

Univ., Kingsville, TX 78363 (Current address: Univ. of Texas Health Sciences Center, San Antonio, TX 78284) and STEVE MARTINEZ, JR., National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, MD 20205 (Current address: Admiral Joel T. Boone Clinic, Naval Amphib Base, Little Creek, VA 23455).

FLYCATCHING BEHAVIOR BY AMERICAN KESTRELS.—While conducting habitat assessments along the middle Rio Grande in New Mexico on 27 Jul. 1978, we observed two adult American kestrels (*Falco sparverius*) foraging in a manner typical of flycatching birds. Each of the birds made a flight at 1500 h from perches approximately 10 m above the ground in a dead cottonwood (*Populus* sp.) tree over an irrigated alfalfa (*Medicago sativa*) field. Each kestrel captured dragonflies (Anisoptera) approximately 6 m above the ground using its beak and returned to its perch to feed.

Insects commonly make up a large portion of the American kestrel's diet (Heintzelman, Wilson Bull., 76:323-330, 1964; Smith et al., Southwestern Nat., 17:73-83, 1972), but previous observations have been of prey taken at or just above the surface of the ground (Balgooyen, Univ. California Publ. Zool., 103:55, 1976). We know of only two other instances of flycatching (Balgooyen, 1976) or pseudo-flycatching (Locke, Condor, 63:342, 1961) behavior for American kestrels although our limited observations indicate the technique may be quite successful.—LOWELL H. SURING, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 3530 Pan American Highway, N.E., Albuquerque, NM 87107 (Current address: Chippewa National Forest, Rt. 1, Box 25, Cass Lake, MN 56633) and CHARLES J. AULT, Dept. of Fisheries and Wildlife, New Mexico State Univ., Las Cruces, NM 88003.

HABITAT SELECTION BY THE DESERT WOODRAT (*NEOTOMA LEPIDA*) INHABITING A PINYON-JUNIPER WOODLAND IN WESTERN NEVADA.—A variety of ecological characteristics of the desert woodrat (*Neotoma lepida*) has been studied, including food selection (Cameron, J. Mamm., 52:288-296, 1971; Meserve, J. Mamm., 55:442-447, 1974), home ranges (MacMillen, Univ. California Publ. Zool., 71:1-66, 1964; Bleich and Schwartz, J. Mamm., 56:518-519, 1975), house structure (Stones and Hayward, Amer. Midl. Nat., 80:458-476, 1968; Cameron and Rainey, J. Mamm., 53:251-266, 1972), and population trends (MacMillen, 1964; M'Closkey, J. Mamm., 53:657-676, 1972), but little quantitative data is available in the literature concerning habitat selection. Most information about habitat selection by *N. lepida* is based on qualitative observations, often where only a portion of the habitat was investigated. For example, Cameron and Rainey (1972) reported that *N. lepida* preferred crevices and caverns in rock outcrops in pinyon-juniper and Joshua tree woodlands, but other microhabitats were not considered. This note provides quantitative information on habitat selection by *N. lepida lepida* in a pinyon-juniper woodland relative to seven habitat variables measured in the community.

Live trapping was conducted in the Geiger Grade portion of the Virginia Range, about 18 km SE Reno and 10 km NW Virginia City, Storey Co., Nevada. The Geiger Grade area ranges from 1465 to 2135 m in elevation and consists of a woodland community dominated by singleleaf pinyon (*Pinus monophylla*) and Utah juniper (*Juniperus osteosperma*). Between the trees and in the larger open areas 15 to 20 species of shrubs are found. Among the most common of these are low sagebrush (*Artemisia arbuscula*), snakeweed (*Gutierrezia sarothrae*), Mormon tea (*Ephedra viridis*), bitterbrush (*Purshia tridentata*), and big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*). Numerous boulder piles and talus slides, in which small mammals are often abundant, occur throughout the area. (For a complete description of the area see Llewellyn, Unpubl. Ph.D. dissert., Univ. Nevada, Reno, 1977.)

From April 1975 to October 1976, a permanent 1.4 ha plot (elev. 2025 m) was trapped for three successive nights on a biweekly basis using 140 Sherman live traps situated at 10 m intervals in a 140 × 100 m grid. Additional trapping was completed in the plot during August 1975, November and December 1976, and April and May 1977. The traps, baited with dry rolled oats and provided with cotton for insulation during the colder months, were placed in the field at dusk and checked in early morning. All individuals captured were sexed, weighed, checked for reproductive condition, marked by toe-clipping or by removing a small patch of hair from the abdomen, and released at the point of capture. Traps in which a capture was made were washed thoroughly and cleaned before being used again, and all traps were checked for proper working condition as they were placed at the trap stations. During the 26-month period, 134 days of trapping and 19,030 trap nights were completed.

Habitat selection was determined by comparing the distribution of *N. lepida* captures, recorded at 18 trap stations, with the distribution of trap stations in relation to seven habitat variables mea-