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HOUSE SPARROW RESPONSE TO MONOFILAMENT LINES AT NEST BOXES

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Abstract: House sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) nesting activities cause problems in and around structures and in nest boxes intended for other species. Previous studies have shown that house sparrows are selectively repelled from feeding sites by monofilament lines spaced 30 or 60 cm apart. The purpose of this study was to determine house sparrow response to lines spaced about 37 cm apart around nest boxes. One hundred forty-six nest boxes were installed, with lines randomly assigned to 73 boxes. All nest boxes were checked approximately every 5 days for nest materials, eggs, nestlings, and fledglings. Successful clutches were recorded for nests that fledged at least one bird. Results indicated no difference between the numbers of treated and control nest boxes

that had nest materials (70 control, 66 treated), but onset of the first set of clutches was earlier (-13 days) in control than in treated nest boxes ($P < 0.05$). In addition, there were more control nest boxes with eggs present (51 control, 34 treated, $P < 0.05$) and more control nest boxes with at least 1 (39 control, 21 treated, $P < 0.05$) or 2 (24 control, 6 treated, $P < 0.05$) successful clutches. Although, monofilament lines do not repel house sparrows from nest boxes as they do from feeding sites, they do appear to reduce the number of clutches and fledglings. Still unclear is whether differences noted resulted directly from line interference with the nesting process or indirectly from some other factor such as age or experience of birds occupying the treated nest boxes.