

**ABSTRACTS FOR CONDOR 104(1) FEBRUARY 2002 C.E.**

**SHORT COMMUNICATIONS**

**FEEDING OF HOUSE WREN NESTLINGS AFFLICTED BY HEMATOPHAGOUS  
ECTOPARASITES: A TEST OF THE PARENTAL COMPENSATION HYPOTHESIS**  
BRIAN L. MORRISON AND L. SCOTT JOHNSON<sup>1</sup>

*Department of Biology, Towson University, Towson, MD 21252*

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<sup>1</sup>Corresponding author. E-mail: [sjohnson@towson.edu](mailto:sjohnson@towson.edu)

*Abstract.* This study asked whether parent House Wrens (*Troglodytes aedon*) in a Wyoming population increased rates of food delivery to broods parasitized by hematophagous blow fly larvae and mites. We observed no significant difference in rates at which pairs fed nestlings at nests with naturally heavy infestations of fly larvae (6–19 larvae per nestling) and nests in which nestling exposure to larvae was experimentally eliminated or severely reduced (0–2 larvae per nestling). The apparent failure of parents to compensate nestlings for resources lost to parasites may, in part, explain the reduced rates of mass gain by parasitized nestlings that we observed and the presence of reduced hemoglobin levels in parasitized nestlings documented in a companion study. Parasitized nestlings may be too weak or anemic to intensify begging activity which would alert parents to their increased need for food.

*Key words:* bird blow fly, ectoparasitism, House Wren, nestling growth, parental care, *Protocalliphora parorum*, *Troglodytes aedon*.

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