

Gray Rat Snakes observed climbing Red-cockaded Woodpecker nesting trees. Renee Roper, a JSU student working on Red-cockaded Woodpeckers (*Dendrocopos borealis*) in the Talladega National Forest, reports that on two occasions she has observed Gray Rat Snakes (*Elaphe spiloides*) climbing Red-cockaded nesting trees in an apparent attempt to prey on the eggs or nestlings. On the first occasion, a snake was seen about six meters (20 feet) high on the trunk of a "dry" tree no longer used by the birds. The snake went into the hole just at nightfall presumably looking for a meal and/or a place to spend the night. In the second case, another gray rat snake was spotted at nightfall about three meters (nine feet) high on the trunk of a longleaf pine (*Pinus palustris*) having in it an active Red-cockaded nest containing young. She was able to pull the snake down by the tail and placed it in a sack for translocation to a new home in her barn. It is questionable whether or not the snake would have made it through the protective area of sticky resin below the hole, but with 25% of this year's reproduction of Red-cockaded Woodpeckers in the TNF at stake, she couldn't take the chance to find out. Only four active colonies totaling 12 adults are presently known over the entire 221,000 acre national forest. *Bill Summerour, Jacksonville State University, Jacksonville, Alabama 36265.*

Barred Owls use nesting box. Clearcutting, shorter cutting cycles, urban sprawl and other land use practices have reduced or eliminated nesting cavities for a number of species including Barred Owls (*Strix varia*). Recognizing this problem, Howard and Larry Smith, two brothers who have a log cabin on Guntersville Lake, designed a box for a pair of Barred Owls whose territory had been invaded by houses and a loss of nesting sites around their lot on the Lake. The two placed the box in a tree behind their cabin and within a few weeks the owls moved in and presumably used the box for roosting or nesting. *Larry Smith, 804 13th Avenue, Jacksonville, AL 36265*

Bluebird killed by House Sparrows. This past spring (1987), a friend related to me that he had for several days noticed House Sparrows attempting to evict bluebirds from a box in his yard. Thinking the House Sparrows (*Passer domesticus*) may have started building a nest in the box, he opened it to remove the nest but instead found a badly injured female bluebird (*Sialia sialis*) slumped over in one corner. He brought the bird to me about an hour later, but by that time it was already dead.

All of the feathers were gone from the top of the bird's head and the skin was bruised and bloodied from a number of puncture wounds in the skull. Both eyes appeared to have been pecked and there were bloody