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The Effects of the Hematophagous Mite (*Dermanyssus hirundinis*) on Nestling House Wrens (*Troglodytes aedon*)

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THE EFFECTS OF THE HEMATOPHAGOUS MITE (*Dermanyssus hirundinis*)
ON NESTLING HOUSE WRENS (*Troglodytes aedon*).

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The house wren (*Troglodytes aedon*) is a small, insectivorous, migratory passerine bird that nests in secondary tree cavities and nestboxes. Both hematophagous (blood-sucking) mites, *Dermanyssus hirundinis*, and predatory (non-blood-sucking) mites, *Androlalaps casalis*, have been observed in the nesting material of the house wren. However, no studies have investigated their effects on nestling house wrens. In other avian species such ectoparasites have had adverse effects on nestlings, including low nestling mass, premature fledging (i.e. nest leaving) dates, and low nestling survival.

The purpose of my study was to determine the effects of *Dermanyssus hirundinis* on the mass at fledging and survival of nestling house wrens. The study was conducted from 1990-1992 in a population of house wrens that bred in nestboxes (N=910) near Bloomington, IL. Mites were extracted from the nesting material in the nestboxes from May-August of each year, and were then counted. These data were then correlated to nestling mass and the date of fledging. The results of this study will be presented at the research conference.