Ring-billed Gulls stealing fish from female American Mergansers.— During the 1951-1952 winter, I observed some interesting behavior of Ring-billed Gulls (*Larus delawarensis*) and female American Mergansers (*Mergus merganser*) at the McMillan Reservoir, Washington, D. C.

The gulls were present on the reservoir before the mergansers appeared. After January 3, 1952, when the mergansers first appeared on the reservoir, both species were present frequently and usually at the same time. However, male mergansers were not present after February 1.

I usually watched birds on the reservoir once in the morning, at noon, in mid-afternoon, and again after 5 p.m. I did not notice gulls paying any particular attention to the mergansers until February 4, when a gull attacked and tried to rob a female merganser of a fish it had just caught and was trying to swallow. This incident was re-enacted later on the same day and many times thereafter.

Five was the maximum number of female mergansers present at any one time. Usually one Ring-billed Gull would deliberately trail one or more feeding female mergansers on the water. Ordinarily, the gull would not go into action until a diving merganser surfaced with a fish, at which time, the gull would take flight, circle briefly in the air over the merganser, and then plunge at it in an attempt to rob the bird of its fish. As a rule, only one gull would follow a group of mergansers and would drive away any intruding gull which might settle on the water near the group. However, if other gulls were present, at a distance, they would often take off as a merganser came up with a fish and compete in the game of robbing the diver of its prey. Sometimes the merganser's dive served as the signal for the other gulls to take off and circle slowly in the air over the area where the bird dived or alight on the water near the place where the diver would surface.

Most often, in their efforts to elude the gulls, the mergansers would sprint across the surface of the water, propelling themselves with feet and wings, using their wings more or less as oars by beating the water violently with rapid wing strokes. They would start and stop abruptly as they attempted to evade the attacking gulls. The gulls were persistent, however, and tried repeatedly to rob the fleeing mergansers. The mergansers would dive only as a last resort when a direct hit from a plunging gull seemed imminent.

When a gull successfully wrested a fish from a merganser, it would leave the reservoir, at least temporarily, pursued by one or more gulls bent on robbing it in turn. During my observations, the gulls seldom succeeded in getting fish away from the mergansers.

On February 13, for the first time, I saw a pursuing gull twice force a merganser to take flight with its catch. This performance was repeated on February 19 and 21. Once a pursued merganser circled over most of the reservoir 5 times, landed on the water, and dived to escape one gull but took off again immediately to escape two other gulls that flew in to attack it as it surfaced. This time, the tiring merganser circled the reservoir an additional two and one-half times before it finally dropped its fish which was seized by one of the band of robbing gulls. This reservoir is large enough so that the birds traveled a good distance in their flight.

Until the 13th of February, the mergansers seemed reluctant to leave the water to escape the gulls. Beginning with the 13th, however, they tried to elude the gulls on each occasion by taking flight, and each time, they dropped their fish sooner or later in their flight. I observed the gulls to be more successful in getting fish away from

flying mergansers than when the mergansers remained on the water and dodged, swam, and dived to evade the gulls. The fact that I saw no gulls try to rob mergansers of their fish until after the male mergansers stopped frequenting the reservoir is also of interest.

After February 21, the mergansers came less and less frequently to the reservoir, and I noted no further action involving these birds and the gulls.—DONALD LAMORE, *3C Parkway Road, Greenbelt, Maryland, November 8, 1952.*

Whooping Cranes in Kansas in 1952.—Although the Whooping Crane (*Grus americana*) was once a reportedly common migrant in Kansas, few or no records have been published for the past several decades. In 1952, I was fortunate in acquiring records of two, and possibly seven, of these large cranes in Kansas.

Mr. M. Wayne Willis, wildlife artist residing in Wichita, Kansas, informed me that he saw a Whooping Crane eight miles north and six miles west of Wellington, Sumner County, Kansas, on the afternoon of 23 March, 1952. Mr. Willis observed the crane, with four Sandhill Cranes (*Grus canadensis*), flying over a maize field. The five cranes landed in the maize field, according to Mr. Willis, and began feeding, presumably upon the maize.

On the morning of 31 October, 1952, I was asked to inspect an unidentified bird being held captive in Sharon, Barber County, Kansas. The bird was a crippled Whooping Crane. Two boys from Sharon had found the crane the previous evening in a pasture eight and one-half miles southwest of Sharon. The crane seemed to be in good health, except that its right wing hung so that the tips of the primaries touched the ground.

Federal authorities were notified, and the injured crane was placed in the custody of Mr. John B. Van den Akker, Director, Salt Plains National Wildlife Refuge, Jet, Oklahoma, on the evening of 31 October. The bird died the following day while en route to the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge in Texas. The crane is preserved as a skin and complete skeleton (KU 31198) in the University of Kansas Museum of Natural History.

On 4 November, 1952, Mr. Fritz Zvlonic, a farmer, informed me that he had seen five "big, white cranes" standing in his pasture, which is two miles north and three miles east of Sharon. After questioning Mr. Zvlonic regarding the appearance of the birds, I am fairly certain that they were Whooping Cranes. He accurately described the birds, mentioning the red on the head, generally white plumage, and black wing tips. Mr. Zvlonic was uncertain as to the date on which he had observed the alleged cranes, but estimated it as 20 October, 1952.

The localities where Whooping Cranes were reported in 1952, in Kansas, are of approximately equal latitude (37° 15′ N). The Sandhill Cranes arrived at this latitude on or about the same dates; in 1952, I observed flights of Sandhill Cranes three miles north and one mile east of Sharon, Kansas, on 30 March, and on 19 and 31 October.—THANE S. ROBINSON, *Biological Survey of Kansas, University of Kansas, Lawrence, January 22, 1953.*

Cinnamon Teal and Avocets in Florida.—On March 8, 1953, we saw one adult male Cinnamon Teal (*Anas cyanoptera*) on Lake Alice at Gainesville, Alachua County, Florida. It was with a large flock of Blue-winged Teal (*Anas discors*), Shovellers (*Spatula clypeata*), and Gadwalls (*Anas strepera*). There are apparently only two