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ATYPICAL NESTING SITES OF THE CACTUS WREN

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The cactus wren (*Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*) nests in a variety of spinescent trees and shrubs, e.g., cholla cactus (*Opuntia* sp.), columnar cacti (*Cereus* sp.), acacia (*Acacia* sp.), and mesquite (*Prosopis* sp.), and rarely in other native, non-spinescent vegetation, e.g., mistletoe (*Phoradendron* sp.) and hackberry (*Celtis reticulata*; Bent, 1948; Anderson and Anderson, 1973; Harrison, 1979). Cholla cacti seem to be preferred nest sites throughout much of the range of the species (Selander, 1964; McGee, 1985; Ehrlich et al., 1988; Rea and Weaver, 1990; Farley, personal observation). Bent (1948) suggested that cactus wrens are strongly dependent on native vegetation and are probably absent where native plant species have been eliminated. During more than 30 years of observations of cactus wren, Anderson and Anderson (1973) noted only occasional use of "introduced plants such as palm and olive".

We observed cactus wrens nesting in a variety of non-native and non-spinescent vegetation in Arizona and New Mexico in recent years. On 10 March 1993, 8 kilometers south of Deming, Luna County, New Mexico, we saw six nests in salt cedar (*Tamarix chinensis*), 2.6-5.0 meters tall (Fig. 1). The nests were of typical construction and were 2.0-3.1 meters above ground; the nest opening orientation seemed to be random. On the same day at this site, we also saw a singing male in a Siberian elm (*Ulmus pumila*) near a nest. This nest was also of typical construction and 4.0 meters above ground in the 8.0 meter tall tree. Salt cedar and Siberian elm are common naturalized exotics throughout the desert Southwest and are in small numbers at this locality in an otherwise typical Chihuahuan Desert scrub habitat.

Observations in native, non-spinescent vegetation include the following: an active nest, 3.0 meters above ground, in a 5.0 meter tall desert willow (*Chilopsis linearis*) in Portal, Cochise County, Arizona, on 16 April 1991; a nest, 2.7 meters above ground, in a 3.2 meter tall Mormon tea (*Ephedra trifurca*) in the Florida Mountains, south of Deming, Luna County, New Mexico, on 10 March 1993; three nests (one of which contained a female incubating two eggs), 2.1-3.6 meters above ground, in the inflorescence of 2.6-4.1 meter tall soaptree yuccas (*Yucca elata*) on the San Andres National Wildlife Refuge, Doña Ana County, New Mexico, on 28 July 1993. Two of the yuccas at the refuge also supported abandoned nests

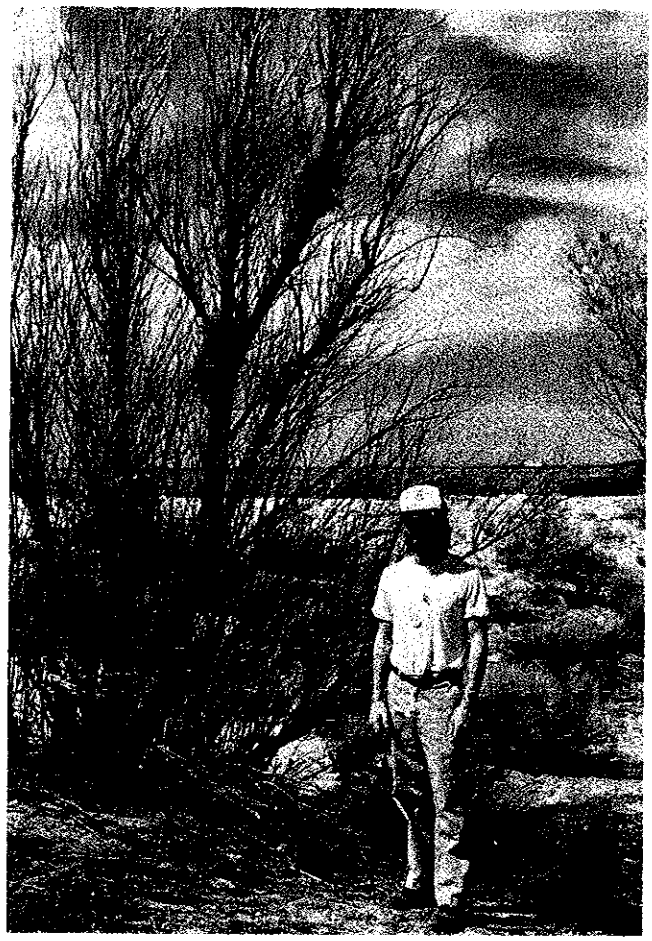

FIGURE 1. Three cactus wren nests in a 4.0 meter tall salt cedar (*Tamarix chinensis*). The uppermost nest appeared to be in use when photographed on 10 March 1993.

within the leaf cluster of the plant, the more typical location of a cactus wren nest in this plant.

We were unable to determine if most of these nests were used solely as nighttime roosting sites or in attempted reproduction. However, our observations indicate that cactus wrens use non-native trees in habitat that is otherwise suitable and are also flexible in their use of native, non-spinescent species. Whether these atypical nest sites are equally suitable locations for breeding is not known.

We thank D. Bleakly, M. Merola, R. Robino, and E. Rockwell for reviewing earlier versions of this note.

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RECORDS OF THREE BAT SPECIES IN SOUTHEAST TEXAS

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During April, June, and December 1993, three species of bats representing distributional records were collected from southeastern Texas. These records include two species previously not reported from Brazos County and a third species representing the first known record of chiropterans from Galveston Island, Galveston County, Texas. The occurrence of the Brazos County individuals coincided with a cold front which moved into the College Station area from the east on 15 April 1993. Previous daytime highs for 12-14 April were in the 20° - 30°C range and nighttime lows in the 10° - 20°C range. But on 15 April the daytime high was 18°C with an overnight low of 7°C. Individuals of both species apparently were affected by the cold front and were forced to seek shelter on the sides of campus buildings. Specimens were deposited in the Texas Cooperative Wildlife Collection, Texas A&M University.

Pipistrellus subflavus subflavus (F. Cuvier, 1832).—On 16 April 1993 an adult female was captured on the Texas A&M University Campus, College Station, Brazos County. Prior to capture, this bat was observed flying near the entrance of the Sterling Evan's Library at approximately 0800 hr. This specimen represents the first record of the eastern pipistrelle in Brazos County. The nearest known locality of record is approximately 48 kilometers to the east in Walker County (Schmidly, 1991).

Subsequently, on 9 December 1993 four additional individuals (three females and one male) were collected in the attic of a house 9.6 kilometers S and 1.6 kilometers W College Station, Brazos County. The occurrence of these bats may suggest the possibility of a resident eastern pipistrelle population in Brazos County.

Lasiurus cinereus (Palisot de Beauvois, 1796).—An adult female hoary bat was captured on the Texas A&M University Campus, College Station, Brazos County, on 16 April 1993. This bat had been observed "roosting" on a brick wall for about 36 hours prior to capture and apparently had entered a state of torpor as a result of the low ambient temperatures. This specimen represents the first record of the hoary bat in Brazos County. The nearest recorded locality is approximately 60 kilometers to the southeast in Montgomery County (Schmidly, 1991).

Lasiurus intermedius floridanus H. Allen, 1862.—On 14 June 1993 an adult female with three pups (two male and one female) and an unrelated male pup were captured near Galveston Fire Station No. 5, 1104 56th Street, Galveston Island, Galveston County. These bats were