



FIG. 1. Herring Gull with plastic device looped behind the head and cut into the upper mandible.

Frances Van Huffel of Mishawaka, Indiana, has suggested that they may look like fish entrails and consequently attract the gulls.—SCOTT C. REA, 952 Riverside Dr., South Bend, Indiana, 6 December 1967.

Distraction display of a pair of Black-throated Green Warblers.—Distraction displays of birds have been reported by many observers. They appear widespread in the wood warblers (Parulidae), having been recorded from at least 34 species (Ficken and Ficken, *Living Bird*, 1:103, 1962). However, most such displays reported in the literature are ones that have been directed toward human subjects. Hence, a series of distraction displays that I observed on 5 July 1966, at Hog Island (Todd Wildlife Sanctuary), Bremen, Lincoln Co., Maine, directed at another potential predator appear worthy of note.

Immediately prior to the observations reported below I was studying a territorial encounter between two pairs of Black-throated Green Warblers (*Dendroica virens*), apparently resulting from one pair with two or more young straying over a territorial boundary. This intense encounter, punctuated by chases, fights, Moth Flights (see Ficken and Ficken, *Wilson Bull.*, 77: 363, 1965), and loud harsh chipping by both adults and young, had been under way for 15 minutes when two Blue Jays (*Cyanocitta cristata*) flew suddenly and silently into the midst of the fighting birds. Almost immediately one male Black-throated Green Warbler virtually dropped from approximately 40 feet in small limbs of a red spruce (*Picea rubens*) to limbs of a small balsam fir (*Abies balsamea*) at a height of about five feet above the ground, followed immediately by one

of the jays. Within 15 seconds of this chase the jay flew to where it and its associate had landed originally, and these two birds then moved about in the branches for approximately five minutes, periodically giving musical *wheee* notes. During this time several or all of the adult warblers uttered nearly constant chip notes, though the vocalizations of the young nearly ceased. At this point a female Black-throated Green Warbler also virtually dropped toward the ground, giving only sporadic flutters during its descent. It dropped to a level of three to four feet in another small balsam fir, and I would have mistaken it for a young bird unable to fly adequately, had it not landed in a position directly in front of me. One of the jays immediately pursued this warbler down to a low level, alighting only a few feet from the bird. In neither instance did the behavior of the warblers directly following this drop change appreciably from that preceding the action. They recommenced chipping at this low level and proceeded to ascend the tree via short flights to the immediate vicinity of the young. Within 30 seconds of the second chase both jays moved away in the direction from which they had come originally. Following the departure of the jays the hostile encounters between the two pairs of Black-throated Green Warblers, which had nearly ceased in the presence of the jays, increased to their former intensity and still were continuing when I left the area 10 minutes later.

The similarity between the dive-display of both Black-throated Green Warblers and motions of a young fledgling that is scarcely able to fly was striking. It would appear that the jays had responded initially to these performances as they would to that of a young bird; as soon as the adult warblers terminated the behavior, the jays ceased to pay attention to them.

At the time of this encounter both adult and young warblers were conspicuous as a result of both their vocalizations and movements. The young remain conspicuous during the extended period of dependency or partial dependency upon the adults (probably in excess of one month in some instances) as a result of the nearly constant loud begging notes that they produce. Hence, they would appear to be vulnerable to predators at this time. The Blue Jay, along with the red squirrel (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*) probably is one of the most important predators of eggs and nestlings of small birds in the spruce forests. These observations, as well as those of Lamore (Wilson Bull., 70:96, 1957) and Chase (Wilson Bull., 11:57, 1899) suggest that Blue Jays will also take newly fledged individuals.

Cruickshank (Auk, 53:480, 1936) reported a display similar to the two reported here given by a Black-throated Green Warbler when he approached its nest. The general lack of observations of this particular behavior may be due to the fact that young seldom are approached by a human when high enough in a tree for adults to respond as described above. These are the only records of this precise behavior that I have noted during six years of intensive study upon this and a large number of other species of wood warblers.

Financial support for the study of warblers was provided by the National Science Foundation (GB-3226 and GB-6071). I thank M. S. and R. W. Ficken and J. P. Hailman for comments upon the manuscript.—DOUGLASS H. MORSE, *Department of Zoology, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland, 12 January 1968.*

Meadowlarks feeding on road-kills.—On the afternoon of 17 December 1967, we obtained information which showed meadowlarks (*Sturnella magna* and *S. neglecta*) to be feeding on the carcasses of road-killed birds. The area was along New Mexico State Highway 26 between the towns of Hatch and Deming in Dona Ana and Luna counties. The date marked the third consecutive day of near-blizzard conditions in