

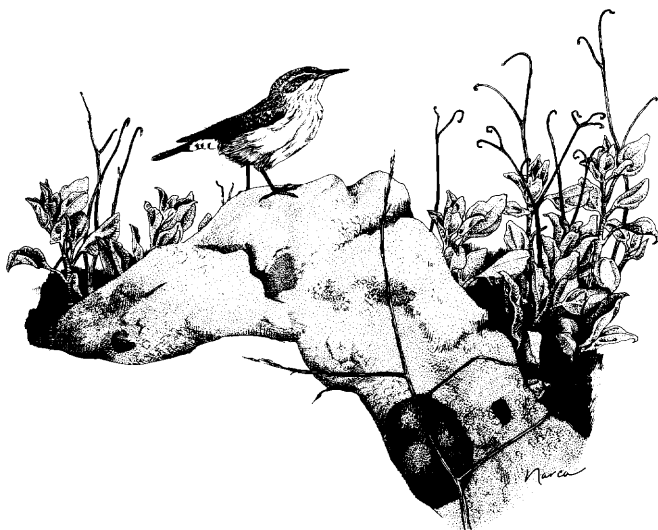
## NOCTURNAL FORAGING OF THE ROCK WREN UNDER ARTIFICIAL ILLUMINATION

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Shortly after midnight on the morning of 8 August 1980 at the Sunset Roadside Rest Area along Interstate Highway 17 between Phoenix and Flagstaff, Arizona (in Yavapai County), I observed a Rock Wren (*Salpinctes obsoletus*) feeding in an artificially lighted area. The wren was moving about on the ground near a building and was relatively tame, allowing me to stand about 20 feet away as it captured a moth fluttering on the ground. Several dead moths on the ground had apparently been attracted to the light on an outside building wall. The Rock Wren grabbed the live moth with its bill, shook it and beat it on the ground a few times and then swallowed it. While I watched the bird for a few minutes it captured and ate about six live moths in this manner. In two cases the bird flew to a nearby low retaining wall where it beat the moths before swallowing them. I observed this feeding activity until the bird was scared away by the passage of another person.

There are apparently few published examples of passerine birds feeding at night, even under artificial illumination (Broun, Auk 88:924-925, 1971; Sick and Teixeira, Auk 98:191-192, 1981). The observation reported here is yet another example of a species' ability to take advantage of locally abundant and easily obtained food, and one of but a few examples of the use of artificial illumination to extend the time available for foraging.

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Rock Wren

Sketch by Narca Moore