

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

to date. Because our observation suggests that nestling birds have long been preyed upon by native fire ants, care must be exercised in evaluating fire ant predation reports so that overemphasis on the effects of predation by imported fire ants does not result from confusion with predation by native fire ants.

We thank Drs. D. R. Clark and W. J. Clark for their critical comments on the manuscript. This is contribution No. TA 10383 of the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station.—JAMES C. KROLL, *School of Forestry, Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, Texas 75961*, KEITH A. ARNOLD, *Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Science, Texas A&M University, College Station, 77843*, AND ROBERT F. GOTIE, *New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Watertown, New York 13601, 12 March 1973*.

**The Rock Wren in Missouri.**—Neither Widmann (A preliminary catalog of the birds of Missouri, *Trans. Acad. Sci. St. Louis*, 17:1-288, 1907) nor Harris (Birds of the Kansas City Region, *Trans. Acad. Sci. St. Louis*, 23:213-371, 1919) mention the Rock Wren (*Salpinctes obsoletus*) for Missouri, but Bennitt (Checklist of the birds of Missouri, *Univ. Missouri Studies*, 7:48, 1932) lists the species as hypothetical. The first record for the state was on 4 November 1950 when the senior author studied for two hours a Rock Wren at Lake of the Ozarks, 10 miles south of Gravois Mills, Morgan County, Missouri. The bird was observed for several weeks around a board pile and a rock foundation of an incompletely constructed cabin in an abandoned field. At that date Easterla (12 years old) did not know the identity of the bird, but was aware that it was new and definitely not in Peterson's Eastern Field Guide. The senior author still has in his notebook a carefully drawn Rock Wren (drawn at that time) with an exact description of the species. It was not until later that the true identity of this bird was learned after a Peterson's Western Field Guide was consulted. Several years later it was learned that a Mrs. Earl M. Johnson, Sedalia, Missouri, had observed and heard calling and/or singing during a two week period a Rock Wren (presumably the same bird) at this same location during November 1950.

On 16 July 1964 John and Julie Hamilton observed for about seven minutes a singing adult Rock Wren near the Missouri River bluffs of northwest St. Joseph, Buchanan County, Missouri. Whether this bird was breeding is unknown, as it could not be found on later dates (pers. comm.). On 23 January 1966, Nathan Fay, Dr. and Mrs. James Key, and Dr. and Mrs. Allen studied a Rock Wren for several hours on a rocky barren slope near the shore of Bull Shoals Lake, near Cedar creek, Taney County, Missouri (pers. comm.).

During a study of tower fatalities, Ball found a dead Rock Wren on 5 October 1972 at the base of a Radio Tower on the N side of the Northwest Missouri State University campus, Maryville, Nodaway County, Missouri. The bird was fresh and had been killed the previous night. This is the first specimen (juvenile male; testes less than 1 mm; 17.2 gms; little fat) for Missouri. It was preserved as a museum skin (DAE 2691) and is at Northwest Missouri State University.

The Rock Wren should occur sparingly in Missouri during migration, as it is a common transient and summer resident in western Nebraska (rare migrant in the eastern part) and western Kansas (Rapp, Rapp, Baumgarten and Moser, Revised check-list of Nebraska birds, *Nebraska Ornithol. Union*, No. 5, p. 21, 1958; Johnston, Directory to the bird-life of Kansas, *Mus. Nat. Hist., Univ. Kansas, Misc. Publ.* 23, p. 43, 1960) and has been recorded once (spring) in Illinois (Smith and Parmalee, A distributional check list of the birds of Illinois, *Illinois State Mus., Series 4*, p. 44, 1955), twice (spring) in Arkansas