

among raptors, the three species for which between-brood cannibalism has been recorded (Black Kites, Lesser Kestrels and Montagu's Harrier) are colonial or semicolonial. Between-brood cannibalism might therefore be a cost of nest clumping.

We are grateful to J. King for correcting the text, and to Gary Bortolotti and two anonymous referees for improving the manuscript.—**Beatriz E. Arroyo**,¹ **Edward Grey Institute of Field Ornithology, Department of Zoology, University of Oxford, South Parks Road, Oxford OX1 3PS, UK; Jesús T. García, c/o Españolito 5, 28932 Móstoles, Madrid, Spain.**

¹ Present address: CNRS/CEBC, Villiers en Bois, F-79360 France.

J. Raptor Res. 31(4):391

© 1997 The Raptor Research Foundation, Inc.

SCRAP-LUMBER ROOST USED BY BURROWING OWLS (*SPEOTYTO CUNICULARIA*)

Burrowing Owls (*Speotyto cunicularia*) typically use mammal burrows for nesting and roosting. After nesting, they disperse to new areas where suitable roost burrows are available (Haug et al. 1993, *Birds of North America*, No. 61, A. Poole and F. Gill, [Eds.], The American Ornithologists' Union, Philadelphia, PA U.S.A.). The apparent purpose of burrows is for protection from predators and the weather.

As part of a concurrent study of postfledging dispersal in Alberta, Canada, Burrowing Owls were fitted with radio-transmitters south of Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada (50°27'N, 104°37'E). On 20 August 1996, one adult female and two juveniles dispersed from their nest burrow to a new location approximately 800 m to the north. Dispersal of this distance involving the whole family is not uncommon (Haug et al. 1993). The instrumented female was tracked to a field, where she flushed from a haphazard pile of scrap lumber roughly circular in shape (about 1.5 m high × 8 m wide). Adjacent to the lumber pile there were several abandoned cars and trucks. The surrounding habitat included a 1 ha hayfield, 4 ha summer fallow field and 64 ha patch of native pasture where the nest burrow had been located.

On five occasions owls were flushed from the interior of the lumber pile and pellets and feces were also found inside. Once flushed, the owls typically flew less than 50 m to nearby fence posts, some of the cars or they landed on the ground. A search of the area indicated there were no other burrows within 150 m and there were neither feces nor pellets within 300 m of the woodpile. All three owls remained at the lumber pile until 20 September.

Despite the fact that Burrowing Owls nest close to people (Thompson 1971, *Condor* 73:177–192), to my knowledge this is the first record in the Great Plains or Intermountain region of Burrowing Owls using an above-ground, man-made roost. These observations suggest that Burrowing Owls are more flexible in their choice of roosting cavities than has been previously thought.

This study was supported by TransCanada Pipelines Ltd., Interprovincial Pipelines Ltd., Foothills Pipelines Ltd. and TransGas Ltd., in cooperation with Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management, the University of Saskatchewan and Nature Saskatchewan. Thanks to Josef K. Schmutz and Dale A. Smith who reviewed an earlier version of this manuscript, and three reviewers who had many helpful suggestions.—**Douglas A. Grier, Wild Bird Clinic, Ontario Veterinary College, University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario, Canada N1G 2W1.**



Grier, Douglas A. 1997. "Scrap-lumber roost used by Burrowing Owls (*Speotyto cunicularia*).*" The journal of raptor research* 31(4), 391–391.

View This Item Online: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/209110>

Permalink: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/227765>

Holding Institution

Raptor Research Foundation

Sponsored by

IMLS LG-70-15-0138-15

Copyright & Reuse

Copyright Status: In copyright. Digitized with the permission of the rights holder.

Rights Holder: Raptor Research Foundation

License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>

Rights: <https://biodiversitylibrary.org/permissions>

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.