

2008 Barn Swallow Colony

2008 Nesting Chronology

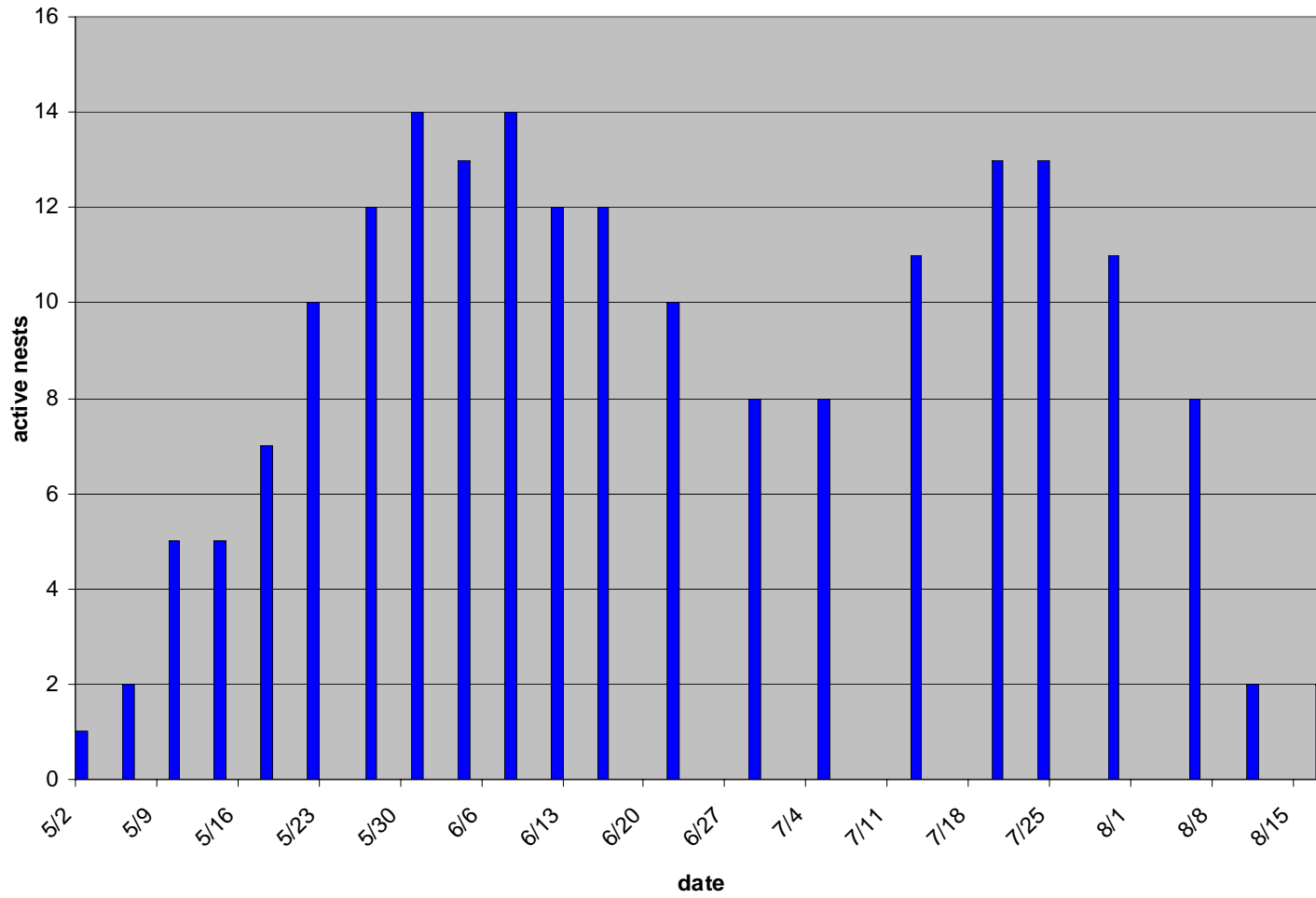
The mud rim on wood nest cups

Blocking line of sight between nests

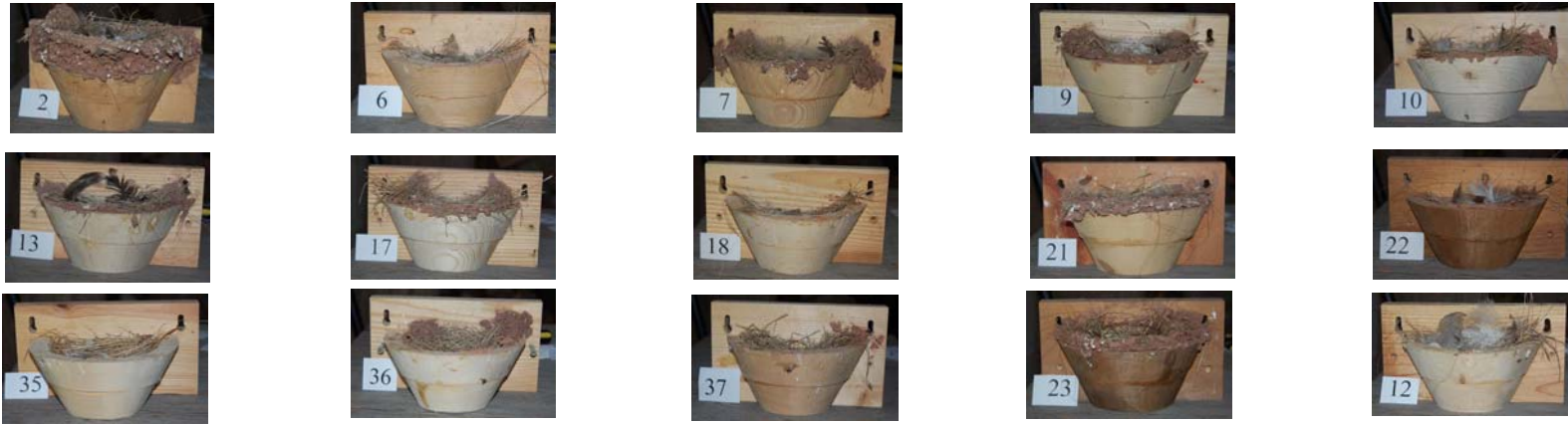
2008 Settlement Pattern



2008 Barn Swallow Nesting Season



Some of the Artificial Nest Cups used in the 2008 Nesting



Barn swallows usually add mud dams around the rim of new wood nest cups. This brings the rim to about 1 1/2" to 2" from the ceiling. There is great variation in the use of mud in the 2008 nests. Four of the nests were left with greater than 2" ceiling clearance, with little or no mud added to the rim. Most, however, were within the 1 1/2" to 1 3/4" range, either with or without mud added. Nest #37 (at right) successfully fledged 2 broods and had no mud rim added. The rim was 1 3/4" from the ceiling. However, 2 nests that had no mud rim were greater than 2" from the ceiling.

