

peculiar species pattern of incidence. There are numerous reports of the hoary bat (*Lasiurus cinereus*) and especially the red bat (*Lasiurus borealis*) being impaled on barbs of usually the top strand of a wire fence. Other than the lasiurine bats, an Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) and a little brown bat (*M. lucifugus*) were reported impaled on barbs of the top strand of wire also. Impalement usually involved the piercing of the wing or interfemoral membranes.

This seems to question the effective detection of these structures by the echolocation system of the lasiurine bats as compared with other bats. Similarly, with future reporting of these occurrences in owls, incidences of species and number should be noted. Possibly, there are also varying degrees of efficiency within different owl species for avoiding wire structures that man utilizes in the environment.

I thank Drs. Millicent Ficken and Charles Weise for reviewing this note.—TIMOTHY McCARTHY, *Vertebrate Division, Milwaukee Public Museum, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53233, 23 March 1973.*

**Great Horned Owl impaled on barbed wire.**—During the summer of 1972 I installed a barbed-wire fence along the south boundary of our 12½ acre property. On my regular morning walk on 20 February 1973 I found a Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*) impaled by its left wing on the top wire. Close examination indicated that it had caught a barb in the skin and feathers at the base of its left wing. This, apparently, caused the bird to flip over the top wire and become firmly hanged by the four barbs projecting from that point in the wire. The wing bone was broken and the wing was severed, except for a bit of skin. The bird was still alive.

Cornwell and Hochbaum (*Wilson Bull.*, 83:305–306, 1971) reported a large number of birds, particularly waterfowl, striking telephone and power lines, fences, and buildings. Barbed wire fences in the vicinity of marshes seem to be a particular hazard to water-loving birds.

This Horned Owl was a full grown male (testes 10 mm × 14 mm) seemingly in good health.—RALPH M. EDEBURN, *Box 42, R. D. 1, Mercer, Pennsylvania 16137, 23 March 1973.*

**An observation of predation by native fire ants on nestling Barn Swallows.**—During the period 26 May–4 August 1972 we studied nesting success of Barn Swallows (*Hirundo rustica*) inhabiting culverts in Brazos County, Texas. On 14 July we observed a column of about 5,000 native fire ants (*Solenopsis geminata*) attacking a Barn Swallow nest containing three newly-hatched nestlings and one unpipped egg. The nest was located 1.70 m above the ground and 4.35 m equidistant from the culvert openings.

By stinging and biting away small pieces of tissue, the ants killed the nestlings and carried away their bodies, except for the heads which were left uneaten in the nest. The egg was not attacked. The adult swallows deserted the nest, and the egg, which contained a fully developed, viable embryo, failed to hatch.

We observed more than 25 other swallow nests during this period; however, we saw no further predation by fire ants. The observed attack by ants occurred shortly after the water beneath the nest dried up, whereas the other nests were located over water throughout the study. Apparently, absence of water permitted attack by the fire ants.

Recently, there has been considerable discussion concerning the impact of imported fire ant predation on nestling birds (see Coon and Fleet, *Environment*, 12(10):28–38, 1971). There are no published records of predation by native fire ants on avian species