

## FROM FIELD AND STUDY

**Common Egret Preys on Meadowlark.**—In the afternoon of February 14, 1959, near Bay-side, Humboldt County, California, I observed a Common Egret (*Casmerodius albus*) with a Western Meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*) struggling in its beak. This brief encounter took place in a wet bottomland pasture where egrets frequently are seen in winter months near Humboldt Bay. The egret held the meadowlark in its bill, alternately by the neck, wings, and feet in the ensuing struggle. The meadowlark ceased struggling within a few minutes, but its captor persisted in efforts to swallow it for another quarter of an hour. At the end of this time the egret was startled by a passing automobile and flew off with its lifeless victim held firmly between its mandibles.

Other members of the family Ardeidae quite commonly kill and consume the young of marsh birds (Bent, U.S. Nat. Mus. Bull., 135, 1927). Indeed F. A. Low (The Heron, 1955:51, Collins, London) cites an instance of a captive Gray Heron (*Ardea cinerea*) seizing and swallowing a Persian kitten. Although I was unable to find published reports of similar acts of predation by the Common Egret, it seems probable that unwary small birds might fall victims of this bird whenever chance and hunger created favorable conditions.—R. E. GENELLY, *Division of Natural Resources, Humboldt State College, Arcata, California, October 23, 1963*,

**Interspecific Relations of Crows and Red-shouldered Hawks in Mobbing Behavior.**—Field observations given here suggest that Crows (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) distinguish between Red-shouldered (*Buteo lineatus*) and Red-tailed (*B. jamaicensis*) hawks and may associate at times with Red-shouldered Hawks in the mobbing of Barred (*Strix varia*) and Great Horned (*Bubo virginianus*) owls. The observations, which were made in a swamp near Seneca, Maryland, between 1951 and 1960, and in Lyme, New Hampshire, in 1963, fall into the four following categories:

(1) *Crows and Red-shouldered Hawks.*—Red-shouldered Hawks were relatively common in Seneca Swamp as indicated by the discovery of four occupied nests in a single morning on March 21, 1953. There was also a sizeable population of Crows in the swamp and adjacent farm lands. The two species were in each other's proximity not infrequently, but I never observed Crows attacking the hawks except in the vicinity of their own nests. On March 13 and again on April 27, 1953, I saw a pair of Crows attack a Red-shouldered Hawk as it flew over a corner of woodland where they nested. The same Crows attacked a Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*) on April 8 and 25 under similar circumstances. The Turkey Vulture, like the Red-shouldered Hawk, was not attacked by Crows at other times of year. The usual indifference of Crows to Red-shouldered Hawks was illustrated in the following incidents: on December 18, 1953, a Red-shouldered Hawk alighted within 10 feet of a Crow, which continued to preen itself as calmly as before, and on December 25, 1951, I watched a Red-shouldered Hawk alight among several hundred Crows without causing any appreciable disturbance.

(2) *Crows and Red-tailed Hawks.*—The Red-tailed Hawk was less common in the swamp than the Red-shouldered Hawk, but it flew across from the neighboring hills occasionally. Red-tailed Hawks were regularly attacked by Crows in all months of the year.

(3) *Relations of Red-shouldered to Red-tailed Hawks.*—Attacks of Red-tailed Hawks by Red-shouldered Hawks were noted only in the nesting season. On February 14, 1954, for example, a pair of Red-shouldered Hawks dove repeatedly on a Red-tailed Hawk perched on a limb. Each time the latter raised one wing as if to protect itself. On April 10 of the same year, unusually loud screaming from a Red-shouldered Hawk flying above its nest attracted my attention to attacks it was making on a Red-tailed Hawk circling in the vicinity.

(4) *Joint mobbing of owls by Crows and Red-Shouldered Hawks.*—An association of Crows and Red-shouldered Hawks took place under somewhat similar circumstances on three successive weekends between April 10 and 24, 1954. Thus, I watched Crows flying in from all directions to mob a Barred Owl. The Crows sometimes came within three to four feet of the owl, while I was standing below in thick undergrowth. Two Red-shouldered Hawks were screaming at the periphery of the group, where most of the Crows were congregated. Neither Crows nor hawks paid any obvious attention to each other. That their excitement was directed at the owl was more apparent when the owl flew farther into the swamp, only to be followed closely by both the hawks and Crows. Joint mobbings of this type also took place at other times of the year. On October 14, 1956, for example, I witnessed an almost identical series of events in Seneca Swamp. Although I came to realize that the