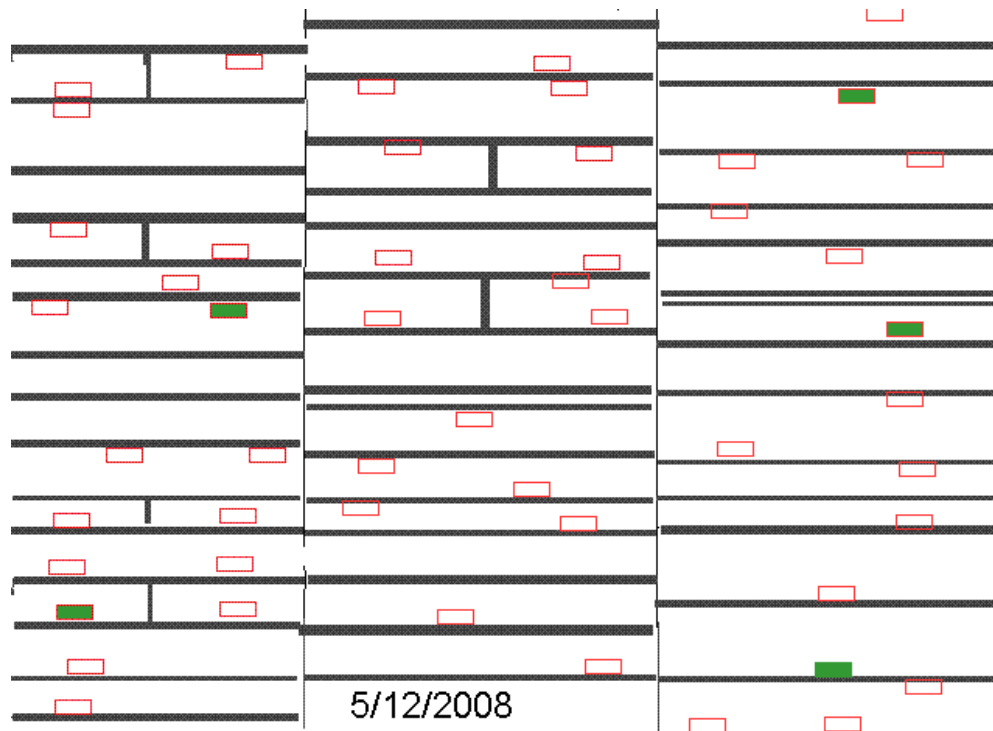


All the swallows dabbed mud at the rear of the cup where it joins the backboard. This is also done when natural nests are reused, presumably to reinforce the nest's attachment to the wall. The tendency to reuse old nests allows barn swallows to readily accept artificial nests. And, when natural mud nests fall, they are usually still intact and just break loose from the wall.

2008 Barn Swallow Colony Nest Settlement Pattern



