

Food habits were first studied from this pit in 1953 (Reed, J. Mammal., 38:135-136, 1957). Students in mammalogy classes at Colorado State University studied foods of Barn Owls using the pit from 1961 to 1964 and in 1966 (unpublished), and I collected and analyzed pellets from 1967 to 1970. During the last four years of the study, Barn Owls were present from March to November but most activity occurred from May to August. No information on times of occupancy is available prior to 1967.

Mammals in the genera *Peromyscus*, *Microtus* and *Reithrodontomys* formed the principal portion of the diet. Non-mammalian prey consisted entirely of birds. Complete prey lists are found in Table 1.

This study was completed while I was an NSF Trainee at Colorado State University.—CARL D. MARTI, *Department of Zoology, Weber State College, Ogden, Utah 84403, 27 June 1972.*

First record of the Ovenbird in Trinidad, West Indies.—During routine bird-bleeding and banding operations in conjunction with arbovirus studies in Trinidad, a male Ovenbird (*Seiurus aurocapillus*) was caught in a mist net on 19 January 1971, in a secondary tropical forest at Waller Field, Trinidad, West Indies. Meyer de Schauensee (*The species of birds of South America and their distribution, 1966*) states that the Ovenbird winters from the southern United States southward through Mexico and Central America to Colombia, and northern Venezuela, and to the Greater and Lesser Antilles. This bird has not been recorded, heretofore, from Trinidad, but two individuals were recorded by J. J. Dinsmore on neighboring Little Tobago Island in November 1966 and March 1967, the first being banded and released (J. J. Dinsmore, unpubl. M.S. thesis, Univ. Wisconsin, 1967). The skin (TRVL 15585) is in the reference collection of the Trinidad Regional Virus Laboratory.—ELISHA S. TIKASINGH, *Trinidad Regional Virus Laboratory, P.O. Box 164, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, West Indies, and RICHARD FFRENCH, St. Peter's School, Texaco Trinidad Inc., Point-a-Pierre, Trinidad, West Indies, 15 May 1972.*

Blackbird nest placement and nesting success.—In a 1971 paper (Francis, Wilson Bull., 83:178-185, 1971) that reviewed eight studies of the nesting success of Red-winged Blackbirds (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) in relation to various environmental factors, I concluded that nest placement with respect to height above ground or water was not significantly related to nesting success. The heterogeneity of the samples on which this finding was based suggested that further study of nest placement, in which as many variables as possible are eliminated, would clarify our understanding of factors affecting the choice of nest location and the relation of placement to nest success.

During May and June 1970, when I was investigating Redwing reproductive phenology in an upland nesting habitat (old-field community) in Erie County, Ohio, 47 nests were found, and examined regularly as long as eggs or nestlings were in the nest. Both the height of the nest above ground and the height of the vegetation were measured to the nearest centimeter. Goldenrod (*Solidago nemoralis*) was the substrate for 31 nests, daisy fleabane (*Erigeron strigosus*) for nine; the remaining seven were located in mustard, clover, thistles, and grasses.

Nests in goldenrod were analyzed for height with respect to vegetation height. Since the plants were growing throughout the period, a regression of plant height on date was computed. Nest completion dates were then estimated by back-dating from the observed laying and hatching dates, and the plant height on the date of nest completion was cal-

culated for each nest. Three nests which failed to hatch were eliminated in the process, leaving a sample of 28 nests in goldenrod, of which 12 successfully fledged young. Comparison of nest height with plant height showed that nests were farther above the ground in taller plants. The distances of the nests below the top of the vegetation were then compared, and found to be essentially the same, averaging 22.6 cm (95 percent confidence limits 20.1 to 25.1 cm). A similar situation occurred in the daisy fleabane, where the nine nests averaged 34 cm below the top of the plants (95 percent confidence limits 30.1 to 37.3 cm). Selection of nest location apparently was independent of the height above ground, but was related to the distance below the top of the vegetative canopy in both plant species.

Although placement of nests was not determined by height above the ground, nest success may be affected by placement. The successful nests were compared with unsuccessful nests (most losses were attributed to predation of eggs and nestlings) with respect to plant height at the time of nest completion, nest height, distance of the nest below the top of the vegetation, date of nest completion, and vegetation type (goldenrod, daisy fleabane, and all others combined). In no case was a significant difference found between successful and unsuccessful nests. The findings substantiate the conclusion cited above.—WILLIAM J. FRANCIS, *U.S. Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, Division of Wildlife Research, Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, P.O. Box 2097, Sandusky, Ohio 44870, 30 May 1972.*

House Finch nests abandoned after snow.—Schroeder's note (Wilson Bull., 84: 98–99, 1972) on the abandonment of nests containing eggs by Vesper Sparrows (*Pooecetes gramineus*) after an unseasonable snow storm in Wyoming prompts me to report a similar incident involving House Finches (*Carpodacus mexicanus*) that I observed at Fort Logan (ca. 10 miles west of Denver), Colorado in 1946. Six nests built in small ornamental evergreens located around the fort's parade ground and living quarters were observed periodically during late April and early May. During the night of 11–12 May several inches of snow with freezing rain fell. The next morning when I examined the nests (three with eggs, three with young, 1–4 days old), the eggs were cold and the young in two nests were dead. Five nestlings in another nest were still alive although cold and feeble. All of the nests appeared abandoned because no alarmed adults called nearby—in contrast to each of my earlier visits. The live nestlings were taken home and successfully hand-reared. Within a day or so after the storm the snow was gone and the finches began renesting in nearby trees.—HERBERT W. KALE II, *Entomological Research Center, P.O. Box 520, Vero Beach, Florida 32960, 21 June 1972.*