



FIG. 1. A generalized profile of the salt marsh and land fill area in Cape May, New Jersey.

If the present trend is maintained this difference can become significant if the Herring Gull colony increases further. The greater number of clutches with three eggs among the Herring Gulls could result from higher initial productivity, reduced loss of nest contents or some combination of the two.

At present, we think the Herring Gulls are not yet in direct competition with Laughing Gulls for nesting habitat since the former build nests on higher sites (G. Nobel and M. Wurm, *Ann. New York Acad. Sci.* 45:179-220, 1943 reported similar findings for those two species on Muskeget Island, Mass.) while the latter are exploiting the lower *Spartina* marsh. However, and this is of consequence, changes wrought by man either in dredging or filling usually result in destruction of prime marshes (*Spartina*) for the Laughing Gull and an increase in the areas which support *Iva* thus laying open the possibility of more Herring Gull intrusion. As yet there was little evidence of predation by Herring Gulls on the Laughing Gull colony, nor any evidence of food competition.

We acknowledge Mildred Miskimen, Donald Kunkle and Jon Greenlaw. These observations result from work supported by the Ecology Training Grant 3343.—SALVATORE F. BONGIORNO AND JEFF SWINEBROAD, *Zoology Department, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 21 February 1968.*

**Barred Owl feeds on crow.**—On 2 December, 1965, at about 07:00 I found on the highway near Plainfield, Wisconsin a dead Barred Owl (*Strix varia*) and about 12 feet away a dead Common Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*). Although sunrise occurred at about 07:14 it was still quite dark since the sky was completely overcast and thick ground fog existed. I had passed there on the previous night at about 22:00 and neither of these birds was on the road at that time. At this point along the highway there are pine plantations on both sides of the road offering many possible roosting sites for crows.

It appeared as though the birds were killed at or at about the same time. The owl was limp, still warm, and showed little external damage. It had 63 grams of crow in its stomach. The crow was badly damaged and due to a much exposed and flattened surface area was no longer warm. The exposed tissue of the crow was not frozen, however, and the freshness of the blood indicated it had been recently killed. The temperature at the Stevens Point Municipal Airport, 20 miles north, at 06:40 was 27° F.

Steinke (Wisconsin Conserv. Bull., 18:7-10, 1953) lists 23 crows found during 3362 miles driven in Wisconsin over a six-year period (1947-52) and Schorger (Passenger Pigeon, 16:53-55, 1954) listed 11 crows as road-killed over a 16 year period (1932-47). But only one of these observations was made during December.

Since crows are apparently seldom killed by cars during this time of year, and since the incident took place at night, it seems unlikely that the crow was killed by a motor vehicle. The evidence suggests that the crow was killed by the owl, which was either feeding on it on the road, or was flying across the road with its prey when it in turn, was killed by a passing car. There is, however, the possibility that the crow was carrion.

The only reference I can find of Barred Owls eating carrion is by Forbush (Birds of Massachusetts and other New England States, Vol. II, 1929, p. 206). The only reference I can find of crow being recorded as food for Barred Owls is in Bent (U.S. Natl. Mus. Bull., 170:189, 1938).—CHARLES R. SINDELAR, 1865 S. West Avenue, Apt. 5, Waukesha, Wisconsin, 2 February 1966.

**Behavior of a Ruby-throated Hummingbird in a room.**—An immature male Ruby-throated Hummingbird (*Archilochus colubris*) was observed while confined in a room at Western Illinois University in Macomb, Illinois, 18 September 1967. The room in which observations were made is 15 feet square and 21 feet high. The north and south sides of the room open to 10-foot-wide corridors, and 18-foot-tall windows comprise about one-half of each of the east and west sides. Five-foot-wide doorways (without doors) open from the east and the west sides to the exterior. The walls and ceiling of the room are white except brownish where some paint is flaking off. The ceiling is without fixtures or wires suitable for perching.

The day was overcast and humid, becoming partly cloudy. At 10:30 CDT the hummingbird was called to my attention. I watched it for the following hour and then for several minutes each hour until 17:00 that afternoon. It hovered and darted nearly at the level of the ceiling with its crown and bill tip usually less than an inch from the ceiling. The bill was inclined slightly upward, and the body hung at about a 60° angle from the ceiling. The bird did not approach the walls of the room, even where the windows came within three feet of the ceiling, nor did it move along the ceiling into the somewhat darker north corridor.

The dartings of the hummingbird were directed toward many small insects, probably dipterans and hymenopterans, resting on the ceiling or hovering immediately under it. The hummingbird caught and appeared to eat immediately several insects shorter than 5 mm in length; many attempted captures failed. If an insect were not caught as soon as it took flight, the hummingbird sometimes chased it several inches. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds normally capture flying insects (Tyler, *In* Bent, U.S. Natl. Mus. Bull., 176:342, 1940; Forbush, Birds of Massachusetts, 1927), but it seems noteworthy that the confined bird was catching insects rather than obviously seeking an escape route.

The bird continued flying just under the ceiling for at least six and one-half hours and presumably found its way out through one of the doorways between 17:00 and 19:00 that evening. Because it seems unlikely that the hummingbird would stay in the room for so long just to feed on the insects, its continued presence in the room probably indicates that it could not find its way out. But if it were trying to escape, why did it keep hovering near the center of the white ceiling rather than investigating the large, unshaded windows nearby? A hypothesis that it was responding to the brightest area as the potential escape route was rejected, for the ceiling was only one-fourth as