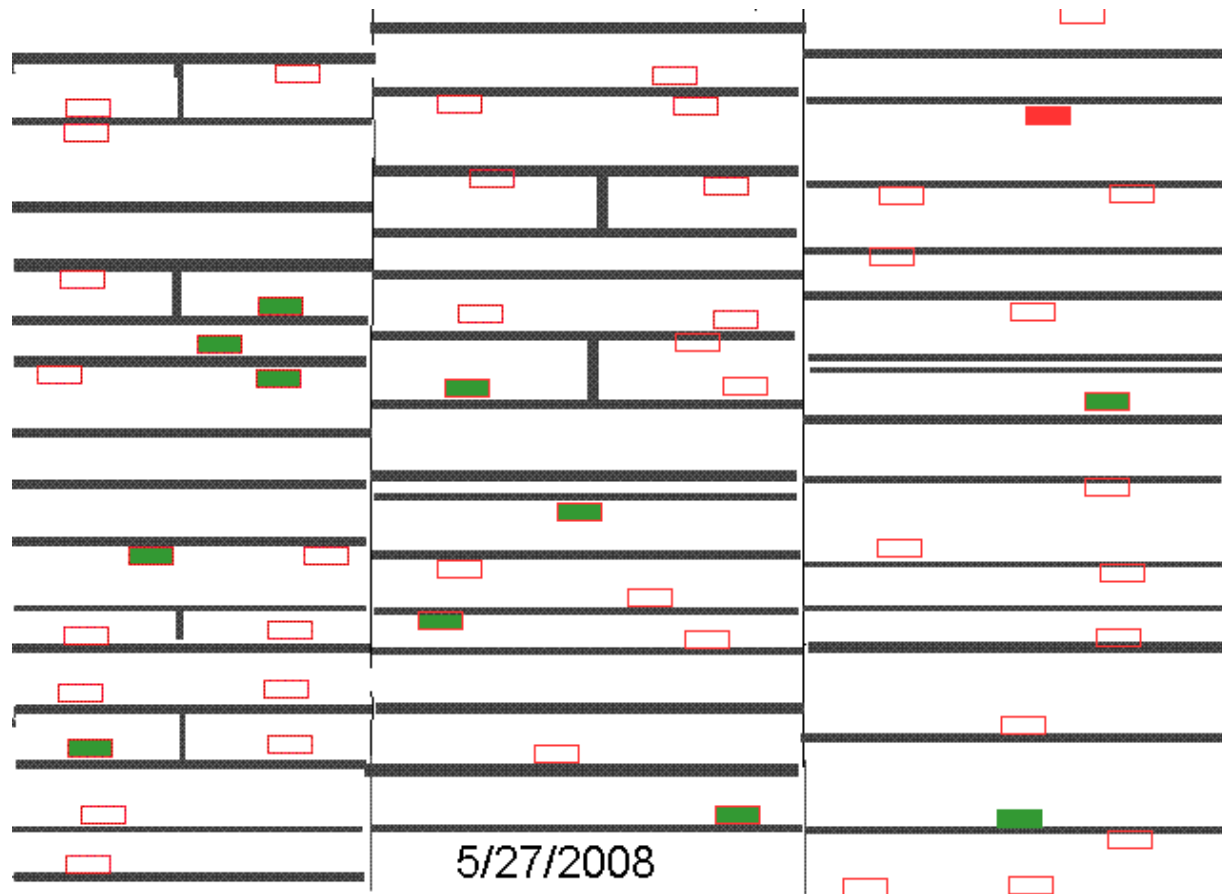
This year several dividers were placed between adjacent ceiling joists in the swallow colony room to block the view of adjacent nests. In previous years, swallows frequently nested very close when the nests were on opposite sides of a joist, but much further apart when on the same side and in line of sight. I thought that blocking line of sight would allow closer nesting on the same joist or on facing sides of adjacent joists.



