

Leucistic Barn Swallow, *Hirundo rustica*Edward D. Fingerhood[†][†]*Deceased; 6 December 1998**[Edited and published posthumously]*

On 4 July 1985, while working a breeding bird atlas block about 1 mi (1.6 km) south of the Maryland/Pennsylvania line on Pleasant Grove Road in Cecil County, Maryland, I observed a leucistic immature Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*). The bird was perched on a dead snag with four immature and two adult Barn Swallows, and one Tree Swallow (*Tachycineta bicolor*), all normally plumaged.

The leucistic Barn Swallow had light tan upperparts from the crown through the tail, except for a cream-colored bar on the coverts between the scapulars and the secondaries. The underparts were cream-colored. The bill was horn-colored. I could not see the leg color. Only the eyes of the bird were dark.

Terres (1980) reported albino and leucistic Barn Swallows being chased by other Barn Swallows whenever they flew. There was no evidence of this behavior in the few moments that I saw the birds in flight. While perched, the leucistic bird made occasional begging movements toward one of the adult Barn Swallows. The adult did not feed the begging bird.

I watched the bird from 12:25 to 12:30 p.m. under excellent light conditions. The distance was approximately 50 ft (15 m). I was using a 10x50 Leitz binocular. I took field notes on the spot.

After five minutes, an unidentified high-pitched alarm note scattered the entire group of swallows. A few returned to the perch during the next ten minutes, but the leucistic bird was not seen again.

LITERATURE CITED

- Terres, J.K. 1980. *The Audubon Society Encyclopedia of North American Birds*. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, NY. 1109 pp.