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First Host Record of *Collyriclum Faba* for the Barn Swallow

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First host record of *Collyriclum faba* for the Barn Swallow



Richard A. Wolinski

While conducting a study of the breeding biology of the Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) near Cohoctah, Livingston Co., Michigan, I captured an adult female (banded #850-45131) during banding operations on 23 July 1974. During examination I found an unusual cluster of cysts directly below the brood patch and above the vent; otherwise, the bird appeared normal and healthy. After being held briefly for photographs of the abnormal growth, the bird was released.

A slide of the cyst sent to W.C. Johnson at Michigan State University was subsequently identified as that of the vent fluke *Collyriclum faba*. This is the first reported host record of this trematode in the Barn Swallow (Johnson, pers. comm.).

A recent report of a Michigan host record for the Eastern Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*) by Pinkowski (*Jack-Pine Warbler*, 54:41, 1976) supports the suggestion that the parasite is found sporadically in a few individuals of a population. About 300 adult and young swallows have been banded at this colony

over a three-year period with only this one occurrence of vent fluke parasitism.

It is possible for a small number of swallows to pick up both intermediate hosts of the vent fluke during the breeding season. Snails, the first intermediate hosts, are probably contacted during efforts to obtain mud for nest construction. Insects normally act as secondary intermediate hosts, with contact made during normal aerial foraging. These sources of possible contact are mentioned by both Kiber (*EBBA News*, 31:257-262, 1968) and Beal (*Food Habits of the Swallows*, a family of valuable native birds. *USDA Bull.* 619, 1918). The investigation of 467 stomachs by Beal (op. cit.) showed that snails are taken occasionally and that dragonflies (*Odonata: Anisoptera*) make up 4% of the total diet.

I thank W.C. Johnson, Kellogg Bird Sanctuary, Michigan State University, for the identification of the fluke and comments on the manuscript. 📍

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