

Acknowledgments

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- ¹ BENT, A.C. 1963. Life histories of North American diving birds. Dover, New York.
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UNUSUAL BANK AND BARN SWALLOW NESTING ON LAKE WINNIPEGOSIS, MANITOBA

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Several species of swallows have benefitted from human activities, and have been quick to exploit new nesting opportunities when they become available. Indeed, some species, such as Barn Swallows, nowadays use natural sites relatively infrequently. This article reports unusual nesting sites for two species of swallows at Lake Winnipegosis, Manitoba, during the summer of 1987, a Bank Swallow colony in a sawdust pile and a Barn Swallow colony on a cliff face.

On 1 June, an active colony of Bank Swallows was located at an abandoned sawmill close to the Mossey River at Winnipegosis, Manitoba. The colony was in a sawdust pile about 15 m high, and had probably been in existence for about 7 years. There were about 150 holes, about 60 of which appeared to be occupied throughout June and July. The birds were still present in early August. The pile was stable because the sawdust had compacted over several years; the existence of the colony had been known by local fishermen for at least 3 years. Bank Swallow colonies were not located anywhere else around the shore of Lake Winnipegosis, which lacks vertical earth banks, and the swallows had taken advantage of a nesting site created by man. Sawdust piles have been reported very infrequently as nesting sites for this species, the most recent being at Hinton, Alberta.^{1 2}

On 9 July, six Barn Swallow nests were located on a cliff face, 8 metre high, on the northwest shore of Mason Island, Dawson Bay, Lake Winnipegosis. The heads of young swallows were visible at three of the nests; two other nests appeared empty, and the sixth nest was an old one which held a recently-constructed Eastern Phoebe's nest. Three of the nests were built in natural cavities of the rock, and three were built on the cliff face itself. The adults were watched hawking insects around a colony of tree-nesting Double-crested Cormorants at the south end of the island. Barn Swallows nests were located at all buildings and docks around the lake, thus it is interesting that a colony of natural cliff-nesting birds persists when many man-made nesting sites were available.

¹ BENT, A.C. 1963. Life histories of North American flycatchers, larks, swallows and their allies. Dover, New York.

² WILDE, G.A. 1987. Unusual nesting site for Bank Swallows. *Blue Jay* 45(2):112.