

During a live-trap study of small mammals in South Carolina I had trouble with a shrike which occasionally pursued mice after release from the trap. The shrike would swoop directly from its perch, which was within 50 yards of most trap locations and hover over a released mouse, vocalizing in a flurry of wispy high register notes. The maneuver was very rapid and always caught me by surprise. The mice always recognized when the shrike was overhead because they would crouch suddenly and usually roll over on their side or back. Seldom did any of the 644 individual mice handled during this study freeze in this manner in the absence of the shrike even when I pursued them to their nest tunnels. The alarm reaction in the presence of shrikes is evidently not unusual with small animals. At mist-netting stations in the same area, captured Savannah Sparrows (*Passerculus sandwichensis*) would appear unusually excited whenever a shrike approached. This behavior was especially evident when Dr. R. A. Norris held a captured shrike within view of several captive sparrows.

On 1 January 1958, after about 8 sorties as described above, the shrike finally attacked one mouse with its feet. The mouse was lifted a few inches off the ground and dropped but no capture was made since I interfered. In the next two or three days I was able to protect the released mice only by standing between them and the shrike. On 27 January I released an adult male mouse which weighed 13 g. It had traveled for about two yards when the shrike swooped down and grasped the mouse in its feet. The shrike flew 30 yards to a plum tree (*Prunus* sp.) with the mouse suspended in its feet. Throughout the initial attack the shrike's bill was not used in any way to handle the mouse. Once on its perch the shrike immediately struck two or three times at the mouse which was held under the foot. It then flew about 40 yards to its customary perch in a chinaberry tree (*Melia azedarach*) with the mouse still clutched in its feet. Since I had pursued the shrike, it almost immediately flew off again and passed within 35 yards of the site of initial contact. Here the mouse was dropped from a height of about five yards. During the entire episode about 85 yards were traversed in a triangular flight pattern. The shrike appeared to leave both perches with the mouse clutched in its feet and at no time in flight was there an attempt at transfer to the beak. The shrike's head and bill were conspicuously in view during most of the incident. Curiously, though, the shrike's feet and the mouse were not visible after the first perch. I would have expected to see a 13 g load suspended in full view.

On 18 March the same mouse was retrapped. Its tail from just beyond the base was missing. It is possible the tail had been injured or removed during the observed attack.

Previous encounters of this shrike with mice other than those which I witnessed were unlikely. The loggerhead feeds less on mice than does the Northern Shrike (*L. excubitor*) and in the old-field habitat no natural opportunity for shrike-mouse encounters would occur since normally the indigenous mice are nocturnal and shrikes diurnal.—LARRY D. CALDWELL, *Biology Department, Central Michigan University, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan 48858, 4 February 1966.*

**Unusual behavior of the Yellow-headed Blackbird.**—Between 7:30–8:00 PM on 2 August 1962 at the Delta Waterfowl Research Station, Delta, Manitoba, I observed the following unusual sexual behavior of the Yellow-headed Blackbird (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*).

A dead, immature, male Yellow-headed Blackbird was lying on its breast atop the screen of an eight foot high flight cage used for waterfowl studies. Another immature male Yellow-headed Blackbird flew to the dead bird and assumed a copulatory position. The head of the live bird was above that of the dead one and the cloacal regions of the

two birds were in close proximity. While over the dead bird, the live bird's neck and head were outstretched and bent slightly forward. Its wings were also extended and fluttered for the duration of the mountings. The tail was thrust downward.

This copulatory position was assumed four times, the duration of each mounting varying between 15–30 seconds. Between the mountings the bird would fly about near the flight cage. After the final mounting the bird flew toward the marsh and disappeared. Subsequent observations of the dead bird and vicinity revealed no further activity.

Nero (1963. *Wilson Bull.*, 75:376–413), stated that, Red-winged Blackbird males (*Agelaius phoeniceus*), in addition to attacking male experimental dummies, frequently also attempted to copulate with them. Allen (1934. *Auk*, 51:180–199) states that a male Yellow-breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*) repeatedly attempted coition with the flat skin of a male Yellow-breasted Chat which was mounted on a branch. Griffin (1959. *Auk*, 76:238–239) recorded apparent homosexual behavior between two living birds, a Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*) and a House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) in which the House Sparrow attempted copulation.

Although McCabe and Hale (1960. *Auk*, 77:425–432) and Linsdale (1938. *Am. Midland Nat.*, 19:1–206) state that first year male Yellow-headed Blackbirds are non-breeders, this inexperienced bird was probably reacting to the peculiar conditions of a strong environmental stimulus and an overpowering sexual drive.—JERRY R. LONGCORE, *Department of Fisheries & Wildlife, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 4 February 1966.*

**An aggressive display by a Tufted Titmouse.**—On 4 February 1964, near Knoxville, Tennessee, I saw a Tufted Titmouse (*Parus bicolor*) give an aggressive display. The bird was hammering on a cluster of hazelnuts while perched at a height of about 3 feet on the trunk of a small, fallen tree. It was approached to within a few feet by two other titmouses. It dropped its cluster of hazelnuts, lowered its head and began to vibrate its slightly raised wings with an especially hard side to side shaking of the tail and at the same time giving a scold note. The approaching titmouses left the immediate area without coming any closer to the displaying individual. Once they were gone the display stopped but the remaining titmouse continued to scold for a few minutes after they were gone. The bird then flew down to the ground and picked up the cluster of hazelnuts, flew back to the same small tree trunk and started hammering on them again.

Brewer (1961. *Wilson Bull.*, 73:348–373) states that behavior resembling the wings-raised and head-forward postures described above are occasionally seen in the Carolina Chickadee (*Parus carolinensis*) and Black-capped Chickadee (*Parus atricapillus*). Laskey (1957. *Bird-Banding*, 28:135–145) reports a similar threatening posture in the Tufted Titmouse. The bird crouches down with spread wings, head thrust forward and emits rasping notes. Dixon (1949. *Condor*, 51:110–135) referring to the Plain Titmouse (*Parus inornatus*) states that they have a threatening posture which may be accompanied by wing vibrations. Odum (1941. *Auk*, 58:518–535) reports a similar display in the Carolina Chickadee.—GARY O. WALLACE, *Department of Zoology and Entomology, University of Tennessee, Knoxville 37916, 22 February 1966.*

**Cape May Warbler in Costa Rica.**—According to Slud (1964. *Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.*, 128:322), the Cape May Warbler (*Dendroica tigrina*) seems not to have been recorded in Central America before the early 1950's. In seven full years of field work in Costa Rica, Slud found this warbler only twice: near Barranca beside the Pacific coast in late November; and near Turrialba on the Caribbean slope, where he