

Food competition among closely related sympatric species.—From this viewpoint, the following incident may be of interest. Late in the afternoon of 6 June 1959, a Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*) and a Black-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*) were observed feeding on some spiny black caterpillars, about one and a half inches long, which were clustered on many tips of the branches all over a willow tree standing beside a sluggish stream. Both cuckoos used the same techniques. Sometimes they would hop to a branch favorably located below a cluster of caterpillars and then fly up to the cluster, fluttering rather awkwardly until one was captured. At other times they would work out along a limb until a caterpillar could be reached by stretching. In any case, the prey was vigorously worked through the bill from one end to the other several times before swallowing. It seemed that the Black-billed Cuckoo prepared its food more thoroughly than the Yellow-billed. Four instances of conflict were observed; in every case, the Black-billed was the aggressor and the Yellow-billed retreated without resistance to another part of the tree. The Black-billed sang twice, the Yellow-billed was silent throughout. The Black-billed captured 11 caterpillars in an hour and a half, of which nine were eaten in the tree and two were carried off. The Yellow-billed was seen to eat six and, so far as could be determined, never left the tree during the observation period. At least an equal number of caterpillars were dislodged from the tree since the wing-fluttering technique frequently shook loose two or three caterpillars in addition to the one taken. At 9 AM the following morning, a careful examination failed to disclose a single caterpillar. Although it cannot be proven, it seems to be a fair assumption that the cuckoos completed the job during the early hours of the morning, because the only other species present here in June which might have participated, Blue Jays (*Cyanocitta cristata*) and Scarlet Tanagers (*Piranga olivacea*), were not observed in the immediate vicinity during this time. Thus, in interspecific competition, a Black-billed Cuckoo dominated a Yellow-billed Cuckoo where an abundant food supply existed, but the competition did not really interfere with the food supply of the dominated species.—R. O. BENDER, *Cobb's Mill Road, R. D. No. 1, Bridgeton, New Jersey, 6 January 1960.*