

**Robins feeding on hairy caterpillars.**—Although several authors state that Robins (*Turdus migratorius*) eat hairy caterpillars (Forbes, Trans. Illinois State Hort. Soc., 13: 119–176, 1879; Perrior, Auk, 16: 284, 1899; Forbush, Useful birds and their protection, Boston, Wright and Potter Co., 1907, p. 288), none mention the removal of the setae.

On 19 March 1968 in Hamden, New Haven County, Connecticut, I watched a group of about 35 Robins feeding on the edge of a woodlot bordering a grassy field. In 30 minutes I saw three different birds eat the hairy black and tan larvae of the banded woollybear moth (*Isia isabella*). Before swallowing them, the birds removed the setae by holding the larvae in the bill and scraping them against the ground with rapid sideways shakes of the head. The movement is similar to that Robins use to prepare earthworms for swallowing, but differs in that the larvae are pressed against the ground and scraped against abrasive stones and vegetation.

The birds scraped for 2 to 3 seconds, dropped the larva, looked at it, then picked it up and either scraped it again or hopped to another spot before scraping again. Each time the bird seemed to hunt actively for a suitable rough surface before scraping. The scraping bouts averaged 18 per minute and in two instances 10 and 12 minutes elapsed before the larva was ingested. In a third instance I secured a larva after it had been scraped against a gravel roadbed for about 7 minutes. Only a few setae remained on the tail and head ends. Probably the length of scraping time needed to remove the hairs varied with the type of ground surface.

While I watched them these Robins ate no earthworms. Perhaps while earthworms were unavailable, they were able to utilize a less desirable food source by modifying motor patterns used to prepare earthworms for swallowing.—EUGENE S. MORTON, Department of Biology, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut 06520.

**Nest-robbing by Cooper's Hawks.**—The preponderance of bird items in the diet of the Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*) has been shown in many studies. Apparently less well known is the fact that some individuals capture nestlings of prey species. Meng (Wilson Bull., 71: 169–174, 1959) saw a male Cooper's Hawk bring two live Scarlet Tanager (*Piranga olivacea*) nestlings to his nest. Hamerstrom and Hamerstrom (Wilson Bull., 63: 16–25, 1951) found that "at least 8.4 per cent" of the food of young Cooper's Hawks were nestling birds. The circumstances of capture of such prey has not been clear; whether the hawk sighted and captured the nestlings on the ground after they tumbled from their nests or actually took them from their nests is not stated.

During the last week of July 1966 I had an excellent opportunity to observe an adult male Cooper's Hawk at close range at Shuswap Lake Provincial Park, British Columbia in mid-afternoon. The hawk perched in several trees within 50 feet of me for almost 15 minutes. Near the end of that time it landed near the top of a 15-foot sparsely leafed birch and craned its neck so as to peer straight down. In a crotch 5 feet below was the nest of a Robin (*Turdus migratorius*) that the young had recently left—I had seen and heard two or three of them wandering about in the grass and bushes below a half hour previously. The hawk dropped straight down onto the branch 2 feet out from the nest, remained there only a few seconds, then suddenly darted off through the woods. During this time the parent Robins were nowhere in evidence. It seemed not entirely fortuitous that the hawk should remain in the vicinity so long and then visit the Robins' nest tree before leaving.

Near Vernon, British Columbia, at noon on 29 July 1963, my attention was sud-