

Mobbing of a Fish Crow by passerines.—Mobbing of hawks, crows, and other large birds by passerines is a common behavior seen during the breeding period. Often the factors evoking this aggressiveness are difficult to determine, and there are few published papers relative to the effectiveness of mobbing by small passerines. The following account regarding a Fish Crow (*Corvus ossifragus*) and several passerines gives information on cause and effectiveness of this incident of mobbing behavior. The observations were made at Winter Park, Seminole County, Florida.

In late afternoon of 15 May 1971, a cloudy day, loud distress calls of Mockingbirds (*Mimus polyglottos*) and Red-winged Blackbirds (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) attracted my attention. About 250 feet away in a pine-palmetto habitat bordered by a drainage ditch, three Mockingbirds and at least three Red-winged Blackbirds were vigorously mobbing an unmarked Fish Crow. The passerines directed their beaks at the crow's body, and the most frequent area hit was the back. After about three minutes the crow flew to and perched in one of four closely-spaced pine trees located about 25 feet from the mobbing area. The passerines then perched in the pines but continuously gave raucous calls. In less than two minutes the crow, followed by the passerines, flew from the trees and returned to the area. The mobbing resumed. A calling Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*) flew to the scene and participated with the Mockingbirds and Red-winged Blackbirds. Again the birds returned to the pines; the crow was panting. Initially I had the impression that the crow accidentally came in contact with the passerines and was trying to escape. During the second mobbing incident it seemed clear the crow was not trying to escape since it kept returning to the same area. After two more similar mobbing bouts, the crow, while hovering somewhat, succeeded in its efforts and took a squealing, well-feathered bird from a nest. The distress calls of the passerines became louder. The crow immediately flew away with the young bird dangling from its beak. One Mockingbird continued to chase the crow as both birds flew out of sight beyond a distance of 1000 feet in an area of several large pine trees. The Mockingbird shortly returned to the mobbing area. I am not sure if the nestling was a Mockingbird or Red-winged Blackbird. Active nests of both species were found in the mobbing area. After about five minutes later, much to my surprise, a crow, presumably the same bird since it came from the direction where the other crow made its exit, returned to the area and the mobbing behavior resumed. This crow began hovering in the same area as before as the calling passerines mobbed the intruder. The crow was undoubtedly after another nestling. During these hovering movements a sudden heavy rain began. The crow flew away and the passerines dispersed.—WALTER KINGSLEY TAYLOR, *Department of Biology, Florida Technological University, Orlando, Florida 32816, 24 May 1971.*

Vesper Sparrow nests abandoned after snow.—During the period 8–10 June 1970, three Vesper Sparrow (*Pooecetes gramineus*) nests, each with four eggs, were found on a small watershed study site 14 miles west of Saratoga, Wyoming. The nests were located under partially dead sagebrush plants on an upland sagebrush site at about 7,850 feet elevation. On 11–12 June 1970, an unseasonable snowstorm, preceded by a one-half-inch rain, deposited 4 to 6 inches of snow on the nesting area. Accompanying this storm was a cold air mass that substantially lowered both daytime and nighttime air temperatures. Temperature extremes for the 10 successive days before, during, and after this storm were: 6 June, 40°–60° F.; 7 June, 40°–65°; 8 June, 44°–68°; 9 June 44°–56°; 10 June, 35°–46°; 11 June, 31°–36°; 12 June, 31°–46°; 13 June, 33°–69°; 14 June, 39°–58°; and 15 June, 44°–58°. The nests were visited again on 22 June, and all were found abandoned. Upon examination, the now spoiled but still intact eggs

were found to have been fertile, with absorption of the yolk sacs well advanced. Since the adult birds continued to incubate, both during and after previous visits to their nests, I believe that abandonment was caused by the accumulated snow at the nest sites. Frequent visits to the nesting area in the following weeks did not reveal any attempts to reuse the abandoned nests.—MAX H. SCHROEDER, *Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, Denver Wildlife Research Center, Denver, Colorado, 9 April 1971.*

Records of the Scarlet Ibis and Red-breasted Blackbird in Ecuador.—In their book, *The Species of Birds of South America* (Acad. Nat. Sci., Livingston Publ. Co., 1966), Meyer-de Schauensee and Eisenmann did not include Ecuador in the stated range of the Scarlet Ibis (*Eudocimus ruber*) or the Red-breasted Blackbird (*Leistes militaris*). This fact leads me to place on record my observations of these species made in 1964 at Limon Cocha (Oriente Province), Ecuador, near the junction of the Rio Napo and Rio Jivino:

Scarlet Ibis.—One seen on 7 May at less than 50 feet in trees at the edge of the lake. Palmer (*Handbook of North American Birds*, Vol. 1, Yale Univ. Press, p. 530, 1962) stated that the plumage sequence in this ibis is "almost entirely unknown." The bird I saw was a mosaic of gray and scarlet patches, the arrangement reminiscent of that in some blue-and-white immature Little Blue Herons (*Florida caerulea*).

Red-breasted Blackbird.—Small numbers were seen in a pasture from 25 April into early May. Of 5 specimens collected, 2 are now in the Museum of Zoology at Louisiana State University, the others at Florida State University.—HENRY M. STEVENSON, *Department of Biological Sciences, Florida State University, Tallahassee, Fla., 32306, 26 July 1971.*

PUBLICATION NOTES AND NOTICES

DIE VÖGEL DES BODENSEEGEBIETES. By H. Jacoby, G. Knötsch, and S. Schuster. Schweizerische Gesellschaft für Vogelkunde und Vogelschutz, Winterthur, Switzerland, 1970: 6 × 9 in., 260 pp., 26 photos, plus graphs, maps. Swiss Francs 18.50.

"The Birds of the Lake Constance Region" summarizes many years of ornithological research around that large lake on the border of northern Switzerland and southern Germany. This report was compiled by three workers with the cooperation of many other individuals, and the whole was sponsored by the Swiss Society for Bird Study and Bird Protection. It provides an excellent example of how intensive bird study in one small region can be summarized, and it pictures the birds in another continent but one with similar vegetation, agriculture, and human uses of the landscape to that found in eastern North America.—JAMES T. TANNER.