

(*Troglodytes aedon*) than occurred in Zebra Finches as the female alone in these two species did all the incubation.

The hunting of prey by the female requires expenditure of energy additional to incubation and brooding and takes time away from the eggs and young as well. My studies suggest that prey caching by the male is a method of conserving the female's energy that otherwise would be expended in this hunting. Prey caching is thus another way of dividing labor between male and female during the nesting period.

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Roosting habits of the Swallow-tailed Kite.—In Surinam the Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*) is one of the commonest raptors. Present all through the year and sociable at all seasons, it usually occurs in flocks of up to 30 individuals. My records show no evidence that its numbers are augmented at any particular season by migrating birds from the north or south. Apart from a nest with a closely sitting bird on 19 March, with the other one circling above the nest tree, I further saw a pair, one of them with a large bunch of moss in its bill, circling above the forest on 6 March but, though they were still present on 13 March, I failed to locate their nest.

In recent studies on its breeding habits by Skutch (1965, *Condor* 67: 235) and Snyder (1975, *Living Bird* 13: 73) its social roosting habits are but casually mentioned. Once at sunrise on 29 October 1961, I flushed a party of about 15 birds from a fully leaved tree on a roadside where they must have spent the night, but in later years I only found them roosting in isolated and tall trees destroyed by fire in forest clearings. On 19 November 1972 I located a small group roosting in such a tall dead tree in a clearing near Zanderij. This roost was used daily till I left in March 1973. Roosts are apparently used for long times at a stretch as I found it occupied when I returned to Surinam on 29 November 1973 and it was still in use when I left the country 3 April 1974. Their numbers varied, and in both years the maximum was 9 birds. Each bird roosted on the very top of a vertical branch. They left rather late in the morning and were apparently unable to make use of any but strong thermal currents. Sunrise in Surinam is between 0600 and 0630 and the birds did not, as a rule, depart before 0800 and at the earliest at 0730, but rainy weather with low clouds prolonged their stay. Sometimes as is usual in this time of the year—the short rainy season—the sky was clear in the early morning but later low dark clouds assembled with heavy showers. Then the kites sometimes returned to their roost as on 25 January and 2 December 1973 when 4 birds were back in the tree at 1130. In the morning they never left together but broke up singly, the first spending some time soaring and circling above the tree. Then a second left and a little later the next one. This went on till all had gone. They spent the time between sunrise and their departure vigorously preening their feathers, but I never saw them sunning on their roost as did a party of Turkey Vultures (*Cathartes aura*) in a nearby tree. I have seen kites sunning only once. This was on the morning of 9 November 1961 when two kites sat on a bare branch in the top of a tall tree towering over the forest near Rama. They sat very upright, close together, with their backs toward the sun, the arms of their wings fully spread, but their wing tips hanging vertically downward, and their tail feathers fully spread. They sat so close that the arm of the right wing of one bird partly overlapped with the left arm of the other and they remained motionless in this strange attitude during all the time I watched them.—F. HAVERSCHMIDT, *16 Wolfskuilstraat, Ommen, Holland.*—Accepted 6 Feb. 76.

Allopreening in the Black Vulture.—Black Vultures (*Coragyps atratus*) regularly feed on offal during low tide on the muddy shore of the Surinam River in the center of Paramaribo. At high tide they rest on roofs of buildings along the waterfront where they spend the time sunning in a very upright stance with widespread wings and their backs to the sun, vigorously preening their feathers. On 22 January 1948, five vultures sat on a roof; two of them very close to each other and almost touching, were preening busily. One nibbled the feathers of the lower neck of the other and the latter responded by nibbling the neck feathers of the first. Harrison (1965, *Behaviour* 24: 161) listed among the Cathartidae species where allopreening has been observed only the Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*), in captive birds, and the California Condor (*Gymnogyps californianus*).—F. HAVERSCHMIDT, *16 Wolfskuilstraat, Ommen, Holland.* Accepted 6 Feb. 76.