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**Red-bellied Woodpecker predation on nestling American Redstarts.**—On 3 June 1977, I was observing a nest of American Redstarts (*Setophaga ruticilla*) at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Laurel, Maryland. The nest was shaded and supported by a tangle of grapevines hanging 7.6 m above the ground in an 18 m tree. The adult birds had been feeding 3 two-day-old young in the nest.

At 14:45, while both adults were absent, I watched a female Red-bellied Woodpecker (*Melanerpes carolinus*) fly to the nest, remove 1 nestling and depart with it. The parents returned just before the woodpecker returned. The woodpecker again carried off a nestling, seemingly unaffected by the scolding and mobbing of the adult redstarts. A few minutes later the woodpecker carried off the remaining nestling. Returning a fourth time, the woodpecker sat atop the nest tree for several minutes still being mobbed by the redstarts. When it left the male redstart followed. The female remained near the nest chipping loudly and moving around the nest. Several times she hopped into the nest and scratched with her feet. The male returned to the empty nest carrying food, ate it himself, and began chipping with the female. The whole episode took 20 min. I do not know whether the woodpecker was feeding its young.

Bent (U.S. Natl. Mus. Bull. 174, 1939) reported the Red-bellied Woodpecker to be omnivorous, eating many kinds of insects, seeds, berries and fruits. He did not mention predation on young birds. Conner (Auk 91:836, 1974) noted predation by a red-belly on Carolina Chickadee (*Parus carolinensis*) nestlings. The closely related Red-headed Woodpecker (*M. erythrocephalus*) is known to prey upon eggs and young of various hole-nesting species, including the Common Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*), Purple Martin (*Progne subis*), Eastern Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*) and Tufted Titmouse (*P. bicolor*) (Bent 1939). This is the first report of a woodpecker removing young from the nest of an open-nesting bird, and the second report of predation by the Red-bellied Woodpecker on young birds.—DORIS J. WATT, *Dept. Zoology, Univ. Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma 73019. Accepted 1 Mar. 1979.*

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**Nest predation by the speckled king snake.**—Nest predation has been regarded as the greatest cause of nest mortality in open-nesting passerines (Lack, *The Natural Regulation of Animal Numbers*, Oxford Press, London, England, 1954). Some species have incurred as much as a 76% loss of nests due to predation (Best, Auk 95:9–22, 1978). It is often difficult to imagine how the more heavily depredated species manage to survive each year; with such a high degree of nest predation occurring annually, it seems that the actual act would be observed often. This is not the case. Pettingill (*Living Bird* 15:33–41, 1976) cited only 12 incidents that he and/or his students had seen during the preceding 35 years.

In early August 1973, a Dickcissel (*Spiza americana*) nest with four 6- to 7-day-old young was found in a lightly grazed prairie near Manhattan, Riley Co., Kansas. The nest was about 15 cm from the ground in an indigo plant (*Baptisia* sp.). A blind was placed within 30 cm of the nest in midmorning and was left vacant until 15:30 to allow the female attending the young to become accustomed to its presence. At that time, the blind was entered with a "go-away." After a tripod-mounted camera was positioned to record feeding behavior, the "go-away" left 1 of us (SF) in the blind. Within minutes the parent was attending the nestlings, seemingly undisturbed by photography.