

during that time. He mentioned that he had observed a similar concentration of nighthawks near a ranch at Reynolds Creek, 14 miles southwest of Walters Ferry, at an elevation of approximately 4000 feet.

During the time of our stay in Idaho, the females must have been brooding the young since no immature birds were seen. During feeding flights observed at Glens Ferry, Hagerman, and Mountain Home, females began flying late in the evening after the males had been feeding for some time. Late flying is seemingly a characteristic behavior of incubating and brooding females (Higgins, unpublished Master's Thesis, Univ. Utah, 1948:21; Rust, *op. cit.*: 185).

Another "cock roost" was found on July 31 at Buhl, Twin Falls County, Idaho, where a group of about 50 males was roosting in a large pile of dead trees. We were first attracted to this roost by seeing a few birds flying over the area at 1:00 p.m. In this case also, the birds were silent and seemed reluctant to leave the roost when disturbed. Six males collected had testes averaging 5 mm. in length.

Selander observed a group of 10 to 15 nighthawks (sex not noted) roosting in a cottonwood tree near Utah Lake, Utah County, Utah, on June 26, 1944, and again on August 11 of the same year. During the past few years, we have seen numerous small groups of these birds perched on telephone poles and fences in various parts of northern Utah.

In desert areas where trees or other such roosting sites are not available, it has been our experience that the birds do not congregate in large roosting flocks. In such regions, nighthawks generally feed in small groups and at sunset have been observed to fly low over the ground and scatter before alighting to roost for the night.

Our information suggests that, at least for western interior populations of *Chordeiles minor*, the establishment of "cock roosts" is a normal behavior pattern. In areas of dense nighthawk populations where a minimum of elevated roosting locations is available, large concentrations occur, but even in thickly wooded places the males sometimes exhibit a propensity for gregarious roosting.

Unfortunately, we were unable to remain at Walters Ferry or Buhl and thus definitely determine the relationship of the roosting males with the nesting females. The presence of females in one of the flocks indicates that birds of that sex not occupied with nesting activities may join the male aggregations. As shown above, the males collected were in breeding condition. There is the possibility that the flocks were composed largely of birds which had failed to find mates earlier in the year. Rust (*op. cit.*: 177-178) mentioned males which apparently were unable to find mates in the spring and continued mating behavior until mid-summer. He observed that, after mating, "the female invariably selects the nesting area . . ." and ". . . the male selects a roost in a near-by tree." However, in view of the large numbers of males comprising the flocks we have observed, we are inclined to believe that "cock roosts" are, in the main, composed of attached, breeding birds, although non-breeding individuals of both sexes may be present in these gatherings.—ROBERT K. SELANDER, *Department of Biology, University of Utah*, and SHERMAN J. PREECE, JR., *Department of Botany, State College of Washington, February 23, 1951*.

A Fatal Meal for a Young Robin.—During the spring of 1950 a pair of Robins (*Turdus migratorius*) nested on a brace under the cornice of my home in Portland, Oregon. A brood of four young left the nest on May 19. While working in my garden the next morning I was attracted by a weak and muffled call of a young bird in nearby thick vegetation. Investigation soon resulted in finding a young Robin. Protruding from its bill was about five inches of thick cotton cord. A quantity of fresh blood was on its bill and extended about two inches down the cord. I tried gently to remove the cord from the bird's mouth and throat but found it so firmly lodged that I gave up the effort. Placing the bird in a sheltered spot I awaited developments. In about two hours I found the bird dead. A post mortem examination was performed in which the cord was found to be 22 inches in length. The walls of the stomach were much extended and showed two ruptures and the body cavity held a quantity of blood. Due to moisture in the throat and stomach the cord had swollen to nearly twice its size as shown after being washed and dried.

I have seen adult Robins kill and carry off garter snakes eight or ten inches in length. Did this young Robin think the 22 inches of cord was a giant angle worm or a snake?—STANLEY G. JEWETT, *Portland, Oregon, January 8, 1951*.