Unused nest cup
 Nest cup with eggs
 Nest cup with young

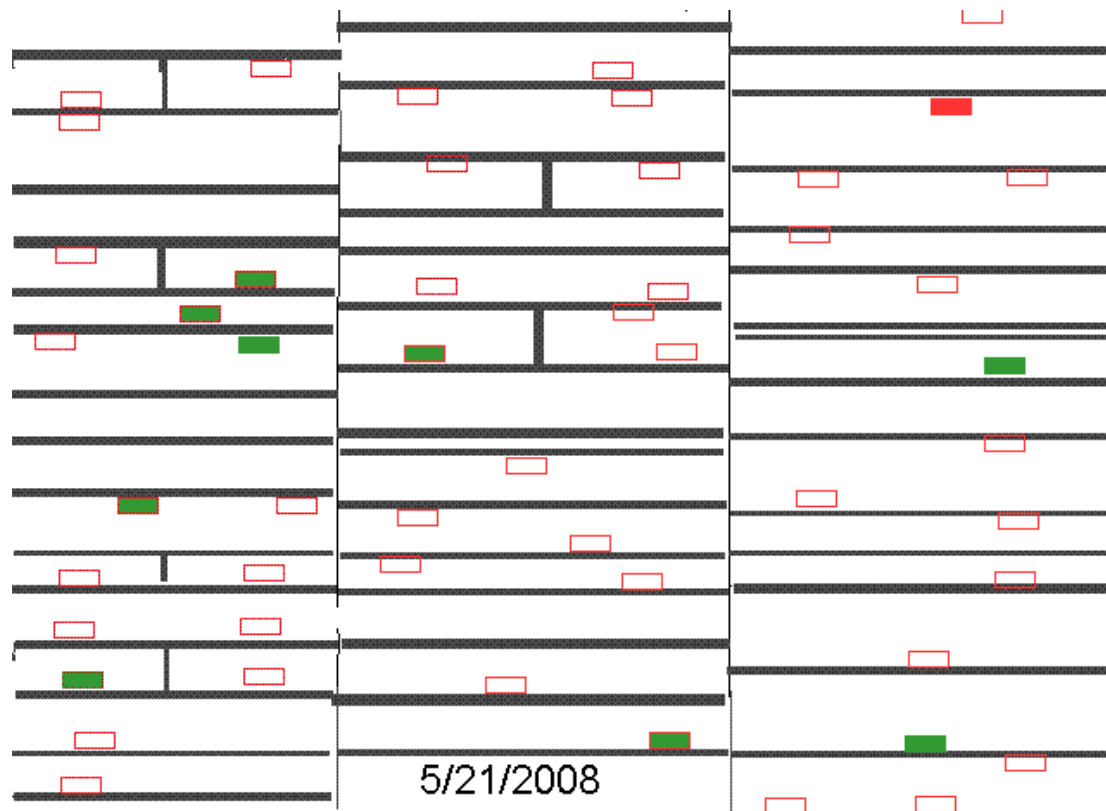
2008 Barn Swallow Nest Settlement

As usual, the earliest nesters selected nest cups widely spaced throughout the swallow room. The horizontal lines represent ceiling joists and the short vertical lines connecting joists are temporary plywood screens to block the view of adjacent nest cups. In theory, the screens should enable closer nesting, but that wasn't demonstrated this year.. As more pairs selected nests, the screens had no effect. The following pages chart the settlement pattern as the season progressed.



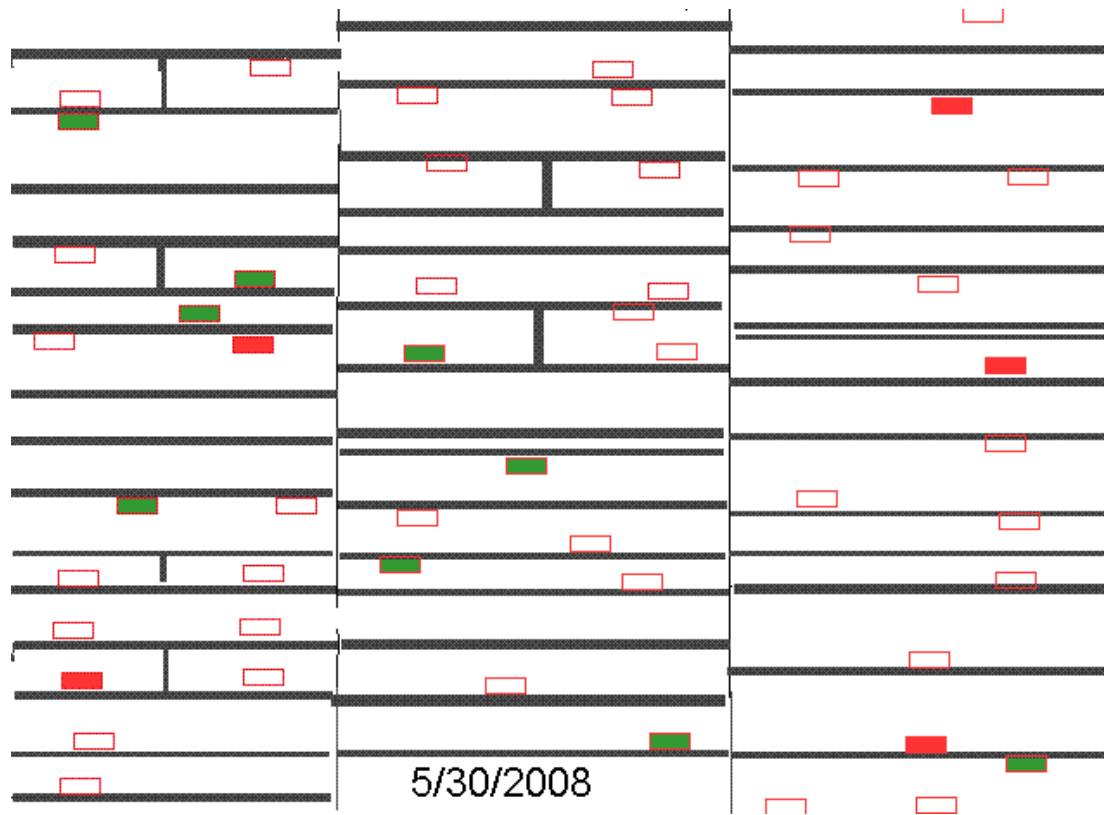
Unused nest cup
 Nest cup with eggs
 Nest cup with young

