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Aerial rain bathing by Common Nighthawks.—Both Slessers (Auk 87:91–99, 1970) and Simmons (pp. 101–104 *in* A Dictionary of Birds, B. Campbell and E. Lack, eds., Buteo Books, Vermillion, South Dakota, 1985) classified methods of bathing in water by birds, but neither mentioned a method we observed in the Common Nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor*), and here named "aerial rain bathing."

At about 12:00 EDST on 10 August 1985 a thunderstorm with heavy rains passed over the Archbold Biological Station in Highlands County, Florida. During the next 45 minutes, 43 mm of rain fell locally and west winds gusted up to 37 km/h. From inside the laboratory building we watched a flock of about 15 nighthawks flying in the heaviest downpour. They flew about 10 to 35 m above oak scrub and among and above scattered slash pines (*Pinus elliottii*), where we think they had been roosting before taking flight.

The flight of the birds was different than usual: they often glided in place as they all faced into the wind, with their body plumage ruffled and tails slightly spread. They appeared to fly with slower wing beats than normal, but several times gave short series of quick beats.

No nighthawk dived or flew erratically as in normal foraging, although individuals did circle back to regain their previous positions. During the approximately 10 minutes of flying in the rain, the flock remained in the same area. When the rain slackened the birds all flew off to the west.

We interpret these observations as aerial rain bathing. The ruffled plumage and spread rectrices may have facilitated feather soaking. The quick wing beats may have functioned to shake water off the wings. Certainly, the birds were not foraging; we doubt that any insect could have remained aloft in the heavy rain. In addition, none of the aerial movements resembled any described display behavior. We heard no calling when we ventured outside the building.

Many birds bathe in rain or wet foliage. No doubt characteristics of birds and their habitats affect the distribution of this form of bathing. Birds that are poorly adapted for standing in water because of short tarsi or weak legs, or that are unable to swim, probably bathe in rain or wet foliage. Birds that live where standing water is inaccessible, or where rain or dew are frequent also probably bathe in rain or wet foliage. GEW once watched a captive frogmouth, *Podargus* sp., a rain-forest bird with short tarsi and weak legs, bathe in the falling spray of a garden hose. The posture of rain-bathing birds "with feathers ruffled, wings fully extended horizontally, and tail spread" (Simmons 1985) certainly characterized the nighthawks we watched, and supports our conclusion that they were bathing in the rain.

Strong flying land birds such as kingfishers and tyrant flycatchers bathe by plunging into the surface of standing water. Simmons (1985) described "flight bathing on the wing by a series of dips and rises," and gave as examples swifts and swallows. He further stated that "highly aerial seabirds, such as frigatebirds and certain terns, are solely flight-bathers." By the context we suspect Simmons is referring to dips *into water* when describing flight-bathers, but we are uncertain. Certainly the several taxa of land birds and seabirds he listed include likely candidates for aerial rain bathing. Among other likely candidates are hummingbirds. Stoner (Condor 49:36, 1947) reported an Anna's Hummingbird (*Calypte anna*) repeatedly flying through a stream of water from a garden hose, which may be interpreted as bathing while in flight.—KEVIN J. MCGOWAN AND GLEN E. WOOLFENDEN, *Dept. Biology, Univ. South Florida, Tampa, Florida 33620.* *Received 13 Dec. 1985, accepted 6 May 1986.*

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Green-backed Heron baits fish with insects.—On 22 August and 8 September, 1985, we observed at least one Green-backed Heron (*Butorides striatus*) apparently attempt to lure fish with live mayflies (Ephemeridae) at the Ouachita River in Montgomery County, Arkansas. On 3 separate occasions, in 3 locations, we watched a heron capture a live mayfly and place it in the water. After the heron watched the mayfly for several seconds from a crouched, standing posture (Hancock and Kushlan 1984), it retrieved the live insect and placed it in a new location in the water a few feet away. This pattern was repeated 10–20 times for up to 30 min before the heron abandoned the mayfly and flew out of sight. We did not witness a heron capture a fish while baiting.

Kushlan (1978) described baiting behavior as placing any material that attracts prey in the water. Lovell (1958), Sisson (1974), and Norris (1975) previously have documented Green-backed Herons baiting fish with bread and feathers. To our knowledge, this is the first report of this species using an insect as bait.

Insects are frequent prey of Green-backed Herons in late summer (Niethammer and Kaiser