

**Prey items of Goshawks in southwestern New York.**—In evaluating food habits of North American accipiters, Storer (Auk 83:423-436, 1966) noted the paucity of data for breeding Goshawks (*Accipiter gentilis*). European work is available (Hoglund, Viltrevy 2:271-328, 1964; Vanbeusekom, Ardea 60:72-96, 1972), but information from North American populations comes mainly from Meng (Wilson Bull. 71:169-174, 1959) and Schnell (Condor 60:377-403, 1958).

We studied Goshawk food habits by identifying bits of food items near nests and feeding perches of nesting pairs at 10 nest sites in southwestern New York between 1964 and 1973. Table 1 summarizes the results.

Prey items can be organized into 3 main size categories. First, the grouse-crow type, comprise 23.4% of the food items, and include 18.2% Ruffed Grouse and 5.2% Common Crow. Small sciurids, including eastern chipmunk, gray squirrel and red squirrel, form the second type and comprise 33.8% of the total food items. Medium-sized birds (American Woodcock, Common Snipe, Common Flicker, Blue Jay, Robin, Starling, Eastern Meadowlark and blackbird) are the third type and made up 31.2% of the total.

Meng (1959) concluded from his data that Ruffed Grouse are not an important prey item of Goshawks. Our data are in accord with Eng and Gullion (Wilson Bull. 74:227-

TABLE 1  
PREY OF GOSHAWKS BREEDING IN CHAUTAUQUA, CATTARAUGUS, AND ALLEGANY  
COUNTIES, NEW YORK: 1964-73

Species	M <sup>1</sup>	A	M	J	J	A	Total	Percent Total
<b>BIRDS</b>								
Ruffed Grouse ( <i>Bonasa umbellus</i> )	1	4	3	3	2	1	14	18.2
American Woodcock ( <i>Philohela minor</i> )	-	1	-	2	-	-	3	3.9
Common Flicker ( <i>Colaptes auratus</i> )	-	-	1	-	3	-	4	5.2
Blue Jay ( <i>Cyanocitta cristata</i> )	-	-	1	4	2	2	9	11.7
Common Crow ( <i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i> )	-	1	-	3	-	-	4	5.2
American Robin ( <i>Turdus migratorius</i> )	-	1	-	1	-	-	2	2.6
Thrush sp. ( <i>Catharus</i> sp.)	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	2.6
Eastern Meadowlark ( <i>Sturnella magna</i> )	-	1	-	2	-	-	3	3.9
Other birds <sup>2</sup>	-	-	3	2	1	-	6	7.8
<b>MAMMALS</b>								
Eastern Chipmunk ( <i>Tamias striatus</i> )	1	3	4	3	1	-	12	15.6
Gray Squirrel ( <i>Sciurus carolinensis</i> )	-	-	1	4	-	-	5	6.5
Red Squirrel ( <i>Tamiasciurus hudsonicus</i> )	-	1	4	4	-	-	9	11.7
Other mammals <sup>3</sup>	-	1	3	-	-	-	4	5.2
							77	100.1

<sup>1</sup> Months in chronological order beginning with March.

<sup>2</sup> Other birds included 1 each of the following: Common Snipe (*Capella gallinago*), Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), Scarlet Tanager (*Piranga olivacea*), blackbird sp. (Icteridae), warbler sp. (Parulidae), unidentified bird.

<sup>3</sup> Other mammals included: 1 deer mouse (*Peromyscus* sp.), 1 eastern cottontail (*Sylvilagus floridanus*), and 2 unidentified.

242, 1962) indicating that a good portion of the diet of Goshawks includes Ruffed Grouse. Meng noted crows (in the same size class as grouse) to make up 44.9% of his total. Medium-sized birds included 31.2% of our total, but only 13.5% of Meng's. Sciurids compared nicely—33.8% in our study to 37.3% in Meng's. Goshawks may be looking for a particular prey size, and differences may represent variation of abundance and availability of species of a particular prey size.

Schnell (op. cit.) recorded food items from one nesting pair in California. Sciurids comprised 21.6% and medium-sized birds 59.1% of the total food items taken. His study, however, began in June with young in the nest, and differences may reflect seasonal variation. Our data from June through August show 50% of the food items to be medium-sized birds, which would agree with Schnell.—JOSEPH A. GRZYBOWSKI AND STEPHEN W. EATON, *Dept. of Biology, St. Bonaventure Univ., St. Bonaventure, N.Y. 14778. (Present address JAG, Dept. of Zoology, Univ. of Oklahoma, Norman 73069). Accepted 22 Sept. 1975.*

**Extra-parental assistance by male American Kestrel.**—On 5 June 1975, in the township of Minetto, New York, I first observed 2 adult male American Kestrels (*Falco sparverius*) alternately carry mice (probably *Microtus*) to the same female kestrel at the nest. The 2 male kestrels preyed on mice from utility wires extending across an open field approximately 1 km from the nest. Within a 10 min period the female kestrel received a partially denuded mouse from each of the males during flight. The female carried the mice to the decayed roof molding of a farmhouse. Investigation of the cavity revealed the female brooding 5 downy young.

I observed the birds daily until 29 June 1975, at which time the 5 kestrels were fledged. During this period I witnessed 47 instances of prey transfer from the male kestrels to the female. On a daily basis it appeared that one male carried a greater number of prey items to the female, but I was unable to determine whether this was the same individual from day to day. The female was not seen foraging during the 24-day period.

I have made occasional observations on the nesting kestrels at the farmhouse during the past 2 years. Kestrels have used the same nest site for at least 3 breeding seasons. Prior to the spring of 1975, I never witnessed a third kestrel assisting the breeding pair, or hunting in the established territory of the pair. Skutch (Condor 63:198–226, 1961) reviewed documented instances of extra-parental assistance in bird species and the American Kestrel was not among 134 species listed. More recently, Vries (An eco-geographical study with special reference to its systematic position, Vrije Universiteit te Amsterdam, Netherlands, 1973) documented polyandric trios of the Galapagos Hawk (*Buteo galapagoensis*). He established that pair bonds persisted from year to year in this species, and that polyandry varied in frequency with population density, occurring more often among denser populations.—WILLIAM A. WEGNER, *324 Shuart Ave., Syracuse, NY 13203. Accepted 4 Nov. 1975.*

**Yellow-crowned Night Herons defecate, disgorge pellets on shore.**—Watching Yellow-crowned Night Herons (*Nyctanassa violacea*) fish in a small piedmont stream at Woodlawn, Baltimore Co., Maryland, in 1973 and 1974, I found that they quite regularly went ashore to defecate, and then reentered the water. I saw this sequence 16 times; another time a bird flew out of sight instead of reentering the stream. In contrast, I saw one bird defecate while standing in the water, and twice saw one defecate into the stream while flying above it.