2008 Barn Swallow Nest Settlement



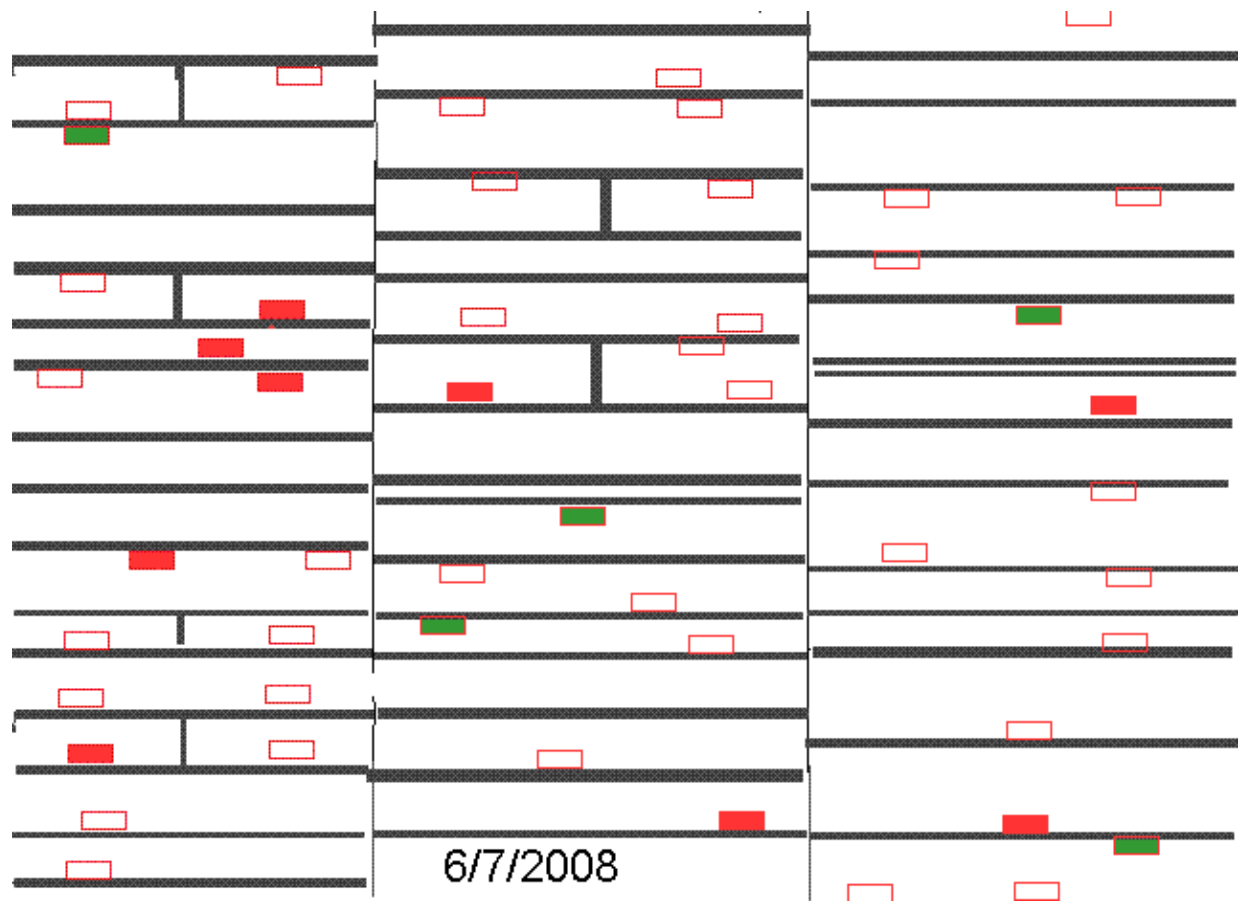
Unused nest cup
 Nest cup with eggs
 Nest cup with young

