

Early on the morning of 30 May, the Starling again fed the young in the nest. A short time later one young left the nest. Thereafter there was much excitement and calling from two Robins on the roof. The second young left the nest in the late afternoon. We could not locate either of the young in the dense undergrowth, and it is not known whether the Starling continued feeding or whether the Robins took over the care of the young.

Logan (Auk, 68:516-517, 1951) has described the feeding of young Robins by a male Cardinal (*Richmondena cardinalis*) at least a day before its own young hatched, and twelve days after the robins had left their nest. Jewett (in Bent, U.S. Natl. Mus. Bull., 196:1949) has also recorded a Swainson's Thrush (*Hylocichla ustulata*) feeding nestling Robins whose parents were present. In the numerous instances of interspecific helpers at the nest summarized by Skutch (Condor, 63:98-226, 1961), the participation of a hole-nesting helper at the open nest of another species seems to be quite rare.—KATHLEEN GREEN SKELTON HERBERT, R. D. 2, Middletown, Delaware 19709, 21 August 1970.

**An aberrant incubation stimulus.**—A thermistor telethermometer probe, inserted into the nest of a Cardinal (*Richmondena cardinalis*), may have functioned as an incubation stimulus for the nesting female. A standard white-tipped, round telethermometer probe was inserted through the bottom of the empty nest and extended 2.3 cm above the nest floor. It is doubtful that the probe was in direct contact with the median aperture of the bird because the probe registered temperatures from 28-30°C, which are lower than would be expected under direct contact.

The probe was inserted on 26 April 1969. A single egg was found under the incubating female on the evening of 4 May, at which time the egg was removed. The bird continued to incubate in the absence of eggs until the probe was removed on 23 May. After the removal of the probe, the bird was seen only once at the nest, which then was abandoned. The length of observed incubation for this bird was 27 days, the normal incubation period being 12 to 13 days.

This may support the view (McClure, Auk, 62:270-272, 1945) that for some birds the "feel" of the egg or other object alone may evoke the incubation behavior. Prolonged incubation of infertile eggs (Berger, Condor, 15:151, 1953; Jickling, Jack-Pine Warbler, 18:114-115, 1940; Peterle, Wilson Bull., 65:119, 1953) has been reported for several species, but this is the first case known to the author where this behavior apparently was elicited by an object (4 mm × 4 mm) considerably smaller than the species' own eggs (25.3 mm × 18.2 mm).—JOHN R. HALDEMAN, Department of Zoology, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, Arkansas 75701, 31 October 1970.

**Bull snake and Common Grackles.**—About a dozen pairs of Common Grackles (*Quiscalus quiscula*) nest each spring in the willows along Little Dry Creek near my home in Arapahoe County, Colorado. One huge tree has 10 branches going abruptly upward from the main trunk, and in this tree a pair of grackles built a nest completely concealed by heavy foliage about 15 feet from the ground. I had watched the birds carrying material and consequently knew its location, though it was not visible from below.