

American Robin feeds garter snake to its nestlings.—On 14 July 1971, at about 2750 m in the Pike National Forest, Teller Co., Colorado, I heard an unusual commotion in a robin's (*Turdus migratorius*) nest which contained 3 nestlings known to be about 10 days old. When I approached a few minutes after an adult left, I observed 2 of the nestlings simultaneously attempting to swallow a snake which was approximately 25 cm long. There was a 5 to 8 cm loop of the snake's body separating the nestlings' beaks. When I returned 10 min later with my camera, the snake had disappeared.

Since the snake appeared dead and I could not find it when I searched the nest site, I assumed that one of the nestlings swallowed it. The snake's color pattern readily identified it as a garter snake, and the only species occurring above 2438 m in Colorado is the wandering garter snake (*Thamnophis elegans*) (Maslin, Univ. of Colo. Studies, No. 6:47-53, 1959).

There are several reports in the literature of American Robins taking small snakes (Marshall, Bird Lore 23:259-260, 1921; McIntosh, Bird Lore 24:152, 1922; Friedmann, The Cowbirds, 259-260, 1929; Bent, U.S. Natl. Mus. Bull. 196:30, 1949; Davis, Wilson Bull. 81:471, 1969; and Netting, Wilson Bull. 81:471, 1969). Both McIntosh and Friedmann indicate that robins will attempt to feed small snakes to their nestlings: McIntosh reported that a robin nestling was unable to swallow a 25 to 33 cm garter snake, and Friedmann, who placed a 7-day-old Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*) in a robin's nest, observed the nestling swallowing a small garter snake fed by an adult robin.—MERLE L. RICHMOND, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Denver Wildlife Research Center, Lakewood, CO 80225. Accepted 3 Feb. 1975.

Chipping Sparrows feeding grit to offspring.—On 20 June 1974 at LaCrosse, Wisconsin, I observed an adult Chipping Sparrow (*Spizella passerina*) land among 4 fledglings in crushed gravel about 3 m from where I stood. The fledglings spaced themselves quadrilaterally around the adult approximately .3 m apart. The adult began pecking grit about .2 cm in diameter and approached one of the offspring. As if it were being fed, the young bird gaped widely as the parent placed the grit in its mouth. The parent repeated this behavior until each fledgling had received approximately 4 pieces of grit. At this point one of the young birds started pecking grit.

I made a similar observation on 31 Aug. 1974 at the LaCrosse Municipal Airport. The observation distance was approximately 3 m, and it was clear that small pieces of gravel were being fed to the young birds. They did not, however, peck grit themselves. This behavior might be an example of learning by prompting or imitation. Such imitative behavior is of obvious importance since the intake of grit is essential in seed eaters.—DOREN CROOK, Biology Dept. Univ. of Wisconsin, LaCrosse 54601. Accepted 25 Feb. 1975.

Predation by Common Ravens on feral Rock Doves.—About 100 Rock Doves (*Columba livia*) have for many years inhabited Succor Creek Canyon, Malheur Co., Oregon. At least one pair of ravens (*Corvus corax*) inhabit the canyon. Over a 2-day period I saw ravens fly toward and dive at groups of doves sitting on projections along cliff faces. The doves were flushed by such maneuvers, but usually stayed close to the cliffs and were not pursued by the ravens. At 19:45 on 14 May 1975 one raven flushed a small group of doves from a ledge and one broke from the flock and flew 0.4 km across the canyon