—**Arnold Devine, Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Hartford, CT 06510; Dwight G. Smith, Biology Department, Southern Connecticut State University, New Haven, CT 06515.**

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#### RENESTING OF MEXICAN SPOTTED OWL IN SOUTHERN NEW MEXICO

Renesting in the wild by Mexican Spotted Owls (*Strix occidentalis lucida*) has not been documented previously. E.D. Forsman et al. (1984, *Wildl. Monogr.* 87:33) stated that a captive Spotted Owl laid two sets of eggs in two different years, but they made no mention of this occurring in the wild.

We report renesting of a pair of Mexican Spotted Owls in the Lincoln National Forest in southern New Mexico. This pair was included in a study of four mated pairs and one female of a mated pair that were fitted with back-pack radiotransmitters in October 1990. Monitored pairs began roosting together in February 1991 and began nesting in March.

We visited the nest sites at least twice per week to check for young after females were thought to be with eggs. On 3 and 4 May, a single, approximately 10 cm tall owlet was dead at the base of the nest tree of one of the pairs. The

owlet was about 1 wk old. Backdating from the date when this owlet was found, the first clutch of this female was laid during the last week of March or the first week of April. After the owlet died, the female remained on the nest until 20 May. She was also observed roosting within 1–200 m of the male in the vicinity of the original nest on 10, 12, and 19 May.

On 26 May, the female which had lost her young was sitting on another nest in a tree about 100 m farther up the canyon than the first nest tree. During daylight hours on 6 July, she was partially erect on the edge of the nest in a position that was clearly visible from the ground. Prior to this date, it had been difficult to see the incubating female from ground level. Based on her more vertical position on the nest we think that the second clutch of egg(s) hatched immediately before 6 July. On 13 July, an owlet was on the edge of the nest. On 16 July, the partially eaten remains of the female and an owlet were on the ground near the nest tree. Entrails had been removed from the female. A foot was all that remained of the owlet on the ground. Within the nest, we found a portion of the owlet's beak and the female's wing.—**K.W. Kroel and P.J. Zwank, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, New Mexico Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM 88003.**

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#### AMERICAN KESTREL COMPLETES CLUTCH FOLLOWING MOVEMENT OF ITS NEST BOX

Compared with many other raptors, American Kestrels (*Falco sparverius*) are quite tolerant of disturbance during incubation (P.H. Bloom and S.J. Hawks 1983, *Raptor Res.* 17:9–14; T.J. Wilmers et al. 1985, *N. Am. Bird Bander* 10:6–8). Even so, daily disturbance usually causes nest desertion (J.A. Gessaman and P.R. Findell 1979, *Comp Biochem. Physiol.* 63A:57–62). The contents of kestrel nests have been removed and placed in metabolism chambers during incubation (Gessaman and Findell 1979), but I am not aware of any published reports where kestrels continued to incubate eggs that had been moved to a different location. Here I report such an event.

The nest box was initially located in a dead maple (*Acer* sp.) 3 m above the ground in southwest Wood County, Ohio. On 3 May 1992, the nest box, containing two eggs (R. Wensick pers. comm.), was removed from the tree and placed upright on the ground 3 m away. The tree was then felled and cut into pieces. I learned about the situation on 5 May and checked the box at 1205 H, discovering the male incubating four eggs. At 1435 H that same afternoon, the female was incubating the eggs. Fearing that the nest would succumb to mammalian predation if left on the ground, at 1515 H I secured the box to a steel fence post 1 m above the ground and 10 m from where the nest tree had been. At the time, the female was perched on a utility wire 100 m away. At 1620 H, I observed the nest box from a distance of 0.5 km with a spotting scope. The female was then perched on a utility wire 10 m away. At 1628 H, she flew to the box, hovered at the entrance for several seconds, then flew to the cut up nest tree and circled around the pieces of the tree for 2 min. At 1630 H, she flew to the box and entered it. She was still in the box when I left 15 min later. During the evening of 5 May the remains of the nest tree were removed and the stump burned. I observed the nest from 1122–1142 H at a distance of 0.5 km on 6 May. I noticed no activity in the vicinity of the box, but observed a pair of kestrels copulating near a nest box located 1 km to the east, suggesting that the pair had deserted and moved to a new nest site. The translocated nest box contained five cold eggs when checked at 1050 H on 10 May. The pair was again observed 1 km to the east.

Thus, after the nest tree was felled, three eggs were laid: two while the box was on the ground and one after it was placed on the fence post. Incubation was observed, and probably initiated, while the box lay on the ground. Incubation normally commences when the fourth egg is laid in a five egg clutch (R.D. Porter and S.I. Wiemeyer 1972, *Condor* 74:46–53).

These observations show that this pair of kestrels continued to use their nest after it was relocated a short distance away at a lower height. This suggests that kestrel nests may be successfully relocated, if disturbance can be kept to a minimum following relocation.

I thank Richard Wensick for providing the fence post and other materials needed to elevate the nest box, for alerting me that the nest tree had been removed, and for providing information on the date and nest contents when the tree was felled. This, and other nest boxes, were constructed using funds provided by a Paul A. Stewart Award from the Inland Bird Banding Association.—**Thomas W. Carpenter, Department of Biological Sciences, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH 43403-0212.**