

sides. The Robin had apparently caught the snake crossing or sunning itself on the bare area. The snake was about as long as the Robin and was most likely a garter snake (*Thamnophis sirtalis*), which is the common species in the area.

When first seen, the snake was violently and erratically writhing on the ground and several times it abruptly raised the front third or half of its body off the ground. It was apparently having convulsions secondary to brain damage.

The Robin repeatedly pecked at the snake and several times jumped up and back as the snake's forceful movements carried it toward the bird or off the ground. The snake's movements finally ceased completely in response to the persistent attacks, whereupon the Robin gathered the snake up in two coils in its bill and flew away.

Bent, (U.S. Natl. Mus. Bull., 196:30, 1949) cites three reports of Robins killing snakes, and Netting (Wilson Bull., 81:470, 1969) lists three others.—WILLIAM F. DAVIS, 423 West 46th Street, Ashtabula, Ohio 44004, 7 November 1968.

Does the Robin Eat DeKay's snake?—The Robin is a common bird locally and DeKay's snake vies with the garter snake for the credit of being the most common snake within the city limits of Pittsburgh, Pa. It might be expected, therefore, that the interrelations of Robins and DeKay's snakes would be thoroughly known, yet such is far from the case. On 16 March 1935, Allan D. Kirk, of Forest Hills, collected, and subsequently donated to Carnegie Museum, a DeKay's snake (*Storeria d. dekayi*) (CM 8293) which had been seized by a Robin and then dropped after a few shakes. Shortly thereafter, in the hope of adding a new species to the Robin's menu, I caught a small DeKay's snake (as we called it in those days; its official common name now is northern brown snake) and endeavored to feed it to the Robins in my yard. This attempt was unsuccessful, but it bears repetition by persons with more patience, for the Robin is known to carry other small snakes to the nest and it is unlikely that the bird is able to distinguish species of small inoffensive snakes. Guthrie (Wilson Bull., 44:97, 1932) cites two references to Robins killing garter snakes, of 10 and 13 inches, but in one case the young were unable to eat the snake, and in the second instance feeding was not actually witnessed. Friedmann (The cowbirds:259-60, 1929) reports that a Robin fed a very young garter snake to a Cowbird, about 7 days old, which he had previously placed in the nest.—M. GRAHAM NETTING, Carnegie Museum, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15213, 30 December 1968.

Recurrent use of territories by individual American Redstarts.—Previous studies of the American Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*) (cited in Yarrow, MS) have not dealt with banded populations. As a result, little is known about whether this species returns to the same territory in successive years. Using the predator-decoy method (R. Root and R. Yarrow, Auk, 84:423-424, 1967) I banded five adult redstarts during two seasons of field work in Renwick Bird Sanctuary, Ithaca, New York. Both adult males banded in 1965, each with a government band and two color bands, returned to the study area the following spring. They both defended territories adjacent to and somewhat overlapping the territories they had held the previous year. In 1967 and again in 1968, one of these males returned and appeared to defend the same area as in 1965. Redstarts may thus return at least four years in succession to virtually the same territory.—RUTH M. YARROW, Section on Ecology and Systematics, Division of Biological Sciences, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, 14 August 1968.