2008 Barn Swallow Nest Settlement



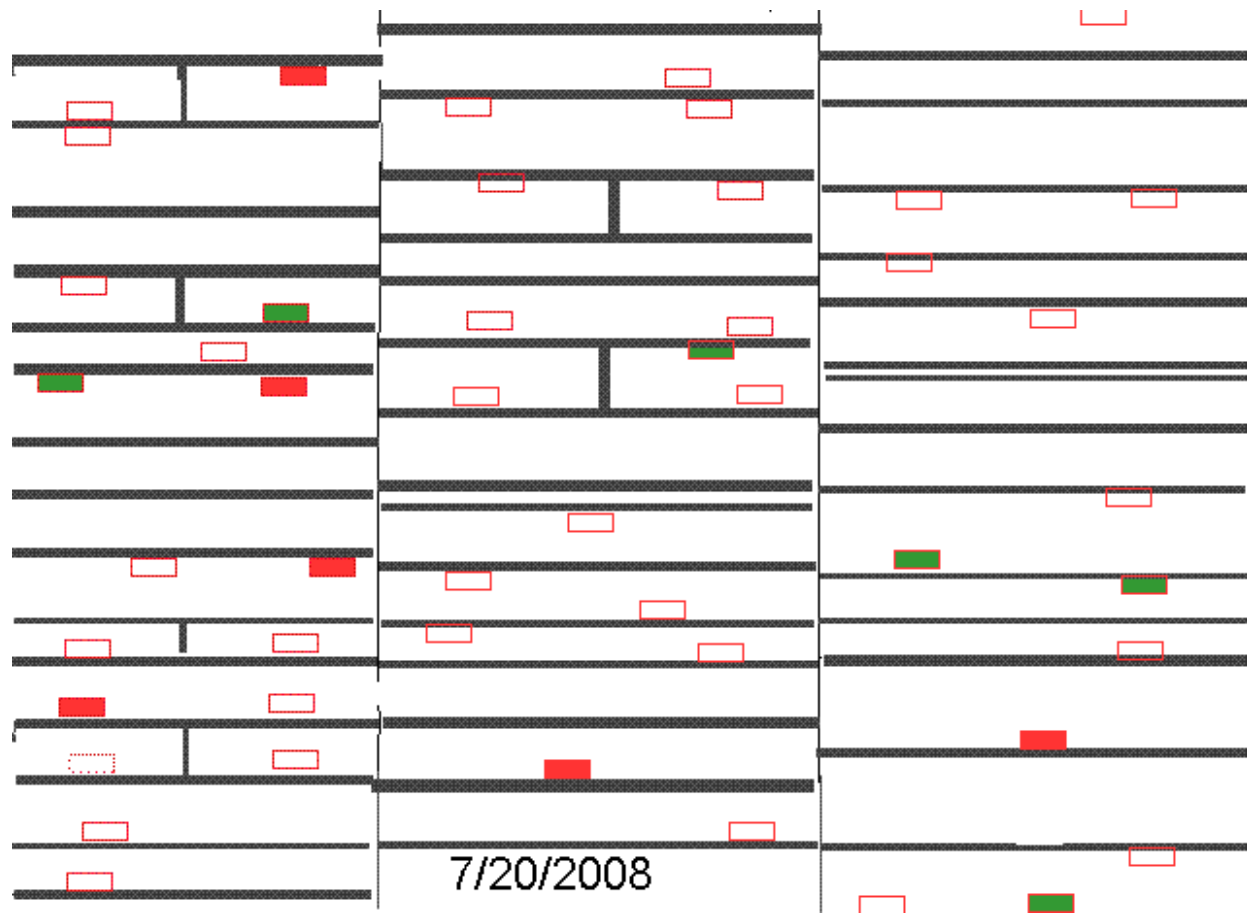
Unused nest cup
 Nest cup with eggs
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