

Contamination of the plumage of breeding Common Terns at Great Gull Island was infrequent (Table 1). In only one year (1974) was more than one percent of the birds oiled. This increase followed an oil spill of unknown origin the previous winter that contaminated much of the Great Gull shoreline; most of the oil washed away before the 1974 breeding season.

Most of the contaminated birds had only small (1–2mm) oil spots. The worst case examined had a 39 x 19mm tar mass on its belly and a broad oil smear across one wing. This had apparently not interfered with nesting because the bird was trapped over newly-hatched young.

It should be pointed out that the birds examined were preselected in that they were individuals sufficiently vigorous to have carried breeding at least as far as incubation when they were trapped. More severely oiled birds may not attempt to breed at all and would not have been examined. Additionally, Common Terns molt on the wintering grounds so that oil contamination might have occurred in Long Island Sound or the waters frequented during migration and winter.

Only comparative studies will provide an idea of whether the contamination reported here is high or not. Such studies would also be of use in assessing the effect of offshore oil drilling operations on east coast waterbirds in the future.

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Carabid Beetle Remains in an American Kestrel Nest.—On 24 June 1976, I collected an American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), nest from a nest box in Pompey, New York. The box was situated 5 m high in a dead tree and faced NNE. Four young had fledged (D. Crumb, pers. comm.), and I collected the nest one day after the last nestling fledged. Nearly all of the pellets in the nest contained fragments of ground beetles (Carabidae). Many other fragments, including legs, elytra, and heads, were in the nest debris. D. P. Schwert identified the species as *Calosoma frigidum* Kirby, a fairly common, large (20–23 mm) shining black beetle with punctate elytral striations.

No previous record exists for kestrels preying on *Calosoma*. Heintzelman (*Wilson Bull.*, **78**: 325, 1964) found parts of Carabid beetles in 54 out of 125 kestrel pellets examined in New Jersey. Before feeding, kestrels often discard parts of insects, such as elytra and legs (Balgooyen, *Univ. Calif. Publ. Zool.*, **103**: 58, 1976). While beetle remains in pellets may only be small bits, larger fragments that are more easily identifiable may be found in nest debris.

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