

reluctant to enter even though he entered several times in what seemed to be an encouraging manner. A week later, a Starling pair were nesting in this recently vacated flicker nest.—KENNETH W. PRESCOTT, *New Jersey State Museum, Cultural Center, Trenton, New Jersey 08625, 18 December 1969.*

The junco as a food item for the Rough-legged Hawk in Alaska.—On 9 August, 1969, I found a male Rough-legged Hawk (*Buteo lagopus*) dying from injuries apparently inflicted by a motor vehicle at Mile 1280 on the Alaskan Highway, 34 miles southeast of Tok Junction, Alaska. The stomach contained a partially digested mass of fur, feathers, and bones. Both forelimbs and several ribs of an immature Arctic ground squirrel (*Spermophilus undulatus*) were found in the stomach. The scapulae of the ground squirrel were broken, but the remaining bones were intact except for some separation at the epiphyses.

The right and left feet and the premaxillary portion of the upper jaw of a junco (*Junco* sp., cf. *J. hyemalis*) were also present and were identified by me by direct comparison with appropriate skeletal material. Feathers associated with these bones were matted, partially decomposed, and discolored. The presence of fur and feathers gives additional support to statements made by Leffler (Bull. Kansas Ornithol. Soc., 17:9-10, 1966) and Bent (U.S. Natl. Mus. Bull. 167:274, 1937) that Rough-legged Hawks do not pluck their prey.

Leffler (op. cit.) discussed feeding habits of *B. lagopus* and presented the fourth published American record of bird remains in the stomach of this species. Bannerman (The birds of the British Isles, 5:138, 1956) indicated that about 12 per cent of the prey records for *B. lagopus* in Norway were avian. Additional records are presented by Witherby (Handbook of British birds, 3, 1948) and Dementiev (Birds of the Soviet Union, 1, 1966). The fifth American record reported in the present paper provides further data on the bird-eating habits of *B. lagopus*. Perhaps when sufficient stomachs of New World representatives of this species are examined, the presence of birds as food items will not be found to be unusual.—SANFORD R. LEFFLER, *Department of Zoology, Washington State University, Pullman, Washington 99163, 16 February 1970.*

Common Grackles prey on big brown bat.—On 4 July 1970, I took a subadult big brown bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*) alive from a dog, and left it hanging in a bittersweet bush in my backyard, where the bat was found by three Common Grackles (*Quiscalus quiscula*). One grackle pulled the bat down onto the lawn. Another chased the first away, and pecked at the bat's chest. The first grackle then attempted to seize the bat, whereupon the second grackle flew out of the yard with the small bat carried easily in its beak.

Hawks, Mississippi Kites, and owls often feed on bats but, to my knowledge, no other birds except Blue Jays mentioned by Hoffmeister and Downes (Southwestern Nat., 9: 102-109, 1964), Allan (J. Mammal., 28:180, 1947), and Elwell (J. Mammal., 43:434, 1962), a Roadrunner reported by Herreid (Condor, 62:67, 1960), and these Common Grackles have been observed preying on bats.—CLAUDINE F. LONG, *Department of Biology, Wisconsin State University, Stevens Point, Wisconsin 54481, 8 July 1970.*

Herring Gull predation on common water snake in Lake Erie.—Many herpetologists have studied the common water snake, *Natrix sipedon*, in the western part of Lake Erie, for these snakes often differ from water snakes on the adjacent mainland of Ohio and Ontario. Water snakes from the islands of western Lake Erie tend to be

uniformly gray above and cream below without the saddle-shaped marking and bands of mainland *Natrix sipedon*. Camin and Ehrlich (Evolution, 12:504-511, 1958) compared the pattern of 11 different females from the Bass Island complex to the distribution of patterns within their litters and found that in all but one litter the female was more uniformly patterned than the majority of her offspring. They argued that only differential elimination could explain these observations and suggested that Herring Gulls (*Larus argentatus*), common birds in the Bass Island region, may be the selecting agent.

During the summer of 1967 I observed a mature Herring Gull which had captured a three-foot water snake along the east shore of Gibraltar Island, Ottawa Co., Ohio. This part of the island has dense vegetation on a dolomite substrate. The gull, which appeared to have swallowed about six inches of the anterior end of the live snake, flew off with most of the snake's body dangling from its mouth. The snake resembled mainland water snakes in coloration and patterning. Thus, this instance of predation supports Camin and Ehrlich's model of selection.—PETER GOLDMAN, *Department of Zoology, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio 43210, 20 July 1970.*

***Turdus grayi* feeding on snake.**—Recent records of the North American Robin (*Turdus migratorius*) killing and/or feeding on snakes (Davis, Wilson Bull., 81:470-471, 1969; and Netting, Wilson Bull., 81:471, 1969) prompt me to place on record the following observation of the common Central American robin (*Turdus grayi*). On 19 May 1968, on a gravel road between Turrialba and Siquirres, Costa Rica (1 mile east of bridge over Río Reventazón), I observed an individual of *Turdus grayi* pecking at a small snake (*Tantilla armillata*) about the size of the North American DeKay's snake (*Storeria dekayi*). The robin killed the snake, but I collected the reptile before the robin had a chance to demonstrate whether or not it was an intended food item. Skutch (Pacific Coast Avifauna, 34:68, 1960) reported that *Turdus grayi* may include an occasional small lizard in its diet. The snake was identified by Douglass Robinson of the Department of Biology, University of Costa Rica.—J. ALAN FEDUCCIA, *Department of Biology, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas 75222, 16 June 1970. (Present address: Department of Biology, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina)*

Predatory behavior in Montezuma Oropendola.—The diet of some of the larger icterids, especially grackles (*Cassidix* spp.) includes vertebrates, even other birds (Skutch, Life histories of Central American Birds, Pacific Coast Avifauna, 31, 1954; McIlhenny, Auk, 54:274-295, 1937). However, according to Skutch, the diet of oropendolas consists of fruits, and perhaps nectar.

During early June, 1970, a large fruiting tree at Finca La Selva, Heredia Province, Costa Rica, attracted numerous individuals and species of fruit-eating birds (as well as a concentration of frugivorous fish in the stream just below the tree). Black-faced Grosbeaks (*Caryothraustes poliogaster*) and Montezuma Oropendolas (*Gymnostinops montezuma*) were regular foragers in the tree. Flocks of each species tended to come and go from the tree, never using the total available food supply. On the morning of 8 June 1970, a noisy flock of *Caryothraustes* was foraging in the tree when several oropendolas flew in. After a short period there was a commotion in the area of the tree occupied by individuals of the two species and the grosbeaks set up a loud screeching note and converged on a single point. Coincidentally a male oropendola flew out of the area to a nearby tree followed closely by one then several other individuals. The grosbeaks stopped the loud calling and left the tree shortly after the oropendolas. The